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Jabari Parker Sweepstakes

This Coming Saturday is More Important than Last Saturday

BYU coaches and BYU fans pulled out all the stops last Saturday night in hopes of enticing Jabari Parker, the LDS basketball phenom to sign a letter of intent with BYU for next season.

Parker was making his official recruiting visit to BYU last weekend. It went well.

Parker had a good time. He looked amused and appreciative of the fan support and the tee shirts that were printed and worn to get his attention.

He hung out with current team members and even spent time with potential team members as evidenced by the Nick Emery instagram photo below.

It features from left to right, Dalton Nixon, T.J. Haws, Jabari Parker, Nick Emery and Eric Mika. Emery and Mika have both officially signed with BYU and Haws and Nixon,

both of whom will juniors this coming season, have verbally committed to play for the Cougars.



Getting acquainted with Dave Rose and his staff during Parker's visit was not difficult. Parker and Rose have a relationship that goes back a while.

Signing with BYU will not be about coaching and fan support. It will not be about academics and environment. While those are all important, the one key element that will put BYU over the top, in my opinion, has to do with players.

Parker and Players

Parker, and any top-ranked national recruit, wants to know with whom they will be playing. They also want to know if those players are any good and will give them a chance of playing college basketball at the highest level.

In case you forgot, Sonny Parker, Jabari's dad, has incessantly been telling any media outlet that will listen that his son's choice of college will be based on academics, coaching relationships, environment and a chance to win a national championship.

Again, I can't speak for Parker and I certainly can't speak for him when it comes to what he saw last Saturday night in the Marriott Center in context of BYU players that could help him win a national championship.

What I will speak to is what I saw on the court. Except for Tyler Haws, it is my opinion that there wasn't a player on the current BYU roster Saturday night that says national championship, let alone WCC championship.

Guys like Nate Austin, Ian Harward, Matt Carlino, Josh Sharp and Anson Winder try and play hard, but BYU is not going anywhere above ordinary with that group of players as a core.

Now Tyler Haws and Jabari Parker is another story, but Haws by himself, isn't going to sway Parker's decision.

Nice and Successful

That is why, again in my opinion, last Saturday's Parker visit was nice and successful in fulfilling the coaching, environment and academic requirements for Parker, but the player part of Parker's paradigm he is looking for at BYU isn't where it should be.

That is why this coming Saturday in Chicago is so important.

Parker knows and Dave Rose knows that other than Tyler Haws, the players that could really entice Parker to Provo are not even on the current Cougar roster.

The players Parker and his family will be eyeing when it comes to BYU will be those on the Lone Peak HS basketball roster who will be playing in the same gym as Parker's Simeon Career Academy team this Saturday in the Chicago Elite Classic.

Actually, it appears that Parker will not be playing and is still nursing his broken foot. That won't stop him from hanging out with the Lone Peak trio of BYU signees and commits.

Dave Rose made sure that Nick Emery, Eric Mika, T.J. Haws and Dalton Nixon of Orem HS, were all present and accounted for with Parker's visit in Provo.

I would also bet money that Rose showed plenty of tape to Parker that showed Kyle Collinsworth playing the point for BYU.

This Parker visit was not about watching the current BYU basketball team, with the exception of Tyler Haws. It was all about introducing T.J. Haws, Nick Emery and Eric Mika.

Lone Peak HS will open their season this Wednesday night at home against Brighton HS. They then will travel to Chicago for a Saturday afternoon matchup in the Chicago Elite Classic with Proviso East HS with the tip set for 1:30 pm Mountain Time.

Proviso East was the Illinois state championship runner-up last season, losing 48-50 to Simeon Career Academy and Parker in the title game.

Absent in Ames

Dave Rose won't be there for the game. He will be in Ames, Iowa with his Cougars facing Iowa State that afternoon.

While Rose won't be their physically, you can bet that his hopes for landing Parker will certainly be in Chicago. A good showing by the Lone Peak trio of Emery, Haws and Mika is essential for BYU's recruiting chances.

