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BYU GROUNDS HELICOPTER AND BRUINS 59-0

A week before the UCLA Bruins faced BYU in Provo, Rick Neuheisel, the Bruins head coach, took advantage of a bye week and added to his charismatic cachet and celebrity.

He did it by using a booster's helicopter to crisscross the Los Angeles area to see as many top-rated So Cal football recruits as he possibly could on a Friday night.

Look for Neuheisel to leave the helicopter in the hanger and use a hot air balloon on his next recruiting foray.

Based on BYU's 59-0 grounding and grinding of the Bruins last Saturday, hot air seems to be a plentiful commodity when it comes to football in Westwood these days.

Celebrity, but no substance, isn't just the province of politics these days; it also applies to the Pac 10 - at least for this season.

In case you missed it, the Mountain West Conference went 4-0 against the Pac 10 last weekend. That included wins by TCU over Stanford, UNLV over ASU and New Mexico over Arizona. And, of course, the biggest of them all was BYU's blowout of the Bruins.

Snobbery

After decades of being subjected to Pac-10 snobbery, some of us have waited years to be able to say this; "UCLA would be a lower echelon team if they were in the MWC."

Okay, that is the epitome of pettiness, but when you have sat through the poundings and pummeling's on the field and in public perception that BYU fans feel like they have endured over the decades, it felt good to pour it on the Pac 10.

Speaking of pouring it on, at halftime, with BYU up 42-0, I called a relative who lives in a Pac 10 city and has been subjected to even more snobbery than those of us in Utah have experienced. I asked him if 42 points was enough.

His response was "heck" no. He reminded me that he and I had sat through the 68-14 Gaston Green gutting of BYU in Pasadena 15 years ago and he wanted the Cougars to hit the 70 points plateau. (Green was the UCLA tailback that ran up and down the field at will against the Cougars)

Pettiness must be in the family gene pool.

Actually, if Bronco Mendenhall hadn't called off the dogs midway through the third quarter, 80-90 points was on the table for the taking.

Helicopters and Hot Air

Now back to helicopters and hot air.

With the pummeling of UCLA, BYU flew vertically in both national polls. The Cougars went from No. 18 to No. 14 in the AP poll and went from No. 15 to No. 11 in the Coaches poll.

You can thank Max Hall for that.

No one was hotter in the air than the junior quarterback for the Cougars.

All Hall did was throw for 7 touchdowns in a little more than two quarters of play.

His performance tied a BYU record of 7 TDs in one game that was held by Jim McMahon and Marc Wilson. Six of those touchdowns were in the first half and that established a new MWC record.

He made it look easy. Oops, it was easy.

How hot was Hall in the air? Put these statistics in your BYU basket and balloon and see how high it flies.

Hall completed 27-of-35 passes for 271 yards en route to the 7 aerial scores. He also had one meaningless pick.

UCLA's defense couldn't stop him. Mendenhall was the only guy who could, and he did, when he pulled Hall and put him on the pine in the third quarter.

In The Books

Now that Hall is in the BYU books with McMahon and Wilson, here is how his tying touchdown tosses will read.

Dennis Pitta 10-Yard Pass from Max Hall.

Austin Collie 2-Yard Pass from Max Hall.

Austin Collie 37-Yard Pass from Max Hall.

Michael Reed 12-Yard Pass from Max Hall.

Harvey Unga 15-Yard Pass from Max Hall.

Dennis Pitta 2-Yard Pass from Max Hall.

Harvey Unga 6-Yard Pass from Max Hall.

After Hall's arm was iced and put to bed with 7:43 remaining in the third quarter, BYU added two more scores in that quarter. The first was a Mitch Payne 24-yard field goal and a Wayne Latu 13-yard scoring run.

After Hall's departure, the Cougars kept the ball on the ground and had backup quarterback Brenden Gaskins pass only on third and long situations to keep the ball in BYU's possession and the clock running.

Gaskins was 4-of-5 for 66 yards. Added to Hall's highlights, the Cougars passed for 337 yards against the Bruins. They also had no trouble rushing the football.

When It Mattered

BYU ran for 184 yards on 45 carries. A significant portion of those carries occurred in mop up action. When it mattered, and before they both went to the bench in the third quarter to join Hall, Harvey Unga had 71 yards rushing on 17 carries. Fui Vakapuna had 34 yards on 9 tries.

BYU totaled 521 yards of total offense against the Bruins. UCLA could only muster 239 yards of offense against what turned out to be an unexpected and stout performance by the Cougar defense.

The shutout was only the second in the Bronco Mendenhall era.

