

HB Arnett's



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Editor's Note: Some of you won't like what you read below. Consequently, please forgive the disparaging remarks as they concern BYU football. They are the result of what I saw and heard last night in Boise as the BSU Broncos bested BYU 7-6. You can expect much more responsible and glowing commentary when Idaho State reappears on the schedule. Nothing restores rational thinking and rave reviews like drubbing clearly outmanned teams.

IS BYU'S SHIP SINKING? NO, BUT IT IS OBVIOUS THAT THERE ARE SOME SERIOUS LEAKS THAT NEED PLUGGED

I wouldn't say that BYU football has a gigantic problem. They have a Titanic problem.

The 7-6 loss to Boise State last night was certainly disheartening. But not as disheartening as listening to the post game comments of Bronco Mendenhall when he was asked about a lack of offense and questionable game management issues late in the game.

I am assuming you might have heard his comments. If you didn't, here is something similar to what was said. It is taken from the obscure post game show of Captain Edward John Smith, the Captain of the Titanic, just after his ship sunk.

Radio Guy: Captain Smith, it looked like you had some iceberg problems tonight. Would you say that was a result of some steering problems?

Smith: Steering problems? I love this boat. It was built on integrity, hard work, fire and competitive spirit. I would take this boat and ram it into an iceberg every time. I trust my boat.

Radio guy: Are you saying you wouldn't do anything different to avoid an iceberg incident if given a second chance?

Smith: I love this boat. It has earned all the iceberg chances I can give it.

Radio Guy: So if you were given another ship to steer, you wouldn't do anything differently? Are you saying that despite now being at the bottom of the sea, your perspective hasn't changed?

Smith: Absolutely not. I trust my ship and the way I steer it. I feel sorry for the next iceberg I see. Those icebergs better get ready to be hit, hit and hit again. We may be sinking into oblivion, but those icebergs will know that they have been hit by a good and gritty ship. That is more important to me than staying afloat and saving the passengers. It's about how I feel as a captain, not how the passengers feel.

Radio Guy: Captain that might be perceived as arrogance and ignorance. Do you want to rephrase what you just said?

Smith: Well Radio Guy, if I must, here is what I would say. We may have sunk to new lows, but I still have trust in my boat. It was forged and built in Belfast by the very best and grittiest workers I know. I would put my ship up against any and all icebergs. Don't expect me to change my steering techniques. I have total trust in my staff, stewards and new salad bar plan...even at the bottom of the sea. I see no reason to do anything differently.

Besides, it might affect my book sales. You may have seen my new book. It's titled: *Smooth Sailing Is What I Say It Is*.

It is a sequel to my first book: *The Emperor's New Clothes*

**TOO MANY BRONCO WANNABES IN CLOTHES
AND COACHING**

The Danish fairy tale, *The Emperor's New Clothes* was written by Hans Christian Anderson in 1837 and is referenced above.

For those not familiar with it, here is the plot synopsis copied from the website answers.yahoo.com.

Many years ago there lived an emperor who cared only about his clothes and about showing them off. One day he heard from two swindlers that they could make the finest suit of clothes from the most beautiful cloth. This cloth, they said, also had the special capability that it was invisible to anyone who was either stupid or not fit for his position.

Being a bit nervous about whether he himself would be able to see the cloth, the emperor first sent two of his trusted men to see it. Of course, neither would admit that they could not see the cloth and so praised it. All the townspeople had also heard of the cloth and were interested to learn how stupid their neighbors were.

The emperor then allowed himself to be dressed in the clothes for a procession through town, never admitting that he was too unfit and stupid to see what he was wearing. For he was afraid that the other people would think that he was stupid.

Of course, all the townspeople wildly praised the magnificent clothes of the emperor, afraid to admit that they could not see them, until a small child said:

"But he has nothing on"!

This was whispered from person to person until everyone in the crowd was shouting that the emperor had nothing on. The emperor heard it and felt that they were correct, but held his head high and finished the procession.

Bronco isn't an Emperor and certainly always wears a tee shirt or some other royal garb on the sideline.

He has, however, surrounded him self with a coaching staff of Bronco wannabes who hope to one day grow up to be just like Bronco.

Most of those wannabes have no coaching resumes to speak of. They seemed to have been hired based on grit, determination and guts, not on coaching acumen.

If assistant coaches aren't going to present Bronco with a clothes critique, then who is?

The difference between Bronco and LaVell the legend, is that LaVell, surrounded himself with opinionated and feisty competitors who would tell it like it was and were willing to literally fight with other coaches on the staff to get their point across.

There were fights between assistants in the press box under LaVell. Guys like Doug Scovil, Fred Whittingham, Mike Holmgren, Norm Chow and Roger French had no

trouble telling LaVell that his schemes, game plans and personnel decisions were buck naked.

There are no such guys currently employed on the BYU football staff. There are guys that are absolutely wonderful human beings in every way possible except in resumes.

It is my opinion, that the only thing these guys have in common is that they want to be just like Bronco...not in coaching acumen, but in personality and makeup.

