

HB Arnett's



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First Time in First Place

BYU Beats Pepperdine and Santa Clara

With wins in Provo over Pepperdine and a very nice victory over Santa Clara on the road, BYU finds itself in sole possession of first place in West Coast Conference play.

The Cougars are 4-0 in league play.

They got that way with a 76-51 win over Pepperdine in Provo Thursday and a very good 82-64 win over Santa Clara on the road.

The common denominator in both wins was 24 points in each contest by Tyler Haws. The thing about Haws and his play is that you don't know he is scoring like he does, until you see the box score.

All he does is put up 20 plus a night and all we as fans do is take him for granted. It might be because he doesn't look like a typical college star nor play like one. He doesn't have to have the ball in his hands all the time to be good. While fans may take his stellar play for granted, Dave Rose certainly doesn't. How can he when in the first four league games, the sophomore is averaging 22.5 per contest?

With Brandon Davies currently on an offensive sabbatical, Haws' production is even more timely for the first place Cougars.

BYU is a much improved team than the one that floundered and faded against good competition earlier in the year.

The reason for the improvement is easy to spot. It is as easy as CZ. Carlino and Zylstra.

Matt Carlino has re-discovered his game and BYU wouldn't be 4-0 in WCC play without him. He is shooting the ball much better and running the team and distributing the ball effectively.

Brock Zylstra is now playing like a senior should be playing. He is knocking down big shots like a clutch player who has been through the battles for three years should.

He is the linchpin for BYU's future success. Haws will be Haws. Davies should be back from his trip abroad any game now and Carlino has shown that he can be a go to guy in getting the ball where and when it needs to be. He can also kill teams with his outside shot when they double down on Davies and gimmick defend Haws.

Those three are solid. Throw in Zylstra and his current shooting streak and this Cougar team can honestly compete for a WCC crown.

We'll see Wednesday if this theory holds water in the WCC chase for a crown. That's because Saint Mary's comes to Provo to face the Cougars in the Marriott Center.

They are still big, have the best guard in the league and are well coached. They are currently 13-4 overall and 2-1 in WCC play.

BYU Basketball Recruiting...Neiman Marcus, Target and LDS Distribution Center

It's no secret that when it comes to BYU basketball recruiting, most of Dave Rose's shopping is done at the LDS Distribution Center.

That is where you would expect to find good quality LDS products.

BYU tried shopping at Neiman Marcus this past year. That is where the big boys with the big wallets and big NCAA resumes shop. Rose and his staff window shopped for three years trying to find a way to purchase and persuade Jabari Parker to say yes to the Cougars.

BYU got to the checkout counter, but never got a chance to pay and play with Parker.

If it can't be found at the LDS Distribution Center, then BYU's shopping options are very limited.

Occasionally BYU will scour a store like middle tier store like Target for recruits and once in a while they will find a bargain basement player that turns out to be good. More often than not, those players are from the juco ranks and not prized or pursued by the big name schools.

Shopping Trip

This past Monday, Dave Rose made a shopping trip to Las Vegas and got to glance through the window at Neiman Marcus, but was more interested in what he saw at Target.

Findlay Prep is a private academy in Henderson that brings players from all over to play. Because they recruit, just like the other private academies across the country do, they are not eligible to play for a state championship in Nevada.

They have a boatload of top tier prospects that the big name schools are constantly shopping for.

Last Monday, they played a game against Bishop Gorman and beat the Gaels by 20 plus points.

Targeting at Target

Rose was literally targeting and taking a look at a 6-4 wing from BG. That would be Rashad Muhammad. He led all Bishop Gorman scorers with 22 points in the game.

Currently he has only one offer and it is from Utah State. Rose was sitting center court with Dave Rice and Ben Howland.

Howland was there to look at one of his commits from Findlay. Rice was there to watch two players he has offered from Bishop Gorman. Chris Jeter is a 6-8 wing and Stephen Zimmerman, 6-11 post player are both sophomores and are both on Rice's radar and wish list. He also is recruiting heavily a guard from Findlay.

