

HB Arnett's



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SPRING FOOTBALL: TERSENESS AND TALENT

Bronco Mendenhall and Robert Anae will never be confused as being charismatic with the press and public. Instead of charisma, two more appropriate words come to mind: Candor and Cantankerous.

Both coaches are known for telling it like it is. Neither coach is known for being effusive in evaluating the exploits of their side of the BYU football. Both men are terse when talent is being discussed.

“We’re a work in progress” for Anae and “Hmm, we’ll see” for Mendenhall is about as loquacious as these two guys get when talking about BYU football. To say they hold their Cougar cards close to the vest is an understatement.

So when either drops a name or two during spring football saying said player has performed well, it is time for picking up ears and pencils to take notes of those names.

With spring football practice coming to a close last Friday, here are names, in alphabetical order that leaked from the lips of Mendenhall and Anae during the last four weeks of drills.

Terrance Alletto, OL...The 6-3, 270 pounder from Ponderosa HS in Parker, CO is as alliterative as it gets. He also looks to have nailed down a starting shot at being the center on the offensive line this coming fall. He redshirted as a freshman in 2009 and then served an LDS mission. He saw very limited action last season as a redshirt freshman. He will be a sophomore this fall.

Craig Bills, S...You know that Mendenhall is high on you when he says you will be a starting safety this fall even though you are sitting out the spring rehabbing from surgery. Bills saw significant playing time last season, especially in the latter part of the schedule. He will team with Daniel Sorensen to give the Cougars two experienced players at safety. Bills will be a junior in the fall.

Alani Fua, OLB...The 6-5, 220 pound outside linebacker has never been a heavyweight physically or in the linebacker playing rotations. That should change this fall based on his play this spring. He will give the Cougar defense another solid option to go along with returning outside starters Kyle Van Noy and Spencer Hadley. Fua will be a junior this coming season.

Mike Hague, DB...Hague and hurt seem to always pop up in sentences describing the senior defensive back. The 5-10, 190 pounder has been mentioned as the guy to fill the vacated boundary corner spot. BYU was counting on Trent Trammell, the juco transfer, but he lasted just one day of spring drills before tearing his ACL. While Hague is getting mentioned, BYU is still trying to find juco corners this summer to use as alternative options.

Taysom Hill, QB...Let's see. Bronco says he and his staff are still evaluating whom they will name as a starter at quarterback despite having Hill take every meaningful snap of spring except in scrimmages and live contact drills. The rationale was to make sure Hill is healthy for the fall. If he is not going to be your starting quarterback, why take those precautions? Hill is the guy. I know it. You know it and so do Bronco and his staff. The question is who will back up Hill? My money is on Ammon Olsen. That is not a bad place to place your bets if Hill can't physically perform during the coming season. Hill will be a sophomore this fall.

Adam Hine, RB...The 6-1, 205 pound running back, is BYU's witness protection player of the spring. After a spectacular high school career, this promising back changed his name from Timo to Hine and then disappeared off the radar due to two years in Panama as a missionary, and two years as a redshirt and rehabbing and recovering from injuries last season. He has had a great spring and punctuated that performance with a 10 carry for 143 yard performance in the last scrimmage of drills last Friday. Jamaal Williams also received praise from Mendenhall and Anae for his play this spring, but he was a proven product. Hine now has given the offensive coaches two proven products and producers at running back for the coming fall.

Paul Lasike, RB...The former rugby player's story won't rival that of Ziggy Ansah, but his pedigree does. The 6-1, 230 pound punishing fullback only started putting on the pads two years ago. He made waves last year, but put the ball on the ground too much to see significant playing time. This spring he proved more trustworthy with the pigskin. He is a punishing runner and will be used in short yardage situations. It wasn't too long ago that Iona Pritchard was going to be the next good big back to replace Manase Tonga in the BYU offense. Now it is Lasike that is replacing Pritchard in a renewed effort to find a big back for blocking, short yardage situations and catching the ball out of the backfield. Lasike will be a junior.

Tanner Mangum, QB...The 6-3, 195 pound freshman quarterback will be getting the keys to the Cougar car on offense. He just won't be getting them until he serves two years on a LDS mission and Taysom Hill has used up his eligibility. High school hype is a hit and miss thing. It usually doesn't transfer to the next level for quarterbacks. Mangum has proven this spring that his hype was justified. Giddiness is hard to sustain for two years while Mangum is gone, but Mendenhall and the offensive staff know what they have coming back when Mangum returns. What they have is a serious playmaker at quarterback. Remember, BYU is only as good as their quarterback. The pipeline is full for the future at the most important position in BYU's football program. Mangum will most likely redshirt upon his return and wait out Hill's last year of eligibility and regain his physical tools during that redshirt year in 2014.