After two seasons, even the biggest BYU honks would at least have to say there is cause for concern in thinking that Brandon Doman may be over his head as offensive coordinator.

Before being blindly handed the offensive reins by Bronco, it appears that Doman and BYU would be better off if he had have spent at least five years at some FCS school, honing his skills and play calling.

With LaVell, he always had some salty guys on his staff. They would say what they thought to each other and to LaVell. That probably wouldn't work well now because of the internet and because Cougar fans want to think their coaches are all seminary teachers.

Bronco has plenty of seminary and wannabe guys. What he needs is at least one coach on staff, or an athletic director, who will tell him to put some clothes on.

MENDENHALL IS WORTH A MILLION BUCKS

I don't know what Bronco Mendenhall is making in salary at BYU, but he certainly could be making at least a million dollars annually as a defensive coordinator at a school like Alabama.

He is big time as a defensive coach and coordinator. He was very good as a defensive coordinator with limited talent. Now that he has talent, he has been much better. The defensive goal line stand last night against Boise State was a top twenty historical moment in BYU football, especially since the other 18 are all offense.

He is also big time as a motivator and molder of young men. He would be worth a million bucks as a mission president.

But when it comes to finding ways to beat rivals, good teams and win in big games that mean something on the national stage and actual game management outside of his defensive duties, he is not nearly as good.

In my opinion, he as a head football coach and his hand picked offensive coordinator, Brandon Doman, may be prime examples of the infamous "Peter Principle".

Here's how Wikipedia defines the Peter Principle: *The **Peter Principle** is a belief that in an organization where promotion is based on achievement, success, and merit, that organization's members will eventually be promoted beyond their level of ability. The principle is commonly phrased, "employees tend to rise to their level of incompetence." In more formal parlance, the effect could be stated as: employees tend to be given more authority until they cannot continue to work competently.*

Here is the HB Arnett definition of the "Peter Principle" when it comes to Bronco.

Defensive coordinator? Absolutely, unequivocally and without question, yes, yes, yes and heck yes!

Fireside speaker and motivator of young men? You betcha!

Game manager and football only administrator? Let me think on that one.

Here are some other random musings from me on the BYU offensive situation.

Forget a quarterback controversy between Riley Nelson and Taysom Hill. What about Alex Kuresa?

Look, it is no secret that Nelson is hurt. He was hurt because he was constantly taking a beating running the ball. Hill is a better athlete, faster, stronger with a stronger arm. Under the current offensive system, it will just be a matter of time before he gets banged around enough times before he also succumbs to injury.

Instead of Nelson and Hill getting tons of carries, how about sharing the load with Jamaal Williams? You have to get the ball in the hands of your best and most talented tailback. That isn't Michael Alisa. He is your most trusted and experienced tailback, but running Alisa wide just doesn't make sense.

Get Williams the ball.

Now back to Kuresa. The BYU offense is flawed as it is drawn up currently to use the running abilities of Nelson and Hill. They are not Denard Robinson of Michigan. If we had him, then the current offense would make more sense. We don't and never will have a qb with that skill set.

What we have had and still have are quarterbacks that can drop back and throw the ball. That is what we have done when we are good offensively. Get Kuresa back from wide receiver and let him sling it down field before he heads out next season on his LDS mission.

Pull a Dave Rose and have Bronco asked Tanner Mangum to delay his mission plans for a year. That is what Rose did with Cory Calvert when it was obvious that he had no shooting guards. Bring Ammon Olsen back from the scout team.

Try something because the option/take a qb beating scheme is not going to work consistently.

Throw the ball and throw in Williams and now we are talking.

So much for salad bars

The new leaner and more nutritionally nourished offensive line is undoubtedly healthier, but they certainly aren't better blockers. At least when they were fatter and sedentary, they had more weight to keep themselves anchored at the line of scrimmage and free from illegal procedure penalties.

The best thing that could happen to the offensive line is to follow the BYU defense around and see what they are eating and ingesting. It certainly works for them.

If you are depressed now about the last two losses to Utah and Boise State, imagine how you would feel without the big time performances of the Cougar defense.

They are spectacular. What they did at Boise was phenomenal and monumental. Give Bronco and his boys all the credit for what they have done this season. Now give them a much deserved reward and give them an offense.

While I am rambling, at the end of this letter you will find a reasonable email I received from a subscriber that he sent me last week after the Utah debacle. I found it interesting and you might also.

WINNING WOMEN

The BYU women of soccer and volleyball continue their winning ways.

The volleyball team swept No. 14 and league rival Pepperdine 3-0 Thursday night in Provo. The three sets were 25-23, 25-17 and 25-22. The Cougars are now 13-0 on the year and are currently ranked No. 16 in the country.

Their next match is on Saturday in Provo against Gonzaga. The match will be televised live by BYUtv at 1 pm Mountain time.

In soccer, the Lady Cougars defeated Utah State in Logan yesterday to run their season record to 9-1 with the 1-0 win over the Aggies.

