

outlook

by Glenn Potter
Head Basketball Coach

In last year's press guide outlook, I said I had no idea what the odds were for winning three conference championships in a row. This year the question is academic for winning three out of four, since we lost 62% of our scoring and 67% of our rebounding strength from last year's team.

Right now we will have a difficult time matching the accomplishments of the three years I have been at BYU, both as an assistant and as head coach. First, we must replace our entire front line, including the first substitute at that position. Second, we play 16 of our 26 games on the road. And third, the overall strength of the league is improving every year.

Looking first at our front line losses, we are missing three starters; Kresimir Cosic (6-11), Moni Sarkalahti (6-8), and Brian Ambrozich (6-5). This means we have to replace three of our first five scorers, plus our top three rebounders. We also lost Jay Bunker, our first replacement at both forward and center.

BALANCE MISSING, TOO

Balance was a big word last year with all starters averaging in double figures. Cosic seemed to be the real cog, however, since he was both our leading scorer and rebounder. How do you replace a three-year, first team all-WAC performer and legitimate All-America candidate?

To offset these losses, we must find replacements

We did not sign any junior college transfers, so from among our returning players and newcomers, we must draw from two seniors, two juniors, two sophomores and six freshmen. Very probably this represents the youngest, least experienced team of any varsity squad BYU has put on the playing floor in the last 25 years. But I do feel we have some good players, and it seems to be a question of how quickly we will mature. (Last year Arizona proved you could compete and win with young players.)

NEW OFFENSIVE ALIGNMENT

One thing I feel will help the effectiveness of our young players is the change in our offensive set from 2-1-2 to 1-3-1, high-low post. This means our taller freshmen, Mark Handy (6-9) and Jay Cheesman (6-9), will be competing for a position closer to the basket, and will not have to make a complete transition from center, where they both played in high school, to a regular forward. Because of the introduction of this new offense, I will refer to these positions as "inside" (high and low post) and "outside" (point and two wings).

THE OUTSIDE POSITION

The nucleus of our varsity experience is at this position. Doug Richards (15.9), the second leading scorer from last year's club, and Belmont Anderson (13.0), will be called upon to increase their leadership abilities and all-around performance. Both of these seniors received recognition as all-conference performers, and their play proved more consistent as the season progressed. One thing is certain—they must take charge if we hope to cope with the lack of experience at other positions.

After Anderson and Richards, the third outside position is a tossup. Grig Clawson (6-3) averaged 8-minutes of playing time a game last year, and should have an edge in experience. Chris Williams (6-7) is up from the freshman team where he averaged 13.6 points per game. Chris is a fine ball handler, and will challenge for the third spot.

With such a small number of lettermen returning, there will be many new faces on the squad. Doug Ainge (6-5) appears to be excellent shooter; Mike Berning (6-1) may be the fastest of the newcomers; Veryl Law (6-1) appears to be very consistent; and Gifford Nielsen (6-5) will be late in reporting, since he is involved in football.

Any of the above could be the third outside player. In any event, they will provide good depth to the outside positions, even though they lack experience.

THE INSIDE ATTACK

Troy Jones (6-9) and Greg Snow (6-7) are the only front-liners returning from last year. Troy has the size (220), and he handles himself well close to the basket. He is equally adept with both his right and left hand. Only a sophomore, he was a redshirt last year. Greg, a returning letterman, is an excellent shooter, but lacks consistency in rebounding, where he must improve. A pair of freshmen, Mark Handy (6-9) and Jay Cheesman (6-9) will also be competing for the post positions. Mark seems to have the tools to become an excellent player. He has size, strength, jumping ability, and quickness to be a real contender for a starting berth.

Jay has been handicapped because of an injury he received this summer. It was necessary to operate and attach three ligaments to the bone in his ankle. He, too, has good size (200) and is a good shooter.

THE CONFERENCE RACE

It appears the power in the Western Athletic Conference has shifted to the southern schools, with the possible exception of Utah. Arizona, Arizona State, New Mexico, UTEP and Utah should all field excellent teams. Arizona needed a center, and recruited one, while ASU needs only to replace its starting guards from last year's championship team. New Mexico must replace some proven players, but last year they had more depth than any team in the conference. UTEP had some unfortunate injuries, but if Jim Forbes is healthy, they will be a challenge. Utah played many young players last season, and all are back, with the exception of Eddie Trail, so I look for them to be improved.

Colorado State has a number of transfers, as does Wyoming. A lot depends on how quickly they jell as to where they will finish in the league.

Personally, I feel Arizona and Arizona State are the teams to beat, with UTEP, New Mexico, and Utah right behind. I would have to place CSU, Wyoming and BYU in the darkhorse class.

