

HB Arnett's

COUGAR SPORTSLINE

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IT'S OFFICIAL(S); SAINT MARY'S IS BETTER THAN BYU

In BYU's 80-66 loss to St. Mary's in Provo Saturday night, there are many who want to blame the loss on officiating, or lack of it.

That's not our take. There is no question that officiating was a distraction, but it was not the determining factor in the outcome of the contest.

A paucity of perimeter shooting by the BYU guard line was a much more valid reason for the defeat. BYU bricks from outside the three-point line rather than questionable blocking calls, determined the outcome of this crucial WCC contest.

The bottom line is that St. Mary's is a better team than BYU and without question they are especially superior when it comes to comparing both teams' guard lines.

Even if the officiating was just a distraction, it does deserve a little more discussion.

BYU and Saint Mary's fans, coaches and administrators are all too biased to discuss this topic rationally. They are too heavily invested in the subject.

We are also biased, so we will just pass along what was said by Vince Grippi, a columnist for the Spokesman Review (Spokane newspaper), in his musings of yesterday regarding the game.

His column is entitled *A Grip On Sports* and we have been enjoying it since BYU hooked up with the WCC.

Grippi said this:

** ALSO SAT IN FRONT of the television and watched Virginia hold off North Carolina State on the road, then St. Mary's punch BYU in the mouth in Provo. Kim said sometime after the 159th whistle was blown in St. Mary's win, "It's sad isn't it? We only saw one game today that was really well officiated; The Virginia game." And she was right. As usual. It reminded me of something one of Tony Bennett's (former Washington State head coach) assistants told me in Seattle last month. I asked him the biggest difference between the Pac-10 and the ACC and he didn't hesitate. Not the players, not the coaches.*

The officiating. It is so much better in the ACC, he said, adding it surprised him at first how much better. Makes me wonder why. The Pac-12 is at the top of the West Coast conference food chain, so it should attract the best officials this part of the nation has to offer (FYI, the three guys doing the BYU/St. Mary's game also officiate quite often in the Pac-12). Are there just not enough people in this part of the country that the pool isn't as deep? Or is it something else? When I posed this question to Kim, her answer was pretty good. She thinks it comes down to what the people at the top demand. The expectations they pass along to their on-floor personnel. The training they offer, the tools they supply, the help they are willing to give. Could be. What do you think?

**BACK TO THAT St. Mary's 80-66 beat down of the Cougars. If you've ever watched a Randy Bennett team, you know they play physical. Some would even call it dirty - and one local coach did just that when speaking about star guard Matthew Dellavedova recently. The Gaels are good at playing that way and when an opponent tries to respond in kind, as the Cougars did last night, they aren't going to be as polished. Which leads to whistles, in this case many of them going against the home team. And that incited the crowd, who felt they were getting jobbed, to use a nice word. When Dellavedova fell to the floor after incidental contact and drew an early second-half foul, the students showed their displeasure and earned a technical by throwing something on the floor. Later Dave Rose earned one as well after another acting job by a St. Mary's player earned a favorable whistle. Watching this unfold at the scorers table and just behind it during the second half, I had the impression that BYU's administration may have made a call right after the game to see if the Big 12 still had an opening.*

BYU GUARDS ARE LIKE THE WEATHER...THEY ARE CYCLICAL

For the last three years, BYU been the beneficiary of a guard line that could make it rain from beyond the three-point line. Opponents had to endure a flood of Fredette and Jackson Emery. Water and wins were plentiful.

The weather cycle has turned. BYU is now experiencing a serious drought. The rain beyond the arc has dried up and looks like it won't return for at least another year and a half.

BYU has a glut of good guards on tap for the future, but that future won't start for the rest of this season and next.

Not only could BYU use some regular rain from three point land, they could also use a little more respect by opposing coaches.

Cue up Aretha

Cue up Aretha Franklin because opponents no longer have to R-E-S-P-E-C-T the Cougar guard line. More specifically, they can totally disregard BYU's outside shooting and focus all their defensive efforts on stopping BYU's low post game.

Heck, at the current rate of outside shooting from Cougar guards, Aretha Franklin herself would probably be an improvement.

After the last four games, the best way to describe BYU's guard play would be to say that they are good guys, but bad shooters.

BYU's most recent box scores document that assessment.

In the last four games against Loyola Marymount, Pepperdine, Virginia Tech and St. Mary's, BYU's starting guard tandem has shoot jut 10% from beyond the arc. Matt Carlino was just 2-21 from the three-point line. His backcourt starting guard compadre, Brock Zylstra, was just 2-18 from the same range in the last four games.

As Aretha Franklin sings, St. Mary's may have been expecting a Saturday "sock it to me, sock it to me" from Cougar guards, but it appears BYU guards forgot the lyrics from long range.

As a team, in the last four games, BYU has made just 12 of 73 attempts from beyond the arc. That works out to be just 16% shooting from the deep perimeter for BYU.

Until opponents have to at least show a little r-e-s-p-e-c-t for BYU's guard play, BYU will continue to struggle the remainder of this season.

St. Mary's is indisputably a much better team than BYU because they have guards that have to be defended and BYU doesn't.

Rose sees it and will recruit to fix it

Don't think for a moment that Dave Rose doesn't know what the issue is. When the majority of your guards on the roster appear to be borderline Division I players at best during the last four games, you don't have any other viable options left to try for the remainder of this season.

What continues to puzzle, however, is how Rose and his staff thought they could even get by this season with their current guards. They used smoke and mirrors for the early part of the season, along with playing mediocre teams.

Against good coaches and good teams, this guard line has been exposed.

Rose is now pursuing another option to avoid a repeat of poor guard play next season.

The BYU head coach is now reportedly trying to sign a juco guard this April. He has offered a scholarship to Raul Delgado and reportedly hopes to get him signed in the spring to at least give another option next season on the guard line.

Delgado will be a stop gap measure because the Cougars have some great guards signed, but none of them will even be on campus for at least another season and a half.

Here's the skinny on Delgado (pardon the Mexican pun)

Delgado is a 6-3, 190 pound guard out of Western Nebraska Community College in Scottsbluff, Nebraska.

BYU showed a little interest in Delgado when he came out of Springville HS two years ago. He was good enough then to earn first-team All State honors.

Two years later he has turned some heads with his play at the juco level and has scholarship offers from BYU, Utah State, TCU and Detroit.

Other schools that are showing interest currently are Texas Tech, UCLA, Colorado, CSU and Penn State.

He currently averages 20 points per game and is shooting 45% from beyond the arc. He set a school record this season making 12 threes in one game. He also is an 89% shooter from the three throw line.

Delgado is originally from Chihuahua, Mexico, but started his high school career at American Leadership Academy in Salem, Utah. He transferred to Springville HS his junior season.

He also made the Mexican National team that participated in the World University Games this past summer.

If Western Nebraska sounds familiar to you, it is because Dave Rose has made several previous recruiting trips to Scottsbluff. Last year BYU offered a scholarship to 6-6 Hauns Brereton from WNCC. The returned missionary turned down the Cougars' offer and signed with Hawaii instead.

Rashaun Broadus was signed by the Cougars out of WNCC.

WNCC's two-man coaching staff are both LDS. Russ Beck has coached at the juco level at Salt Lake Community College, Dixie State College and at College of Southern Idaho. He also was an assistant at Southern Utah University for one year.

Yahosh Bonner is his assistant coach. Bonner prepped at Cedar City for a year before finishing his high school career at Mountain View HS in Mesa, AZ.

BYU was always on his recruiting trail, but never offered a scholarship. He played at Cochise JC in Arizona and then at Northern Colorado.

BYUtv International

The recruitment of Delgado may be the first time BYU can actually legitimately use the LDS Church's BYUtv International channel as a recruiting tool for athletics.

While Delgado's immediate family resides in Utah County, Rose and his staff can pitch the fact that his extended family back in Chihuahua can all access the majority of BYU basketball games via BYUtv International and do so in their native Spanish language.

