

HB Arnett's



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BYU loses 19-16

Please Pardon my Participation in the Ponzi Scheme called the BYU Offense

Big hat, no cattle.

That's the promise and premise of all Ponzi schemes. Bernie Madoff made his scheme work longer than most with slick bookkeeping and great public relations. Bronco Mendenhall has made his offensive Ponzi scheme work for almost two years now.

He has used coaching changes, mantras of "grit and determination and go fast, go hard" and fan gullibility, including mine, to keep this scheme and hopes of a return to BYU's offense of old alive.

But here's the problem with all Ponzi schemes: Big hat, no cattle. Eventually there is no production to back up the promised rate of return to glory days of offense for Cougar fans.

You don't have to be a forensic accountant, but just an ordinary football fan to see that BYU's offensive books didn't balance against Virginia.

Here is what was promised preseason by the BYU hype machine and me and what actually materialized against Virginia.

Ponzi vs. Production

We were promised that 10-11 offensive linemen would travel to Virginia and all would play. Cougar coaches could have traveled 20-25 linemen and it wouldn't have helped the awful offensive line performance shown at Virginia. BYU's most experienced returning linemen were exposed and embarrassed with constant speed rushes to the outside and overpowering bull rushes up the middle.

We were promised that Taysom Hill is the most athletic quarterback to ever play the position at BYU. That turned out to be just 80% true. He has two legs, one arm and a good head to live up to that billing, but his right arm let him and BYU's offense down.

No matter how you promote it or Ponzi it, 13 of 40 for 175 yards is not pretty. Those were the passing stats for Hill. The killer, of course, was the last throw of the game that was intercepted and led to Virginia's game winning touchdown. Accuracy in accounting is usually the down fall of all Ponzi schemes and lack of accuracy in passing the football will lead to the same results in BYU's offense.

Offensive coaches told us all spring and preseason that Taysom Hill was accurate enough. His passing stats were a definite throw back to the past when it comes to BYU quarterbacks. We aren't talking about McMahon, Young, Detmer or Wilson. Hill looked more like Steve Lindsley and Bob Jensen in his first outing of this season.

Speaking of that ill advised late throw, when BYU appeared to be in control of the game, offensive coordinator Robert Anae took total blame for the play call.

Assessing Blame

No word yet on assessing blame for some of the other bizarre BYU play calling throughout the contest.

We were told that Anae was the answer. Based on his first game back at BYU and the offensive performance turned in against Virginia, Bronco probably should start asking different questions about his offense.

We were told the kicking game was solved. Yes, there was a successful field goal against UVA, but it is now going on almost three seasons since I can remember seeing a ball kicked into the end zone on a kickoff by BYU.

We were all abuzz when word leaked out from fall camp that NFL scouts were paying attention to walk on receivers. We were led to believe that this would be a renaissance year for guys like Ross Apo. We thought dunking a basketball would translate to the football field and making spectacular catches.

Yes, Cody Hoffman did not play because of a hamstring injury, but walk on receivers are the key words here. BYU is playing with too many of them.

When it came to special teams and snapping the ball, those also are apparently works in progress. Putting the ball on the ground while snapping it to Taysom Hill cost the Cougars a safety. Having a punt blocked is faulty special teams play. Those two flubs alone cost the Cougars 9 points and the game. Throw in another 7 points lost on the final Cougar turnover of the contest on the Hill interception, and this game was gift wrapped for the Cavaliers.

Grin and Bear It

Most BYU football fans had to grin and bear this unfortunate defeat which was snatched from the jaws of victory. There were, however, probably others who just were grinning from ear to ear.

This is only my assumption, but smirks and smiles were probably all over the faces of Riley Nelson and Brandon Doman and the rest of the dismissed offensive staff from last season.

BYU did prove that the go fast, go hard offensive attack would produce more plays. The Cougars ran 93 against Virginia. Take away three of those plays, the blocked punt, the skidded snap that led to a safety and Hill's lone interception, and BYU comes away a winner.

Back to Ponzi schemes. Before new money covering old money eventually runs out of steam, most schemes have their blue chip moments. They occasionally make a winning trade or transaction during the process. They just don't make enough to keep the scheme afloat.