NON-CONFERENCE GAMES

My first thought is that we play too many road games. We open at home on Nov. 30 (Weber State) and Dec. 1 (Idaho State). Immediately thereafter we play only one other regular scheduled home game between Dec. 1 and Jan. 24.

Besides our two Big Sky opponents (Weber has represented the conference in the NCAA tournament as far back as I can remember), we play New Mexico State twice, Denver, Kansas State and Creighton. NMS has hopes of joining the top-twenty after failing off last year. Denver is coming off an excellent season, while Kansas State (loser to Memphis State in the NCAA regional tournament) must find replacements for two starters.

In summary, this will be the youngest, least experienced team that I have ever had an opportunity to work with. Our success will depend on two things: 1) increased leadership and improved play from our returning lettermen, and 2) consistency from our incoming freshmen.

Name, Position	Ht.	Class	Scoring Average	Rebound Average	Scoring Position
LETTERMEN LOST: (5)					
*** Kresimir Cosic, c	6-11	Grad.	20.2	9.5	1st
*** Kalevi Sarkalahti, f	6-8	Grad.	11.7	9.1	4th
** Brian Ambrozich, f	6-5	Grad.	10.7	8.6	5th
*** Jay Bunker, f-c	6-8	Grad.	6.1	3.8	6th
*** Craig Jorgensen, f	6-7	Grad.	.9	.5	9th

LETTERMEN RETURNING: (4)

** Doug Richards, outside	6-3	Sr.	15.9	4.6	2nd
** Belmont Anderson, outside	6-3	Sr.	13.0	5.2	3rd
* Grig Clawson, outside	6-3	Jr.	1.8	.6	7th
* Greg Snow, inside	6-7	Jr.	-	-	-

OTHER SQUAD MEMBERS. (2)

Chris Williams, outside	6-6	Soph.	JV last year	Lakewood, Colo.
* *Troy Jones, inside *Redshirt	6-9	Soph.	-	LaCrescenta, California

INCOMING FRESHMEN: (6)

	Ht.	Wt.	Class	Hometown
Jay Cheesman, inside	6-9	185	Fresh.	Orem, Utah
Doug Ainge, outside	6-5	185	Fresh.	Eugene, Oregon
Mark Handy, inside	6-9	225	Fresh.	Ogden, Utah
Veryl Law, outside	6-2	175	Fresh.	Provo, Utah
Mike Berning, outside	6-1	175	Fresh.	Fort Wayne, Indiana
Gifford Nielson, outside	6-5	195	Fresh.	Provo, Utah

RETURNING STARTERS: (2)

Guard - Doug Richards,	6-3	Sr., Regular for two seasons.
Guard - Belmont Anderson,	6-3	Sr., Alternated as a sophomore, regular starter last year.

jv **schedule**

jv results

Nov. 30	Weber State	Provo	5:15
Dec. 1	C.E.U.	Provo	5:15
Dec. 7	Dixie College Inv.	St. George	
Dec. 8	Dixie College Inv.	St. George	
Dec. 14	C.E.U.	Price	7:30
Dec. 20	Ricks College	Provo	5:15
Dec. 22	Utah State	Provo	5:15
Jan. 12	Utah	Salt Lake	5:15
Jan. 19	Utah State	Logan	5:15
Jan. 24	College Souther Idaho	Provo	5:15
Jan. 25	Utah Technical College	Provo	5:15
Feb. 7	Utah Technical College	Provo	5:15
Feb. 9	Dixie College	Provo	12:45
Feb. 14	Weber State	Ogden	5:15
Feb. 16	Utah	Provo	5:15
Feb. 21	Ricks College	Rexburg	7:30
Feb. 22	College So. Idaho	Twin Falls	7:30
Feb. 28	Intramural All-Stars	Provo	5:15
Mar. 2	Intramural All-Stars	Provo	5:15

		OPP	BYU
Dec. 8	CEU at Price	108	94
Dec. 9	Tech at Provo	69	116
Dec. 13	CEU	83	102
Dec. 16	USU	89	84
Dec. 22	Ricks	74	77
Dec. 23	CSI	74	73
Jan. 13	ISU at Pocatello	76	58
Jan. 20	USU at Logan	71	67
Jan. 23	Utah at Salt Lake	72	78
Jan. 25	SUSC	65	92
Feb. 3	Utah	69	86
Feb. 8	Dixie at St. George	90	72
Feb. 9	SUSC at Cedar City	85	71
Feb. 17	Dixie	103	97
Feb. 23	Ricks at Rexburg	91	81
Feb. 24	CSI at Twin Falls	97	73