



BYU MEN'S BASKETBALL

NOTES AND QUOTES | NO. 14 BYU AT UTAH | SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2023

The following notes and quotes from No. 14 BYU's 73-69 setback to Utah on Saturday evening at the Jon M. Huntsman Center in Salt Lake City, Utah.

All-time series: BYU leads all-time series 134-130

Attendance: 15,648 (Sold Out)

TEAM NOTES

Cold winter night

In its first loss of the season, BYU shot a season-low 36.6 percent from the floor, 23.2 percent from three and 55.6 percent from the free throw line. It also marked the first time this season that Cougars did not connect on double digit 3-pointers, going 7-of-30 from deep.

All good things come to an end

Head coach Mark Pope's eight-game win streak came to an end on Saturday, the second-longest win streak during his tenure at BYU.

Second half success

BYU has now outscored all nine opponents in the second half with the Cougars outsourcing the Utes by 10 (38-28) in the final 20 minutes.

No time for turnovers

Only three of BYU's eight turnovers came after halftime as the Cougars have now recorded 10 or less turnovers in five of nine games. To put that in perspective, they had four such games in 34 games in 2022-23.

Round mound of rebound

BYU outrebounded Utah, 42-41, including a 28-19 margin in the second half.

PLAYER NOTES

Double trouble

For the first time during his BYU career and second-time in his collegiate career, Spencer Johnson recorded a double-double as he finished with 10 points and a career-high 11 rebounds. He actually recorded a 10-point, 12-rebound double-double in his first collegiate game at Salt Lake Community College on Nov. 1, 2019 against Chandler-Gilbert.

Bench bringing the energy

Jaxson Robinson and Richie Saunders combined for 30 of BYU's 34 bench points. Robinson finished with a game-high 17 points, 10 of those coming in the opening half for a third straight game. Saunders scored in double figures for the fourth time this season and 10th in his career with a season-high 13 points.

Dropping dimes

Aly Khalifa finished with a season-high six assists in 26 minutes of action.

CAREER HIGHS

Free Throws: Trevin Knell (4)

Rebounds: Spencer Johnson (11)

SEASON HIGHS

Points: Richie Saunders (13)

Field Goals: Richie Saunders (5)

3-Pointers: Richie Saunders (2)

Free Throws: Trevin Knell (4), Aly Khalifa (2)

Assists: Aly Khalifa (6)

Steals: Spencer Johnson (2)

Minutes Played: Dallin Hall (28)



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Head coach Mark Pope

Opening Statement

"Congratulations to Utah. They played tough and with a ton of intensity, it's a terrific win for them. I'm proud of my guys in the parts of the game where we could find the space to be us where we were really good. I'm super proud of that. I have a little more confidence than ever that we have a chance to grow into a really good team. I'm excited for that."

What did you learn about your team in it's only non-conference road game?

"We are proud of the eight turnovers because that feels like us. The 17 offensive rebounds on our toughest shooting night came against the tallest team in the country. I feel like we got exposed on high ball screens. We weren't ourselves in transition defense in the first half. Sometimes the emotion of the game pulls you somewhere that is not you and it's very fixable. That comes from too much care, not enough care."

The final offensive possession

"I wanted to have a go-game and then a wraparound on the weak side. Aly did a great job getting a catch, Dallin did a nice job coming in from three but he just lost the handle. You had a look for him to get downhill but also come to two feet and had some curl stuff on the back end."

Spencer Johnson

Coaches message after the loss

"It hurts for sure. It hurts to lose but super encouraging for us that the fact we didn't shoot very well. We held our turnovers to eight which was under 10 and encouraging. In a road game like this we had 17 offensive rebounds. Stats like that are really encouraging for us so we know that we went have our best shooting night or maybe things are going right that we can still put ourselves in a position to win."

Nerves in the first half

"I think we were a little nervous, the fact that it was a rivalry game. We had so emotion that spilled into the wrong areas of the game. We had a really solid game plan coming and we got sidetracked."