While Rice is still looking at Muhammad, the younger brother of current UCLA freshman Shabazz Muhammad, he currently isn't high on the recruiting list for UNLV.

That is why BYU was there looking. The Cougars have a scholarship to give this coming April and they are out looking for the best available option.

Bishop Gorman has given BYU Jonathan Tavernari and Anson Winder, but if UNLV and Rice do want the younger Muhammad, BYU will be out of the picture.

In case you forgot, Dave Rice's brother, Grant Rice is the coach at Bishop Gorman.

Back Order at Distribution Center

Meanwhile, back at the LDS Distribution Center, the three Lone Peak LDS premium products (Nick Emery, Eric Mika and TJ Haws) are currently out of stock and on backorder. That's what happens when you have items that are in high demand not only by BYU but by non-member shoppers also.

Lone Peak left town again Saturday to face Wesleyan Christian Academy of North Carolina in the Brandon Jennings Invitational Showcase in Milwaukee.

They presented their product well with a 63-59 win over a very talented and athletic WCA team.

The Knights trailed for a very good portion of the game but did what they do best when the game was on the line. They defended well and made big baskets in critical situations.

The BYU bound troika tallied 18 points each in overcoming a 9-point first half deficit.

Football National Letter of Intent Day Just Three Weeks Away

It's that time of year when BYU football fans get excited about restocking the football cupboards.

Letter of intent day is set for Wednesday, February 6.

Listed below is the latest BYU list of current commits. Also included are random comments from me.

Francis Bernard, RB, 5-11, 215, Herriman HS, UT

Ma'ataua Brown, DL, 6-5, 340, Cerritos JC, CA

Michael Davis, WR, 6-2, 180, Glendale HS, CA
(BYU's best speed at WR since Todd Watkins)

Nathan DeBeikes, RB/LB, 6-2, 195, Thousand Oaks HS, CA
(Little fanfare, but big heart, should be a player)

Garrett England, DB, 6-3, 180, Skyline HS, UT

Rylee Gautavai, LB, 6-1, 205, Bountiful HS, UT

Billy Green, QB, 6-2, 200, Kings HS, WA

(Already enrolled in school. Will participate in spring drills)

Keegan Hicks, OL 6-2, 270, Bingham HS, UT

Brayden Kearsley, OL, 6-5, 295, Aloha HS, OR

(Now questionable...likely Oregon State but Robert Anae made a visit this past weekend)

Moroni Laulu-Pututau, WR/TE, 6-4, 190, Mountain Crest HS, UT

(Put 30-40 pounds on this guy and he could be the next great tight end. Lacks weight, but not athleticism.)

Dallin Leavitt, DB, 5-11, 200, Central Catholic HS, OR

Samuel Lee, CB, 6-0, 180, College of Canyons JC, CA

Inoke Lotulelei, WR, 5-9, 175, Cottonwood HS, UT

Claudell Louis, DL, 6-6, 270, College of Sequoias JC, CA

Kalolo Manumaleuna, LB/DL, 6-2, 250, Compton JC, Ca

Kaimana Nacua, QB/DB, 6-1, 195, Liberty HS, NV

Patrick Palau, RB/LB, 5-11, 240, East HS, UT

JonRyheem Peoples, DL, 6-6, 300, Rigby HS, ID

(Big fish in little Idaho pond, Has athletic tools, however)

Trajan Pili, LB, 6-1, 220, Centennial HS, NV

Jordan Preator, DB, 6-0, 180, Fremont HS, UT

Addison Pulsipher, DL/OL, Temecula Valley HS, CA

(Third and last of the Pulsipher brothers to play at BYU)

Johnny Ragin III, LB, 6-3, 215, Wilsonville HS, OR

(Still shopping around and taking trips to Iowa and California)

Tanner Shipley, WR, 6-2, 190, Wilsonville HS, OR

Thomas Shoaf, OL, 6-6, 260, Columbus North HS, IN

Talon Shumway, WR, 6-3, 190, Lone Peak HS, UT

(The best all around athlete with multiple talents in this class)

