

Thursday, December 23, 2010

Dear Dumb@55

Do you have a death wish? Are you trying to die? Is that really the most efficient way to kill yourself? Because I can think of several less painful and immediate options. Running across an unlit road in dark clothing is a sure fire way to get killed, but man is that going to hurt.

Exactly how stupid are you? I have always been a fan of the Darwin Awards, but perhaps you wanted to take it to the next level. I am fine with that. I welcome the chance to have your stupidity genes removed from the population so that you can't pass them on. But don't use me to do it. Exactly how lazy are you anyway that you would choose to make someone else do your dirty work? Looter.

I hope you had the crap scared out of you, because it took nearly a day for me to just unclench.

Sincerely,
The guy who nearly killed you

PS. Merry Christmas you idiot

Posted by Radar in Personal Entry at 21:19

Wednesday, December 22, 2010

Blog Re-open for Business

Thank you all for your patience. The blog is now migrated to new hardware that should see us through for quite some time. Shots of the new hardware (courtesy of Radar) are below the fold.

Posted by Ancient of Days in Ooops at 08:28

Tuesday, December 21, 2010

Red, Blue And Pigskin

So you know all those people arguing against so many bowl games? UTEP helped prove their point? You know all those people talking about the tradition and celebration of the Bowls? UTEP helped disprove their point. 6-6 should not be enough to warrant a bowl game. Sure once in a while you get a team like BYU who struggled through their early season, and is actually better than their 6-6 record, but more often than not, you get a UTEP.

UTEP wasn't the only team embarrassed during the bowl openers as all three games were blowouts.

Meanwhile, Utah is in Vegas preparing for the Broncos, and time to discuss BYU's season. New Mexico Snore

So is a 6-6 MWC team better than a 6-6 C-USA team? By miles. BYU jumped on top of the Miners early in this game, and never let up. Heaps totaled 4 TD's, and the hookup "Heaps to Hoffman" showed, that it's going to be heard a lot over the next three years. Mitch Payne became BYU's all time leading scorer.

UTEP was outmatched, offensively, defensively, coaching wise, and any other way you can think of. Much like the rest of the opening day bowls, this one was a bore after the first few minutes.

Season in Review

Before we start the BYU review I want to take you back to a conversation about the Utes in 2009, between myself and a Cougar Fan after the Utes lost to Oregon.

BYU Fan:... you know for a fan who's team also lost on Saturday...

RB&P:... Plus the nice thing about knowing the season is a rebuilding year, is the losses don't hurt as bad

BYU Fan: wasn't favored... but was ranked and the other team was not

RB&P: Yes, but still the Utes were a road underdog

BYU Fan: rebuilding... i don't believe in that term.

It's the last comment in particular. BYU did something this season, that Cougar fans don't like to admit they have to do. They had to rebuild. Truth be told, they haven't had to rebuild in the previous four seasons, but they seemed to have forgotten the years before that.

So if BYU doesn't rebuild, then 2010 was an absolute failure. But even this particular BYU fan admitted this season was a rebuilding year, and it's under the guise of a rebuilding year that this season needs to be looked at.

And under that guise, 2010 was a success for the team. Despite starting slowing with a terrible decision to play two QB's, the team rebounded, and ends with a 7-6 winning record. This season was very similar to Bronco Mendenhall's first in Provo. The Cougars not only turned the ship around this season, but with the emergence of Jake Heaps, Josh Quezada, Cody Hoffman, and Kyle Van Oy, they may have found some solid freshman building blocks for the future. Although their coach seems intent on possibly screwing that up.

Sure the Cougars would have loved to have rebuilt with a season like the Utes' 10 win rebuilding season in '09, but the Utes had more in the cupboard than BYU did to start this season. But to look at the 2010 season as anything than a success, means you had unrealistic expectations to begin with.

Was It All A Success

While the team had a successful year, I'm not so sure you can be as generous when talking about Bronco Mendenhall's season. While Bronco did a great job in the second half of this year, to get this team in position to be in a bowl game, it was largely his fault that they were in such dire straits to begin with. Personally I though 2009 was perhaps Bronco's best while in Provo. 2010 may very well have been his worst.

First of all, one must question why they had to go with so many freshman and sophomores to begin with. Where was

the recruiting the previous years. Granted turnover is part of College Football, but to travel as many as 60 freshman/sophomores for their first road game is shocking.

Beyond that though, was the decision to go with two QB's. It seemed obvious to anyone who saw that Heaps was by far the better QB. It didn't take 4 games and a shoulder surgery to make that obvious. Yet Bronco insisted on sticking with the system. And to make things worse, he would reflect responsibility for the decision as it started going bad. Heaps is the QB of the future for the Cougars.

Bronco seemed detached, and disinterested in the first half of the season as his team sputtered to losses. He never seemed willing to take responsibility for it, instead throwing his coordinators under the bus, eventually firing his defensive coordinator. As I said before, I had no problem firing Jaime Hill. I personally think both coordinators should have been let go before the season, but Hill was nothing more than a scapegoat to take blame away from Bronco.

However that scapegoating was the turning point. Bronco took over as Defensive Coordinator, and life was breathed back into that unit. Not only that but their seemed to be a change of mentality on the offense as well, relying on the run game to take pressure off of Heaps.

Overall, I think Bronco deserves a C for 2010.

Vegas Baby, Vegas

The Utes have touched down in Vegas and are preparing to get absolutely slaughtered. At least if you listen to everyone that's what you must believe. Utes are a heavy underdog, and not many in the media are giving them a chance.

After all, wasn't Utah just a paper champion to get up to #6. They don't have their starting QB. They've been frauds all year.

I'm pretty sure more people gave the Utes a chance against Alabama in 2008 than are giving them a chance this year.

Granted this team isn't anywhere near as good as they were in 2008, but I wouldn't completely write off the Utes yet. Coach Whittingham has shown, that when given extra time to prepare, he can come up with a good gameplan.