Jamaal Williams was BYU's blue chip performer against Virginia. All the sophomore did was carry the ball 33 times for 144 yards rushing. He also had 2 catches for 25 yards. Add that up and you get 169 yards of total offense for Williams. He was the only consistent offensive performer on the field for the Cougars.

Will Depend on Defense

While Williams was carrying the offense, the Virginia debacle shows that the BYU defense will have to carry the team again this season.

It remains to be seen just how good the Virginia offense was or will be. My opinion is that they were mediocre at best. Even with that assessment, holding the Cavaliers to just 223 yards of total offense was a spectacular show put on by the Cougar defense. Of UVA's 19 points, 16 were gifted wrapped for them by Cougar offensive and special team mistakes.

Even the BYU defense can only cover so much for the rest of the team's performances. But make no mistake. Bronco Mendenhall may be clueless when it comes to game management and offense and solving the glaring issues on that side of the ball, but he does know defense and delivers consistently in that area of the game.

Is Texas Strike Two?

BYU looked bad offensively on its first swing of the season last week against Virginia.

They were off balance, out in front, and out of sync. Despite my Ponzi pontifications about the Cougars above, I will wait to see how the Cougars do on their next two swings of the season before actually turning myself in to the proper authorities for being too Pollyannaish in the preseason on the BYU offense.

While BYU returned to Provo last Saturday night in a body bag, we just don't have enough body of work on the Cougars, Virginia or Texas to know what kind of teams all three really are.

This week should be telling. Virginia gets Oregon at home and while Texas is coming off a 56-7 mauling of New Mexico State in Austin, that means nothing. Did I mention it was New Mexico State?

So here's the deal. This game for BYU is simple. Texas will have a much better front seven defensive than Virginia did.

They will game plan and take away Jamaal Williams. There will be no 100-yard plus rusher for BYU against the Horns.

Texas' defensive game plan will be to make Taysom Hill beat them with his arm. Based on Hill's outing last week, that seems like a sound and safe plan.

Offensively, the Longhorns racked up 711 total yards of offense last week against New Mexico State. David Ash, the UT qb, passed for 343 yards and had 4 touchdown passes against the Aggies. Averaging 8.5 yards per carry, Texas rushed for 359 yards against NMSU.

Borrowing similar words from former Texas Senator Lloyd Bentsen in a debate with Dan Quayle some years ago, "I know BYU's defense and New Mexico State, you are not in the same league."

Texas has athletes and they will move the ball, they just won't put up the points like they did last week.

This game will rest on a must-be-improved BYU offense. The Cougars have to be more productive than they were last week.

Taysom Hill must be more accurate and must be protected by the offensive line for that to happen.

Here's the irony of last week. As bad as the offensive line played, Jamaal Williams did rush for a buck 44 on the ground.

Hill will have to complete at least half of his throws this Saturday for BYU to have a chance.

Defensively, we expect the Cougar defense to put up a big fight against the Longhorns. We don't expect Texas to have the kind of big play day they had last week against the Aggies of Las Cruces.

All four of David Ash's four touchdown passes were big yardage throws. He had td passes of 54, 64 and 74 yards. His last td pass was for 25 yards. Ash also ran one in from 55 yards out. Those kind of over the top scores shouldn't happen against the Cougar defense.

Make no mistake, BYU's secondary and pass rush will be tested by Texas, but we expect them to hold up. Now if the BYU offense can finally hold their own, this will be a game.

Again, with two strikes left in the early season at bat for BYU, my Ponzi-Pollyanna pick for Saturday is BYU 24 Texas 21.

Las Vegas odds makers have Texas as an early 6.5 point favorite on the road.

BYU's Top Ten Toughest Teams to Beat this Season

1. Virginia...As mediocre as Virginia appears to be, they were too tough for BYU to beat. I don't expect the Cavaliers to stay in this spot for long.
2. Utah State...This game will be extra tough in Logan. Chuckie Keeton is the bad news. He is also the good news. Keeton is the real deal, but this year he doesn't have any NFL caliber running backs to take the load off him. The Aggies lost a game they should have won except for some great game management by Kyle Whittingham. They face Air Force this week in Colorado and should be 1-1.
3. Wisconsin...Still too early to tell on the Badgers, but they are guaranteed to be tough at home. Badgers drilled an overmatched UMass 45-0 last week. They get another gimme with Tennessee Tech in Madison this Saturday.

