

'79-'80

## The Outlook

There has been only one school to win back-to-back conference titles in the 17-year history of the WAC and that was BYU in 1971 and 1972.

All five starters return from last year's championship BYU squad and the 22,700-seat Marriott Center is sold out for season tickets, so the only onus or bonus for the Cougars is to see if they can repeat as WAC titlists.

Should the starting five remain the same as last year, the lineup would be two seniors, a junior and two sophomores. The 1978-79 squad produced a 20-8 record, the best since the Cougars won the 1972 WAC crown with a 21-5 record.

The lone junior from last year's starting five is All-American Danny Ainge, referred to as Danny Two Sport by *Sports Illustrated*. Ainge, twice All-WAC, sports a 19.8 average in his two years on the BYU guard line. When Ainge isn't serving as a catalyst for the Cougars, he is working out as a second baseman for the Toronto Blue Jays.

The two seniors to join 6-5 Ainge are 6-10 center Alan Taylor and 6-1 backcourt artist Scott Runia. Runia was second team All-WAC and Taylor was honorable mention last season. Taylor enters his third season as a starter in the pivot, improving vastly each season. Taylor is BYU's workhorse on the boards and is an excellent percentage field goal shooter inside the perimeter.

Outside the perimeter, the quick release pistol is Runia, a BYU starter since his freshman days.

The two sophomore forwards are excellent shooters both inside and outside, with a number of fluid moves toward the bucket. The power forward mold is filled by 6-10 Fred Roberts, who played in four foreign countries this past season with either U.S. all-star teams or the BYU squad's trip to Italy and Yugoslavia. Roberts had an excellent freshman year. The finesse forward is filled by 6-7 Devin Durrant, who had a good freshman season. Durrant is a highly skilled passer who exhibited a deft touch a few times last season.

And without losing hardly a beat in pulse in the backcourt, Arnold can insert 6-2 junior Steve Craig, who can really spring as a jumper.

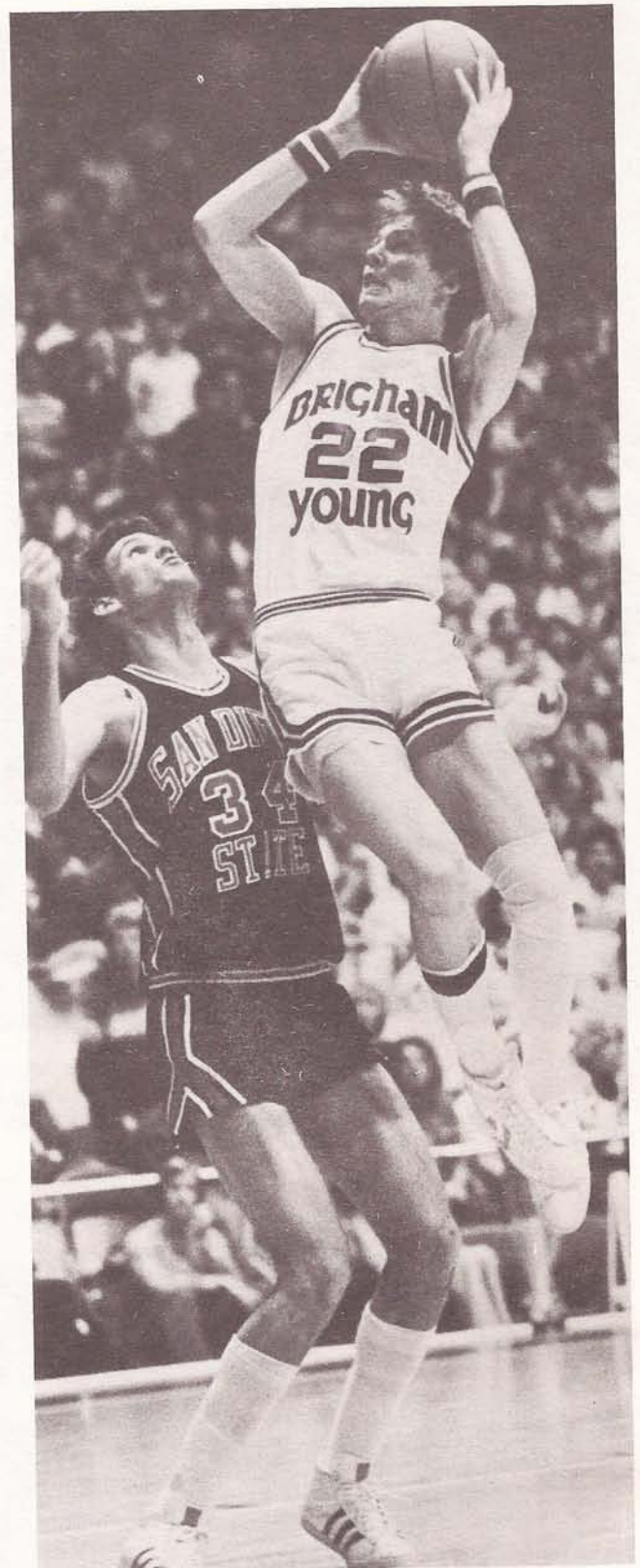
Sophomore muscleman Steve Trumbo, 6-8, is probably the first forward off the bench, but even had to spare others in the pivot at times last season. He, too, has excellent vertical jumping ability.

