



801 372 - 0819

hbarnett@fiber.net

1391 West 800 South – Orem, Utah 84058

Vol. 36, Issue 7 – September 21, 2015

[Click Here To Order or Renew Your Subscriptions](#)

UCLA Beats BYU 24-23...Blame it on Two Plays

The Bruins of UCLA beat BYU Saturday night in the Rose Bowl 24-23. Most Cougar fans are pinning the loss on two particular plays. The Cougars had the ball in UCLA territory and both times were driving for a clinching touchdown in the fourth quarter.

Both times, on second and third and long, BYU's offensive brain trust opted for a run up the gut instead of putting the ball in Tanner Mangum's hand and giving him a chance to make some magic happen. BYU settled for a field goal on the first and ended up throwing a game clinching interception on the last. Those were indeed game changing plays, but not the two plays to which I refer.

In my opinion, the two plays that cost BYU this game occurred on the second play from scrimmage in the second half at Nebraska. In case you forgot, that was when Travis Tuiloma suffered a knee injury that was projected to keep him out of action for 4 to 6 weeks. In my opinion, had Tuiloma been available, UCLA still would have rushed the ball for 200 yards against the Cougars, but they wouldn't have gashed BYU like they did on their last two scoring drives. The earliest we could see Tuiloma back, in my opinion, would be against East Carolina for homecoming on October 10.

The other play occurred in the third quarter on November 1, 2014 in Murfreesboro, TN against Middle Tennessee State. That is when Jamaal Williams ran a wheel route out of

the backfield and caught a clutch pass from Christian Stewart. Unfortunately, he also tore his knee and missed the rest of the season. He is also missing this year due to ramifications from that injury. BYU has been one running back short since that play occurred. It appeared that the missing running back needed would be supplied by Taysom Hill with his talented feet, but of course, there were two plays in the first and second half against Nebraska that removed him from the Cougar offensive picture.

Fickle

And finally, BYU also lost this game due to the very nature of college football. Since 1922, when BYU started playing football, the Cougars have had just 1 undefeated season. That was in 1984 when Robbie Bosco led BYU to a 12-0 record and a national championship.

Because of the fickleness of college football, I don't expect any major team in contention for the national title to get through the season without a loss. An undefeated football team at the FBS level is an anomaly, not the norm.

So let's talk about what the UCLA game showed us in terms of where BYU is currently as a program. Especially coming off three consecutive 8-5 seasons. Bronco Mendenhall has apparently fixed most of the flaws of those three ordinary years.

Quarterback...As long as Taysom Hill was healthy, BYU was very, very good at quarterback. With Tanner Mangum, BYU is still very, very good, barring an injury and the lure of an early entry into the NFL draft.

Running Backs...This year was almost a disaster until Adam Hine started running like Adam Timo did in high school. He ran for a buck 49 (149 yards) on 23 carries. Next to Mangum and Travis Tuiloma, in my book, Hine is currently the third most valuable player on this team. He will get some help shortly when Algie Brown and Francis Bernard are cleared to play due to current injuries. Watch for the true freshman Bernard to open some eyes. Those same eyes should be popping next season with the return of Jamaal Williams and Squally Canada to active status. You know about Williams. Canada has been a terror on the scout team while sitting out the mandatory transfer year from Washington State. Defensive back coach Nick Howell tweeted last week that Canada was better than any back the defense had faced against Nebraska or Boise State. Good thing that tweet didn't come after the UCLA game and the show put on by Paul Perkins. Just to throw a little gasoline on the future of running backs at BYU, there is a 50-50 chance that Charles West, the troubled, but talented high school running back out of Coppell, Texas could still show up on campus in January. We will see.

Offensive Line...Since the return of Robert Anae and the hire of Garrett Tujague BYU appears to have made great strides in improving the offensive line. They are tougher, meaner and playing well. They aren't perfect, but there has been a very noticeable improvement and the future looks bright. The only guy happier than me would be Tanner Mangum.

Wide Receivers... This is a good and functional group. I still stand by what I said preseason. There are no legit NFL prospects at receiver on this team. BYU has gone big and there are plenty of bigs in the pipeline. The best thing this group has going for them now is Mangum. He is finding the open guy and hitting them on time.

Defensive Backfield... In my opinion, this is the most improved group. They have no shut down super star, but they are playing well. When is the last time you heard that about BYU defensive backs? Kai Nacua is getting plenty of pub and making plays, but I think Michael Davis has improved enough to have played himself into a potential NFL draft pick. Give him another year and look for him to go in the late rounds of the 2017 draft. He has size and speed and now has shown that he can use those assets in making plays. For the first time in years, BYU appears to have a decent pipeline of talented db's just waiting their turns to play and produce beginning next season.

Linebackers... Harvey Langi had a break out game against UCLA. As soon as he can consistently wrap up and quit whiffing on tackles he looks like a super star in the making. BYU has outside talent in Fred Warner and Sione Takitaki. My pick for a guy to keep your eyes on for the future is Phillip Amone. All he does is make plays and tackles.

Defensive Line... BYU has had some good defensive linemen in the last 5 years, but most of the best of that group were accidents. Ziggy Ansah fell into BYU's lap. Same for Hebron Fangupo. They are the only BYU defensive linemen that are currently on NFL rosters. BYU's best success as come at nose guard with guys like Eathyn Manumaleuna and currently Travis Tuiloma. The bottom line on this group is that BYU appears to have seriously whiffed in recruiting to this position in the last several years. In my opinion, this is the chink in BYU's future national stage armor. There is a reason that Bronco has been using his "wildcat" blitzing scheme the last two games. Without Tuiloma, he doesn't have the personnel up front to hold up against good FBS teams. I believe the saying is "If you can't dazzle them with brilliance, baffle them with blitzes."

