

HB Arnett's



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Playground Payback?

BYU The Last Name Called, But Still Playing

For some of us when we were in grade school and junior high school, being the last player picked when choosing teams on the playground was always emotionally draining and emasculating to our youthful confidence and self-esteem.

I'm willing to bet that nobody on the current BYU basketball roster and coaching staff was ever the last guy to have their name called when choosing sides when they were young.

Now they know how the rest of us felt.

As to how we feel now after BYU was the last name to be announced during the NCAA Basketball Selection show, I think we can say that we all feel pretty darn good.

If there is any emasculating to be felt, we will leave that up to Ole Miss, Xavier, Baylor or Georgia State.

Those are the teams that BYU will have to eventually defeat if they hope to advance to the Sweet Sixteen.

Nursery and Naps

Unless you are one that is involved in the new LDS pilot program that features an 8-hour block of meetings on Sunday, you should already know that BYU will face Ole Miss Tuesday night in Dayton, Ohio. (Just kidding about the 8-hour block. That isn't happening. It's hard enough finding willing bodies to staff the nursery. It would be even harder to find willing bodies to serve as nap monitors for us old guys.)

Here's the travel itinerary for BYU this week. Dave Rose and his troops will trek to Dayton today (Monday). The Cougars will hopefully practice this afternoon and have a shoot around Tuesday before taking on the Rebels of Ole Miss later that night.

If BYU wins, they will leave immediately for Jacksonville and play Xavier on Thursday. A win Thursday will get the Cougars either Baylor or Georgia State on Saturday. A win there would put BYU in the Sweet Sixteen and earn them a trip to Los Angeles for the Western Regionals.

A win in LA next week on Thursday, most likely against Arizona or Ohio State, would land the Cougars in the Elite Eight, most likely against Wisconsin or North Carolina on Saturday.

A win on Saturday against either the Badgers or Tar Heels would force us 8-hour block guys to wake up from our naps and dreams of a Final Four appearance because BYU would finally make the Promised Land in Indianapolis.

Promised Land

Speaking of the Promised Land, BYU will need its own version of manna from heaven to make this happen. The Cougars will have to rain down threes on opponents for this to be a reality.

Tyler Haws and Kyle Collinsworth should both play their games. That means they will play well. You can bet, however, that they will be well scouted and well-guarded regardless which teams BYU faces.

Corbin Kaufusi has made dramatic strides late in the season, but BYU isn't beating anybody with their offensive or defensive post game. That leaves it up to Chase Fischer, Anson Winder and Skyler Halford to hit threes consistently for any of these deep-run-in-the-tournament-dreams to become a reality.

Unfortunately, reality runs both ways in these dreams. Anson Winder is still questionable with his knee. If he plays in this tournament, it will be extremely limited minutes. Skyler Halford should be ready to go, but the key cog in BYU's magic machination for a deep run is still Chase Fischer. How he shoots, so go the Cougars against good competition.

Based on the box scores of this season, the chances of Chase hitting 40 percent from beyond the arc in three straight games is not likely. If he can light it up in three games this week, BYU will be making their first Sweet Sixteen appearance since Jimmer was a senior.

We all would love BYU to advance in this tournament and avoid an early exit, but as in many years past, seeing is believe. If you want to see to believe, here is how you do it. The BYU-Ole Miss game will be televised live Thursday at 7:10 pm MDT on truTV. For those wondering how to get truTV, this might help. truTV on Direct TV is Channel 246. On Dish, it is Channel 242. Comcast in Utah is Channel 44. For truTV on other providers and in other areas [Click Here](#)

As long as you are Cougar Clicking, here are some other links to show BYU 's relief and elation at being selected and a quick response from Dave Rose on BYU's bid. [Click Here](#) to see BYU's celebration and [Click Here](#) to hear Dave Rose's comments.

Ole Miss is Formidable Foe

We can talk about Ole Miss and their 20-12 overall record and their 11-6 SEC record (11-7 if you count their first round loss to South Carolina in the SEC tournament). We can talk about their athletes and size. They have plenty of both.

But the main talking point that should concern BYU and Cougar faithful is this: Ole Miss took No. 1 and undefeated Kentucky to overtime in Lexington only to lose 89-86. Thought that might get your attention. It certainly has Dave Rose and his staff's attention.

As usual, the Rebels, like almost every other team that BYU has faced in NCAA post season play, will have better and more athletes than the Cougars will put on the floor. That's nothing new for BYU. If it was always about having the best pure athletes, BYU would not have won 25 games this season.

BYU finished the year winning 8 of their last games. They started that nice winning run when they started to rebound and play a little better defense. Those two items will also determine how far the Cougars advance.

Four-Way Tie

Ole Miss, at 20-12 and 11-7 finished in a four-way tie for third in the SEC at 11-7. Stefan Moody leads the Rebels in scoring at 16.3 points per game while Jarvis Summers (12.4) and Ladarius Summer (11.2) also average double figures. Sebastian Saiz leads the way in rebounding at 5.4 boards per game.

The key guy here is Moody. He is only 5-10 but extremely quick and can get to the basket whenever he wants. Think Evan Payne of LMU and Alec Wintering of Portland, only much better.