Craig Christensen, 6-4, was the only other returning letterman who saw much action last season, but finds himself mixed with some of the most talented backcourt players in the Rockies.

A new blossom in the backcourt is 6-3/4 redshirt Greg Ballif, who pots left-handed and has hustled himself into contention after foot surgery.

The trip to Italy and Yugoslavia produced a few surprises other than Ballif's return, and one of them was 6-6 Steve Anderson. Anderson proved himself as a long-range zone buster and seems to have recovered from knee surgery which curtailed his playing time last season.

Newcomers, a couple of prep All-Americans, strengthen the pivot and guard line for the Cougars, with 6-11 Greg Kite and 6-1 Mike Maxwell. Kite (Houston, Tex.) has the ability to adequately spell Taylor, while Maxwell (Salt Lake City, Utah) is quick



*All-American Danny Ainge*

and is an excellent shot—both were probably the cream of their respective regions last season.

Graduation losses from last season were just a shade below those of 1978—two players with a combined firepower of five per cent. Another loss to the team is that of 7-0 Dave McGuire, who transferred to a Los Angeles area junior college.

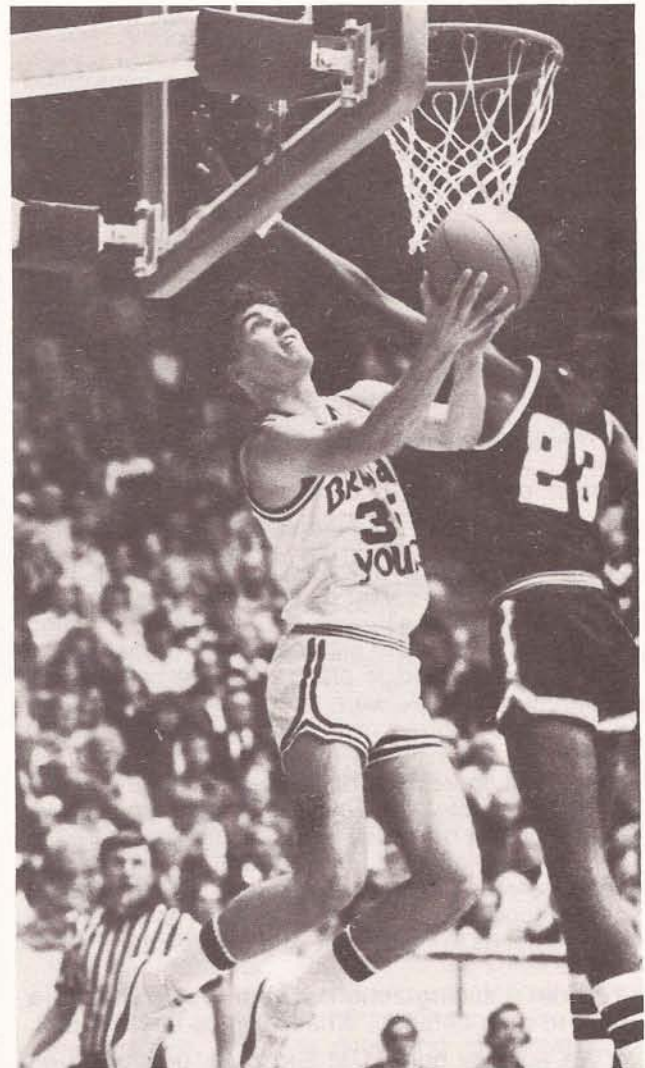


# Personnel Picture

PLAYERS NOT RETURNING (3)	Ht.	Scoring Average	Rebounding Average	Scoring Position	Loss/Class
**Keith Rice, F	6-5½	4.1	2.0	7th	Graduation
***Glen Roberts, F	6-5	2.0	1.1	10th	Graduation
**Dave McGuire, C	7-0	1.5	1.5	12th	Transfer
PLAYERS RETURNING (9)					