Merrill Taliauli, DL 6-2, 300, East HS, UT

Kuj Tapusoa, DB, 5-11, 195, Kahuku HS, HI

BYU Offers that Cougars are still trying to land

Zach Barnes, LB/DE, 6-3, 215, Grayson HS, GA (Visits campus next weekend)

Gaius Vaenuku, DL, 6-5, 280, Euless Trinity HS, TX (Visiting campus this weekend)

Other Offers and Long Shots

Lowell Lotulelei, DL, 6-2, 300, Bingham HS, UT

Siale Fakailoantonga, TE/LB, 6-4, 220, Cottonwood HS, UT...Originally committed to Utah, but now open to all comers

Nic Purcell, OL, 6-8, 300, Golden West JC, CA...LDS returned missionary originally from New Zealand. 26 years old, but has NCAA eligibility issue to be resolved because played two games on a "social club" team in NZ before coming to US and before serving a mission. Oregon is spearheading an appeal.

Auston Johnson, LB, 6-1, 245, El Camino JC, CA

Chongo Kandolo, OL, 6-4, 300, Fresno City JC, CA...Visited BYU on 12/7, Illinois on 11/7, visiting Tennessee this week and will visit Nebraska next weekend.

Bonus recruits...redshirt transfers and returning missionaries.

Transfers who redshirted

Michael Wadsworth, 6-1, 180, played in all 13 games for Hawaii in 2009 season as a freshman. Will be on scholarship this coming season. A returned missionary.

Drew Reilly, 6-3, 195 former starting safety from CSU and returned missionary...got a scholarship this month.

Missionaries that should be back for next season

Corey Edwards K

Jordan Black OL

Algernon Brown RB

AJ Moore RB

Toloa'I Ho Ching LB

Tuni Kanuch OL/DL

Bryan Sampson TE

Adam Pulsipher, TE

Brian Rawlinson OL

Aulelio Olomua LB (nephew of Robert Anae)

All Sports Standings

Thanks to a subscriber who keeps abreast of this topic and graciously sends us updates on the Learfield Sports Directors' Cup, here's where BYU currently is in the latest standings.

He also sends along his latest opinions and musings on BYU and the Directors' Cup. As they say on TV, his opinions do not necessarily represent the views of Cougar Sportsline, but they are pretty close.

BYU is 13th in America, just behind Texas, Washington, and Michigan State, and just ahead of Georgetown, Syracuse, and Texas A&M. BYU always does well in this broad ranking of athletic programs, but that's a little higher than normal, thanks to the girls' soccer and volleyball teams having better-than-average years.

Gee, I wonder if BYU's absence from a major conference has anything to do with not playing on Sunday, or religious affiliation, or opposition to gay marriage. Naw!

Other local schools: Utah State is 68th, and Southern Utah is 148th. The University of Utah is unranked. Shouldn't someone be talking about firing Chris Hill? The Pac-12 money is rolling in, but the school's athletic programs are awful. His job is safe precisely because The University of Utah hasn't taken a position on gay marriage, will play on Sunday, and has no religious affiliation.

Nobody will write that in the Utah media. But you should at least publicize these results, because this is what college athletics is all about.

To see the full standings, [click here](#).

Television Timetable

BYU vs. Saint Mary's

Wednesday, Jan 16 at Provo

Tipoff: 9:00 pm Mountain Time

TV: ESPNU

BYU vs. UC Irvine (Men's Volleyball)

Friday, Jan 18 at Provo

Start: 7:00 pm Mountain Time

TV: BYUtv

BYU vs. San Diego

Saturday, Jan 19 at Provo

Tipoff: 7:00 pm Mountain Time

TV: BYUtv

BYU vs. Gonzaga

Thursday, Jan 24 at Spokane

Tipoff: 9:00 pm Mountain Time

TV: ESPN2

BYU vs. Portland

Saturday, Jan 26 at Portland

Tipoff: 8:30 pm Mountain Time

TV: ESPNU