Going from Wynn to Cain, is a slight dropoff in talent, and control of the offense. However, the big complaint I've had with the Utes in the latter half of the season, is that they put too much trust in Wynn, and seemed to abandon their workhorse senior running back Maddie Widsiata III.

In order to beat the Broncos, the Utes must do two things offensively, control the clock, and not turnover the ball. Cain may actually be the better QB for those two things. Because the coaches don't trust Cain as much to control the entire offense, they will rediscover, and re-focus on the running game. Although, Cain will still need to pull the ball out during the Zone Read once in a while. This doesn't mean Cain won't be asked to throw the ball. The one thing about Cain is, when the offense is geared towards his strengths, he is a very efficient QB. He won't take the same risks that Wynn will. While that means Wynn is more likely to give you big plays, there is also the worry about turnovers.

Defensively, the Utes absolutely must get pressure with their front four. They cannot allow Kellen Moore to get comfortable. Pressure with the front four will allow Brandon Burton and Lamar Chapman to put their WR's on an island.

It's going to be a tough game, but the Utes are out to prove their season wasn't a fluke. They deserved their 10 wins.

The MWC No-Lose Bowl

While they won't say it publicly, you can bet that Craig Thompson and the MWC want Boise State to win the Vegas Bowl. They'd rather see their future succeed, and not their past.

But the conference, and the worst commissioner in college football are in a position where no matter the outcome they are winners. Either they are sending off one of their best teams as a winner, so they can show the big boys how it's done, or their incoming team will end this season by beating a team that is abandoning the conference to go onto greener pastures.

Either way, expect a smiling Craig Thompson at the end of the game.

Blog Export: Annals of the Homestarmy, <http://www.thehomestarmy.com/s9y/>

Posted by Sideshow in Red, Blue And Pigskin at 09:53

Monday, December 20, 2010

Podcast Movie Special: Star Trek Nemesis

Our final Star Trek TNG movie podcast. I can't tell if it brings a tear to my eye because it is the last, or possibly the worst. I shouldn't be too tough on them, but they did a bunch of weird things in this movie that didn't really make sense. If you are going to steal from one of the classic Star Trek scripts/plots then do it properly.

Various topics discussed in this podcast include:

Â Â Â Â What is Will Weaton doing in this movie as a Starfleet officer?

Â Â Â Â Music Intro: Hear Me by Imagine Dragons

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If you have something to say then we welcome your comments below, or feel free to email us at trekwest5@thehomestarmy.com, twitter us at hashtag [TrekWest5](#), or leave us a voicemail at 801-788-4913.

Posted by Radar in Podcast at 04:00

Wednesday, December 15, 2010

Red, Blue And Pigskin

In a week where the only on-field action was the game between Army and Navy, most of the news this week came from off the field. For Utah, not a whole lot going on. Jordan Wynn successfully completed his shoulder surgery that will keep him out till next May. Meanwhile the rest of the team prepares for the Broncos and the Las Vegas Bowl.

BYU has a bit more news than that. Of course, they start off the bowl season on Saturday with the New Mexico bowl. But that isn't the only bit of news to come out of Provo. We now know who they'll play during their regular season next year, as well as postseason destinations for a future two years.

But first let's preview that bowl. So Many Bowls

There are 35 bowl games, and 70 bowl teams. Two numbers that combined with the BCS has strived to make the bowls pretty well irrelevant. It's not much of an accomplishment anymore when you don't even need a winning season to make a bowl game. What makes a bunch of bowling 6-6 teams even more sad, is to see a team like Temple, who had a great year, and ended with an 8-4 season, sitting at home without a bowl game.

Land of Enchantment

As usual there needs to be a start to the bowl season. This year it's the New Mexico Bowl versus 6-6 BYU and 6-6 UTEP. Last year this bowl ended up being my favorite bowl of the entire season. It featured 6-6 Wyoming upsetting 8-4 Fresno State in double overtime.

This year the matchup is between two teams going in opposite directions. We all know BYU, thanks to the brain dead decision to have a two QB system, started the season 1-4, getting embarrassed by Air Force, Nevada, Florida State, and Utah State. Bronco decided to take over the defensive coordinator duties shortly after, and led his team to a 5-2 record down the stretch. The Cougars were actually lining up to kick the winning field goal in rivalry game, before Brandon Burton blocked it, and blocked the Cougars chance at a winning regular season.

However the strides made by the defense in the second half of the season, have greatly improved the Cougars.

The Miners of UTEP however started the season on a bit of a roll, starting with a 5-1 record. However, as the season progressed the Miners suffered a few injuries and come to New Mexico losing 5 of the last 6 games. The Miners rank in the middle of the pack in most major statistical categories, not really doing anything great, but not being bad at anything either. Depending on how healthy they are, they should be able to hang in the game for a while, but if BYU plays the way they did down the stretch, they should be able to separate themselves in the final quarter, to secure a winning record overall on the year.

Let's Go Bowling

The New Mexico Bowl isn't the only bowl on the Cougars minds this season, as it was announced yesterday that BYU has accepted bowl bids for 2012, and 2013 season, In 2012 they will face the MWC 2nd team in the Poinsettia Bowl. In 2013 they are scheduled to face the 6th ranked Pac-12 Team in the Kraft Fight Hunger Bowl.

Both of these bowls have a payout of 750,000 dollars, but unlike any bowl they've had the last few years, BYU doesn't have to share it's purse.

A couple of thoughts. First. Both of these bowls are lesser bowls than the Las Vegas Bowl. The Vegas Bowl Committee, has not been shy in their love of the Cougars, as the fans sell out that stadium every time they are there. So why was a deal not reached with them? BYU, and especially Coach Mendenhall has not been shy in voicing their displeasure over the Las Vegas Bowl. Did the Cougars not want to work a deal with them? Figuring that 100% of 750,000 beats going back to Vegas, or did the MWC step in and refuse to give up their spot to the Cougars.