Next up is Oregon in Eugene on Saturday.

Hawaii Is All About Hands

If BYU is hoping to heal its wounds and offensive headaches from the last two weeks, Hawaii could be the perfect medicine.

They are not a terrific defensive team.

BYU should be able to finally score some points against a defense, regardless if the quarterback is Riley Nelson or Taysom Hill.

Those two guys are the key.

The more Brandon Doman takes the ball out of their hands and gets it into the hands of guys like Cody Hoffman, Ross Apo and Jamaal Williams, the healthier Nelson and Hill will be and the more productive the offense will also be.

BYU has to find a way to stop the pounding of Nelson. They have to get the ball to other offensive players.

Primarily, that means throwing the ball down field. The sooner that happens the sooner BYU will start scoring points again.

I call it BYU 27 Hawaii 14

Television Timetable

BYU vs. Hawaii

Friday, Sep 28 at Provo

Kickoff: 6:00 pm Mountain Time

TV: ESPN

BYU vs. Utah State

Friday, Oct 5 at Provo

Kickoff: 8:15 pm Mountain Time

TV: ESPN

BYU vs. Oregon State

Saturday, Oct 13 at Provo

Kickoff: TBA

TV: TBA

BYU vs. Notre Dame

Saturday, Oct 20 at South Bend

Kickoff: 1:30 Mountain Time

TV: NBC

Extra-curricular reading

Here's a reasonable view and opinion of a concerned subscriber that was sent to me last week and before the Boise State game.

Dear HB,

For over three decades BYU football established an offensive legacy that was the standard by which all passing teams were judged. The reasons for moving to a "progression based", possession passing game are just as true and necessary today as ever before. Why in the world when you have one of the most productive, entertaining and competitive passing offenses in the country would you abandon the "offensive culture" to become a "balanced team".. BYU never was balanced, except when the games were so far out of hand, Lavell Edwards refused to throw the ball in the fourth quarter and often part of the third quarter.

The more balanced we become, the "mediocre" we will be, and we will certainly fall into national irrelevance, where we are right now. ..

Please understand, I am a great fan of Bronco's values and the qualities he expects and instills in his players.... However, by his own admission, "He knows nothing about offense".... Why would you bring an option oriented QB without any experience, allow him to bring in his high school buddy who is the running back coach at an option offense university (Navy) and give him the keys to drive a high powered passing game into football independence, where every game is critical?

Simple answer, YOU DON'T. The Brandon Doman experiment has failed. We can't move the ball effectively against top flight defenses by being balanced. BYU needs to throw the ball 50 times a game and the running game with take care of itself. Unfortunately, Doman was a mediocre passing QB at best, and unfortunately Nelson is his clone.... Reilly should have had three more passes intercepted against Utah and got away with it. He looks only for Hoffman and now Friel. What happened to Ross Apo, Falslev, and the backs out of the backfield?

The whole passing scheme of old has been scuttled for a balanced attack that will ultimately lead to disaster. Frankly when you consider the competition I don't think we can get too excited about Bronco's record against meaningful competition. This year I felt we had four games that would define the program and determine our national relevance. We just lost the first one to Utah. Close yes, but truth be told, we only managed just over 300 yards for the game.

Years past we had that many passing yards in a half. Looking closer, Utah had just lost their starting QB, all conference running back, and top defensive back.... We still couldn't win the game, and as well as the defense played we should have.... Next we have Boise State who lost all the main cogs in their offensive machine. Notre Dame looks formidable at this point and Georgia Tech will be no walk in the park. The way Utah State and Oregon State are playing they could defeat us as well. Can you imagine teams playing BYU "forcing us to pass"?

That is the last thing teams wanted from us in years past, and they knew they were going to see it 50 times a game. Can you imagine the old BYU passing attack in a "hurry up mode", passing with 20 seconds left on the play clock. Unfortunately, Doman does not have the mind for the passing game and he should be thanked for his effort and moved into another capacity.

Taysom Hill may or may not be the answer, but if all he is going to do is run the ball when he comes in, then he isn't the solution either. Put him in the pocket, let his quickness allow him to elude rushers, and see if he can pick up the third or fourth options in the passing scheme. That is if Doman still has those options available to him. I guess like so many fans who remember the good ole days, the football we are watching game in and game out is very painful. Fortunately, the defense is getting better. We have never had better receivers and more inadequate and untested quarterbacks in over 30 years that I have been watching. ESPN can't be happy. The ESPN announcers frequently mention this isn't the BYU offense they have enjoyed over the years.

Last Saturday night the ESPN announcers kept wondering why BYU was sticking with the option. 9 rushes and 12 yards won't get it done. I guess they forgot BYU's passing offense now has an option QB for the OC.... Next year with Wisconsin, Boise State, Texas, Georgia Tech and there may be others; we will need a return to our old "passing" routes to be competitive. Such a shame what with going Independent we abandon the one thing that made us competitive with anyone; A feared, high scoring, possession passing attack. Thanks for your time.

A subscriber