



# BYU FOOTBALL



|            |   |    |    |   |    |
|------------|---|----|----|---|----|
| Cincinnati | 0 | 10 | 10 | 7 | 27 |
| BYU        | 7 | 7  | 14 | 7 | 35 |

September 29, 2023  
LaVell Edwards Stadium

## TEAM NOTES

### THE BIG 12 ERA

- > BYU won its first conference home opener and first conference game as a member of the Big 12 Conference.

### 4-1 RECORD

- > BYU has now won four of its first five games for the fourth-consecutive season, the 22nd such season in program history.

### HOME SWEET HOME

- > BYU was welcomed home from its two-game road trip by an over-capacity crowd of 63,834 fans, LaVell Edwards Stadium's largest attendance since the Cougars 26-23 (OT) win over No. 22 Utah on Nov. 28, 2009.

### SIXTY FOR KALANI

- > With Friday's win over Cincinnati, Kalani Sitake earned his 60th-career victory at BYU in his eighth season. The legendary LaVell Edwards also earned his 60th-career win in his eighth season at BYU (1979).

### TURNOVER MARGIN

- > BYU is now 4-0 on the season when winning the turnover battle. The Cougars were +3 vs. Sam Houston and +1 vs. Southern Utah and at Arkansas.

### SCORING VS. CINCINNATI

- > BYU's 35 points is the most the Bearcats have allowed this season. Cincinnati allowed 20 vs. No. 16 Oklahoma a week ago and entered Friday allowing 21 per game.

## PLAYER NOTES

### QB KEDON SLOVIS

- > Slovis recorded his 10th touchdown pass of the season in Friday's win. This matches his 2022 season output at Pitt.

### RB LJ MARTIN

- > Martin's four rushing touchdowns through his first five-career games are the most for a true freshman BYU running back since Luke Staley's eight through five games in 1999.

### WR CHASE ROBERTS

- > Roberts became BYU's second pass-catcher to surpass 100 yards in a game on the season as he recorded a career-high 131 yards on six receptions along with a touchdown on 21.8 yards per catch.

### WR DARIUS LASSITER

- > Recorded his third touchdown reception of the season and second in as many weeks.

### LB MAX TOOLEY

- > Posted a career-high 16 tackles (nine solo), his first double-digit tackle game since 13 versus Notre Dame in 2022. Friday marked Tooley's fifth-career game with 10+ tackles.

### CB JAKOB ROBINSON

- > Recorded his first-career interception returned for a touchdown on his third interception of the season and seventh for his career.
- > Robinson is now one of 17 players nationally (entering the weekend) with three interceptions on the season and one of only four with three interceptions and a pick six.

## NOTABLE FIRSTS/CAREER HIGHS

### OL IAN FITZGERALD

- > First career start (at BYU)

### LB HARRISON TAGGART

- > First career start

### LS AUSTIN RIGGS

- > First career fumble recovery

### CAREER HIGHS

- > WR Chase Roberts - rec. yards (131)
- > DE Isaiah Bagnah - tackles (7, tied)
- > LB Max Tooley - tackles (16)
- > Safety Raider Damuni - tackles (5)

## GAME INFO

**Weather:** 72°F, clear

**Attendance:** 63,834

**Series Results:** 3-0

**Captains:** QB Kedon Slovis, OL Connor Pay, DE Tyler Batty, LB AJ Vong-phachanh

**Coin Toss:** Cincinnati won the toss and deferred to the second half.

**Uniforms:** Royal helmet, royal face-mask, royal jersey, royal pants, white trim

### BYU Flag Bearers

**Alumni:** C. Shane Reese (BYU President), Keith Vorkink (BYU Advancement Vice President)

**USA:** Max Tooley (LB)

**Sione Veikoso 72:** Joshua Singh (DT)

**Big 12:** John Nelson (DT)



For a live feed of in-game notes follow **@BYUGameNotes** on X (Twitter) throughout gameday. Track milestones, news, notes and more.



Find more game materials including box scores, postgame audio/video files and more at [byucougars.com/pressbox](https://byucougars.com/pressbox)



### **KALANI SITAKE, BYU HEAD COACH**

#### **Opening Statement:**

"Glad we got the win. Give a lot of credit to Cincinnati. They did some really good things. They kind of put us in a tough spot as they possessed the ball for such a long time. They finished with 84 plays, and we had 53 on offense. The fact that we scored that many points on that few plays means that we probably had some explosive plays, but we also need to possess the ball, convert some first downs and get some drives going. Defensively, we also need to get off the field and get some stops. I'm glad we were able to force some turnovers and turnovers on downs. I'm happy that we won, but we also have room to improve and get better."

#### **On the importance of the 40-second touchdown drive before the half**

"We were doing nothing offensively. I don't know how many yards we had, but the time of possession was key. Cincinnati took care of the ball, possessed it, kept drives going. The only highlight we had [in the first half] was the interception return for a touchdown. Other than that, it was hard and our fans were waiting for something to be excited about, they just had to wait until the last drive of the half. Kedon [Slovic] can really throw the ball, we have very capable receivers. We just need to find ways to put points on the board."

