

HB Arnett's

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TWO WINS LAST WEEK PUT BYU ON TRACK FOR WCC PRESSEASON PROGNOSTICATIONS

BYU notched two West Coast Conference wins last week. They defeated Loyola Marymount in Los Angeles 73-65 and gave a major beat down to San Francisco in the Marriott Center. The final score was 81-56.

Noah Hartsock led BYU in scoring against Loyola with 21 points and Brock Zylstra put up a team-leading 22 points against the Dons of USF.

The two wins boosts the Cougars' record to 14-4 overall and 3-1 in WCC play.

It also puts BYU in third place in the current league standings. That was where the Cougars were tabbed to finish by preseason polls.

It is still a little early in the season, but based on early season action by all the teams in the conference, Gonzaga, St. Mary's and BYU appear to have been validated as the three teams in serious contention for the conference championship.

Saint Mary's and Gonzaga are both 3-0 in conference action with the Gaels of SMC 14-2 overall and Gonzaga with a glossy 13-2 overall record.

Barring a total meltdown by BYU, they shouldn't lose to any other WCC teams at home or on the road other than Gonzaga and St. Mary's.

The same can be said of those two schools during the remainder of the league season. This race will be determined by how these three teams fare against each other. BYU is currently 0-1 while St. Mary's is 1-0 via their blowout win over BYU. Gonzaga is 0-0 in big three play.

It should get interesting from here on out. Neither of the big three can afford be upset by any of the remaining also-ran teams.

The key for BYU will the guard line. Noah Hartsock and Brandon Davies are as good as they come in

this league. You can expect both the Gaels and Bulldogs to key on the Cougar inside attack.

That means that Dave Rose will have to hope he can get the kind of guard play he got against San Francisco.

If teams scheme defensively against BYU bigs, the Cougar guards will have to hit open shots to make opponents pay.

In the NCAA tournament it is all about guard play. The remainder of this WCC season for BYU will also be all about guard play.

BASKETBALL NOTES

The good news is that Brock Zylstra had a very nice offensive game against USF last week. He scored 22 points in the win and hit six of six three-ball attempts.

He also had 23 points earlier in the year against Northern Arizona at Prescott and 26 against Buffalo in Provo. His offensive output against the better teams on the schedule, however, is not nearly as spectacular.

BYU needs Zylstra to find a happy scoring medium against all opponents. If he can do that, BYU could be a very, very good team.

BYU got a lot of media time and positive press last season with Jimmer Fredette. It looks like Dave Rose and the Cougars are getting the same media run, on a smaller scale, with the exploits of two of their future players.

Lone Peak HS in general and Nick Emery, T.J. Haws and to some extent, Conner Toolson, in particular, continue to make believers out of those media types who cover recruiting and the prep basketball scene nationwide.

Emery lit up Lincoln HS of Brooklyn Saturday night 90-63 in a game at the Brandon Jennings Invitational in Milwaukee. Emery had 31 points and T.J. Haws added 19. He was 9-of-9 from the free throw line.

Lincoln was a top 25 rated national program. They have produced such players as Stephon Marbury and Sebastian Telfair.

That makes the 22 points scored by Conner Toolson in a reserve role impressive. Lone Peak already has three players committed to the Cougars for the future in Emery and Eric Mika, a 6-8 front court player who is not eligible to play this season because of a transfer issue. He like Emery are both juniors.

Haws is only a sophomore and could be the best of the bunch, but it is Emery who now being tabbed the next Jimmer Fredette for Dave Rose and his program by national prep pundits.

Toolson is also only a junior and the son of former Cougar Andy Toolson. He is a shooter, but still looks like he only 13-14 years old physically.

If he can bulk up with weight and strength during the next two years, we will not be surprised to see him as another Lone Peak recruit headed to BYU. He is already on the Cougar radar and coaches have been following this current Lone Peak crew for years since they were all in the eighth grade.

Toolson is listed at 6-2, but that might be a stretch. Our eyeballs have him at about a buck fifty weight wise. If he gets stronger and can fill out and continue to grow, he is a definite Division I player.

Two other division I players, both of whom have signed with the Cougars and will go on LDS missions are having nice years.

Cory Calvert, the 6-4 guard from Chaparral HS in Colorado, returning to action after suffering a broken wrist a few weeks back, scored 9 points against top rated East HS of Denver 65-62. The game was played at East. East is the same team that was burned, torched and deep fried a few weeks ago by Lone Peak.

Jordan Chatman of Union HS in Camas, WA, hit for 22 points last Friday for Union HS in a 91-75 win over Heritage HS.

FOOTBALL RECRUITING

February 1, the national letter of intent day for football, is just a couple of weeks away. We listed BYU's current list of verbal commits a few issues ago. Nothing has really changed, but here it is again.