As mentioned earlier, BYU will have to compete on the boards against the Rebels. They also cannot afford a lackluster performance from beyond the arc. Shooting lights out from the three line will keep BYU from having their lights shot out in an early exit from the tournament.

BYU Women Earn NCAA Bid

The BYU Women's basketball team will learn today just who they will face in the opening round of the NCAA tournament.

The Lady Cougars are assured a spot in the tourney based on their exciting three-game run in last week's WCC tournament. Jeff Judkins and his team ran the table against WCC foes in Las Vegas by beating St. Mary's, Gonzaga and San Francisco to earn the league's automatic bid for post season play.

Lexi Eaton also earn the MVP trophy for her outstanding play. Included in that play was a clutch 8-foot jumper with 2 seconds remaining to secure the win against St. Mary's in the opening round of the tournament.

Gonzaga, the regular season champion, should also get an invite to the girl's dance.

Spring Football

Now that we know that Bronco Mendenhall is back in charge of the BYU defense, we know, based on his history, that this will be a very competitive unit. The BYU head man is keeping his personnel cards close to his vest this spring. All he will say when asked how the defense is coming along is that he is still looking for players that will play hard, be assignment sound and trustworthy.

Translated that means that this spring Bronco is still going through his guts, glory and grit drills to find players to fit his scheme and demands. That is good news, because this scenario has worked well for Bronco in the past.

Offensively, grit, glory and guts is firmly entrenched at quarterback with Taysom Hill in the picture. BYU is still extremely protective of him, but the man himself has said on numerous occasions that if there was a game this week, he could and would play.

Where the intrigue and potential excitement for this offense in the fall comes is at wide receiver and offensive line. If these groups are better than they were last season, BYU could make some offensive waves and noise...even against a grueling and daunting early season schedule against Nebraska, Michigan, UCLA and Missouri.

Based on the spring responses from Guy Holliday and Garret Tujague, they might be on to something here. [Click here](#) to hear Halliday and then [Click here](#) to hear what Tujague has to say.

The unknown receiver that Holliday refers to that may have some talent is Elliot Knox, a 6-3, 180 receiver out of Snow Canyon HS in St. George. He started his career at Dixie State, went on a mission and then tried to walk on at Arizona State. He is now in Provo and at least has caught the eye of Holliday.

Spring Sports

Baseball...BYU continues its winning ways at home by taking 2 of 3 games from Pepperdine over the weekend in Provo. The Cougars went with their ace, Kolton Mahoney, in the first fray, but he couldn't get out of the second inning. Mike Littlewood used four more pitchers but the Cougars lost 11-3.

They bounced back with a 5-3 win on Friday and a 6-5 extra inning win on Saturday. The Cougars are now 9-11 on the year after a brutal opening road schedule. More importantly, they are 2-1 in WCC play. The Waves of Pepperdine were last year's league champ and picked to finish second in the conference this season in preseason polls.

Next up for BYU will be Gonzaga for a three game series in Spokane.

Softball...The softball sisters are on a nice run. They took 4 of 5 games in a San Diego tournament last week. The only loss was by the score of 4-1 against No. 15 ranked Baylor. The wins were against Long Beach State, 2-1; San Diego State, 3-1; Western Carolina, 31; and UConn, 3-1.

Next up will be a three game series this weekend against Oklahoma State in the Lady Cougars' home opener this weekend in Provo. All three games will be televised live by BYUtv. The Cougars are currently 17-7 on the season.

Track...The NCAA Indoor Championships were held last weekend and BYU was represented well by Shea Martinez, the sophomore from Kaysville. She finished 7th overall in the 800 meters.

Jason Witt finished 4th in the 5000 meters. The Cougars' super star runner, Shaquille Walker, never made it out of the 800 meters heats when he stumbled at the end of his race.

Rugby...The Cougars solidified their No. 1 ranking with a 35-26 win over St. Mary's last Saturday in Provo. BYU is currently undefeated and this was their second victory over the Gaels. You can watch the match in its entirety by [clicking here](#).

TELEVISION TIMETABLE

BYU vs. Ole Miss

Tuesday, March 17 at Dayton9 at Las Vegas

Tipoff: 7:10 MDT

TV: Tru TV Direct TV Channel 246; Dish Channel 242; Comcast in Utah Channel 44

For Tru TV on other providers and in other areas [Click Here](#)

BYU vs. Oklahoma State (Softball)

Friday, March 20 at Provo

Doubleheader: First Pitches: 4:00 and 6:00 pm MDT

TV: BYUtv

BYU vs. Oklahoma State (Softball)

Saturday, March 21 at Provo

First Pitch: 1:00 pm MDT

TV: BYUtv

BYU vs. Gonzaga

Thursday, March 19 at Spokane

First Pitch: 7:00 pm MDT

TV: theW.tv (streaming)

BYU vs. Gonzaga

Friday, March 20 at Spokane

First Pitch: 7:00 pm MDT

TV: theW.tv (streaming)

BYU vs. Gonzaga

Saturday, March 21 at Spokane

First Pitch: 1:00 MDT

TV: theW.tv (streaming)