A good showing by Mika is especially important. It is no secret that the Cougars have no post presence for next year based on what is currently on the roster. Mika and Luke Worthington of Wisconsin, two recent signees, will be the post presence for the Cougars next year.

The Chicago Elite Classic will feature six games pitting Chicago prep basketball teams against teams from across the country. Simeon and Whitney Young are the two marquee Chicago squads in the field.

Last season, Lone Peak beat Whitney Young 72-67 in double overtime while playing in the prestigious Beach Ball Classic in South Carolina.

They did it without any post presence. Now they have Mika in the middle.

No TV

There is no television coverage planned for the games, but here is the official announcement for the CE Classic put out by the organizers of the event.

The inaugural Chicago Elite Classic, a six-game high school basketball event, is slated for Saturday, Dec. 1, at University of Illinois-Chicago Pavilion. Two of the city's most prolific high school basketball programs – Simeon and Whitney Young High School – have teamed up with the City of Chicago to host a showcase of the best basketball programs in the metropolitan Chicago area vs. top teams from California, Georgia, Maryland, Ohio and Utah. General Admission tickets are \$17.50 and are available at [Ticketmaster](#) (click for direct link), at UIC Pavilion Box Office and at all Villa locations. For Session One, floor seats are available for \$55; floor seats are not available for Session Two.

Chicago Elite Classic Schedule

Session One:

9 a.m. - Phillips vs. DeLaSalle (Ill.)

11 a.m. - Normal U-High vs. St. Vincent's-St. Mary's (Ohio)

12:45 p.m. - St. Joseph's vs. Mater Dei (Calif.)

2:30 p.m. - Proviso East vs. Lone Peak (Utah)

Session Two:

6:30 p.m. - Whitney Young vs. DeMatha (Md.)

8 p.m. - Simeon vs. Milton (Ga.)

“From Isaiah Thomas to Derrick Rose, when student athletes from around the country think of great high school basketball, they think of Chicago,” said Mayor Rahm Emanuel. “The Inaugural Chicago Elite Classic will show the commitment to High School basketball that unites our City and showcase the community and competitive spirit that makes Chicago’s student-athletes so successful.”

“We are thrilled to team up with Whitney Young and host some of the best teams in the country,” Simeon head coach Rob Smith said. “Chicago is undoubtedly a hotbed for the best basketball talent in the nation. Our goal is for the Chicago Elite Classic to provide our guests top-tier competition on the court and an entertaining experience off the court in our great city. Additionally, fans will be treated to intense and electrifying competition from the best teams in the land.”

“We are so thankful to our partner Simeon and especially to Mayor Rahm Emanuel and the City of Chicago for their support of the Chicago Elite Classic,” Whitney Young head coach Tyrone Slaughter said. “The community has rallied around our effort and it speaks volumes about the passion for high school basketball in the city. Combining the talent that Chicago produces year-in and year-out with the best of the best from across the country is sure to produce an entertaining basketball event for fans of all ages.”

Hee Haws! No Guffaws, But Great Play by Sophomore Sensation

I don’t know if Jabari Parker was paying attention (See article above). But I was and you can bet that Cal State Northridge coach Bobby Braswell also was engaged in what Tyler Haws was doing to his Matador team.

Braswell and his CSUN club came to Provo with a 6-0 record, with wins already against two WCC clubs, San Diego and Pepperdine.

What Haws did Saturday night in Provo was put BYU on his back and carry them to an 87-75 win.

He did it the old fashion way. He did it the way Jimmer Fredette used to do it by scoring 32 points and making big baskets when they were really needed.

He used an assortment of long range bombs, clutch baskets at the rim and his patented mid range jumper. He finished his night going 9-17 from the field, including 2-4 from beyond the arc. He also was 12-12 from the free throw line.

That’s the good news. The bad news is that by now, every opposing coach on BYU’s schedule this year is also paying attention to Haws.

They will start planning their defenses around him. That means he needs help and will need it soon from teammates if BYU is going to get wins and be a threat in WCC play beginning in January.

It looks like Rose has found a serviceable solution at the point guard position. He now starts Craig Cusick and brings Matt Carlino off the bench.

