



801 372 - 0819

hbarnett@fiber.net

1391 West 800 South – Orem, Utah 84058

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BYU 45 ECU 38

An Almost Rhodes...oops, I mean Road Scholar Evaluates BYU's Performance against ECU

While attending BYU years ago, I almost became a Road Scholar. That shouldn't be confused with the more prestigious Rhodes Scholar.

After scoring the same amount of points that BYU did against ECU in securing their fourth win of the season, the 45 points I scored on a Political Science final exam years ago, had BYU academics almost telling me to hit the road and return to the more compatible academic setting of Palo Verde College in Blythe, California.

Because of my less than sterling academic performance in that class, to this day, I still consider myself a Political Science Nephite (I actually also struggled academically in English and Book of Mormon at BYU and still get Neophyte and Nephite confused). I also have the same difficulty distinguishing between Rhodes Scholars and Rhodes Bake-n-Serve Bread. I can't remember which one is crusty when overcooked or over educated

If you are a Rhodes Scholar and reading this, I apologize. But aren't you ashamed of yourself and an Oxford Education for reading a rag like *Cougar Sportsline*?

Shame is subjective. I never played college football, but I have no shame in doing what every other sports media Nephite-never-played-the-game guy does when they give out grades in evaluating BYU's performance after every football game.

So here is my non-Oxford objective (sorta) but over cooked and under thought evaluations and grades.

Scoreboard: A+...I don't care how you get there. Whether you over schedule, under schedule, do some serious can kicking or barely survive because of luck or injuries, on either sideline, good coaching or bad coaching, on either sideline, a win is a win. You don't give them back and you don't look back. BYU's 45-38 win over East Carolina was a coulda, shoulda, woulda, game that was in the end a win.

Tanner Mangum: B...Yeah, I know all about the late game heroics and the superb passing numbers like completing 24 of 33 passes for 332 yards and 3 touchdowns. The extra credit project of returning to the game late despite an injured right hamstring was very good, and under normal circumstances, would have got the guy an "A". But I'm grading on the curve. As good as Mangum's performance was, it won't be his best. The best is yet to come. If you don't believe that, I suggest you go back and watch the ESPNU broadcast of the game on replay. Pay close attention to what Dan Hawkins, the former Boise State and Colorado head coach had to say about Mangum. You would have thought he was Mangum's agent or wants to be his agent. He absolutely gushed about Mangum's abilities and his upside. He said that BYU has had some great quarterbacks in the past, but BYU football fans should buckle up for the exciting ride they are going to have with the kid from Eagle, Idaho. As far as Hawkins as a commentator, I give him an A-. He was good, knowledgeable and not annoying like some. Had he yelled at the top of his lungs, "It's Division I football" I would have given him an A.

Beau Hoge: A...Despite the fact that he was breathing heavily trying to catch his breath before every play and despite the deer in the headlights look in his eyes, I like this kid's play and potential. Give him some mop up action when the game is not on the line and Hoge should be a very serviceable backup to Mangum, this season and beyond. He is athletic enough and has a good enough arm to help BYU wins some games.

Algie Brown: A, B, C and D...Put another 30 pounds on this guy, and make him a middle linebacker and he could have an NFL shot. This guy runs to contact so I give him a C as a potential play for pay linebacker prospect. I give him an A for the two fourth down conversions he made. It saved the game. I give him a D for the two fumbles and dropped pass from Hoge. Add it all up and throw in the three touchdowns, one a 53 yarder, and Brown, with his 134 yard night on 24 carries was a solid B+ performer against ECU.

Devon Blackmon: A...I give him a top grade, not because he is a game-breaking- play-making machine, but because of his immense improvement from last season to this year. It is a night and day performance. The mid-day sun was certainly shining on Blackmon

Saturday night. He had 9 catches for 142 yards. He still is looking for the end zone and his first touchdown as a BYU Cougar.

