

Season Outlook

BYU begins the 1989-90 basketball season with an enthusiastic new coaching staff and four starters returning. An ideal situation? Not quite.

This season's Cougars don't have much height and very little experience on the bench. And the one missing starter, 6-10 All-America offensive machine Michael Smith, averaged 26.4 points and 8.6 rebounds.

He was the first round pick (13th overall) of the Boston Celtics and won the three-point contest at the Final Four shootout. Besides being a top-notch passer, Smith's absence is compounded by the loss of three front-line reserves.

John Fish, a talented 6-9 freshman a year ago, left on an LDS mission; steady 6-7 reserve Alan Astle graduated; and 6-9 David Wolfe left school.

On the plus side, speedy guard Marty Haws could be one of the best in the conference. The 6-2 senior averaged 14 points and 5.1 assists last year.

Though Haws is often mentioned as a pro football prospect, Coach Reid thinks he will get consideration as an NBA possibility.

The other honors' candidate is 6-6 senior Andy Toolson, last year's second-leading scorer with a 15.3 average and 6.6 rebounds. Toolson will play forward and guard and the Cougars will look to him for leadership and consistency.

Steve Schreiner, a 6-7 junior, averaged 11.2 points and 4.9 rebounds last year, and could improve on that this year with the Cougars looking for more balanced scoring.

The other starter back is Kevin Santiago, a 6-2 senior, who walked on a year ago. He averaged 4.8 points and his confidence improved noticeably over the course of the season.

BYU's only other lettermen saw very limited action. Mark Heslop, a 6-5 sophomore, scored 32 points in 19 games while averaging 5.2 minutes. And 6-9 senior Steve Andrus had four points in averaging 2.3 minutes in 11 games.

Both have a chance to play a lot more this season. Heslop will battle 6-2 redshirt freshman Alan Frampton and 6-5 returned missionary freshman Todd Gentry for backup duty on the guard line.

Three other possibilities are 6-3 senior Paul Briggs, who played a lot with the junior varsity last year, 6-1 JC transfer Scott Moon and 6-2 super shooter Randy Reid.

Moon, who is a walk-on from Utah Valley Community College, probably won't make the impact Santiago (also from UVCC) did a year ago but he could help in the backcourt. He turned down offers from several four-year schools to test his talents at BYU.

Reid, the coach's oldest son, averaged 30 points in high school last year and was a crowd-pleaser type with both three-point ability and passing wizardry.

However, he practiced with the BYU baseball team during the fall which might put him behind in the guard scramble.

The other starter on the front line might well be 6-8 junior Todd Crow from Dixie College. Crow had a great career at Dixie, finishing as the Rebels' number two all-time scorer (he averaged 20.5 last year with eight rebounds per game).

Crow could play a lot as the Cougars battle taller opponents for rebounds. Besides Andrus, help on the front line will depend on the development of three freshmen—6-9 Kirk Davidson, 6-8 John Lloyd and 6-7 Mark Durrant.

Durrant, whose brother, Devin, was an All-WAC performer before going on to European success, averaged 25 points last year while Lloyd had 18 and Davidson 15.

The other roster player can't be counted out, either. He is 6-9 David Astle, who is trying to get back in shape from two years as a church missionary.

Coach Reid says the battle for positions is "wide open" and undoubtedly some of the younger players will figure in the player rotation before too long. Of the 14 scholarship players, seven are freshmen.

"For the first time since I've been here (his 12th year), we have no All-America candidate and no All-WAC player back so we'll have to play well together," says Reid.

"If we are team-oriented, have good chemistry and adjust to the change in coaching style, we could surprise some people. I'm always optimistic.

"I know one thing. No one will out-hustle us."

Schedule-wise, the Cougars have seven of their first 10 games at home (plus exhibitions with Holland and Athletes in Action). As for the WAC race, Reid sees BYU in more of a spoiler role than that of a challenger for league honors.

"New Mexico and UTEP are legitimate top twenty teams and Wyoming returns almost everyone plus some redshirts. Hawaii should be good and Colorado State will be competitive with its style of play. The Rams won't beat themselves.

"Utah has a great nucleus in Josh Grant and Air Force will be as good or better with Raymond Dudley. San Diego State has a lot of talent, which is hard to evaluate because there are so many junior college players.

"BYU probably doesn't have the depth to be a contender but we're looking forward to being part of another great WAC race."

Seniors

Steve Andrus
Paul Briggs
Marty Haws
Kevin Santiago
Andy Toolson

Juniors

Todd Crow
Scott Moon
Steve Schreiner

Sophomore

Mark Heslop

Freshmen

David Astle
Kirk Davidson
Mark Durrant
Alan Frampton
Todd Gentry
John Lloyd
Randy Reid

Coach's Comments

You spent five years working under Frank Arnold and six with Ladell Andersen. What are your thoughts about being the head coach?

First, it's something I've always dreamed about. A year ago I could have gone to UCLA as an assistant but BYU is where I wanted to be. Inside I've felt someday I would be a head coach. I'm thrilled it will be in Provo.