**Danny Ainge, G	6-5	18.4	3.8	1st	Junior
*Fred Roberts, F-C	6-10	14.3	6.8	2nd	Sophomore
***Alan Taylor, C	6-10	13.6	9.5	3rd	Senior
*Devin Durrant, F	6-7	13.2	5.2	4th	Sophomore
***Scott Runia, G	6-1	11.6	2.5	5th	Senior
*Steve Craig, G	6-2	6.3	2.9	6th	Junior
*Steve Anderson, F	6-6	3.5	3.2	8th	Junior
*Steve Trumbo, F	6-8	2.7	2.2	9th	Junior
*Craig Christensen, G	6-4	2.0	0.6	11th	Junior
FRESHMAN RECRUITS (2)					
Greg Kite	6-11	17.8	15.0	Madison High,	Houston, Texas
Mike Maxwell	6-1	30.8	—	Highland High,	Salt Lake City, Utah



Steve Craig, a proven sixth man



Devin Durrant: WAC Freshman of the Year



Arnold Interview:

# **Arnold Answers**

## **Questions on**

### **1979-80 Team**

Will our graduate and mission losses or our incoming freshmen alter BYU's game plan?

- Very little, if any. Our graduation and mission losses included two players that saw limited action and one redshirt that saw none. If anything, our incoming freshmen Greg Kite and Mike Maxwell will give us additional strength and depth.

The starting five returns this year; will they necessarily be the starters for 1979-80?

- On the first day of practice, they were considered as our starting five. What happens between now and our first game, however, will be based entirely upon which five players will best play together as a unit. Frankly, I feel that too much emphasis is put on who will start. There is no doubt in my mind that we have at least seven players who have the ability to start for us and two more who will play substantially and will contribute greatly to the success we hope to enjoy.