Remington Peck, DL...The fact that Mendenhall singled out the spring play of the 6-4, 240 pound defensive lineman, is either a signal that Peck has emerged as a player, or in my opinion, that the BYU defensive line is in trouble. Peck is most likely a player if Mendenhall says he is, but at only 240 pounds, it will have to be shown to me that he can stop the run. I will side during this spring with Mendenhall's assessment, but reserve the right to judge again in the fall. BYU was without two sure starters on the defensive line this spring in Eathyn Manumaleuna and Bronson Kaufusi. It will take some Mendenhall magic in the fall to piece together a productive defensive line in the fall, especially in the depth department. Peck will be a sophomore in the fall.

Brett Thompson, WR/TE?...There were no names mentioned this spring when it came to discussions about tight ends. The drought looks like it will now go four years since Dennis Pitta last rained on opposing defenses. Thompson, a 6-3, 220 pounder has made waves this spring as a big option as an inside receiver. If you can't have a productive tight end, a productive big inside receiver gives you the next best option for creating defensive mismatches for opponents. Thompson will be a junior this fall.

Michael Yeck, OL...The 6-8, 290 pound tackle has gone from the anonymity of just a name on the roster, to a player that appears to have earned himself a starting spot on the offensive line this fall. Chalk it up to the new up tempo offense, the new coaching staff for the offensive line, or karma, but Yeck kicked karma in the butt this spring. He and Alletto were the surprises of the offensive line. This unit looked like it was just going to bide time until the fall and new juco players arrived, but Yeck and Alletto evidently didn't get the memo. Yeck will be a junior this fall.

Names not Forgotten...While spring is a time for making noise and a name for yourself if you want to see playing time in the fall, BYU had several players this spring that were held to limited or no action during spring football drills.

Those players had no need to make a name for themselves. Their names and games are already known to coaches and fans alike. Oh yeah, they are also already known to the opponents appearing on the Cougars' 2013 schedule.

Kyle Van Noy jumped started his national notoriety campaign for this coming season at the Poinsettia Bowl last December. ESPN will be looking for ways to feature his play on their highlight reels this fall.

Cody Hoffman was BYU's go to guy at receiver last season. That won't change this season. The only thing keeping Hoffman from mega bucks at the next level is ordinary speed and the need for more strength. If he can bulk up and learn to block, it is my opinion that he could make serious money as a converted tight end at the next level.

Bronson Kaufusi is now done moonlighting as a basketball player. Now he will get back to man handling offensive linemen in the fall.

Eathyn Manumaleuna has been making defensive plays since he emerged on the scene with his game saving field goal block against UCLA in the Las Vegas Bowl as a true freshman. There is more in the tank for this solid defensive lineman if he can get back to 100 percent health from his knee surgery of last season.

JD Falsev was BYU's best football player last year...based on a pounds per production model. There should be more production in the model this coming season.

New Names that will be Needed

There was a reason that BYU inked so many juco offensive and defensive linemen. They will be needed next season. It remains to be seen if any will turn out to be players but these are the juco bodies with which BYU will be working with this fall.

Josh Carter, OL, 6-5, 290, Eastern Arizona JC

Edward Fusi, OL, 6-1, 285, Mt. San Antonio JC (Calif)

Sam Lee, CB, 6-1, 180, College of the Canyons (Calif)

Kalolu Utu, DL, 6-2, 285, Compton CC (Calif)

De'Ondre Wesley, OL, 6-6, 310, Diablo Valley JC (Calif)

High School Names that may be Factors

Michael Davis, WR, 6-2, 180 Glendale HS (Calif)...BYU can always use speed at wide receiver. This guy has it.

Brayden Kearsley, OL, 6-5, 300, Aloha HS (OR)...Highly touted and need for bodies on the offensive line may be the combination that lets this guy play this season.

JonRyheem Peoples, DL, 6-6, 300, Rigby HS (ID)...Extremely raw, but BYU's desperate need for bodies on the DL and Peoples size, may parlay into limited playing time.