Secondly, this continues a tradition the Poinsettia Bowl has, and the Fight Hunger Bowl has started to have of scheduling Independents. The Poinsettia Bowl has long had an every other year agreement with Navy to be the MWC opponent. Navy is facing off against San Diego State this year. The Fight Hunger bowl has Army, Navy, and BYU for

it's next three years. This seems to show, that right now, BYU is just another Army/Navy in the eyes of the Bowl committees. I'm not sure that is exactly the perception BYU is hoping for.

Of course all of the above bowl agreements are not in play if BYU clinches a BCS bowl, or fails to be bowl eligible.

2011 Regular Season

We'll go over this in more detail next week with the BYU Review/Preview, but they Cougars announced their 2011 Regular Season Schedule. Cougar fans better get in all the jokes about Utah's soft schedule while they can, because the schedule for the Cougars is not much better. They do face Ole Miss, Texas, Utah, and Oregon State. But then the final 8 games are worse than any MWC Conference schedule could ever create.

The Cougars only hope is that Texas rebounds from what was a disappointing 5-7 season. Texas must replace 4 coaches on it's staff, including defensive coordinator Will Muschamp, but Texas is still Texas, and should be a strong opponent.

While it's understandable that BYU had to scrounge together a schedule for the next couple years, their scheduling is going to have to improve drastically, if BYU wants to stay relevant as an independent.

Bowl Season Begins

While they may be irrelevant, the bowl games are still fun to watch. BYU may start it off this Saturday, but they aren't alone. Also on Saturday is the uDrove Humanitarian Bowl which features the Boise State smurf turf. Oh and Northern Illinois will be playing Fresno State, as well as the R+L Carriers New Orleans Bowl pitting Ohio vs. Troy. Monday is Beef-O-Brady's St. Petersburg Bowl which has Southern Mississippi playing against the first AQ Bowl team of the year, Louisville.

Wednesday is the Vegas Bowl, which we'll preview next week.

Posted by Sideshow in Red, Blue And Pigskin at 09:34

Monday, December 13, 2010

Podcast 85: Shalom old friend

Because the West Wing is sucking so much, Listener Jim has decided to focus on his family and schooling. Joey and I would like to personally thank Listener Jim for all of his emails week in and week out for the last year and a half. Thank you good friend, and Shalom. This podcast covers episodes 9-12 of The West Wing, Season 6.

Various topics discussed in this podcast include:

- Â Â Â Â Peter Nash Day is NOT a real thing
- Â Â Â Â 10 Days in a Madhouse by Nellie Bly
- Â Â Â Â Welcome new listener Kris
- Â Â Â Â Movie podcast announcement: TRON
- Â Â Â Â Should TW5 get a Facebook page?
- Â Â Â Â Joey's Culture Corner: Stories Behind the Best-Loved Songs of Christmas
- Â Â Â Â Farewell Listener Jim
- Â Â Â Â Is the F-word appropriate office language?
- Â Â Â Â Music Intro: I Fight Dragons

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Here are the ratings that we gave for each show: Impact Winter: 1hr 04min 44sec

Peter: Television - 6

Joey: Television - 7

Faith Based Initiative: 20min 50sec

Peter: Television - 6

Joey: Television - 5

Opposition Research: 24min 44sec

Peter: Television - 5

Joey: Television - 5

365 Days: 24min 38sec

Peter: Television - 4

Joey: Television - 7

If you have something to say then we welcome your comments below, or feel free to email us at trekwest5@thehomestarmy.com, twitter us at hashtag TrekWest5, or leave us a voicemail at 801-788-4913.

Posted by Radar in Podcast at 04:00

Thursday, December 9, 2010

Red, Blue And Pigskin

So the Bowls have been announced, and contrary to popular belief, the BCS didn't get it right with their matchup. It's impossible to get it right when you are choosing only two teams. Especially when at least 3 teams are undefeated.

Meanwhile the BCS had a bad week, that started with a dominant 4 loss team earning an automatic qualifying while a 1 loss riff-raff was left out, and has continued with one of their computer rankings being shown to be incorrect, and shining a light on the fact that there is no transparency or contingency plans.

Locally the Utes got bad news, and then got their bowl announcement. The Utes will put up their 9 game win streak against the toughest opponent of the stretch. The Cougars meanwhile kick off the post season with a battle of two teams trying to get winning records. The Big One

Honestly I can buy the argument that Oregon and Auburn should be playing in the National Championship game. Where I have a problem is the fact, that TCU also deserves to play in that game. I think Oregon is by far the best team. I think Auburn would get worked by TCU. Unfortunately the Big Crappy System cannot handle 3 or more undefeated teams. And of course, the non-aq never stood a chance to get in that game.

TCU's Consolation Prize

TCU didn't get into the Championship game, but they will get to play in "The Granddaddy of Them All". The Rose Bowl is arguably the most well known bowl out there. It's probably the only non championship bowl that is still relevant. It is a great honor for TCU to be able to play in that bowl. However, the people who say TCU should be happy about their consolation prize are morons. TCU should be playing for the whole enchilada.

Your Powerful Automatic Qualifiers

Boise State went 11-1 and gets a crappy bowl. Nevada went 12-1 and gets a crappy bowl. In automatic qualifying conferences Michigan State went 11-1 and gets to go to a crappy bowl. Heck Temple went 8-4 and doesn't get to go to a bowl game at all.

All of the above are made even worse by the fact that the University of Connecticut won the Big East automatic qualifier, and gets to go to the Fiesta Bowl, despite the fact that they went 2-2 out of conference, and finished the season in a 3 way tie for the Big East, and had the most losses of those three teams.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I present your 4 loss, Big East Co-Champion, Automatic Qualifier.