Despite being 0-for-eternity from beyond the arc, Carlino actually played one of his better games against CSUN. He is now 1-17 from three point land on the year.

That has to improve based on history. Last season Carlino finished the year shooting 41-124 from beyond the arc. That was a .331 shooting percentage. He currently is at just under 6 percent shooting from long range.

Next up for the Cougars will be Montana in Salt Lake City on Wednesday and then Iowa State on the road in Ames on Saturday afternoon.

The Grizzlies are currently 3-1 on the year defeating WCC member San Diego last Saturday in Missoula 67-66. They also have a road win over Idaho.

Iowa State is now 4-2 on the year with the two losses coming last week in the Global Sports Classic in Las Vegas. The Cyclones were beat by Cincinnati 78-70 and by UNLV 82-70.

UNC 2 BYU 1

Grit and Determination Actually Means Something in Women's Soccer

The BYU Women's soccer team bowed out of their hunt for a national championship last Friday night at South Field in a 2-1 double overtime loss to North Carolina.

They didn't do so gracefully...except in post game interviews. They did it with real grit and determination and were just one grain of grit away from moving on to the Final Four this coming weekend in San Diego.

Grit and determination has taken a beating lately when it comes to BYU athletics. Instead of a paradigm to rally around, it has become a parody that Cougar fans cite to express their concern for a football season that has gone south.

Grit made a comeback for BYU Friday night against the dynasty of North Carolina.

That is because there was real talent on the BYU women's soccer roster to back up that grit. That talent wasn't squandered on a "woulda, coulda, shoulda" season but was manifested magnificently by a 20-2-2 final record.

Grit without production has made Cougar fans a little leery for the future of football.

Grit, with real talent and real production on the pitch has many Cougar fans giddy for the continued success of Women's soccer in Provo.

Actually success in Provo is too provincial in describing what BYU women's athletics in general and BYU Women's soccer in particular have been able to do because of BYUtv.

What used to be a fan base just beyond family and friends, hasn't yet gone global, but it has made giant strides in attracting much deserved interest from many living outside the parameters of Provo.

That should continue to pay dividends in exposure and success in recruiting and maintaining the current ground swell of success in the soccer program.

In volleyball, the No. 12 seeded BYU Women's team will host first and second round matches in NCAA tournament action this Friday and Saturday in Provo.

BYU will meet New Mexico State on Friday and with a win over the Aggies, they would then face the winner of Arizona State/Oklahoma the following night.

The women finished their regular season as co-champions of the WCC (13-3) and with an overall record of 26-3.

In addition to BYU, five other teams from the West Coast Conference received NCAA invites in volleyball.

Here is a short clip from the WCC official announcement of the invites:

SAN BRUNO, Calif. -- Six West Coast Conference schools will represent the WCC in the 2012 NCAA Tournament, as announced Sunday by the NCAA on ESPNU. WCC co-champion BYU, Loyola Marymount, Pepperdine, Saint Mary's, WCC co-champ San Diego and Santa Clara will represent the league in the field of 64.

The conference's six bids is tied for the WCC's most ever, tying its previous record set back in 2003. The Big Ten Conference and the Pacific-12 Conference led all conferences with seven bids each. The WCC was next with six teams representing the league in the NCAA Tournament.

BYU, the WCC's automatic qualifier and co-champion of the conference, will host New Mexico State on Friday. The Cougars received the league's AQ by virtue of the conference's tiebreaker process, which was the number of sets won in the BYU-San Diego series. BYU received the NCAA's No. 12 seed and the winner of the Cougars-Aggies match will face the winner of Arizona State-Oklahoma. The Cougars finished the regular season with a 26-3 overall record and were 13-3 in WCC play.

ACCOUNTABILITY ISN'T A ONE-WAY STREET

Accountability Avenue isn't a one-way street. Traffic should be moving in both directions.

Bronco Mendenhall is the perfect traffic cop when it comes to accountability, as long as he has the whistle in his mouth. He holds players accountable when they violate team rules. Just ask Joe Sampson and Zac Stout.