#### **On takeaways from the Cincinnati game**

"I don't think we are the type of team that can go and impose our will on people and try to run the ball on teams that are going to load the box. There are different ways to execute, put points on the board and get first downs which is our goal on offense. Defensively, we need to stop the run. The thing that hurt us the most was the QB run game. Looking at what Emery Jones was able to do, he scrambled for yards, he had the QB draw that was working really well for them and we didn't make him uncomfortable enough. Defensively we are going to figure it out."

#### **The importance of the pick-6 and muffed punt**

"You need those. We want to win the turnover battle and we want to take care of the football. We didn't do a great job of that last week but tonight we did better. We need to play more assignment sound, clean football. That will allow us to have more opportunities to make big plays."

#### **On Miles Davis contributing to the offense**

"I really don't care how the points go up on the scoreboard. I'm so proud of Miles Davis for fighting through adversity. I never saw him let down at all. He's always working. Always upbeat. I think he's going to be a main-stay for us. I think he's taking advantage of opportunities."

#### **On the quarterback draw...**

"We had some adjustments on the sideline we made to take care of it, and that's how we got the sack. We knew that's what they were going to try to go to, especially since they had success on that early. So then we made some adjustments. The players weren't executing it. Either we weren't demanding it enough of the players and weren't getting it done. When we started to settle in and get it done, good things happened to us."

#### **On Cincinnati's Defensive Line**

"They have a really physical d-line. I've been saying that for awhile now. They have a really good defense. If we can't go up one way, let's find different ways to get first downs and get some points on the board."

#### **On playing a physical game**

"There's that part in competition, that physical play, that's what we want to make sure we can hang. Credit to the linebackers, with



## POSTGAME QUOTES BYU

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Ben [Bywater] not there. How awesome was it for Harrison [Taggart], AJ [Vongphachanh], and Max Tooley to be in double digits in tackles? It was nice to have those guys, specifically Harrison, get some reps."

### **JAKOB ROBINSON, BYU DB**

#### **On Defensive effort tonight**

"We haven't had a touchdown as a defense this year, so that was big for us. We knew the offense would come back and start putting up points."

#### **On his game preparation this week**

"Last week was pretty hard for me, and the coaches pushed me hard. They kept telling me to play aggressive, so I think it was mainly the coaches helping me out this week."

### **CHASE ROBERTS, BYU WR**

#### **On quarterback Kedon Slovis**

"He has such a good feel for the game. We have seen it everywhere that he has played, and now he has brought it to BYU. He is able to make plays and throws from whatever arm angle or whatever way he is rolling out. I am grateful for him, his leadership and how he is able to keep the team together when things aren't going how we want them to."

#### **On the scoring drive at the end of the first half**

"We started looking at their tendencies and what they were doing. We were talking as wide receivers, quarterback and offensive coordinator, and started calling plays that fit what we were seeing. I think it was just getting the right feel for what they were doing and how we could best attack them. Then we got it going."

#### **On being healthy after two seasons of injury**

"It is a blessing, and I give glory to God. Injuries are hard, and it is a battle. The main thing is just staying healthy no matter what happens: win or lose, good game or bad game. It is a blessing to make some plays and win some games as a team."

### **LJ MARTIN, BYU RB**

#### **On the scoring drive at the end of the first half**

"We knew they were a good defense. We have a lot of respect for them and we were just trying to get things going. We struggled at times, but we were able to find some of their weaknesses and I think we exploited those in the second half."

#### **On offensive success in the third quarter**

"The momentum from the last drive in the first half definitely carried over. Being able to go right down and score on three big plays really opened up the rest of the playbook. We were able to figure them out and the rest is the rest."

#### **On his 27-yard touchdown run**

"It was really fun. The offensive line did a great job. I didn't even get touched until 20 yards in, and they are going to continue to do a great job. I couldn't ask for a better offensive line."

#### **On his first month of college football**

"I have always dreamed of it. For it to actually happen is just a blessing, and I have to give all glory to God. I am just thankful for the opportunities."



### **SCOTT SATTERFIELD, CINCINNATI HEAD COACH**

#### **On BYU and playing at LaVell Edwards Stadium:**

"First of all, congratulations to BYU on their first Big 12 win. I have a lot of respect for Coach Sitake over here, the program and the way they do things. It is a first-class program. Great environment here tonight. This is Big 12 football man, this is awesome."

#### **On turnovers:**

"This game came down to two turnovers. One that went for a touchdown for BYU, and the other one basically went for a touchdown inside the ten. That was the difference in the game. We didn't create any turnovers tonight. The bottom line is they made more plays than we did, and they came out ahead and got the win."

#### **On BYU making plays:**

"That's the way football is, you have to make the plays when they're there, and they're very good at that. They made the plays when they had to make them. Right before halftime, that was huge momentum for them to be able to drive down and get that touchdown."

#### **On Slovis, Rex and Roberts:**

"They have some talented receivers out on the outside. Their tight end [Isaac Rex] is very, very talented, big receiver. Number Two [Chase Roberts] is a great player. I think they're gonna continue to throw the football to those guys, that's what Slovis does. We anticipated coming in here and getting some turnovers, because last week, they did turn the ball over...and, you know, he didn't do as much of that tonight."

### **JOWON BRIGGS, CINCINNATI DE**

#### **On BYU's offense:**

"Those guys were fit and physical guys and we just got to make sure that we're matching that physicality and making sure we're getting the ball down. In reality, what killed us were the explosive plays there."