

ATHLETIC PUBLICITY BUREAU

Judging from the calibre of teams met in the basketball season just concluded, BYU moved into the "heavyweight" class with its '63 schedule, and post-season bids now being handed out seem to prove it.

In a glance back at the Y's campaign, it was discovered that ten of the Cougars' 14 losses came against college teams currently slated for post-season tournaments. The number could increase before all berths are filled.

Four of the Y's opponents have been invited to play in the NIT. Providence, LaSalle, Memphis State and Wichita have all accepted bids. The Cougars beat Providence and LaSalle in the Quaker City tournament, but dropped contests to the Tigers and Shockers.

Other BYU opponents have been scheduled for playoff activity within the NCAA. Arizona State, Utah State, Ohio State and Oklahoma City will be in NCAA playoff action this month.

With this kind of opposition, the Cougars did well in fighting to a 12-14 season record. It was only the third losing season in Coach Stan Watts' 14 years as basketball coach at Brigham Young University.

The second place finish behind third-ranked Arizona State in the Western Athletic Conference race also brought some honor to the BYU squad.

The Cougars had a weak 5-9 record going into the WAC campaign, but picked up six wins against four defeats to anchor second place.

If the team fell short of its goal of a championship, there was some consolation in the fact that home attendance topped expectations. More than 103,000 fans witnessed the Y's 13 home games, marking only the third time in fieldhouse history that the attendance reached the 100,000 mark in one season.

A few other high-marks were counted in the '63 season. The Cougars fell only a fraction of a point below their all-time offensive record with a 77.1 point average.

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They were moderately successful from the field with 41 per cent of their shots going in the basket, and 71 per cent of their free throws hitting the mark.

Individually, most of the honors went to two seniors, forward Bruce Burton and guard Gary Batchelor.

Burton topped all scorers with his 445 points and 17.1 scoring average. He collected the most rebounds, 271, and placed himself among the top all-time scorers in BYU history. The 6-4 forward from Lomita, Calif., tallied a total of 1089 points in three years of play with the Cougars.

The best field goal percentage, however, went to center John Lewis, who edged Burton by a fraction of a point. Lewis was .474 accurate from the field compared to Burton's .471 mark.

Batchelor will give future BYU players a good target to shoot for on the free throw line. The Kaysville senior had a .874 percentage from the charity line, and upped his career record to 81 per cent for three years of shooting in the free throw department.

In another record entry of note, Bob Skousen, who saw action in only four games this season because of a painful knee injury, was credited with a 15.5 point career scoring average.

The Arizona senior had a 17.7 average in 1959, a 15.9 average in 1962, and 13.0 mean in the season just completed. The former high of 15.1 was held by a former great, Joe Nelson.

Six seniors will be lost through graduation. They are guards Bill Crow, Ron Steinke and Gary Batchelor, and forwards Jim Kelson, Bruce Burton and Bob Skousen.

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