He holds assistant coaches accountable when they aren't performing up to his standards. Just ask Jaime Hill.

He appears to still hold BYU football fans accountable for their lack of football knowledge and for booing him in his first game against Boston College eight years ago.

Make a mistake and you should be held accountable. Except if your name is Mendenhall and somebody else is blowing the whistle against you. Then accountability appears to be optional.

Mistakes have been made this season when it comes to quarterback play at BYU. Mistakes were made by Mendenhall.

He still appears to not accept accountability for those mistakes. Saying things like I would do it all the same way again, is not accountability. It appears to be more arrogance than accountability.

Okay, the "Beat up Bronco" moment has come and gone. He isn't going to acknowledge accountability for sub par quarterback play this year.

BYU fans won't be allowed to have their "I told you so" moment because it won't be acknowledged by Bronco.

But before we let the Beat up Bronco moment go entirely and move on to next season, we must acknowledge the crescendo of criticism for Mendenhall that was evident last Saturday in Las Cruces and accentuated by the play of James Lark.

The CofC (Crescendo of Criticism) for Mendenhall featured some fortissimo football turned in by James Lark. The senior back up to Riley Nelson completed 34-50 passes for 384 yards and six touchdowns. It was a display of Déjà vu BYU football. You remember those days when the ball came out on time and hit receivers on the numbers and in their hands, don't you?

Granted, it was performed on an off-Broadway stage against an awful and off-Broadway team in New Mexico State, but any way you cut it or stage it, a 50-14 win over NMSU was music to the ears and manna from heaven for the eyes of quarterback starved BYU football fans.

Lark was lent a helping hand by wide receiver Cody Hoffman. The junior wide out had five of the touchdown passes thrown by Lark and left the game with 12 catches for 182 yards.

With the win, BYU finishes the regular season with a 7-5 record and will now face San Diego State in the Poinsettia Bowl in San Diego on Dec. 20.

This season was a major disappointment, but it is over. Bronco is still going to be the football coach at BYU next season.

As long as he is the traffic cop with the whistle in his mouth on Accountability Avenue, it is going to be a one way street.

Like it or not, Beating up Bronco and going against his grain and the one-way flow of traffic isn't going to change. We might as well fall in line with his way of thinking and fall in line with the one way traffic flow.

It is his way or the highway and the sooner we get in line on that one way street, the happier we will be as BYU football fans.

Bronco isn't going to change. For those who want to foment the Beat Up Bronco theme, they will have plenty of help next season with Notre Dame, Texas, Wisconsin, Utah and Boise State all on the 2013 schedule.

The Beat up Bronco movement for this year is dead. May it rest in peace for another 9 months until we see who he anoints as his quarterback next fall.

Television Timetable

BYU vs. Creighton (women)

Wednesday, Nov 28 at Salt Lake City

Tipoff: 3:00 pm Mountain Time

TV: BYUtv

BYU vs. Montana

Wednesday, Nov 28 at Salt Lake City

Tipoff: 7:00 pm Mountain Time

TV: BYUtv

BYU vs. Iowa State

Saturday, Dec 1 at Ames, IA

Tipoff: Noon Mountain Time

TV: Cyclones.tv (on line pay per view)

BYU vs. Utah State (women)

Tuesday, Dec 4 at Provo

Tipoff: 7:00 pm Mountain Time

TV: BYUtv

BYU vs. Utah State

Wednesday, Dec 5 at Provo

Tipoff: 7:00 pm Mountain Time

TV: BYUtv

BYU vs. Utah

Saturday, Dec 8 at Provo

Tipoff: 7:00 pm Mountain Time

TV: BYUtv

BYU vs. Weber State

Saturday, Dec 15 at Ogden

Tipoff: 7:00 pm Mountain Time

TV: BYUtv

BYU vs. Eastern New Mexico

Tuesday, Dec 18 at Provo

Tipoff: 7:00 pm Mountain Time

TV: BYUtv

BYU vs. Baylor

Friday, Dec 21 at Waco

Tipoff: 7:00 pm Mountain Time

TV: ESPN2