NAMES ON 2013 SCHEDULE

Aug 31, Sat, Virginia at Charlottesville
Sep 7, Sat, Texas at Provo
Sep 21, Sat, Utah at Provo
Sep 27, Fri, Middle Tennessee State at Provo
Oct 4, Fri, Utah State at Logan
Oct 12, Sat, Georgia Tech at Provo
Oct 19, Sat, Houston at Houston
Oct 26, Sat, Boise State at Provo
Nov 9, Sat, Wisconsin at Madison
Nov 16, Sat, Idaho State at Provo
Nov 23, Sat, Notre Dame at South Bend
Nov 20, Sat, Nevada at Reno

FLUFF AND STUFF

Football

BYU and Bronco Mendenhall announced last week that Geoff Martzen has been hired as the new Football Player Personnel and On-Campus Recruiting Coordinator. Here is the official BYU blurb announcing the hire:

PROVO, Utah—BYU head coach Bronco Mendenhall today announced Geoff Martzen has been hired as Football Player Personnel & On-Campus Recruiting Coordinator.

A native of Reedley, Calif., Martzen comes to BYU after serving as a recruiting specialist at Boise State and Alabama, and as a high school football coach.

“Geoff is young and energetic and has gained a great understanding of successful recruiting processes from his experiences at Alabama and Boise State,” Mendenhall said. “We are always trying to get better, and I believe Geoff will help us do that. I’m looking forward to his contributions to our program.”

Martzen assisted in the recruiting coordination of high school and junior college recruits at Alabama for Nick Saban’s 2012 recruiting class and at Boise State for Chris Peterson’s 2013 recruiting class. Rivals.com rated the Crimson Tide’s 2012 class No. 1 in the nation, while the Broncos’ class this past February was the highest-rated class in school history.

“I’m excited about this opportunity at BYU,” Martzen said. “I’m eager to get to work and build upon the great experiences I’ve had at Alabama and Boise State. I feel fortunate to

be able to work with some of the nation's top football programs, and I'm especially looking forward to working with the great young men that make up the BYU program."

Prior to going to Alabama, Martzen coached high school football in the Fresno, Calif., area from 2007-2011, serving four years as offensive coordinator and one year as quarterbacks coach. He coached two years at Sunnyside High School and three years at Reedley High School.

Martzen has a bachelor's degree in kinesiology from Fresno State University and has completed graduate work at both Alabama and Boise State.

Basketball

BYU also announced in basketball last week that the Cougars will be participating in the 2013 CBE Hall of Fame Classic in Kansas City in late November of this coming season. Here is the official announcement released from BYU:

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – BYU will join Wichita State, Texas and DePaul at Sprint Center for the championship rounds of the 2013 CBE Hall of Fame Classic, Nov. 25 and 26, 2013. The National Association of Basketball Coaches (NABC) announced the field today.

The semifinal matchups will be held on Monday, Nov. 25. The finals will take place on Tuesday, Nov. 26, beginning with the consolation game, followed by the championship game. All four games will be broadcast on the ESPN family of networks.

Volleyball

Despite splitting two matches on the road last week at UC Santa Barbara and UCLA, the Cougars clinched the outright title in MPSF play. They earned the right to host all post season playoff games as long as they keep winning in those playoffs.

The Cougars eked out a 5 game win, 3-2 over the Gauchos on Friday night, but were swept in 3 games by UCLA on Saturday night. Next up for the Cougars are matches on the road at Pacific and Stanford this coming weekend.

Baseball

After starting the WCC season with an 0-3 record, BYU upped their season mark to 5-4 in league play with a three-game series sweep of Santa Clara this past weekend in California.

The Cougars are now currently at 17-14 overall and find themselves in the thick of the league race to earn one of the four spots in the WCC post season baseball tourney. Here are the current WCC Baseball Standings.

Pepperdine...6-3, 18-12
Gonzaga...7-4, 19-10-1
LMU...7-5, 16-15
BYU...5-4, 17-14
San Diego...5-4, 19-12
San Francisco...5-4, 16-15
Portland...4-4, 12-19
St. Mary's...2-4, 11-21
Santa Clara...0-9, 8-21

BYU previously took two of three games from current league leader Pepperdine in a series played in Provo two weeks ago.

Television Timetable

BYU vs. Washington State (Baseball)

Monday, April 8 at Provo

First Pitch: 10:00 am Mountain Time

TV: BYUtv

BYU vs. Portland (Baseball)

Friday, April 12 at Provo

First Pitch: 6:00 pm Mountain Time

TV: BYUtv

BYU vs. Loyola Marymount (Softball)

Saturday, April 13 at Provo

First Pitch: 1:00 pm Mountain Time

TV: BYUtv

BYU vs. Loyola Marymount (Softball)

Saturday, April 13 at Provo

First Pitch: 3:00 pm Mountain Time

TV: BYUtv