4. Notre Dame...Beat Temple in South Bend 28-6. The key is South Bend. Irish are extremely tough to beat at home. They travel to Ann Arbor for a showdown with Michigan this week.

5. Texas...This will be a game. BYU has the same home field advantage as teams like Notre Dame and Wisconsin do. Even with a sub par offense, BYU's defense gives the Cougars a chance.

6. Utah...The Utes will be 3-0 coming to Provo. They beat Utah State and will beat Weber State and Oregon State in Salt Lake. BYU gets a bye before facing Utah.

7. Boise State...The bubble sprung a leak last week in Seattle. The Huskies pounded the Broncos 38-6. BSU gets a feel good game this week in Boise against Tennessee-Martin.

8. Nevada...BYU will struggle all season long on the road. This game is at Reno. Last week the Wolf Pack lost on the road at UCLA 58-20. UC Davis will make them feel better this Saturday in Reno.

9. Georgia Tech...Home sweet home. BYU will be hard to beat in Provo. GT is coming off a 70-0 thumping of Elon. Next up for the Yellow Jackets is a trip to Duke.

10. Middle Tennessee...The Blue Raiders are a better football team than most think. They whipped Western Carolina 45-24 last week, but now go to Chapel Hill to face North Carolina on Saturday.

Others receiving votes...Houston...They beat Southern 62-13 last week and travel to Philadelphia for a tougher test against Temple this week...Idaho State...The Bengals open this week in Pocatello against Dixie State and then get Western State the following week at home. It gets real in week three at Seattle against the Huskies of Washington.

NFL Rosters

NFL teams pared their rosters to 53 players last Saturday. Here is the list of former BYU football players that stuck.

John Denney, Deep Snapper, Miami. Now in his 9th season and signed a three-year extension for \$1.2 million per year last month.

Dennis Pitta, Tight End, Baltimore. He made the 53-man roster because there are expectations that he will be back and playing before the end of the season. Here is a very nice story describing Pitta's status and just how excruciating painful experience. [Click Here](#). Pitta will likely be put on the injured reserve list soon.

Hebron Fangupo, Nose Guard, Pittsburgh. Here is his bio from the Steelers' website.
PRO (1-0/0-0): Hebron Fangupo was claimed off waivers from the Seattle Seahawks on December 29, 2012...released by the Seahawks on December 28, 2012...added to the Seahawks' active roster on December 20, 2012...added to the Seahawks' practice squad on September 11, 2012...released by the Houston Texans on August 31, 2012...originally signed with the Texans as an undrafted rookie free agent on May 14, 2012.

Brett Keisel, DE, Pittsburgh. Now in his 12th year of NFL play

Matt Reynolds, OL, Kansas City. He was signed to the Chiefs practice squad

Bryan Kehl, LB, Washington.

Ziggy Ansah, DL, Detroit.

Harvey Unga, RB, Chicago. Signed again to the practice squad.

Television Timetable

BYU vs. Texas

Saturday, Sept 7 at Provo

Kickoff: 5:00 pm Mountain Time

TV: ESPN2

BYU vs. Utah

Saturday, Sept 21 at Provo

Kickoff: TBA

TV: TBA

BYU vs. Middle Tennessee

Friday, Sept 27 at Provo

Kickoff: 7:00 pm Mountain Time

TV: ESPNU

BYU vs. Utah State

Friday, Oct 4 at Logan

Kickoff: 6:00 pm Mountain Time

TV: CBS Sports Network

BYU vs. Georgia Tech

Saturday, Oct 12 at Provo

Kickoff: TBA

TV: TBA

Make Some BYU Mahogany Memories



FEATURES

- Solid Wood – walnut, cherry, maple and santos mahogany
- Handmade by craftsmen from heirloom quality hardwoods
 - Official Regulation Size
 - Laser Engraved Logos
- Includes decorative wood stand for table or desk display
 - Officially NCAA Licensed

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