More BCS Mess

On Monday, the day after the Rankings were announced, and bowl matchups set, it was discovered that one of the computers used in the BCS were wrong. They had left out a FCS playoff game. This exclusion was enough to cause Boise State to move up to 10, and LSU to move down to 11.

Some will say it didn't have an effect since neither team were in a BCS Bowl. The MWC however counters that they are trying for AQ status, and Boise counts for them.

Give the Colley Matrix credit, they are the only one of the 6 BCS computers that makes their formula public. This brings up a few big questions. Since there is no checks and balances to make sure that the computers are correct, how do we know this hasn't happened before? Why are the formulas so secret? Are they secret so that they can be finagled with if necessary. The BCS doesn't have much credibility to begin with, what little it did have is now out the window.

Their needs to be transparency, not just with the Computers, but with the Coaches poll as well, and not just in the final week. All votes should be made public.

Start the Season

After starting the season 2-4, the BYU Cougars ended the regular season on Brandon Burton's blocked field goal, and a 6-6 record. It was enough to earn them a bowl appearance. The Cougars will actually start the bowl season off on December 18th in the New Mexico Bowl. They will get to face former WAC Rival, UTEP Miners, a team going in the opposite direction as the Cougars by losing 5 of their last 6 games.

Viva Las Vegas

Thanks to Burton's Block, the Utes are going to the Vegas Bowl. With them they bring their 9 game winning streak. However they put that streak up against the most difficult opponent they have faced during that stretch, thanks to ESPN working a deal to get Boise State as the opponent.

Due to a lack of Pac-10 bowl teams, this traditional Pac-10 vs. MWC matchup looked like it wouldn't be happening. Instead we get a future Pac-12 team versus a future MWC team.

Will Cain Be Able?

To make the game even more difficult for the Utes, it was announced that Jordan Wynn, who had been suffering with a shoulder injury since the Iowa State game, and had it re-injured against BYU, will miss the game, due to shoulder surgery. The surgery was necessary in order to get Wynn back for next season.

This means that Terrance Cain, will get one last chance to redeem himself.

Next Week

Next week we will preview BYU's New Mexico Bowl matchup, and give a review of their season.

Posted by Sideshow in Red, Blue And Pigskin at 15:50

Monday, December 6, 2010

Apologies

Dear Listeners:

As some of you may know, I (Joey) have been suffering from some health issues this past year. Unfortunately, my physical body is trying (yet again) to re-assert its dominance in my life - this put me in the situation this weekend where I spent several days paralyzed with pain and was not even able to get to a phone to let Pete know there would be no podcast delivered for editing this week.

As circumstances provide, we will get our review of the last of the "Star Trek" films published, as well as return to our regularly scheduled programming with "The West Wing". On behalf of both Peter and myself, I apologize for the gap in the schedule.

Posted by Ancient of Days in Podcast at 10:55

Friday, December 3. 2010

Brashen

Last spring after some discussion, Daboo gave our old labrador-mix mutt (some of you knew and hated Ford) back to her mom and we adopted a German Shepherd puppy. We named him Brashen (after the character in the Liveship Traders by Robin Hobb) and we call him Brash.

I'd always loved German Shepherds and admired their intelligence and versatility. When I was a kid, I learned that they've been trained as guide dogs for the blind; since then, I've learned they are also used to sniff out narcotics, apprehend individuals in cooperation with law enforcement officials, and of course for sheep herding. They are also my favorite looking dog. I have posted some images of him as a puppy here on Winged Wolves.

Daboo was willing to get a German Shepherd on the condition that she be able to train him to do something useful. She did some poking around and found a club here in Utah that does Schutzhund training (Wasatch Hundesport). She joined the club and quite enjoys spending her Saturdays out doing tracking, obedience, and bite work.

Somehow I also got roped into helping out by programming a website for the club. I can't take credit for much of the design, but I built a database onto the existing site and cleaned up some css issues.

If you would like to be chased around by a 70 pound dog, let me know, I'd be happy to help!

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Personal Entry at 08:31

Thursday, December 2, 2010

Peter Nash Day Around the World

As most of you know, December 2nd is Peter Nash Day. I thought I'd share some of the photos that are pouring in from around the world demonstrating how Peter Nash Day is celebrated - feel free to add a link to your own Peter Nash Day celebration photojournal in the comments! More will be added as they come in, so keep watching this space. I don't know who these three fine fellows are, but they're clearly enjoying Peter Nash Day:

In some parts of the world, school let out early so people could go home to "get their Nash on":

The magic 8-ball wishes all of us a "Happy Peter Nash Day":

Even Harry Potter knows it's Peter Nash Day:

"Wait," cry the office workers, "it's Peter Nash Day? We're going home!":

Women everywhere go CRAZY for Peter Nash Day:

This blog recommends you keep your "Peter Nash Day" celebrations in check - don't be like this young man, whose PND party drew the attention of the local police force:

Posted by Ancient of Days in Gathering Darkness at 22:13

Red, Blue And Pigskin

And thus ended the third age. And how else would this age end, than with a game going down to the wire. In a rivalry that has the most 7 point or fewer games since 1997, this year's version wasn't any different. After suffering through Harline being open, Magic Happening on 4th and 18, and the Blue Streak the last few years, Utah finally ended up with some magic of their own, thanks to mid week film study pointing out a hole in the Cougar field goal unit. Blocked!

After 59 minutes and 56 seconds of gameplay, BYU who had led most of the game was trailing by one, with the score 16-17, when they lined up for a game winning Mitch Payne 43 yard field goal. The Utes desperately needed to block the attempt. And thanks to mid-week game film study, they knew BYU was weak on the right side, so they moved speedy Brandon Burton to that side. What happened next will join Harline, Magic, Blue Streak, 34-31, Kaneshiro's Doink, and all the other memorable moments in this rivalries lore.

