

HB Arnett's



Cougar Sportsline

"Lite"

hbarnett@fiber.net

801 372 0819

Vol. 38, Issue 22, - December 24, 2018

BYU 49 WMU 18

The Potato Bowl in Pictures

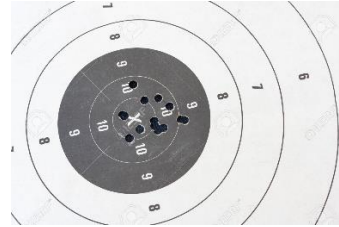


This bowl game win epitomizes the evolution of Jeff Grimes as BYU's offensive coordinator. Because of many reasons: injuries, ineptitude, lack of depth and lack of wins, Grimes has evolved from a rookie OC, to prove himself capable of changing what didn't work at the first of the season and adapting and installing a new offense on the job and in the middle of the season.

It paid off handsomely in Boise and should even become more attractive next season. In case you missed what he did, here it is in pictures.



Grimes swatted away the early offense of fluttering and sputtering *fly sweeps* and went with a higher caliber offense to suit his offensive personnel and talent.



That new offense was designed to put Zach Wilson in the shot gun and let him throw bulls eye bombs down the field. Did it work?

You and the Western Michigan defense can be the judge by clicking to watch this:



Defensive Duct Tape and the Guy that Made it Work



Take a look at the starting defense against Arizona and then compare it to the starting defense against Western Michigan. The only thing that stayed constant in BYU's defense this season was the defensive front.

The back end of this defense, including linebackers and defensive backs, was injury riddled from early on. The duct tape job Ilaisa Tuiaki did with his mix and match back end defense late in the year was remarkable. He has taken heat for his lack of aggression, but he needs some love for what he and his defensive staff put together as the season ended without the players they started with.



PROOF IS IN PUDDING AND PRODUCTION

From the day they arrived, Jeff Grimes and his offensive line coach, Ryan Pugh, said that the best players would play. They also said that the best player would be the guy that showed he was the best during the week of practice.

The most obvious example of that mantra was when Zach Wilson replaced Tanner Mangum. That same scenario took place at left guard on the offensive line. Thomas Shoaf started the season at that spot. After three games he was replaced by Keanu Saleapaga, the freshman redshirt, that switched from defense to offense at the start of the season. The last three games of the season it was Keiffer Longson who started.

All three will be back next year. Shoaf will be a senior. Longson will be a junior and Saleapaga will be a sophomore. Depending on how the play and show in the spring, one of these three may also be playing right tackle and replacing graduating senior Austin Hoyt.

Regardless, with the return of four starters on the o-line, coupled with the return of Zach Wilson, the prospects for productive pudding offensively looks good.

Last Man Standing and Sole Survivor



That's how I describe BYU's running back merry-go-round this season. They started with Squally Canada, tried Lapini Katoa, and went all in on Matt Hadley late in the season. All three couldn't survive the injury bug.

That left the enigmatic Riley Burt. He looks like a running back and passes the eyeball test. He just never passed the production test...until last Friday against Western Michigan.

All Burk did was score a 37-yard touchdown while rushing for 110 yards on just 13 carries. That works out to an 8.5 yard per carry average. He actually looked like a running back that knew what he was doing and then did it.

BYU is still looking for a running back recruit and the chances of landing one is remote. Maybe Burk, if given the chance to be the change of pace with Wilson throwing the ball, could be an answer. We will see.

Recruiting Is a Pigskin Piñata



You never really know what you are going to get until you get it open and the goods on the field. This year was no different. They hype is always heavy, but it will take a few seasons to really evaluate what Kalani Sitake and company hauled in.

NAME	POS.	HT.	WT.	HOMETOWN	PREVIOUS SCHOOL
Maile, Brooks	DL	6-4	285	St. George, Utah	Pine View HS
Conover, Jacob	QB	6-1	205	Chandler, Arizona	Chandler HS
Hill, Keanu	WR	6-3	190	Eules, Texas	Trinity HS
Ellison, Eric	DB	5-11	170	Banning, California	Mt. San Jacinto College
Wheat, Carter	TE	6-4	225	Mesa, Arizona	Red Mountain HS
Freeland, Blake	OL	6-8	260	Herriman, Utah	Herriman HS
Christensen, Caleb	DB	5-9	180	Smithfield, Utah	Sky View HS
Mitchell, Bruce	DL	6-4	265	Kamas, Utah	South Summit HS

Erickson, Ethan	TE	6-5	225	Kahuku, Hawai'i	Kahuku HS
Daley, Michael	LB	6-3	220	Highland, Utah	Lone Peak HS
Roberts, Chase	WR	6-4	195	American Fork, Utah	American Fork HS
Gunderson, Brock	OL	6-4	265	Cypress, Texas	Cypress Woods HS
Udo, George	DB/LB	6-1	210	Walnut Creek, California	Berean Christian HS
Unutoa, Eli	OL	6-5	290	Kapa'a, Hawai'i	Kapa'a HS

81-90

BYU Loses Again...This Time to SDSU

It's safe to say that BYU basketball is not very good defensively. They have little problem scoring themselves, but a big problem defending their opponents.

