

HB Arnett's ***COUGAR SPORTSLINE***

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BOZOS, BENCH, BRACKETS AND BUSTING THROUGH

Let's start with bozos. BYU made Utah and TCU look like basketball bozos last week with total beat downs of the two conference teams.

Utah had a little bozo boost of their own with the post game rants and antics of their coach Jim Boylen, but BYU certainly gave him plenty to bozo and boohoo about.

The final score, BYU 71 Utah 51, didn't accurately reflect how the Cougars totally dominated this game.

We might as well throw in berserk into this story. With TCU leading BYU 18-4 after the first four minutes of the season finale in Fort Worth for both teams, Dave Rose demonstrated the BYU version of berserk.

Berserk is five steps below bozo on the basketball coaching spectrum, but Rose, was to say the least, very animated in two consecutive timeouts called to restore order to BYU's dismal game-opening play.

It worked. From that point on, it was BYU who worked the Horned Frogs en route to a 107-77 win.

Both wins were the result of BYU's deep bench. Michael Loyd Jr, Charles Abouo and Brandon Davies all had big games and performances in the final week of the regular season.

Bad Rap

One of the raps on Rose and his teams is that they aren't athletic enough. That is no longer true when Rose can look to his bench and find all the athletes he needs.

It is probably a week to early to really get serious about NCAA tournament brackets, but we expect BYU to have a 5 seed at worst and a 4 seed at best.

A 4 seed will require a semi-final win over UNLV in the MWC tourney. As any BYU basketball fan worth his salt and seeding can tell you, beating UNLV on their home floor is something that Dave Rose has

yet to do as a BYU head coach.

This could be the year. We have no evidence to back up that statement, but we know special when we see it and this is a special season for BYU basketball.

For the Cougars to win when it comes to matchups with the other three good teams in the league, San Diego State, New Mexico and UNLV, it is always the same.

BYU has to shoot the ball well from the outside and they have to rebound. In the three league losses this year, BYU didn't do that.

We have a busting through feeling that this will be the year that BYU gets UNLV on their home floor. Better than a feeling, BYU has a Fredette. A big game by the junior guard is more important than any feelings.

If Fredette is back from his sub par performances of the last three games, BYU will win.

Even with the rare win over the Rebels that we are predicting, it won't produce the showdown Cougar fans are hoping for in a rematch against New Mexico.

We don't see the Lobos getting by their likely semi-final game against San Diego State.

Regardless of what happens in the MWC tournament, we still see plenty of special in this season with BYU in NCAA tourney play. It is all about guard play and BYU should have enough of it to finally get beyond a first round game.

THE FUTURES MARKET

Listed below are how BYU's most recent signees and future prospects fared during the last week. All except recent signee Anson Winder, are LDS.

Kyle Collinsworth, 6-6 guard/wing, senior, Provo HS...The season came to an end for Collinsworth last week as his team lost in the state championship semi-finals 57-50 to Mountain Crest. He did go out with a bang, however. Collinsworth scored 30 points, had 14 rebounds, 5 assists and 2 steals. He was the focus of the Mountain Crest defense and was double and triple teamed almost every time he touched the ball in the paint. Collinsworth finished the year with a 23.7 points per game scoring average.

Nick Emery, 6-0 freshman guard, Lone Peak HS...The talented frosh scored 22 points, but it wasn't enough as Lone Peak lost to Bingham HS 64-53 in the opening round of state playoff action. Emery finished the year with an 18.5 points per game scoring average.

Anson Winder, 6-3, guard, Senior, Bishop Gorman HS...Bishop Gorman captured their second consecutive state championship last week in Reno. Going into the playoffs, Winder was averaging 16.7 points per game. Dave Rose mentioned last week in an address to the Cougar Club that he expects Winder to be a contributor next season because he can provide defense. More specifically, he said Winder is capable of stopping penetration by opposing guards.

Jabari Parker, 6-5, wing, Freshman, Simeon HS, Chicago...Parker scored just seven points for

Simeon last Friday night, but most came at a crucial time, according to a report from the Chicago Sun Times. According to the ST's story, The freshman's clutch scoring at the end of the third period helped stem an Argo HS wave of scoring and propel the Wolverines to a 61-39 victory over the host Argonauts in a Class 4A regional final. "He made big baskets in the second half for us," Simeon coach Robert Smith said. "He's very mature for a 14-year-old."

DeMarcus Harrison, 6-4, guard, Junior, Christ School, Arden, NC...The season is over for Harrison after his team captured the North Carolina Independent Schools Athletic Association 3A state title. Harrison was also selected to the 3A all state first team. Christ Church still has at least one more game to play. They have been invited to ESPN RISE's national season-ending tournament which will start in April and be played in Maryland. Teams and brackets will be announced in mid March.

Jordan Chatman, 6-3, guard, Sophomore, Skyview HS, Ridgefield, WA...Season concluded last week for Skyview. His team lost at home 65-64 to Mountain View. That means their season is over. Chatman scored 14 points in his final outing of the year.

Jordan Smoot, 6-10, center, Junior, Crown Point HS, Crown Point, IN...Smoot had 10 points and 13 rebounds in a 56-46 loss to LaPorte last week.

