

HB Arnett's

COUGAR SPORTSLINE

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VINYL VERSUS CD's

They used to make records by pressing them into vinyl. Now it is all on CD's.

BYU was technologically current in the record department last Saturday in Provo by producing a masterful CD (completely dominating) 38-24 win over Air Force.

Max Hall and Harvey Unga both went Platinum in recording their names in the BYU record books.

Hall went digital over Ty Detmer and downloaded to his resume the record for most wins by a starting BYU quarterback. Detmer previously held the record for wins with 29. Hall now owns the all time mark with 30 wins.

Harvey Unga broke the rushing record for BYU by surpassing the previous mark held by Curtis Brown. Unga now has 3,267 yards rushing for his career. He also set a new BYU record for rushing attempts. That mark was also held by Brown.

Unga finished with 67 yards rushing on 11 carries against the Falcons.

Against Air Force, Hall completed 33-of-45 attempts for 377 yards and five touchdowns. He also had two interceptions in the game.

While the BYU defense didn't set any records, they showed some promise of delivering a few hits of their own next week against Utah.

The Cougar defenders are still athletically challenged in some key spots on the defense, but they played extremely hard and with heart against the Cadets.

It was a welcome sight and one that will deliver more success if that level of play can be continued against Utah and a bowl opponent.

BEEN THERE, DONE THAT

On paper, in the battle of Utes and Cougars set for this Saturday in LaVell Edwards Stadium, BYU should win.

The Cougars are coming off their best performance of the season, a 38-24 domination of a good Air Force team. Momentum is on their side.

BYU is perceived to be the better team based on rankings. The Cougars are ranked No. 15 in the USA Today Coaches' Poll. Utah is at No. 19. In the AP Poll it is BYU No. 18, Utah No. 22.

Throw in the algorithms and analysis of the BCS and their computers and BYU is still in front of the Utes. The BCS boys have the Cougars pegged at No. 19 and the Utes at No. 22.

Even the guys who really know and make a living by knowing have the Cougars as the better team.

The early Las Vegas betting line opened with BYU as a 7 1/2 point favorite.

The only place where the two teams are even is in domination by TCU. Both clubs looked pathetic in losing to the Horned Frogs.

Despite all the paper signs of BYU being successful against the Utes, in our opinion, BYU is in trouble.

Utah is coming into this game with an inexperienced quarterback. Jordan Wynn, a true freshman, has started just three games for the Utes and is just 2-1 in those starts.

On Paper

On paper, BYU should eat him up and take advantage of his lack of experience.

Oops, the last time Utah showed up with an inexperienced quarterback in Provo, it was 2005 and seldom-used backup Brett Ratliff shredded the Cougar secondary and defense with his arm and legs and led the Utes to a 41-34 overtime victory.

Line up the two quarterbacks in this upcoming game, Max Hall of BYU and Wynn of Utah, and on paper it is a monumental mismatch. Hall is the most winning qb in BYU history with 30 victories. Wynn has just two wins to his credit.

So why is our stomach still churning with anxiety?

Both teams have good running games. The Utes have better receivers, but BYU has better tight ends.

The Utes have better defenders. Neither team has much of a kicking game.

The key matchup will most likely be Ute wide receiver David Reed going up against Cougar cornerback Brian Logan. Look for Utah to do all they can to get this matchup as often as they can.

Size Advantage

Reed is an exceptional wide receiver with a distinct size advantage over Logan.

Logan is a very good corner, but he is small. If he was 6-1 instead of 5-6, he would be exceptional. He would also be playing in the Pac 10.

History shows that the Utes will come prepared and ready to play. Recent history of BYU in this matchup shows that you never know what you will get with the Cougars.

None of that matters. The winning team will have the quarterback that performs the best. That performance will be based on which team can protect their qb.

Max Hall appears to be the slam dunk choice, but we aren't betting against Wynn because despite going against a front seven of the Cougars that he hasn't seen in person, he will know what they are going to do and how they will play certain formations and situations.

You can count on the Cougars doing what they have always done defensively against the Utes and you can count on Ute coaches knowing what to expect and preparing Wynn accordingly.

Pass Protection

This game will come down to pass protection. For BYU to win this game, they will have to get to Wynn. We don't think that will happen too often, but we do see Max Hall redeeming himself for his dismal performance of a year ago against the Utes.

It is all about the quarterbacks. We pick Hall and the Cougars and call it BYU 31 Utah 28.

BYU AND UTAH PLAYING FOR CUPCAKE AND PROGRAM CHAMPIONSHIPS

Forget the Mountain West Conference championship. That belongs to TCU.

Forget playing for a BCS bowl berth. That passed both teams by weeks ago.

This game is for the cupcake championship.

It wasn't intentional. Neither the Utes or Cougars wanted to play pushovers this year, but both did.

Blame it on the two-tier Mountain West Conference cake. The top layer of BYU, Utah, TCU and Air Force is firm, but the bottom layer is soft and spongy.

It is a similar scenario of other conferences. The upper echelon teams feast and frost their win-loss records on the lower-end cupcakes of their respective conferences.

Going into this matchup of MWC cupcake challengers, BYU holds a one-game lead in the softie standings.

Utah has beat just one team with a winning record this season. That would be Air Force. BYU has beat two teams with winning records to date. That would be Oklahoma and Air Force.

The Sooners will more than likely give up their winning record this weekend when they face Oklahoma State. Another loss and the Sooners will finish the regular season at 6-6.

Losing Record

As of right now, neither the Utes or Cougars have lost to a team with a losing record this season, but BYU will have lost to a team in Florida State that will be 6-6 next week after the Seminoles face Florida this coming Saturday.

The win-loss record of the bottom five teams of the MWC this year is an abysmal 17-38. Both the Utes and Cougars also featured 3-8 Utah State on their non-conference slates this season.

The Utes also cupcake walked over 1-9 San Jose State and 4-7 Louisville. BYU countered with 3-8 Tulane.

That is why the BYU-Utah game this Saturday in Provo is so big. The team that wins will get the automatic berth in the CCS (Cupcake Championship Series) game against Boise State. Don't get us started on their schedule of cream puffs.

While a BYU win over Utah will be nice, in our opinion, it won't unseat the Utes as the better program over the last ten years.

Partisanship

Take away the partisanship and from our perspective, Utah is the better program over the last decade. The Utes hold a 6-4 winning record over the Cougars in the last ten seasons.

They have appeared in 8 bowl games in ten years and have won all eight games. BYU has appeared in six games during that same period and are just 2-4.

Overall, in the last decade, BYU is 78-46 and Utah is 85-36. In the last four years with Bronco Mendenhall and Kyle Whittingham as head coaches, BYU is 38-13 and Utah is 37-14. Both are 2-2 in head-to-head matchups against each other.

We still give the edge to Utah as the better team of the last decade because of their bowl record and two BCS winning appearances.

It is much closer if you take only the last five years. Both Utah and BYU have won two conference championships. TCU won the other. The difference is that when Utah won their championships, they were undefeated seasons and resulted in BCS bowl wins. BYU's conference championships resulted in two trips to the Las Vegas Bowl

More Rubbing, Less Reminiscing

A win on Saturday will draw the Cougars closer to Utah in the battle of programs and would give Mendenhall a one-game edge in head-to-head matchups with Kyle Whittingham, but until BYU is able to sniff a BCS appearance, when it comes to the two programs, the Utes are still the best team of the

last decade or the last five years.

History, however, is so yesterday. What is really important is who will be the best program on Saturday?

This game is never about reminiscing about history, but about rubbing the most recent win into the face of the other team.

As Cougar fans, here's hoping that Saturday will produce more rubbing and less reminiscing.

BASKETBALL WINS KEEP COMING

BYU notched two more wins in basketball last week with victories over Idaho State and Hawaii.

The Cougars were 87-53 winners over ISU in Provo and defeated Hawaii in Honolulu 83-65.

Jimmer Fredette led all scorers in both games. He put up 22 against the Bengals of Idaho State and added 20 more against Hawaii.

His nice outings were complemented by his backcourt mate Jackson Emery. The junior guard from Lone Peak HS in Utah threw in 19 against ISU and 11 more against Hawaii.

Speaking of Lone Peak, Tyler Haws, the true freshman from the same school, looks to have locked down a starting role for the Cougars.

He scored 12 against Hawaii in his first career start as a Cougar. Against ISU, he scored 9, but also had 5 rebounds, 6 assists and 2 blocked shots.