The first was a 38-0 shellacking of Utah State in 2006.

Both happened when BYU was using a 3-3-5 defense.

You may remember that Bronco threw his baby out with the bath water two years ago when he real-

ized that he would seldom have corners that could play in press coverage and reverted back to a more common 3-4-4 defensive approach.

Against UCLA, he brought back the baby and brought Brandon Bradley to the field at corner while moving Scott Johnson to Kat back.

That allowed the Cougar defense to solve its injury issues at linebacker and get another good athlete on the field in Bradley.

Cemented

It also cements the walk on credo of Mendenhall with his use of Johnson.

The Timpview HS product is now on scholarship, but he started as a walkon and now has turned into a defensive playmaker for the BYU defense.

He won't win any awards at combines for his athletic prowess, but all he does is make plays.

When it comes to making plays, BYU's penchant for blocking field goals was still intact against the Bruins. The closest the Bruins came to scoring on BYU was in the second quarter when they had the ball on the Cougar 14-yard line with a first down.

They had to settle for a 32-yard field goal try that was blocked by BYU.

With the win, BYU is now 3-0 on the year and begins conference play this coming Saturday when they host Wyoming in Provo.

COWBOYS COMING

BYU will begin league play this Saturday when they line up against the Wyoming Cowboys in Provo. Kickoff is set for 1:00 pm and the game will be televised on the Mtn.

The Cowboys are currently 2-1 on the year and have played their first three games in Laramie.

They needed some late-game heroics to notch their two wins, a 21-20 squeaker over Ohio and a 16-13 win over North Dakota State.

The Pokes are 0-1 in conference action because Air Force drilled Wyoming 23-3 in Laramie two weeks ago.

This Wyoming squad is not a very good team. We aren't the only ones who think that way.

Las Vegas odds makers have made BYU a 28-point favorite.

The Pokes are a team that is stagnant on offense. They only average 251 yards of offense per game. Most of that average was accumulated against Ohio and NDSU.

Air Force held the Cowboys to 216 total yards in a 23-3 win.

There are reports that have the natives getting a little restless in Laramie.

Joe Glenn is Mr. Personality as a coach. He is likable and a really nice guy.

In Wyoming, where ranching is a way of life, Glenn is the epitome of the cliché, "Big Hat No Cattle".

He just doesn't have the horses to run with the big studs of the MWC.

In the last five seasons, here is what Wyoming has done. They started 4-8 under Glenn. They went 7-5 the following year. In 2005 they finished with a 4-7 record. The 2006 season was a push with a 6-6 mark and last year, 2007, the Cowboys finished with a 5-7 record.

We like Joe Glenn, but not here. We call it BYU 41 Wyoming 10.

MILLION DOLLAR MATCHUPS

It is still 9 weeks away, and currently undefeated TCU and Air Force still stand in the paths of both the Cougars and Utes, but if the stars align, and no major injuries occur, BYU and Utah could be playing for \$9 million when they face off in Salt Lake City on Nov. 22.

That game could be for a BCS discount bid.

We say discount because all BCS bids are not created equal.

Champions from the six major BCS conferences each get \$17 million for appearing in a BCS bowl game.

The other six non-BCS conferences eligible for a BCS bid, if they meet the criteria for an invite, only earn \$9 million.

It could be worse. If Notre Dame makes a BCS game, they only get paid \$4.5 million. Of course, they don't have to share with any other schools.

All BCS bids are not created equal. That is because of the golden rule. Those who have the gold, make the rules and will keep most of the money for themselves.

For example, in theory, it could be possible for both BYU and Utah to finish the year both qualifying for a BCS bid, but we can guarantee that only one non-BCS team will be invited to the party.

In theory, the winner of the BYU-Utah match up could automatically qualify for a bid and the other team could qualify for selection as an at large team.

Don't bet on it. BCS big boys are not going to let millions of dollars slip through their fingers and invite a qualified non-BCS at large team, no matter how good they are.

All champions of the Big East, Big 12, SEC, ACC, Pac 10 and Big 10 get automatic invites.

Here are the criteria for all other non BCS schools to earn a piece of the action.

The champion of Conference USA, the Mid-American Conference, the Mountain West Conference, the Sun Belt Conference or the Western Athletic Conference will earn an automatic berth in a BCS bowl game if either:

A. Such team is ranked in the top 12 of the final BCS Standings, or,

B. Such team is ranked in the top 16 of the final BCS Standings and its ranking in the final BCS Standings is higher than that of a champion of a conference that has an annual automatic berth in one of the BCS bowls.

No more than one such team from Conference USA, the Mid-American Conference, the Mountain West Conference, the Sun Belt Conference, and the Western Athletic Conference shall earn an automatic berth in any year. If two or more teams from those conferences satisfy the provisions for an automatic berth, then the team with the highest finish in the final BCS Standings will receive the automatic berth, and the remaining team or teams will be in the pool of teams eligible for selection by the bowls as at-large teams.

Trust us, Las Vegas doesn't give away money and the BCS boys are not going to give their money away either to a non-BCS at-large qualifier.

MINOR MATCH UP

Sticking with the BYU-Utah match up down the road, there are some intriguing head-to-head meetings on the horizon.

Max Hall versus Brian Johnson will be the marquee match up. Harvey Unga against the Utah tandem of tailbacks, Matt Asiata and Darrell Mack will be interesting to watch.

But, in our opinion, the key match up that will have a huge impact on the outcome of the game will be between BYU freshman offensive left tackle Matt Reynolds and Utah's sophomore right defensive end Paul Kruger. If Reynolds can keep Kruger out of Hall's face, BYU chances of winning go up dramatically.

Both Reynolds and Kruger are big-time talents.

In case you haven't been watching Reynolds, put your glasses on him this week.

He has what NFL scouts and personnel directors are looking for. He has size. He has great feet and

he also has long arms. that can lock on to defensive linemen and keep they away from Max Hall.

There are some NFL potential draft picks on this current BYU offensive group, but we will make our prediction here and now.

None of the current roster of BYU offensive players will be drafted as high in the NFL draft as Reynolds will be when he finally comes out and declares for the draft.

Matt Money is the real deal and has NFL written all over him.

NAMES AND GAMES

Redshirt Roster...We know that Bronco Mendenhall has said that he won't make any decisions on whom he will redshirt until after the season, but his actions say something different.

We haven't looked at every play, but we do notice that Bernard Afutiti and Jessee Tafui are not seeing any playing time on the field.

Both are big time talents and both are juco transfers. With BYU losing four of their five starting offensive linemen to graduation after this season, Tafui is talented enough to help fill the void next year. Afutiti was a playmaking monster in fall camp.

Freshmen Faces...Here are some other players that won't be redshirting this year. These true freshmen were playing in high school a year ago. They all made the official stat sheets for BYU in the Cougars' first three games.

They include Iona Pritchard, lb and fb; Shiloah Te'o, db; Daniel Sorensen, lb; Justin Sorensen, K; Michael Alisa, lb; Spencer Hadley, lb; O'Neill Chambers, wr and kr.

Faces in the Crowd...There were more than a few interesting faces in the crowd at last week's UCLA game. Here's a list of a few of those faces.

Tyler Haws...6-5, Lone Peak HS. Still BYU's top priority basketball recruit for this season. Will make a choice between BYU and Stanford and sign early in November. We like BYU and Dave Rose's chances.

Brandon Davies...6-8, Provo HS. Behind Haws, is next in line on BYU's basketball recruiting list.

Jake Heaps...6-1, qb, Skyline HS, Sammamish, WA...Will be the No. 1 high school qb recruit in the nation a year from now. BYU is all over him.

Anthony Heimuli...5-11 running back, Mountain View HS, Orem, UT. Committed to BYU. He rushed for 221 yards on 31 carries last Friday in a win over Payson. He missed two games with a leg injury before returning for a big output against the Lions.

Adam Timo...6-1, running back from Snow Canyon HS in St. George. Don't know if he made it up for the game, but he is off and running for big yardage in this his senior season. He isn't surrounded by much help on his team, but Timo has rushed for over 700 yards in four games. His team is 0-4 on they year. We are hearing that Timo, who committed to BYU as a sophomore, is still getting recruiting interest from some Pac 10 schools. They are telling him that he can not only play football for them, but also participate in track. He holds the current Utah state high jump record with a leap over 7 feet.

TELEVISION TIMETABLE

BYU vs. Wyoming

Saturday, Sep 20 at Provo

Kickoff: 1:00 PM Mountain Time

TV: Mtn

BYU vs. Utah State

Friday, Oct 3 at Logan

Kickoff: 6:00 pm Mountain Time(tentative)

TV: KJZZ (tentative)

BYU vs. New Mexico

Saturday, Oct 11 at Provo

Kickoff: 4:00 PM Mountain Time

TV: Mtn

BYU vs. TCU

Thursday, Oct 16 at Fort Worth

Kickoff: 6:00 pm Mountain Time

TV: Versus