Marques Johnson, DL, 6-2, 305, El Camino JC, CA
Sawyer Powell, LB, 6-1, 205, Richland HS, WA
Troy Hinds, DL, 6-5, 230, Davis HS, UT
Jamaal Williams, RB, 6-2, 190, Summit HS, CA
Jherremya Leuta-Douyere, LB/FB, 6-0, 220, Servite HS, CA
Butch Pau'u, LB, 6-0, 215, Servite HS, CA
Micah Hannemann, DB, 6-1, 185, Lone Peak HS, UT
Steven Richards, TE, 6-2, 240, Alta HS, UT
Austin Hoyt, DL, 6-7, 240, Argonaut HS, CA
Phillip Amone, LB, 6-0, 220, Dr. Phillips HS, FL
Dylan Collie, WR, 5-10, 200, Oak Ridge HS, CA
Taysom Hill, QB, 6-2, 225, Highland HS, ID
Tanner Mangum, QB, 6-2, 185, Eagle HS, ID
Josh Weeks, WR, 6-4, 200, Show Low HS, AZ
Rhett Sandlin, DB, 6-3, 220, Alta HS, UT
Matt Hadley, DB, 5-11, 190, Connell HS, WA
Ammon Olsen, QB, 6-4, 210, SUU/Alta HS, UT
Roman Andrus, DL, 6-5, 235, Oak Ridge HS, WA

Signees reportedly leaving on LDS missions before enrolling in school include:

Tanner Mangum, QB, Eagle HS, ID
Josh Weeks, WR, Show Low HS, AZ
Butc Pau'u, LB, Servite HS, CA
Troy Hinds, DL, Davis HS, UT
Steven Richards, DL/TE, Alta HS, UT

In addition to the new signees, BYU will have a significant crop of returning LDS missionaries for next season. They include:

Fono Vakalahi, OL, 6-3 335
Brett Thompson, TE 6-3, 215
Mitch Mathews, WR, 6-6 200
Trevor Bateman, DB, 5-9, 180
Tui Crichton, OL, 6-3, 357
Terrance Alletto, OL 6-3, 290
Craig Bills, DB, 6-1, 205
Remington Peck, DL, 6-4, 240
Jacob Hannemann, DB, 6-1, 190
Bronson Kaufusi, DL, 6-6, 240
Russell Tealavea, DL, 6-3, 270
Brad Wilcox, OL 6-7, 270

Of this group, three have played and seen action before they left. Another returning missionary has the potential to be a super star for the Cougars either on the offensive or defensive line.

Craig Bills played safety for Bronco Mendenhall as a true freshman. We look for him to be a starter for the season opener against Washington State. He is that good.

BYU hasn't had a decent offensive threat at tight end since Dennis Pitta and Andrew George departed two years ago. Brett Thompson, if he can put on some weight and strength, in our opinion, might make a very dangerous tight end. We don't think it will take the BYU coaches to realize it and make the switch from wide receiver to tight end.

Bronson Kaufusi, barring an injury, could be a future NFL player. He is athletically gifted and if he can bulk up and still retain his quickness, could be BYU's next superstar.

In other recruiting news, BYU had held a scholarship for Brandon Fanaika, a highly touted offensive lineman from Pleasant Grove HS in Utah. He turned down the Cougars last week and pledged to sign with Stanford.

With the scholarship now available, BYU didn't waste any time in offering that grant in aid to Hiva Lutui, a big offensive lineman from Euless Trinity HS in Texas.

The chances of landing Lutui, a 6-2, 270 pounder, appear to be slim. He is not LDS and originally committed to UCLA in August. He has already tripped to Utah and will trip to USC on Jan. 20.

We don't see this one happening for the Cougars. If BYU strikes out here, we look for the scholarship to go to Roman Andrus of Oak Ridge HS near Sacramento. If a scholarship shows up, he will get it. If not, he will walk on.

BYU'S 2012 FOOTBALL SCHEDULE IS FIRM AND FINAL FROM SEPTEMBER TO LATE OCTOBER

BYU is set to go in football for next season's schedule from September to late October.

November is basically also set with opponents and location of games. What isn't set yet are dates.

Let's start with games that are finalized.

Sept 1 Washington State at Provo

Mike Leach is one of a few college head coaches who never played football in college. He is also one of a select few coaches who can talk more than football. He returns to his alma mater in his inaugural game as WSU's new head coach.

Sept 8 Weber State at Provo

Homecomings must be hip this year. John L. Smith returns to Utah (he previously was the head coach at Utah State, Louisville and Michigan State) as the new head guy in Ogden.