BYU a 4 Point Dog

Michigan Up Next...Big Game in Big House

I'm no football coach or TV analyst and I haven't stayed in a Holiday Inn recently, but I do have some ideas on how Michigan and Jim Harbaugh are going to play BYU when the Cougars make their first football appearance ever in Ann Arbor.

BYU is certainly no Bo-Diddley Tech when it comes to football, but expect Harbaugh to employ the Bo-Woodley Tech approach to beating BYU. I expect Michigan to close down their play book and keep only the pages written by Bo Schembechler and Woody Hayes.

In case you haven't studied those pages penned by the two legendary Big 10 coaches, it consists of three yards and a cloud of dust and controlling the line of scrimmage. That's where this game will be played.

Don't expect a lot of rushing success from BYU and do expect Michigan to be productive doing what they do best...run the ball. That means that BYU will have to do what they do best. Throw the ball.

Expect a smash-mouth approach from Michigan. Also expect Michigan to experience an open-mouthed bewilderment at how good Tanner Mangum and the BYU passing game really is.

Michigan will try to make this game a street fight with knives. As Harrison Ford showed as Indiana Jones in "Raiders of the Lost Ark", [a gun is not a bad option](#) in such a conflict.

As long as BYU has Tanner Mangum slinging bullets down field, BYU will always be in this knife fight. I call it BYU 31 Michigan 24.

BYU Football Loads up on Commitments Last Week

What was predicted last week came to fruition when Troy Warner, the younger brother of current Cougar Fred Warner, said he would sign with BYU and enroll in school in Provo in January. He was also joined in the BYU haul by Keaton Torre, a QB from Bingham HS and Max Tooley from Bountiful HS in Utah. Here is the latest list of current BYU football commits.

Max Tooley, DB/LB, 6-1, 195, Bountiful HS, UT
Troy Warner, DB/WR, 6-2, 185, Mission Hills HS, CA
Keaton Torre, QB, 6-3, 210, Bingham HS, UT
Britton Hogah, Deep Snapper, 6-3, 220, Olympus HS, UT
Keenan Pili, LB, 6-2, 200, Timpview HS, UT
Drew Jensen, DB, 6-2, 195, Brighton HS, UT
Hank Tuipulotu, TE, 6-3, 225, Nation Ford HS, NC
Wayne Kirby, DL, 6-3, 300, Highland HS, ID
Jonah Trinnaman, WR, 6-0, 185, Snow College
Darius McFarland, DL, 6-2, 250, Box Elder HS, UT
Freddy Livai, DL, 6-4, 250, A.B. Miller HS, CA
Atunaisa Mahe, DL, 6-1, 285, West Jordan HS, UT
Solofa Funa, DL, 6-2, 225, Spanish Fork HS, UT
Alea Hifo, DB, 5-9, 175, Heritage HS, CA
Jaren Hall, QB, 6-0, 180, Maple Mountain HS, UT
Skyler Southam, K, 6-1, 180, Wasatch HS, UT

Who's Good and Not Good

Getting Close to Finding out after Three Games

After three games this season, we are getting closer to finding out which teams on BYU's football schedule are good and which aren't.

Here's a quick look at BYU's 2015 football opponents and what they have done after three weeks.

Nebraska...1-2, lost to BYU 33-28 at home, beat South Alabama 48-9 at home and lost in overtime on the road to Miami 36-33.

Boise State...2-1, beat Washington 16-13 at home, lost to BYU 35-24 on the road and beat Idaho State at home 52-0.

UCLA...3-0, beat Virginia at home 34-16, beat UNLV on the road 37-3 and beat BYU 24-23 at home.

Michigan...2-1, lost to Utah on the road 24-17, beat Oregon State at home 35-7 and UNLV at home 28-7.

Connecticut...2-1, Beat Villanova at home 20-15, Beat Army at home 22-17 and lost on the road at Missouri 9-6.

East Carolina...1-2, Beat Towson State 28-20 at home, lost to Florida on the road 31-24, lost to Navy on the road 45-21.

Cincinnati...2-1, Beat Alabama A&M at home 52-10, lost to Temple at home, 34-26 and beat Miami (OH) 37-33 on the road.

Wagner...0-2, Lost on the road at Rice 56-16 and lost at home to Monmouth 31-16.

San Jose State...1-2, beat New Hampshire at home 43-13, lost at Air Force 37-16 and lost at Oregon State 35-21.

Missouri...3-0, Beat SE Missouri State at home 34-3, beat Arkansas State on the road 27-20, beat Connecticut at home 9-6.

Fresno State...1-2, beat Abilene Christian at home 34-13, lost on the road at Ole Miss 73-21 and lost at home to Utah 45-24

Utah State...1-2, beat Southern Utah at home 12-9, lost to Utah on the road 24-14 and on the road at Washington 31-17.

Television Timetable

BYU vs. Michigan (Football)

Saturday, September 26 at Ann ArborPasadena

Kickoff: 10:00 am MDT

TV: ABC

BYU vs Connecticut (Football)

Friday, October 2 at Provo

Kickoff: 8:15 MDT

TV: ESPN2

BYU vs. Loyola Marymount (Women's Volleyball)

Tuesday, September 29 at Provo

Start Time: 7:00 pm MDT

TV: ESPNU