Burton came off the edge, got his hand on the ball and the Utes covered it up to seal the victory, as the Utes, and Ute Fans became enveloped by the joy of victory, while those of the Blue persuasion were left with the agony of losing a game in which they had held the other team scoreless for 3 quarters.

Of course not all BYU fans wanted to admit that their team blewa 13-0 lead, and rather than put the blame on their team, they would rather look elsewhere for answers.

Under Review

Seven Weeks ago, the San Diego Aztecs were robbed against BYU by a horrible replay call on what was a J.J. DiLuigi fumble. While the Aztec fans all whined, the truth is that call is not what won BYU the game. During my write up for that

week, I didn't even mention the call, because of the fact that BYU did enough else right to win, and San Diego State did enough else wrong to lose.

This weekend, Karma came back against BYU. Leading 16-10 with five and a half minutes left in the game, Jordan Wynn threw an interception to Brandon Bradley. During the return, Kendrick Moeai ripped the ball out of Bradley's hands and gave the ball back to Utah. Two plays later Utah scored what would be the winning TD.

The fumble was replayed and ultimately upheld. It shouldn't have been. While it wasn't as atrociously wrong as the San Diego State game, it still seemed to be pretty obvious that Bradley's knee was down a couple of frames before the ball was ripped out. What the replay official saw that made him leave the call as is, I don't know. This replay combined with the SDSU game, showed a major flaw in the replay system. You can't ask officials to overturn the calls of their official buddies. It should be a third party.

While that call did swing momentum into Utah's favor, and Utah scored two plays later, don't believe for half as long as Bradley's knee was down before the ball came out, that it cost BYU the game. Much like there were plenty of other reasons that BYU beat the Aztecs, this fumble replay isn't even in the top 7 reasons why Utah beat BYU.

Here are those reasons.

1a. The Block

The obvious reason that the Cougars lost the game was that Brandon Burton blocked Mitch Payne's game winning field goal attempt. However, what hasn't gotten enough play in my opinion is the fact, that block was made possible by something found mid week by the Utah coaching staff.

During film review they found a weakness in the Cougars field goal unit. Knowing they absolutely had to have the block, they swapped Burton to the opposite side he usually mans during field goal block attempts. Coach Whit just told him to get hit that ball, and the next thing Burton knew his hand was stinging.

Now the reason this play doesn't get the number one spot by itself is because...

1b. Cougars Forgoe The Figgie

...the field goal would never have been required by the Cougars had Bronco done the smart thing earlier in the third quarter, and kicked a field goal, instead of going for it on 4th and inches. With a little more than twelve minutes to go in the third quarter, the Cougars, aided greatly by a Terrance Cain interception, faced 4th and inches at the Utah 14 yard line. Now I understand the desire to go for it on such a short distance, and possibly break the opponents will.

However at this point it was only a 6-0 lead for the Cougars. A TD By the Utes gives them the lead. Points were at such a premium so far this game, that the only sane option is to kick the field goal, and make it a two score game.

Instead, Bronco outsmarted himself. First he thought he could break the Utes and went for it on 4th and inches. Then it was Offensive Coordinator Robert Anai's turn to outsmart himself. Instead of running it up the gut with his power running back Brian Kariya, or with his workhorse J.J. Di Luigi, or even QB sneaking it for a measly few inches, Anai called a play action pass, which Brandon Burton knocked away from the receiver, giving the ball back to the Utes.

That field goal there would have meant that Utah would have been trailing 17-19, and the Cougars wouldn't have had to have a field goal to win the game.

3. Utah Wanted It More

Most of the time when a game comes down to the wire, the team that wants it more, is the one that comes out victoriously. In this game, Utah wanted it more.

4 moments that prove that Utah wanted it more.

In the 4th quarter, after a BYU fumble, Jordan Wynn threw the ball to DeVonte Christopher. Brian Logan had good coverage, but knowing that Logan was just 5'6" Wynn threw it up making it a jump ball. As both Players jumped for the ball, it seemed as if Logan would be able to do just enough to prevent the catch. However, Christopher reached around Logan, tipped the ball up, caught the tip, and fell into the end zone, all while keeping his hands under the ball to prevent it from hitting the ground. Brian Logan had stellar coverage on the play, Christopher just wanted the ball more.

Brandon Burton's block, was a player needing to make a play, and going out and making the play.

Even though Bradley's knee was down, Moeai ripping the ball out of Bradley's hands was a moment where two men battle, and Moeai's sheer will won out.

And finally Eddie Wide's performance all game. Wide suffered an injury in the first half. It was only worsened thanks to a Horse Collar tackle in the second half, yet wide kept coming back into the game, shrugging off the injury, and being the workhorse for Utah.

Another way you can tell that Utah wanted it more...

4. BYU Unable To Convert Field Goals Into Touchdowns

Four times during the game BYU had the ball at the Utah 26 or closer. Of those four drives, only one went for a touchdown. Twice the Cougars were within the Ute 15 yard line. They ended up with 3 points from those two drives.

BYU had plenty of times to score TD's, and put this game out of reach. They just could not do it, instead they ended up kicking field goals, which let Utah climb it's way back in the game.

5. Halftime Adjustments

Utah's playcalling in the first half was terrible. Aaron Roderick continued a 4 game slide that has been worse than QB Jordan Wynn's. Apparently Roderick forgot that he had two stud senior running backs, because for the majority of the first half, the Utes abandoned the run game. And when they did try to run it, they just called simple dive plays. Utes went into halftime with 9 running back rushes for 11 yards.

After halftime, partially precipitated by a lack of trust in now playing Terrance Cain, the Utes re-discovered their running game. In the second half the Utes ran 15 times for 78 yards. Not only that, but they used both running backs in the passing game as well coming out of the back field.

The re-focus on the running backs sparked the offense, and was a good reason why the Utes, who were stuck with miserable field position in the first half, was able to start moving the ball.