Sept 15 Utah at Salt Lake City

Savor this one because it may be one of the last times the Utes and Cougars meet in this rivalry. You can blame it on the Pac 12 and the new inter-conference deal between the Big 10 and the Pac 12. You can also blame it on the Utes not being competitive enough in their new league, consequently needing to load up their front end of the schedule with beatable teams. BYU certainly was very beatable last year, but Utah can see the handwriting on the wall for the future.

Sept 22 Boise State at Boise

Other than USC and Oregon, Boise State has been one of the top three dominant teams in the West during the last five years. Dominations means dollars and BSU coach Chris Peterson literally cashed in with his dominating program recently. Peterson was given a pay raise to \$2 million dollars per annum. Too bad the Broncos couldn't give Kellen Moore a million dollar annuity to stay another year. With Moore, the Broncos were dominant. Without him, they will be good, but not dominant. The Broncos open the year at Michigan State. For the second year in a row, BSU is losing its offensive coordinator. Last year it was Bryan Harsin who went to Texas. This year it is Brent Pease who is deciding between Alabama and Florida. Both schools have offered him the job of offensive coordinator.

Sept 29 Hawaii at Provo

Norm Chow returns to Provo with his wish fulfilled. He is finally a head coach. Wishes are relative, however. While Chow became an offensive celebrity at his last few stops at NC State, USC, Tennessee Titans, UCLA and UCLA, he made more money as an assistant coach than 95 percent of head coaches across the college landscape. We don't know how he will fare as Hawaii's new coach, but he will certainly be able to afford the bump in cost of living on the islands.

Oct 5 Utah State at Provo

This will be the battle of turnarounds. Utah State finished bowl eligible for the first time in many years. BYU saw offensive production and their season turn around after Riley Nelson took over at quarterback for Jake Heaps.

Oct 13 Oregon State at Provo

Mike Riley is a good coach who was saddled with a bad team last year in Corvallis when BYU and the Beavers met up. He now has a seasoned and talented quarterback and will have an improved defense. This one could be interesting.

Oct 20 Notre Dame at South Bend

Notre Dame appears to be on the upswing in football. So does BYU. These will be two teams looking to get back to the national scene in football. It will also be a battle of different coaching personalities. Brian Kelley of the Irish is known for his tirades, Bronco Mendenhall is known for his taciturn manner on the sideline. We don't know if silence is golden, but are sure the Notre Dame helmets are.

Now for the rest of the schedule.

There are four other games that BYU is contracted to play this coming season. We know three of the teams that the Cougars will be playing and we know where those three games will be played. We just don't know when they will be played.

BYU has signed contracts with Georgia Tech, San Jose State and New Mexico State. All games will be played away from Provo.

The New Mexico State is firm in place and date. BYU will travel to Las Cruces to face the Aggies on Nov 24. No word yet on the dates for the games at Atlanta and San Jose.

BYU also has a contract that was signed last year with Idaho for another game in Provo.

We don't know, however, if the Cougars are looking to buy themselves out of that game to face another opponent.

We do know that BYU and East Carolina have been in contact with each other for some time. The Pirates also have some open dates in November which would fit nicely with BYU's November needs.

It would not be a surprise to see either Idaho or ECU playing in Provo in November.

That will have to happen if the Cougars want to come up with 6 home games to match the 6 road games they already have set in concrete.

Here are the home games: Washington State, Weber State, Hawaii, Utah State, Oregon State and Idaho or East Carolina.

Here are the away games: Utah, Boise State, Notre Dame, Georgia Tech, New Mexico State and San Jose State.

BYU TELEVISION TIMETABLE

BYU vs. Santa Clara

Saturday, Jan 14 at Provo

Tipoff: 6:00 p.m. Mountain Time

TV: ESPNU

BYU vs. San Diego

Monday, Jan 16 at San Diego

Tipoff: 8:00 p.m. Mountain Time

TV: BYUtv

BYU vs. Loyola Marymount

Thursday, Jan 19 at Provo

Tipoff: 6:30 p.m. Mountain Time

TV: BYUtv

BYU vs. Pepperdine

Saturday, Jan 21 at Malibu

Tipoff: 6:00 p.m. Mountain Time

TV: BYUtv

BYU vs. Virginia Tech

Wednesday, Jan 25 at Blacksburg

Tipoff: 5:00 pm Mountain Time

TV: ESPN3

BYU vs. Saint Mary's

Saturday, Jan 28 at Provo

Tipoff: 7:00 p.m. Mountain Time

TV: ESPNU

BYU vs. Gonzaga

Thursday, Feb 2 at Provo

Tipoff: 9:00 p.m. Mountain Time

TV: ESPN2