Jonathan Tavernari broke out of his early season scoring and shooting slump in Hawaii.

The preseason All MWC first team selection broke lose for 17 points on 7-for-14 shooting. He was 3-of-7 from beyond the arc. He also grabbed 5 rebounds.

Two Games

The Cougars will have two games this week. Both are home games.

Southern will be in town on Tuesday for a matchup with the Cougars. They don't appear to be very good. They were blown out last Saturday by Utah in Salt Lake City 88-48.

Weber State will show up in the Marriott Center on Friday in a post-Thanksgiving game.

The Wildcats are currently 0-3 on the year with a loss to Utah State at Ogden and losses to UC Santa Barbara and Seattle on the road.

Weber should get their first win earlier this week when they face Western State in Ogden on Tuesday.

It is still early, but after three games here is what we see when it comes to BYU basketball.

BYU may have finally found the next Danny Ainge. That would be Jimmer Fredette. His style of play is different, but his production isn't.

Fredette may be the guard that can take BYU to a couple of NCAA wins.

He is a scorer and can create his own shot. There is a reason that he is the preseason MWC player of the year selection.

He has game and has brought it in each of the first three contests.

Focus

Opponents will focus on him, especially in league play, but he is the real deal.

Jackson Emery would be the go-to guard for Dave Rose if not for Fredette. He is the team's best defender and brings energy to the floor on every outing. When his outside shot is right, like it was against Idaho State, he is all conference material.

Jonathan Tavernari will score. You just don't know when. His shooting slump appears to be over, but for the first time in his career, Dave Rose has some leverage over Tavernari.

If he is having a bad outing, Rose can go to the bench and get production from Noah Hartsock.

Speaking of Hartsock, he may be the most productive player per minute on the team.

He doesn't look like he is doing anything spectacular, but you look up and he has a stat line full of rebounds and points.

Hartsock has been effective in the post when BYU goes small and quick and he also helps at the 4 spot.

Tyler Haws is showing that he can do at this level what he did at the high school level. He is a good open court player and can get to the rim and finish.

Outside Shot

His outside shot has been good in the early going, but he will make his living getting to the rim and consequently getting to the foul line.

The player that has surprised us the most with his good play is Michael Loyd, Jr. His penchant for offense and shooting the three has been unexpected.

The post play is still unsettled. Brandon Davies shows big talent as a freshman, but has yet to play any extended minutes.

Chris Miles will be needed against some teams, but we expect the post to be by committee with Hartsock, Davies and Miles all seeing action according to foul troubles and matchups.

This is a very good team. They could be a great team, but that won't be known for sure until the Cougars face a good team. That hasn't happened yet.

BASKETBALL BRIEFS

A few years back there was a pretty good movie released called Glory Road. It detailed the history of Don Haskins and UTEP basketball, when, in 1966, Texas Western (now called UTEP) won the national championship in basketball by beating Kentucky.

At the time it was major news because Kentucky started 5 white guys and Texas Western started 5 black guys. If you know the racial history of this country, you know why it was news.

We aren't expecting a sequel to the movie, but 43 years later, BYU had their small version of Glory Road.

With 39 seconds remaining in the first half of the BYU basketball game against Idaho State in Provo last week, there were four black players on the court for BYU.

Three days later in a game against Hawaii in Honolulu BYU had four black players on the court for significant minutes while the game was being contested.

As one who is old enough to have lived through the racial tensions of the '60s and '70s, and as one old enough to know about and experience from a distance the "Black 14" protests at the University of Wyoming, I certainly noticed that nobody else noticed.

In my mind, nobody noticing or caring about the rotation Dave Rose had on the floor last week says a lot about the university and the basketball program.

Both are positive statements.

TELEVISION TIMETABLE

BYU vs. Southern

Tuesday, Nov 24 at Provo

Tipoff: 7:00 pm Mountain Time

TV: none

BYU vs. Weber State

Friday, Nov 27 at Provo

Tipoff: 7:30 pm Mountain Time

TV: The Mtn

BYU vs. Utah

Saturday, Nov 28 at Provo

Kickoff: 3:00 pm Mountain Time

TV: The Mtn and CBS C

BYU vs. Utah State

Wednesday, Dec 2 at Logan

Tipoff: 7:00 pm Mountain Time

TV: the CW30 (local only in Utah)