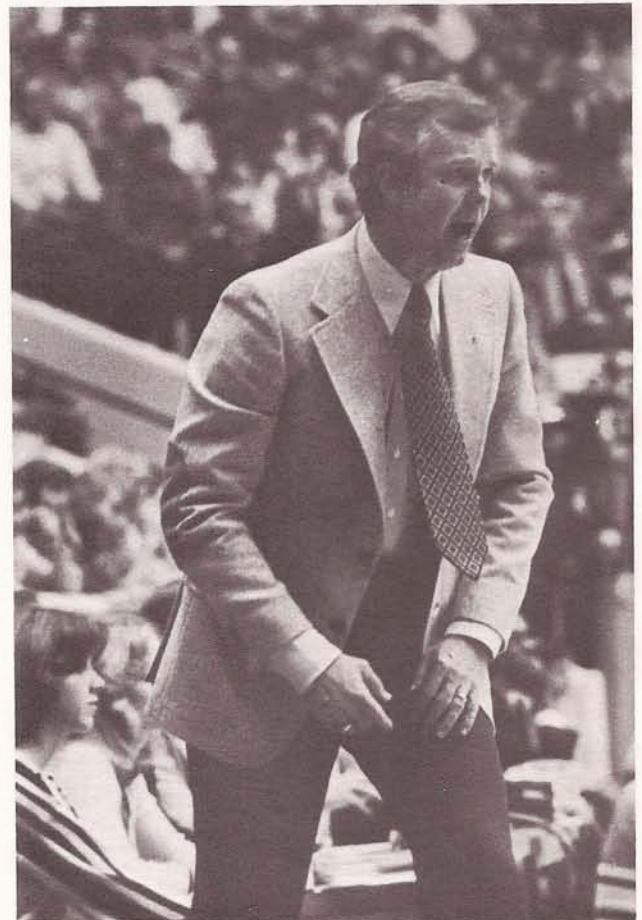
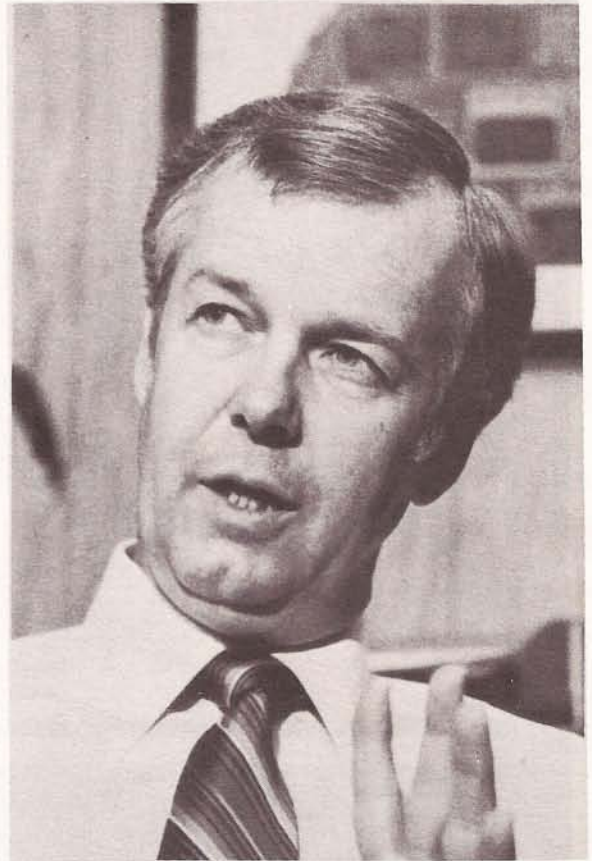
What was it that our team lacked last year and do we have those elements this year?

- We lacked three things last year that kept us from being a legitimate national power. (1) Experience at certain positions; (2) Solid man-to-man defensive play at certain positions; (3) Backup strength at the center position.

This year I believe we will improve in all three areas. (1) We are a year older so obviously we have more experience, although we are still quite young in certain spots; (2) Last year some of our young players were asked to play a different position defensively than they were accustomed to. I'm sure we will see improvement from them this year; (3) Greg Kite will help us more this year than most people will appreciate. His presence on the practice court will enable Alan Taylor to continue to improve even more for his final year. I do not expect Greg to set the world afire his first year, but he will prove to be a very competent replacement for Alan when called upon, which will enable us to give Alan the rest he needs to perform at peak efficiency.

You ran a sliding zone last year, but you favor a man-to-man defense. What will it be in 1979-80?

- We will play both M/M and zone, depending on the opposition. Whichever it is I assure you it will be hard-nosed and intense.







Do you plan to implement any other offensive or defensive changes?

• We were successful with what we did last year so I have no intention to change things drastically. We simply hope to improve upon—in some cases add to—our offensive and defensive attacks.