BYU Secondary: Incomplete...Truancy and a trip to the School Nurse's office almost cost BYU this game. Those that stayed in school, got a C. They were average. Had back up corners Michael Shelton and Jordan Preator not been suspended by Bronco Mendenhall for this game for a violation of team rules, and had Micah Hanneman not gone to the Nurse's office because of an injury in the second half, ECU's QB grade of A- would have more likely been a B- if Mendenhall had a full classroom of defensive backs for the second half of this contest.

Linebackers: A- & B: BYU is now getting some playmaking from its outside linebackers that matches the headlines and hype that Fred Warner and Sione Takitaki generated when they were recruited to Provo. Both guys are disrupters and play makers. I give both A- for their performances against the Pirates of ECU. The Cougars are getting adequate inside linebacker play, and hopefully that will improve when another disruptor, Harvey Langi, returns from injury.

Defensive Line and Offensive Line: Honorary A's...If universities can give honorary degrees, I can give honorary A's to any player on the Cougar roster that plays on the line of scrimmage. Only real men need apply. The beating and punishment given out and received at the line of scrimmage deserves the highest grade fans can give. Still, it's hard to see anybody on the line of scrimmage taking the Road Scholarship to the next level of play in the NFL. I give this group a solid B.

Coaching and Kicking: A & B...No Guts, no Glory. Bronco Mendenhall has come a long way from icing the kicker in a PAT attempt to attempting two fourth and ones against East Carolina. Both worked. So did the fake punt and the punt block. Give Mendenhall an A for his out of the box thinking. Give the special teams and kicking game a C. The blocked punt and Jonny Linehan's fake punt for a first down is worth an A. The blocked punt put on BYU was due to poor execution was worth a C. Average for kicking game is B.

Mangum Medicine

Dr. Oz is busy, So Here's the Best Medical Advice I Can Give for a Strained or Pulled Hamstring

I just checked the odds and opening line in Las Vegas for this Friday's game against Cincinnati. Strained hamstring opened as an 8 ½ point favorite over torn meniscus and 38 point favorite over a Lisfranc.

I'm laying the points and taking Tanner Mangum's strained hamstring recovering and healing enough for him to play this Friday against Cincinnati...on two conditions. It actually is a strained hamstring and nothing worse and Mangum uses the CP Protocol in his approach to recovery and rehab.

CP stands for cow pie. If you apply a liberal amount of CP on your hamstring and then wrap it with an ACE bandage and keep it in place for the entire week, it will insure that nobody, especially media, will bother or bug you while your body naturally recovers.

Beginning today, the most asked question on BYU's campus will not be "Is he single" but "Is he healthy."

Bronco Mendenhall will give a preliminary prognosis this morning in his weekly press briefing. Hopefully, he will have health reports also on Ului Lapuaho and Micah Hanneman. And a nice report on violation of team rules will be forthcoming on Michael Shelton and Jordan Preator.

Cincinnati has had two weeks to get ready for BYU and the game this Friday night in LaVell Edwards Stadium. BYU now has 5 days to prepare.

Not to be the bearer of Cow Pieish news on the BYU football parade, but Nate Austin also had hamstring issues that kept him from playing basketball the entire season last season. The difference, of course, is that his hamstring was torn, not strained or pulled.

The bottom line is this. BYU can beat Cincinnati even if Ului Lapuaho and Micah Hanneman can't play against the Bearcats. BYU can't beat UC, however, if Mangum doesn't play.

This gives new meaning to the catch phrase *Mangum Miracle*. In a hopeful precedent, Terenn Houk was still in a walking boot Saturday afternoon entering the stadium. Nobody thought he would play, but he did.

Without Mangum, BYU's running game is not good enough to beat the Bearcats. With Mangum, even at 70 percent, the BYU passing game is good enough to secure the win provided the offensive line and schemes put together by Robert Anae can keep the Idaho signal caller up right and untouched.

I'm optimistic that the CP (can also stand for Constant Prayers) treatment program, or some other proven protocol for Mangum's hamstring will work. I call it BYU 28 UC 21.