Defensively, the Utes focused more on the run game for BYU. The Cougars had amassed 47 rushing yards in the first half. This running game had allowed Heaps to get comfortable and is what allowed the Cougars to take a 6-0 halftime lead. The second half, the Cougars only got 18 yards, and dared Heaps to try and beat them. Fortunately for them, the Coaches didn't seem to really trust Heaps with this job, until they absolutely had to, and even then not enough. With the running game stuffed, BYU struggled offensively, and weren't able to keep switching field position, and pin the Utes deep, as they had been in the first half.

A key to Utah stopping the run, was the realization that BYU didn't do anything but run the ball out of it's I-Formation set. So everytime in the second half when the Cougars would line up in this set, Utah would load the box and get the stop.

6. BYU Didn't Trust Heaps

As mentioned above, BYU didn't put their faith in "Saint" Jake. When they'd get deep into Utah territory, they were more than happy to try and play it safe, and settle for field goals. Only once did they actually take a risk, and as mentioned above, it was a terrible time to do it. That said, on the 4th and inches, Heaps actually made a good, quick, throw under pressure. Brandon Burton just made a better play.

The lack of trust was never more evident than on BYU's final drive. BYU got the ball with about 4:20 left in the game. First two plays of the drive were runs. They both got stuffed, and a minute was now off of the clock. With no other choice, BYU put the ball in their freshman QB's hands. And he delivered. 5 play later, 4 of which were passes, BYU was sitting at the Utah 24 yard line.

Apparently BYU was fine settling for a 40+ yard field goal, as out went the WR's, and in came the I-Formation. 3 plays later BYU was at the Utah 25, and Mitch Payne was coming out for a 42 yard field goal.

Sure BYU couldn't afford a turnover, or a sack that would have taken them out of field goal range. Sure all BYU needed was a field goal to win, and sure Mitch Payne was already 3 for 3 on the day, including 2 from 42+. And yes Mitch

Payne is the all time kicking scorer in MWC history. Mitch Payne has only ever missed 4 kicks less than 40 yards in his career. However once he goes beyond that 40 yard line, his numbers drop. In his career, he is 9/16 on kicks between 40 and 49 yards. So despite having made 2 already that day, a 42 yard field goal was no gimme.

BYU should have trusted Heaps to get about 5 more yards. Instead, as they had done all day long, they took the ball away from their QB, and played not to make a mistake. Which in and of itself, was the mistake.

It's kind of funny that although Heaps was the better of the QB's, he was the one who wasn't trusted. While the one who struggled, but had the most trust of his coaching staff is the one who became victorious.

7. Couldn't Stop Utah

Bad calls are part of the game. It's the human element. There is no way that officials will always get it right. You hope those missed calls don't have a huge effect, but in truth rarely has a missed call actually cost a team a game. In this case there were more than five minutes in the game, and the Cougars had a 6 point lead. Utah still had to score.

That's just what they did. BYU wasn't able to deal with the adversity. On the next play they gave up a huge pass down the middle to TE Dallin Rogers that set the ball up on the 3 yard line. On the very next play, Matt Asiata scored. One stop is all BYU had to do, and that fumble call was moot. On some earlier bad calls that went against the Utes, Utah was able to overcome and make a stop. BYU failed to do so here.

8. Still Plenty Of Time

There was no guarantee that even had the officials got that call correct, that BYU would have held on. There was over five minutes left in the game at the time of the call. Although BYU was just coming off of a 15 play drive, that was aided by a controversial replay of it's own, BYU really hadn't been moving the ball that well in the second half. Their other drives that half had combined for 16 plays, 58 yards, 1 TD, 1 punt, 1 fumble, and 1 turnover on downs. This despite two drives starting inside the Utah 23 yard line. Momentum had clearly swung in the favor of the Utes.

Utah also has the ability to strike quickly. Their first TD was a 1 play, 37 yard TD pass. Their 2nd TD ended up being a 3 play 38 yard drive. All through the year they have shown the ability to move down the field with quickness. The week before, the Utes had two 3 play, 60+ yard TD drives.

The Utes also had all three timeouts. So say Utah had forced BYU to a three and out, and BYU had taken 1 1/2, or 2 minutes off the clock. The Utes would have gotten the ball with 3 1/2, or 4 minutes still to go in the game. With three timeouts, and the college timing rules that stop the clock on first downs. And considering that a three and out would have really had momentum on the Utes side, who's to say Utah still doesn't score a TD. Only this time there wouldn't be any time on the clock for BYU to mount a drive.

9. The Other Calls

Pinning all the complaints on that one call, also discounts the fact that even though there weren't many penalties called, officiating in the game wasn't at the highest level. It also ignores the assistance that BYU received from three other calls during the game. The first half was war of field position. What really assisted BYU was the ability to pin Utah deep in their own territory. In the second half, BYU made a pass deep to Devin Mahina, and he was hit hard by Brian Blechen. Blechen was flagged for a "hit above the shoulders", aka a Helmet to Helmet hit. Replays would show that Blechen did nothing wrong. Blechen hit with his arms extended into Mahina's chest. The only helmet contact came from the fact that Mahina was in the air, and came down onto Blechen.

Mahina ended up dropping the pass. This play was a third down. Instead of forcing a punt from BYU's side of the field, the Cougars got a new set of downs in Utah territory. They would eventually punt and force Utah to start at the 10 yard line.

Later in the second half, Eddie Wide ran for a first down. On the tackle out of bounds, the BYU defender clearly grasped Eddie Wide under the shoulder pad for a horse collar tackle. No flag, even though it hurt Wide, and he was down for a few minutes. Terrance Cain would eventually throw an interception on this drive, but who knows how play calling would have been different in the 15 yards from this penalty had put the Utes in BYU territory.