If St. Mary's Randy Bennett can establish a viable recruiting pipeline in Australia and use ESPN Australia as a tool to accomplish that, BYU can certainly look into using BYUtv International and BYUtv Global as a legitimate recruiting tool in the recruitment of talented and qualified foreign players.

SIGNING DAY SIGNATURES

BYU is expecting the signatures of the following football players to arrive in their office on Wednesday, Feb 1.

You can watch a special signing day show on BYUtv later in the day at 7:00 p.m. It will give details and show footage for most of the new recruits of Bronco Mendenhall and his staff.

Matt Hadley, Connell High School, Connell, Wash.; 5-11, 200, safety

Rhett Sandlin, Alta High School, Sandy; 6-3, 225, LB

Josh Weeks, Show Low High School, Show Low, Ariz.; 6-4, 200, WR

Tanner Mangum, Eagle High School, Eagle, Idaho; 6-3, 190, QB

Dylan Collie, Oak Ridge High School, El Dorado Hills, Calif.; 5-10, 190, WR

Phillip Amone, Dr. Phillips High School, Orlando, Fla.; 6-0, 220, LB

Austin Hoyt, Argonaut High School, Jackson, Calif.; 6-7, 265, OL

Steven Richards, Alta High School; 6-2, 240, DE

Micah Hannemann, Lone Peak High School, Alpine; 6-1, 185, DB

Butch Pau'u, Servite High School, Anaheim, Calif.; 5-11, 225, LB

Jherremya Leuta-Douyere, Servite High School, Anaheim, Calif.; 6-0, 230, LB/DE

Jamaal Williams, Summit High School, Fontana, Calif.; 6-2, 190, RB

Troy Hinds, Davis High School, Kaysville; 6-5, 225, OLB

Sawyer Powell, Richland High School, Richland, Wash.; 6-2, 205, OLB

Marques Johnson, El Camino junior college, Torrance, Calif.; 6-2, 305, DT

Ammon Olsen, SUU returned missionary transfer, Sandy, UT, 6-4, 215 Alta HS QB

Taysom Hill, Stanford returned missionary transfer, Pocatello, ID, Highland HS, 6-3, 210, QB

Returned missionaries also to be announced as part of signing day list.

Fono Vakalahi, 6-foot-3, 335 pounds, OL

Brett Thompson, 6-3, 216, WR

Mitch Mathews, 6-6, 202, WR

Trevor Bateman, 5-9, 178, DB

Tui Crichton, 6-3, 357, OL

Terrance Alletto, 6-3, 287, OL

Craig Bills, 6-1, 209, DB

Remington Peck, 6-4, 240, DL

Jacob Hannemann, 6-1, 190, DB

Bronson Kaufusi, 6-6, 240, DL

Russell Tialavea, 6-3, 266, DL

Brad Wilcox, 6-7, 265, OL

BYU TELEVISION TIMETABLE

BYU Football Signing Day Special

Wednesday, Feb 1, 7:00 p.m. Mountain Time

TV: BYUtv

BYU vs. Gonzaga

Thursday, Feb 2 at Provo

Tipoff: 9:00 p.m. Mountain Time

TV: ESPN2

BYU vs. Stanford

Friday, Feb 3 at Provo

Volleyball: 7:00 p.m. Mountain Time

TV: BYUtv

BYU vs. Portland

Saturday, Feb 4 at Portland

Tipoff: 8:00 p.m. Mountain Time

TV: BYUtv

BYU vs. Pepperdine

Saturday, Feb 11 at Provo

Tipoff: 4:00 p.m Mountain Time

TV: BYUtv

BYU vs. San Francisco

Thursday, Feb 16 at San Francisco

Tipoff: 8:00 p.m. Mountain Time

TV: ESPNU

BYU vs. Santa Clara

Saturday, Feb 18 at Santa Clara

Tipoff: 5:00 p.m. Mountain Time

TV: ESPNU