Fluff and Stuff

I'm always entertained by the television commercials for FarmersOnly.com and Match.com. I am even more intrigued by the matrimonial results compiled by the fictional website I call CougarCouples.com.

Here are a few Cougar athlete couples that have made matches and married within the BYU athletic family. Yeah, I know that sounds weird, but hey, my uncle married my cousin (My mother's brother married my dad's niece).

Here is my unofficial list of BYU inter-squad athletic marriages. Hopefully I won't have to report on any intra-squad marriages except for those on the track team which is comprised of both genders.

Kyle Collinworth (basketball) married Shea Martinez (track)
Tyler Haws (basketball) married Summer Raymond (gymnastics)
Adam Pulshiper (football) married Makenzie Morrison (basketball)
Jonny Linehan (rugby and football) married Marisa Nimmer (Soccer)
Bronson Kaufusi (football) married Hilary Smith (Soccer)
Andy Isom (baseball) married Taylor Campbell (Soccer)

The Women's soccer team is still the dominant team in the WCC. The Lady Cougars are currently 3-0 in league play with wins over Gonzaga and Portland on the road and a home win over San Diego. Next up will be Pacific in Provo. Overall the Cougars are 11-1-1. They are currently the No. 5 ranked team in the country.

In women's volleyball, the Cougars are currently tied for the lead atop WCC standings with Santa Clara and San Diego at 5-1. Santa Clara beat BYU in California and BYU beat San Diego last week in San Diego. Overall the Lady Cougars are 15-2 on the year and ranked 15th in the nation.

I now have two most hated musical performances on my list. If interested in what those are. [Click here](#) and then [click here](#).

I am, however, looking forward to the BYU-Utah football game next year in Salt Lake City. Cal proved a good quarterback can move the ball on the Utes. BYU has a great quarterback. Plus Utah will lose their running back to the NFL and BYU will be back in the running back business with Jamaal Williams, Squally Canada and Charles West all up and running. Throw in a game breaker wide receiver with the arrival of Snow Juco transfer Jonah Trinnaman. He had a big time outing against Phoenix College two weeks ago with a 200 plus yard receiving game. Count me in as anxiously awaiting this next Utah-BYU game set for September 10 in Salt Lake. Just a small caveat on the next great juco receiver at BYU. It was just two years ago that Nick Kurtz was the next great juco receiver. He has helped, but he is far from dazzling in his early season play.

In basketball, the early call from me is that this will be another Dave Rose Shoot and Scoot team. He has three point shooters galore. There won't be enough basketballs to go around. He will push the tempo and get out in the open court.

The question will be: Can this team shoot the three and play some D? The preseason chatter is how this team will be much, much, better defensively. They certainly will be bigger inside and be a better rebounding team, but just how much better they will be defensively remains to be seen, in my opinion.

None of those questions will really be answered until Dec. 2 when the Cougars face Utah in Salt Lake City. That's when we will know the answer to this year's true or false question. Can BYU really shoot the 3 and really play some D?

Television Timetable

BYU vs. Cincinnati

Friday, October 16 at Provo

Kickoff: 6:00 pm MDT

TV: ESPN

BYU vs. Wagner

Saturday, October 24 at Provo

Kickoff: 1:00 pm MDT

TV: BYUtv

BYE (Football)

Saturday, October 31

BYU vs. San Jose State

Friday, November 6 at San Jose

Kickoff: 9:30 pm MST

TV: CBS Sports Network

Saturday

BYU vs. Pacific (Women's Soccer)

Saturday, October 17 at Provo

Start Time: 7:00 pm MDT

TV: BYUtv

BYU vs. Gonzaga (Women's Volleyball)

Thursday, October 15 at Provo

Start Time: 7:00 pm MDT

TV: BYUtv

BYU vs. Portland (Women's Volleyball)

Saturday, October 17 at Provo

Start Time: 1:00 pm MDT

TV: TheW.tv (streaming on line)