The above two examples came on drives where neither team scored. Only field possession was affected. However the third one did occur on a drive where BYU had scored. All second half BYU had been struggling to move the ball as well as they did in the first half. On 2nd and 10 from the BYU 31, Heaps was under pressure, scrambled and eventually

threw a pass to Devin Mahina on the sideline. Mahina bobbled the ball as he fell to the ground. The play was ruled a reception. It was sent for review. During the review you can see Mahina Bobble it twice while his feet were in bounds, than Mahina fell to the ground on his back. As he hits his back, you can see once more the Mahina bobble the ball, still trying to get control. However since he was already out of bounds, and a WR who goes to the ground in the process of making a catch, must control the ball throughout the process, the play should have been ruled an incomplete pass. Instead BYU had a first down, and what would become a field goal drive was extended.

This replay was as obvious as the fumble replay. It was also just as blown. However much like BYU failed to stop Utah, Utah failed to prevent BYU on the rest of the drive. BYU got a field goal out of the drive.

The truth is as bad as these calls were, and as bad as the fumble call was, they were not even close to being the reason Utah won, and BYU lost. Utah won because they wanted it more. BYU lost because they made enough mistakes to allow the Utes victory. BYU fans should be looking at their team, and their coaches, not the men in stripes.

Be Careful What You Wish For

Despite coming off of a career week against the Aztecs, many Utah fans were foolishly calling for Terrance Cain to play in place of Jordan Wynn. Obviously Wynn had struggled the second half of the season. There were many reasons for this, some of which were Wynn's fault, some of which weren't. Wynn never was comfortable against TCU, and became gun shy. You could also tell that the constant booing by Utah fans, had started to affect Wynn mentally.

However during that stretch where Wynn had slumped, the Utah offensive line had suffered some it's worst weeks of the year with protection. The WR's were also turning into BYU WR's by not being able to catch the balls Wynn did throw. Worst of all was that Aaron Roderick was in the middle of a stretch of terrible play calling.

But football is a what have you done for me lately business, and fans don't want excuses, so when Wynn struggled in the first half, out came the boo-birds, and the foolish calls for Terrance Cain to start. As the Ute offense came out for the first offensive drive of the second half, fans got their wish, as Cain took the field, and was cascaded by Cheers. Terrance Cain would then go to show fans they need to be careful what they wish for.

Terrance Cain is a good quarterback. He could be a successful starter for about 40-50 division 1 schools. However he isn't as good in a complicated offense such as Utah runs. He has never had the grasp of the offense the way Wynn has. And remember, I am someone who said it would be a mistake if Utah burned Wynn's redshirt last year.

Cain came in, and his first three passes were as bad as any Wynn had thrown that day. He hopped one off the ground, then his height caused issues as his second pass was batted. Finally on his third pass, he locked onto a WR, than threw a pass he never should have thrown, as it ended up in BYU's hands.

On his next possession Cain once again threw a pass he never should have thrown. Fortunately for him BYU ran out of room and was unable to get the interception in bounds. You could tell that Utah coaches didn't trust Cain, as the playcalling from there on out consisted of run plays, and short, short passes, as Cain led the Utes on a bit of a drive. However, with BYU realizing that the Utes didn't trust Cain, they started stopping these passes, so Utah called a pass play. Cain proceeded to throw an even worse intereception than the one previously.

Two drives, two interceptions, and BYU now led 13-0. Wynn was re-inserted, shook off the benching, and led Utah to the victory.

So now the question is what about Wynn for next year. Part of Wynn's struggles were that the Utah coaches trusted him a little too much. Combined with the excess of trust for Wynn, was the fact that there was a lack of trust in Cain. Utah would consistently put the game in Wynn's hands, and go without the run for long stretches of games. While this would work against the dredges of the nation, against better teams it didn't work.

Don't forget that Wynn is also just a sophomore. As a freshman, there isn't a lot of pressure put on you. The playbook is slimmed down, and the play calls are simpler. However with a year under his belt, the coaches started asking more of Wynn this season. While he handled it well to begin with, when adversity struck, and the fans started turning against Wynn, he didn't quite have the mental fortitude to shake it off.

The other problem were the unreal expectations, and praise leveled on Wynn. During the season, even Whittingham said this offense had the potential to be the greatest in Utah history. Comparison's to Brian Johnson and Alex Smith were being heaped on him. Alex Smith was a rare college talent. But many forget that Brian Johnson didn't become the Brian Johnson we all think about until midway through his senior season. Utah fans didn't fully trust Brian Johnson as

he started his senior campaign. Johnson didn't start to show the leadership that he is known for until the Air Force game of that final season.

Next year Wynn will be a junior. He will probably be the best QB on the roster, and he still has all the tools, and talents to become a really good QB for Utah. However, the job should not just be given to him next season. He needs to earn it in spring and fall camp. Utah also needs to help him out, by making sure they get a good running back recruit, and making sure not to forget about him. Wynn also needs to bulk up, and learn to take a hit while running the ball.

Speaking Of Unreal Praise

Jake Heaps had a good game for what was his first taste of the rivalry. While he struggled early, including a few bad passes, one of which ended up as an interception, Heaps hung in there, and got comfortable with the game. On that final drive Heaps led his team down the field with confidence.

It was also during this final drive that the Mtn started talking about a conversation with Bronco Mendenhall they had earlier in the season during the week leading up to San Diego State. According to the Mtn, Mendenhall had said that Heaps had shown enough in practice to make him believe that not only did Heaps have the possibility to become one of the best QB's in BYU history, but that he believed he would become the best.

Heaps had a solid freshman season. He showed a lot of talent, but he also has some holes in his game. However, this is a dangerous road of comparisons, and expectations to start putting on Heaps. BYU has a proud history of QB's. One would have to be really good, to beat out the likes of Jim McMahon, Steve Young, Robbie Bosco, Ty Detmer, Marc Wilson, Gifford Nielson, and Steve Sarkisian, who currently top the list of all time QB's. They along with Virgil Carter are the eight All American QB's BYU has produced. Heck, BYU's all time winning QB was Max Hall, and he wouldn't even be considered a top eight QB in BYU history. One might even say that Brandon Doman, and John Beck, who aren't part of the All-American crew, were better than Hall, meaning Hall isn't even a top 10 QB.