Evaluate the following: our strengths, weaknesses, schedule, and the WAC.

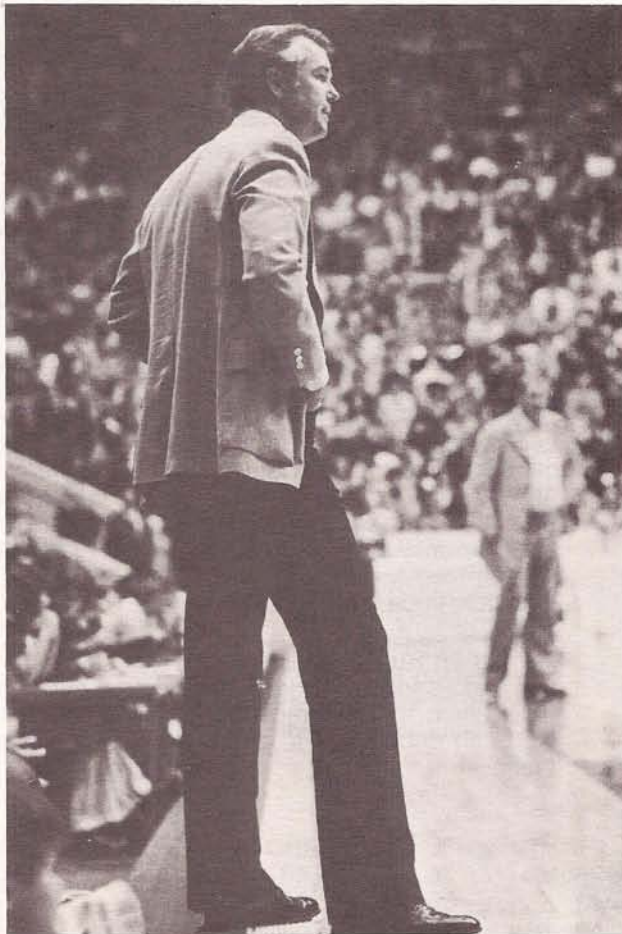
• *Strength*—I believe that we will be strong at all five starting positions, and have a very capable, strong bench for support. We will be a good rebounding team and an excellent shooting team. Our team togetherness is exceptional.

*Weaknesses*—Speed and quickness in certain positions.

*Schedule*—A good schedule. We will be fortunate enough to face some of the outstanding teams in America, particularly in tournament play, providing we are successful in first round competition.

*WAC*—I have said on many occasions that I felt that the WAC was down a bit last year—mainly because it was so young. Every team, with one exception, had outstanding freshmen and sophomore players. That certainly does not lessen our championship, because we were one of the youngest teams, if not the youngest team, in the conference overall.

Our young players continue to grow, and will prove to be as good as any in the country. I therefore feel that for the next two or three years we can expect the competition in the WAC to be among the finest in America. We will be one of the top three or four conferences nationwide.



You were picked to finish first in the WAC last year and accomplished that task. Explain how you intend to repeat this process.

• Last year is history. We are proud of our accomplishments, but they are absolutely meaningless as far as our future is concerned.

We intend to upgrade our level of performance in every category. We will expect every coach and every player to dedicate himself to longer, harder hours of work.

It is our goal to become the very best team that we are capable of becoming. If we do that and it results in another conference championship, we will obviously be pleased and proud once again. On the other hand, if we become the very best team we are capable of becoming and it does not result in a championship, we will still be pleased and proud. To do our best is our objective. If we do so, we will be successful.

Hawaii is now in the league. Will their addition pose many new problems?

• Hawaii's program has been down, but they are rebounding steadily. We expect them to be a positive force in future years. The long round trip to Honolulu looks very attractive on the surface. It will be, however, a very demanding and difficult trip for just the one game. Other than the travel, the lure of the beaches, the hula girls, and the great Polynesian food, we certainly see no problems with Hawaii's entrance into the WAC.