Since we haven't seen much defense this season from Dave Rose's team, we might have forgot what good defense looks like.

Bruce Bowen was a spectacular defender during his college and NBA career. To refresh our memories of what defense looks like and likely won't look like this Saturday again at Mississippi State when the Cougars go up against the Bulldogs. Click below to see the fundamentals of defense.

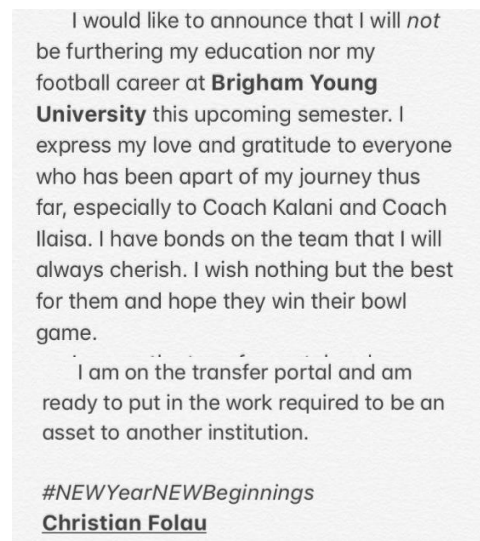


Culling the Herd



In the dairy business, they call it culling the herd. If a cow isn't producing enough gallons of milk daily and if that milk is low in butter fat, she is sent to the auction and replaced with a better producing cow.

The same thing happens in college football, even at BYU. They used to call it non-renewal of scholarship. Now, the polite and face-saving nomenclature is "Transfer Portal". This way both the player and coach get a politically correct way out of embarrassing situations for both. Here are 3 examples from the last few days.



at BYU and we have both decided that it's what's best for both sides as there are some personal reasons on my end and business reasons on theirs. I love each and everyone of the members of the team and staff here and I will miss them. I also want to thank those that have supported me regardless during my time here.

My name is on the Transfer Portal as of today and I'm ready to take the next big



The Lonely Ranger
@wayne_kirby64



Do We Actually Own It?

When it comes to critiquing and criticizing players, coaches and administrators of sports teams, that is what I have made a living doing for the last 35 plus years.

Based on letters to the editor and reading sport chat room writings. I have plenty of company. You would think that we own our favorite team and take full ownership of them, their play and their seasons.

I used to think that way and then I read an article written by Craig Calcaterra of NBC Sports. Here is the except that caught my eye.

Are Yankees fans spoiled? Sure, on some level they are. But I don't think this is about Yankees fan entitlement as such. Indeed, I think it speaks to a phenomenon in sports that applies to fans of any team: an overemphasis on championships. Indeed, I think championships are highly overrated and that caring only about championships is a great way to make yourself miserable as a sports fan.

Winning championships is, obviously, the goal of every sports team, but you are not a sports team. You are a fan. Sports are entertainment to you, not a means of personal validation. Because, again, you haven't done anything to earn the validation of a championship like a player or a coach or an executive has. You watched it happen, but it's their entire professional existence. They spend all of their waking hours to achieve that goal. You invested a little time, some of your disposable income and, depending on your temperament, greater or lesser degrees of emotional investment in order to watch baseball games.

You can't say that the stakes for you are anything like the stakes for someone who owns, operates or plays for a professional sports franchise and thus you can't say that anything less than a championship is failure and expect me to take you seriously. Especially considering that, when they're being honest, and when they're not giving postgame interviews, even the people in professional sports will tell you that they don't actually think in those terms themselves. There are executives for 86-win clubs who are happy with how their team did given the talent they have. There are players who are

quite proud of their years even when they get knocked out of the playoffs in the first round.

I'm not sure where the "anything less than a championship is failure" idea came from, but it's relatively new.

I found this article in its entirety very interesting and informing. I think you might also. You can read it by clicking here: <https://mlb.nbcports.com/2018/12/12/championships-are-overrated/>