

A Look at Last Season

Depth, outside shooting touch, and a strong inside game paved the way for BYU's men's basketball team to rise above expectations.

Few, if any, thought at the beginning of the season that BYU would finish the season at **25-7 overall and 12-4** in the Western Athletic Conference, tie for the league title and win the automatic berth through the WAC post-season tournament.

The bubble finally burst when the Cougars, a number-10 seed, lost to Louisiana State, 94-83, in the NCAA first-round at Boise, Idaho.

"It was a fantastic year with big surprises," said BYU Coach Roger Reid. "The strength was our team concept, the unselfishness and the balance. We accomplished a lot in the classroom and on the court."

Reid, 67-29 in three years at the BYU helm, has been successful in leading BYU to **three consecutive 20-win seasons, three NCAA berths, two WAC regular season titles, two league post-season crowns, and has been named WAC and Kodak District 13 (NABC) Coach of the Year twice** in his three years.

The Cougars got their **11th claim to the WAC title and won the U.S. WEST WAC Tournament** thanks to a 54-foot buzzer-beater by **Kevin Nixon** against UTEP. The 73-71 victory over UTEP boosted BYU above the .500 mark for the first time in the eight-year history of that tournament.

BYU was picked fourth in the pre-season WAC poll, but tied with UTEP for the league title with a 12-4 mark and won the Oquirrh Bucket for in-state supremacy for the sixth time with a perfect 5-0 record. BYU was unblemished in league play at the Marriott Center at 8-0. BYU won its first seven games of the season and closed the season with another seven-game winning skein until the LSU loss.

The Cougars were led by center **Gary Trost**, a first-team All-WAC performer who made the U.S. WEST WAC All-Tournament Team for the second year in a row. The 6-10 junior was also named WAC Player of the Week in the final week of regulation play, was All-District by the writers and coaches and made the All-Red Lobster Classic Team.

Other Cougar honors were 6-10 **Russell Larson** being selected as WAC Freshman of the Year and



A blimp was an addition at BYU home games during 1991-92.

being named, along with 6-8 teammate **Kevin Nixon** to the WAC All-Newcomer Team. Larson was MVP of the Cougar Classic and was joined by Nixon.

Transfer **Nick Sanderson**, 6-4, was named to the All-Red Lobster Classic team and **Jared Miller**, 6-8, was named GTE Academic All-District.

Perhaps the key to BYU's season was point guard **Nathan Call**, 5-11, who was named to the WAC All-Defensive Team and was second team All-WAC. Call set the BYU record with 129 games played in a career and finished second in the career assists with 528 assists (**Danny Ainge** had 539 in 188 games).

Injuries, primarily, forced BYU to use five different starting lineups, but the lineup of **Mark Heslop**, Trost, Call, Nixon and Miller started 20 games and was the Cougar mainstay.

Reid often played nine Cougars in games to secure a 14-1 home record, an 11-6 road record, shoot 50 percent from the field, 43 percent from three-point range, out-rebound opponents by an average of four and out-score the opposition by 11 points.

BYU played four teams from last year's NCAA Tournament, beating ninth-seeded UTEP two out of three times, defeating Princeton and losing to NCAA runnerup Michigan and La Salle. BYU opponents which played in the NIT included James Madison, Florida, New Mexico and Utah. BYU had a 3-3 record against opponents in the NCAA tournament and a 6-1 record against its opponents selected for the NIT.