I learned a great deal from Coach Arnold and Coach Andersen. There are a lot of facets of a major college program besides the strategy during the game. I hope I can incorporate some of their strengths in our program.

Also, I think to be successful you have to be a student of the game. In that regard, there are things you can learn from coaches nationally and even from other sports. I've learned from LaVell Edwards on how to deal with people and with the media, for example.

You had a reputation of being very intense as an athlete and then as a high school coach. Will that carry over to your college coaching?

I hope so. I expect a lot from our players. I'm not going to shortchange them. I'll stand up for our players during a game.

I believe in pushing players to their maximum. How does a player know how good he can become unless he is taken to his limits? Our players are like my family. I love them and want the best for them.

Beyond that, I can only say, as I'll say many times, no one will out-hustle us.

What qualities did you look for in assistant coaches?

I wanted people who were hard-working and enthusiastic with experience in recruiting. I needed guys who didn't need training and we got some excellent people.

Tony Ingle was the head coach at Alabama-Huntsville and really has a way with kids—with everyone for that matter. He makes friends instantly. He's been high school coach of the year in Georgia and junior college coach of the year. He's an excellent coach and recruiter.

Charles Bradley had worked with me at camps during the summer. He played against us at Wyoming and coached against us at San Diego State and Wyoming but was always a class guy.

Being our first black coach was never an issue with him. It's like he has always been part of BYU. He's as excited about making the Cougars winners as anyone I've seen.

Their efforts have paid off already. In a few months, we've been in the homes of some real quality players. I feel good about the response we're getting.

You've been an assistant coach for 11 years and you've had a son go through a major recruiting blitz. Has that affected your attitude about recruiting?

Obviously, recruiting is the lifeblood of the program. We need to continually evaluate our methods and their effectiveness. Yes, I have learned many things over those years and with Randy's experience.

Most of all, I've learned there's a lot of competition for the top players. And it demands a year-around effort from the entire coaching staff. It's not fair to designate one person as the "recruiter." We're all going to be involved in recruiting and, when the rules allow, we'll all be making visits to prospects.



Head Coach Roger Reid



Roger and Diane Reid with children (from left) Randy, Darren, Kelli Ann and Robbie.

We're excited about the groundwork which has been accomplished so far and we're looking forward to upgrading our talent and being competitive year in and year out.

Will BYU's recruiting change under Roger Reid?

Yes and no. We'll continue to concentrate on the top LDS players and then the best Utah kids. In those two groups we have a loyal following and youth knowledgeable about our standards and our expectations of them on and off the court.

Then we go wherever we need to for good players. California has been a prime area for all our sports because of the relative proximity and because we have so many students from all parts of the state.

It's logical to think we will look at the South more because of Coach Ingle's connections and at the Washington, D.C. area because of Coach Bradley's connections.

As I said, we need to upgrade our program with the right kind of people and without compromising our integrity.

What is your philosophy for offense and defense?

In a sentence, it is to have an up-tempo offense and to change defenses. We use lots of statistics and analysis to complicate the fact we want our best shooters to have a good shot every time down the floor.

At the same time, we want to force the opponent's players to take poor percentage shots. Having the same players involved in both aspects in a real challenge. They have to change from finesse to be able to score to aggressive to be able to play defense. It's a contradiction which has to take place in a split second hundreds of times in a game.

We would like to push the ball up the floor every chance we get but to fast break you need rebounds. Eventually, we'd like to be able to full court press and use half-court traps.

To summarize, we'll use multiple offenses and try to keep opponents off balance by changing up our defenses as well.

Some people say the missionary program is a big benefit for BYU. How would you evaluate it?

The missionary program definitely is a big benefit for the Church and for the individual. There's a great deal of mental discipline and maturing which takes place.

Basketball-wise, missions take a physical toll because most missionaries aren't involved in a regular conditioning program and have only limited time available to play any ball.

It's also a challenge planning-wise for the coaches because an athlete has a freshman year or redshirt year adjusting to major college ball, two years on a mission and, in most cases, a year to get back in shape and regain his playing skills.

So it's three or four years from when you recruit a player until he's contributing to the program. It's just one of those aspects which makes BYU such a great place that we have to work around.

As much as I'd love to have Nathan Call, Gary Trost and John Fish here as potential starters, I'm happy for them and for the missionary experience.

What is your philosophy about the term "student-athlete" and the challenge to have players graduate?

That's a good question. Above everything else, including winning, we are serious about education. And we aren't just giving lip service to it. We probably met more on academics during the summer than anything else. We're telling that to the players and their parents right up front.

We want a player at BYU to become a better person—to be more qualified to meet life. Some of that we can accomplish through athletics and the rest has to come through the classroom. We want our players to get a degree.

You talk a lot about the intangibles it takes to be winners. Can you elaborate?

The only way we're going to be truly successful is to be a happy family. We need to be team oriented and band together. How the players feel about their teammates, about the school and the program—all those things will determine how good we'll be.

Our coaching staff has that togetherness and, in time, I think our team will too.

We have a great Athletic Director in Glen Tuckett and Associate AD in Pete Witbeck. We have a great support system in the Sports Information Department. We have all the ingredients to be successful.