Heaps will now enter his sophomore season, as the guy, hopefully. One can never trust Bronco fully not to make the stupid decision to reinstate the two QB system. However, the sophomore season will also mean, more trust and responsibilities for Heaps. Heaps will have to start getting all of his offensive weapons involved, and not just rely on J.J. DiLuigi. Heaps has the talent, but let's make him earn the praise first.

View From The Red Zone

The crowd was a mixed bag for this rivalry game. On the plus side they were loud, and rambunctious. You could see they were wild enough, that multiple times during broadcast, they made the tv cameras shake. They kept that emotion going through most of the game.

On the negative side, was the ridiculous treatment of Wynn, especially coming off of Wynn's play the week before. Fans were also "rewarded" for their treatment of Wynn by the appearance of Cain. While Mad Giggler and I were vocal about it being a mistake when Cain came in. I did find the cheers for Wynn's return funny though.

As we entered the fourth quarter, and Utah got to 10 points, there started to be a sense of inevitability. We knew what was going to happen. When BYU was driving for their field goal to make it 16-10, Giggler turned to me and said, "Here we go, they'll get a field goal, and then Utah will drive down for the winning TD." Even as trouble started to occur and Utah had to punt, that sense of inevitability was still there.

However, when Utah did score and everyone realized there were four plus minutes on the clock, the Ghosts of Harline, Collie, and Andrew George entered the stadium. And especially as BYU started to drive for that final field goal attempt. A sense of inevitability turned into a bit of dread, of here we go again. While the crowd stayed loud, there were a lot of prayers as BYU lined up for that final kick, begging the Football Gods, to please allow Utah to get one of these last second miracles.

After the game fans stormed the field. I was one of them. And while I was down there in the midst of the chaos I ran into a few of the players. However it was Brian Blechen that stood out to me. As Blechen was trying to make it to the middle of the group with the rest of his teammates, he was constantly asked for people to take a picture with him. Blechen stopped and let all of them take pictures with him. Never once trying to hurry them up.

While I was watching him, he stopped and noticed my face paint job, done by my wife. He shook my hands and complimented the face paint. So I just wanted to share with my wife the player love. But overall I was impressed with Blechen. Sure it was a short sample size, but from what I could see, is that despite being as successful as he was in his

freshman year, he was still very nice, and humble. It's going to be fun watching him.

Upon Re-Watching

I don't know if it was because I knew the outcome, but as I watched the game twice more, BYU didn't seem to dominate the game as much as I thought they had, while in the stands.

I was surprised to see that Utah led the stats at both the end of the first half, and the game. I did remember Utah playing sloppy during the game, and maybe because I focused on Utah during the game, I was kind of surprised to see that BYU also played very sloppily.

Interestingly enough, penalty wise this was one of the cleanest games in years. However, as has seemed to be the rule lately in the rivalry, it was still very sloppy. This wasn't a case of one team dominating and letting it slip through their hands. Upon a third total viewing (one in the stands, two at home), this was a game, where both teams made enough mistakes to lose, while only one made the plays to win. Kind of a like last year, only with a different team winning.

I wonder what it is about rivalry games that cause the sloppiness?

Proof The Rivalry Will Survive

One of the biggest questions as we enter the fourth age, is whether this rivalry will be able to survive, and remain one of the more intense, and best rivalries in the nation, now that both teams are not in the same conference.

This game is proof that it will. There wasn't anything really important on the line this year. Neither team had a chance at the Conference title. There wasn't a BCS Bowl or a National Championship on the line. All that was on the line was a better record, and a possible better bowl.

Yet this game was still an intense, dogfight all the way to the end. While the game needs to be moved away from the third week of the season, and moved to the season opener, as long as both teams remain competitive, this rivalry will be just fine.

Bus Crash

Boise State's bus ride to the national championship came to a screeching halt in Reno, Nevada this week. Despite being ahead 24-7 at halftime, the Broncos let the Wolf Pack back in the game.

Kyle Brotzman lined up for a game winning kick at the end of regulation. He missed it. Boise, then was unable to get a TD in overtime, and again lined up for field goal. Brotzman would later admit the first kick was still on his mind, as he sailed the second kick wide. Nevada would connect on their field goal and had the Broncos the first loss of the season.

The true hypocrisy of the BCS will be shown next Sunday when the bowl selections are released and a one loss Boise team is not selected as an at-large team for a BCS Bowl, but a one loss Ohio State will be. This will be made even worse by the fact, that Boise's strength of schedule, the one thing that the power conferences always rely on to say that Non-AQ's are unworthy, is in fact better than Ohio State's.

Season's End

With the end of the Holy War, the season for the Utes and Cougars are done. They both have accepted bowl bids, Utah to Vegas, and BYU to New Mexico, and next week we'll find out opponents. Over the next few weeks I'll review their individual seasons, as well as preview the bowls. We'll discuss the 2011 outlook for both teams. We'll also review the entire season as a whole, and make fun of my terrible preseason predictions. We will also show off my wife's work this season with a year of game faces.

And Finally

I don't mind BYU, in fact I love them. I love everything about them. I love their program, their fans. I love everything. I think the whole university and their fans and the organization is classy.

Posted by Sideshow in Red, Blue And Pigskin at 14:15

Happy Peter Nash Day

All hail our shiny-domed tv overlord! May his golden smile bless us always and grant us longer lives!

Long Live Peter Nash!

Remember whenever you forget to celebrate Peter Nash day, Joey kills a kitten! Entries from last year

How it all started

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Personal Entry at 06:43