



# BYU MEN'S BASKETBALL

NOTES AND QUOTES | NO. 18 BYU VS. GEORGIA STATE | SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2023

The following notes and quotes from No. 18 BYU's 86-54 win over Georgia State on Saturday evening at the Marriott Center.

**Series Results:** BYU leads all-time series 2-0.

**Attendance:** 13,819

## TEAM NOTES

### Hot Start

BYU opened up the night on a 9-0 run going 3-of-6 from deep. Trevin Knell, Aly Khalifa and Dallin Hall each found the bottom of the net from the 3-point line in the opening four minutes of the game.

### Double-Digit Lead

The Cougars led by 11 with 1:24 left in the first half and maintained a double-digit lead for the remainder of the game. BYU's largest lead of the night was 34 with 2:58 left in the game.

### Royal Reserves

BYU's reserves have outscored the opponent's every game thus far in the 2023-24 season. Saturday night, the Cougars' bench outscored the Panthers' 35-15.

### Marriott Center Magic

With the victory Saturday night, BYU moves to 57-10 all-time in the Marriott Center under head coach Marc Pope. The Cougars currently hold an eight-game win streak at home.

### Leading at the Half

The Cougars entered the break with the lead for the ninth time this season. BYU improves their record to 9-0 on the season while leading at half.

### Lights out

BYU made 10 or more 3-pointers for the 10th game this season going 15-for-38 against Georgia State.

### Sharing the Rock

The Cougars recorded 23 assists on 32 made field goals. Four players scored in double figures: Richie Saunders, Trevin Knell, Noah Waterman and Dallin Hall.

### Race to 10 wins

BYU wins 10 games for the fastest time since the 2010-2011 season when they opened the season 10-0.

### Taking care of the ball

The Cougars recorded a season-best of only four turnovers against the Panthers Saturday night. It marked just the fifth time since 2010 they had four or less turnovers in a game.

## PLAYER NOTES

### Knell'd it

The senior scored BYU's first points of the night for the second time this season, the first being the first game of the season against Houston Christian. Knell finished the night with three 3-pointers going 3-of-5 from beyond the arc. This marks the 17th time of his career he has ended a game with three or more triples, tied for the 13th most in program history with Jake Toolson and Elijah Bryant.

### Saunders' Streak

Richie Saunders tallied a career-high in points with 20 on 8-of-14 field goals. In the first half of play, he scored 10-straight points for the Cougars. Saunders is the ninth player on the BYU roster to have a career-high of 20 points or more.

### Dishing Dimes

Spencer Johnson recorded his seventh game this season with five or more assists. The senior dished out seven in the win against Georgia State.

### Aquaman

Noah Waterman connected on 3-of-5 3-pointers on his way to 13 points. This marks the seventh time this season he has finished a game in double figures and 33rd of his career.

### Newcomer News

UC Irvine transfer Dawson Baker recorded his first points as a Cougar going 3-of-5 from the field for six points.

## CAREER HIGHS

**Points:** Richie Saunders (20)

**Field Goals:** Richie Saunders (8)

**3 Pointers:** Trey Stewart (1), Dallin Hall (4)

**Blocks:** Trevin Knell (2)

## SEASON HIGHS

**Points:** Richie Saunders (20), Dawson Baker (6)

**Field Goals:** Richie Saunders (8), Dawson Baker (3)

**3 Pointers:** Aly Khalifa (1), Trey Stewart (1), Richie Saunders (2), Dallin Hall (4)

**Rebounds:** Dawson Baker (1)

**Assists:** Trey Stewart (4), Dawson Baker (1)

**Steals:** Aly Khalifa (1), Noah Waterman (1), Dallin Hall (2), Dawson Baker (1)

**Blocks:** Trevin Knell (2), Aly Khalifa (1), Richie Saunders (2)

**Minutes:** Dawson Baker (8:45)



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**Head coach Mark Pope**

***On limiting turnovers***

"This is not a coaching thing. This is a player thing. We've talked about it before but it was a real Achilles heel for us last year, understandably with the youth we had on the floor. These guys were self monitoring all summer long. It matters to them. So to play this Georgia State team with the nature of the game the way it was tonight is a really significant accomplishment."

***On team depth***

"We're one of two teams in the country with nine players that have career highs of 20 or more. Think about that on your roster. You have nine guys that have proven they're capable of putting two dimes down. It's pretty great. Right? Depth is required if you're going to be a high level basketball team."

***On play of the game***

"My play of the game was an example of Richie being an unbelievable teammate. We were racing down the floor and Trey Stewart kind of let a floater pass go. It's a turnover and then Richie flashes a screen and makes a ridiculous effort to save the play and ends up drawing a foul. That's being a great teammate. That's being an elite level teammate, by saving your guys when maybe somebody doesn't make the best decision. That was a really special play to me because it's who Richie is. He's going to do everything he can to help everybody on this team."

***On being on track with the 2010-11 team***

"The most rewarding part for me is that we continue to believe more and more in who we are trying to be. I think it's been a real gift to us to see that what these guys are trying to do on the court, and the identity of the team they are trying to be, can actually really work for us. I think our belief is growing and I think that's super important for us going into this deal."

**Dallin Hall**

***Opening statement***

"We executed Coach's game plan well and we played together, which is a staple of our team. We had a lot of fun just being us tonight."

***On his mental approach***

"A year of experience definitely helps. I had to learn the hard way last year. I think we have also taken big strides in our mental approach to each game. We have what we call the "peace squad" that is a huge help for us in our mental approach to games. We focus a lot less on who's in front of us and a lot more on what makes us special. We feel like when we put our energy into those things, it allows us to find success in no matter who is matched up against us."

***On developing his game***

"I sat down with the coaches at the end of the season last year and we talked about things that we wanted to really grow and shooting off of the bounce was one of them. I know my coaches have complete confidence in me and I have full confidence in my game. That is what leads to the shots you saw out there tonight."

**Aly Khalifa**

***Opening statement***

"It was a great win. I feel like we played super hard from the jump all the way to the end. