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Oregon State's 42-24 Win over BYU is Classic Case of Déjà Vu and Potential Déjà Sue

It has been a while since I have seen a piece of passing poetry delivered in LaVell Edwards Stadium. As Yogi Berra said, it was Déjà vu all over again last Saturday afternoon in Provo.

Unfortunately, it was Oregon State, not BYU, delivering the iambic pentameter passing clinic while BYU's defense was simply the verse and victim.

Seeing a team in LaVell Edwards Stadium getting sliced and diced by a prolific passing game was a Déjà vu moment. Too bad BYU was the dicee and not the dicer in this 42-24 Beaver beat down of the Cougars.

I'm not an attorney, but I also recognize a Déjà sue copyright infringement case for the Cougars when I see one.

A prolific downfield passing game, accentuated by a decent running game, was originally patented by BYU.

It is one thing to take a loss to a very good Oregon State football team, but it is downright demoralizing to get beat by an offensive scheme that you patented and perfected years ago.

Alimony

I am not divorced, but after seeing Oregon State take the best years of BYU football and pass it, literally, before my eyes, I now have a better appreciation for what paying alimony must feel like. It can't be pleasant.

Neither was BYU's loss to a top ten ranked Oregon State team.

The Cougars are now 4-3 on the year and doomed to be domed by Notre Dame this coming Saturday in South Bend.

The game will be televised nationally on NBC and provide some great exposure for BYU. You know all about exposure don't you?

That is what happened to the previously touted and vaunted BYU defense when the Oregon State passing attack exposed them as not quite ready for prime time.

There will be many who want to keep their heads held high and point to BYU winning the statistical battle between the teams.

The Cougars had more first downs. They had plenty of passing yardage and almost equaled OSU's production in the air. Jamaal Williams and Cody Hoffman were both spectacular against a pretty good Beaver defense.

Riley Nelson played his heart out, especially considering his comeback from back injuries. He also broke the hearts and backs of any potential BYU win with three turnovers and two more questionable option pitches that should have been turnovers.

Second Best

Let's be frank. At quarterback, the best of BYU (Nelson) wasn't better than the second best of Oregon State (OSU backup Cody Vaz).

It's just my opinion, but one I have observed and held for 30 years. When it comes to BYU football, it is always about the BYU quarterback and the passing game.

BYU has a passing game this year. It just isn't the patented and prolific one they used to have. Oregon State made that painfully clear.

If it was clear to me, it certainly will be clear to Cougar coaches as they watch film. Who knows? Maybe this Oregon State loss can somehow become a moral victory if it gives

BYU football a déjà vu view into its offensive past and incentive to get back to that style of offense in the immediate future.

Déjà vu for BYU is a drop back pocket passer and a downfield passing game. This spring BYU may want to visit with Oregon State coaches and get a refresher course on what made BYU great offensively in the past and what is making the Beavers great offensively this year.

Or, to save air fare and expenses, they can just spend time watching old BYU films.

TOO MANY TURNOVERS

If you have a checking account, you know the basics. You can't write checks if there is a negative balance in your account.

It's the same with football. You very seldom win football games with a negative balance in the turnover department.

In the three games in which BYU has lost this season, they were definitely overdrawn in that category.

BYU turned the ball over 10 times in the losses to Utah, Boise State and Oregon State. The Utes, Broncos and Beavers, had zero turnovers in those games.

Here's the breakdown. BYU had 2 turnovers against Utah. They had 5 against Boise State and 3 against OSU.

There are plenty of excuses for an overdrawn checking account. They include: bad bookkeeping, bad job, bad postal service etc.

The bottom line, however, is that for whatever reason, there is not enough money in the account.

With BYU's three current losses, there are also plenty of excuses. They include: quarterback injury, bad bounces, bad calls, good opponents etc.

Bottom Line

The bottom line, however, is regardless of the reasons and excuses there were too many turnovers by BYU in those games.

Of the 10 turnovers committed in the three losses, 7 were made by Riley Nelson.

He is the quarterback that played almost all the minutes in the three losses. He is the guy that made the most turnovers in those games.

You can make a case that it is unfair to judge Nelson negatively in those losses because they came at the hands of the three good teams. You can't equivocate, however, on the fact that turnovers committed by Nelson cost BYU three wins.

Again, like an overdrawn checking account, there are plenty of good excuses to go around, but banking is a bottom line business and so is football.

Here is the bottom line on Nelson's passing stats this year. The good news is that he has thrown 6 touchdown passes. The bad news is that he has thrown 8 interceptions, 7 of which came in the 3 Cougar losses this year.

I am sure there are plenty of valid excuses, but football, like banking is a bottom line business. You can't write checks with insufficient funds. You can't win games by throwing more interceptions than touchdowns.

Notre Dame

BYU has 5 regular season games remaining, beginning with Notre Dame on Saturday.

The Cougars are not changing quarterbacks. They just need Nelson to be more prudent and fiscally sound on the field.

If there isn't enough money in the bank, you don't write the check. If there isn't a receiver open, you don't throw the ball.

Nelson will have some much needed overdraft protection in three of the remaining five games. It will come from a spanked and scolded defense that wants to redeem itself. They have an excellent chance of doing that against Idaho, San Jose State and New Mexico State.

Covering Cougar checks against Notre Dame and Georgia Tech may be more difficult by the BYU defense, but is doable. But only if the BYU offense in general and Nelson in particular quits writing bad checks and throwing bad interceptions.

Looks Like the Check Written in August will Finally be Covered and Cashed

I was hoping the checks I wrote in August would eventually bounce. Unfortunately, it looks like at least one is a lock to clear the bank.

Here are the first three paragraphs I wrote in early August with the first *Cougar Sportsline* issue of this publishing year.

*If you are reading this newsletter, the demographics of **Cougar Sportsline** indicate that the chances are about 95 percent that you are a BYU football fan, will vote for Mitt Romney and know who Jabari Parker is.*

Brace yourself. You aren't going to like November.

Come November, BYU should already have at least 4 losses and be out of any BCS consideration. Mitt Romney won't be President of the United States and Jabari Parker won't be signing with BYU.

As many subscribers told me in August, that was the nadir of negativity.

Barring some sort of miracle at Notre Dame, I don't see any way of apologizing for the four loss statement.

This year is a done deal. BYU will win either 7 or 8 games and play in the Poinsettia Bowl in December against San Diego State. That scenario is contingent upon the Aztecs winning at least two of their remaining five games.

I do think that the Mitt Romney and Jabari Parker scenarios have significantly changed since August. Consequently, I do apologize for any angst or anger my comments may have caused.

To make it up to subscribers, I am now going to transition from the nadir of negativity to the epitome of euphoria when it comes to BYU football...for next season.

While the schedule for next season will potentially be brutal with games against Texas, Wisconsin, Utah, Notre Dame, Utah State, Boise State, Washington State and Houston, the outlook for BYU for next year actually is pretty optimistic.

Epitome of Euphoria

Let's start offensively. Every offensive skill player, with the exception of Riley Nelson, returns.

Taysom Hill is back. He, in my opinion, can throw the ball downfield if offensive coaches allow it. Jamaal Williams is the perfect back for a downfield passing game. He can not only run, but if you get him the ball in the passing game out in space, he is dynamite.

Cody Hoffman has made rumblings about leaving early for the NFL. When he gets his assessment from scouts and NFL teams, he will find that they don't think he has the speed needed to be an outside receiver in that league. I look for him to come back and continue to be BYU's best wide out.

All tight ends will be back. After three years, BYU should be able to find a competent one from the big group returning.

The offensive line will be the key component. If they can protect Hill and give him time to throw the ball downfield, BYU is back in business. When Hill doesn't have time and is forced to scramble and make a play, he is at his best.

Ditched to DI

He is also pretty good on the quarterback draw and option pitch, but look for those plays to be ditched or donated to Deseret Industries for next season.

Defensively, the big dilemma was going to be the defensive line. That now doesn't look like a desperate situation. BYU has committed plenty of juco d-line help, but with the emergence of Bronson Kaufusi and now with the potential return of starters Ian Dulan and Eathyn Manumaleuna with medical hardship years, the d-line looks like it will be just fine.

There are plenty of good linebackers. Personally, I think Uani Unga and Manoa Pikula will be an upgrade from Ogletree and Kavienga.

Kyle Van Noy may leave early for the NFL, but Alani Fua and Spencer Hadley will both be back as outside linebackers.

Daniel Sorensen and Jordan Johnson both return in the defensive backfield. Craig Bills will take over for Joe Sampson. The only question will be at the one boundary corner spot. The Cougars already have a juco commit at corner in highly touted Davion Orphey from Santa Ana JC in California.

The kicking game is still a mystery that needs solved and so is the coaching staff. Bronco and his offensive coaches need to decide what the bread and butter is going to be for BYU.

We have seen enough of the option offense. It works with great athletic quarterbacks, but in Bronco's words, is not sustainable due to injuries to those option quarterbacks.

You may not have like what you saw from Oregon State because they were shredding the Cougar defense, but you will like it when you see that offense return to BYU next season.

WE TAKE GROTTA OVER GRIT

Notre Dame is a 14-point favorite over BYU in the match up of the two schools in South Bend this Saturday.

The game will be televised nationally by NBC with kickoff set for 1:30 Mountain Time.

Both teams have good defenses, despite the poor passing showing for BYU last week against Oregon State.

Both teams have decent, but not great offenses and both have quarterback issues. The Irish have injury issues at that position and BYU has turnover issues at the same spot.

Notre Dame's defensive line is outstanding. BYU's offensive line is still suspect.

The best Mormon linebacker in the nation will be playing in this game. Manti Teo is now a national story line.

There is a very good reason why the Irish are picked as a two touchdown favorite in this game. No opposing offense has scored a touchdown against Notre Dame since September. That doesn't bode well for BYU's enigmatic offense.

I can't find any reason at all to like the Cougars here, but I do. Notre Dame has a grotto. BYU has grit and maybe I've had too much grog. I call BYU to cover the spread.

I just don't call them to win the game.

Notre Dame 17 BYU 10.

BYU BANKING ON BETTER SHOOTING FOR SUCCESS

Dave Rose unveiled his 2012-13 BYU basketball team last week.

Official practices started last Friday. Cougar fans can get a first look at this squad on Wednesday, Oct 24 with the annual Cougar Tip Off exhibition set for the Marriott Center.

Rose will try and make the Cougars even more competitive than they were last season with improved outside shooting.

More specifically, he has said that he thinks this team will be able to be more consistent from the perimeter.

The Cougars relied on the inside play of Brandon Davies and Noah Hartsock last season to win games.

Davies is back, but if Rose can complement him with an outside game, this could be a good team.

The return of Tyler Haws from his LDS mission and the addition of Raul Delgado, a combo guard from Western Nebraska, are the two guys Rose is counting on to provide the improvement from beyond the arc.

The Cougars already have injury issues. It was announced a few weeks back that Chris Collinsworth's career in basketball is over due to ankle surgery.

Rose also mentioned in his press briefing last week that Stephan Rogers has not responded from his knee issues from last season. There is a chance that he will not play at all this season or if he does, it could be limited action because of the constant swelling of the knee after going hard on the court.

Delgado is coming off a dislocated shooting elbow suffered this summer when he was home in Mexico and playing pickup basketball. The early word is that he will be ready to go by the start of the season. He is already back working out and practicing with the team.

If Rose is correct about improved outside shooting, then keep an eye on the minutes played stat. Last year the guard minutes were divided between Matt Carlino, Brock Zylstra, Anson Winder and Craig Cusick.

None of that quartet was a great outside shooter. They had a nice outing one night, but overall, they were subpar shooters. Rose is banking on Haws, Delgado and incoming freshman Cory Calvert to pick up the slack from outside and pick up the minutes from those four players.

It should be an interesting year. While BYU was spotty offensively last year, they have always been consistent in the win column due to the consistent coaching of Dave Rose. We expect more of the same from him this season.

Women Continue Winning Ways

The nationally ranked BYU women's volleyball and soccer teams continued their hot streaks last week.

The No. 5 ranked soccer team defeated San Francisco at home in Provo 3-1 on Thursday and followed up that win with a 2-1 road victory over Portland. Both teams are in the WCC. BYU is now 13-1-1 over all and 2-0-1 in league play.

Next of for the Lady Cougars in soccer are games against Gonzaga in Provo on Friday, Oct 19 at San Diego against the Lady Toreros on Thursday, Oct 25. The Gonzaga game will be televised live on BYUtv.

In volleyball, the No. 16 ranked Cougars defeated Portland and San Francisco last week to run their record to 18-1 over all and 6-1 in WCC play.

Next up for the Cougars will be a return match in Provo on Thursday against Saint Mary's, the only team to defeat BYU. The Lady Cougars will face Santa Clara on Saturday on the road.

Television Timetable

BYU vs. Notre Dame

Saturday, Oct 20 at South Bend

Kickoff: 1:30 Mountain Time

TV: NBC

BYU vs. Georgia Tech

Saturday, Oct 27 at Atlanta

Kickoff: TBA

TV: TBA

BYU vs. Idaho

Saturday, Nov 10 at Provo

Kickoff: TBA

TV: Most likely BYUtv