Stephen Rogers...6-8, 190, forward, Freshman, Mesa Community College, AZ...Rogers, the ACCAC player of the year, was named MVP of the recently completed league tournament. He scored 24 points, had 12 rebounds, four assists and two blocked shots in MCC's championship win over Cochise College. The game was on the road in the home gym of Cochise. Rogers and his team will now play College of Eastern Utah Tuesday night in Salt Lake City in a battle of champions from NJCAA Division I and 18 to determine which team moves on to the National Tournament in Kansas. The game is set to be played at Salt Lake Community College.

BASKETBALL BRIEFS

Cougar Club Snippets...Dave Rose said last week at the local Cougar Club function that he needs a center that can run the floor in order for his offense to be effective and good. He also said he wasn't sure yet if James Anderson, the redshirt sophomore reserve post player for the Cougars, would be back next season. Don't know why he mentioned that. It could be that Anderson is looking for more playing time.

If that is the case, since he already has redshirted, he would have to move down a level to be eligible to play immediately next season.

If Rose is looking for a post player that can run, he already has one in the pipeline. That would be 6-11 Ian Harward. He signed last season out of Orem HS and is currently on a mission. He is the most athletic big man BYU has signed in years. You notice we didn't say he is the strongest big man BYU has signed in years.

Harward is very raw and missed a year of high school action as a junior with a broken leg, but if he can somehow bulk up and get stronger, he will fit Rose's description of what he is looking for.

Speaking of stronger and playing the post, you can bet that BYU will have Brandon Davies in the weight room during the off season. He has a nice offensive game that should continue to get better, but he needs work on his defense and rebounding. He also needs to get stronger to keep opposing

post players from being able to back him down at will in the low block.

Scholarship Count...BYU, according to our count, still has one scholarship to give this spring. We expect any scholarships that are to be given by BYU in April to come from the juco ranks.

Quality big men from junior college are rare and when they do show up, they are snapped up by the big name programs. We still expect the Cougars, however, to try and find some sort of suitable big man to add muscle to the roster for next season. If they can't find one, we expect to see a juco forward to sign in an effort to replace Tyler Haws and give more competition at the three spot.

Here are the scholarship players and their eligibility status for next season. You are allowed by the NCAA to have 13 players on scholarship. As you can see, BYU only has one scholarship to give this spring unless Anderson's spot does become available.

Charles Abouo, 6-5, 210, Jr.
James Anderson, 6-10, 230, Jr.
Brandon Davies, 6-9, 230, So.
Jackson Emery, 6-3, 185, Sr.
Jimmer Fredette, 6-2, 200, Sr.
Noah Hartsock, 6-8, 215, Jr.
Michael Loyd, Jr., 6-1, 170, Jr.
Logan Magnusson, 6-6, 210, Sr.
Chris Collinsworth, 6-9, 225, So.
Kyle Collinsworth, 6-6, 200, Fr.
Anson Winder, 6-3, 200, Fr.
Nick Martineau, 6-0, 180, So.

Fredette Back...We included Jimmer Fredette coming back for next season, despite rumblings that he may be NBA bound after this season.

We expect him to submit his name for early entry into the NBA draft. That will allow him to work out for teams and get a feel for how the pros evaluate him. But, just like Jonathan Tavernari and Lee Cumard, we also expect Fredette to remove his name from the early entry list and return to BYU for his senior season.

BYU expects him back. They are still working on finding an opponent for a possible game next season in Fredette's home town or close by. That is all you need to know about Fredette's NBA draft status for this year.

Okay, here is something else you need to know. Chad Ford, of ESPN, said this recently about Fredette in one of his columns on the ESPN website.

"Don't sleep on BYU's Jimmer Fredette as a potential draft candidate this year. If he were playing at Duke, he'd be mentioned as a potential player of the year candidate. Much like Duke's own Jon Scheyer, he's not the greatest athlete in the world, but he's tough, can really see the floor and he shoots the lights out."

"He's really tough and he's a fearless kid," one NBA GM said. "He's going to lead a team. I wish he was a little bit better athlete, but I can't name five better point guards in this draft. He'll find a way to do it at the next level."

FULL CIRCLE...Roger Reid was an outstanding coach at BYU. His record verifies that assessment. What got Reid in trouble and out the door were his perceived lack of skills when it came to public relations and recruiting.

Utah fans reveled in BYU's quandary with Reid.

Now it's their turn. The Utes now have their own basketball coach who has a public relations and press problem. He may be a great coach, but his on-the-court and post-game-press conference tirades paint him more as a bozo than a bonanza for Ute supporters.

It may be early, but his recruiting, in our opinion, also looks a little suspect to us.

Only time will tell, but as they say, what goes around comes around and in our opinion, now it's Utah's turn.

TELEVISION TIMETABLE

MWC Post-Season Tournament

BYU vs. TCU

Thursday, March 11 at Las Vegas

Tipoff: 7:00 pm Mountain Time

TV: The Mtn

If BYU wins:

BYU vs. UNLV or Utah

Friday, March 12 at Las Vegas

Tipoff: 9:30 pm Mountain Time

TV: CBS C

If BYU wins:

BYU vs. New Mexico, SDSU or CSU

Saturday, March 13 at Las Vegas

Tipoff: 5:00 pm Mountain Time

TV: Versus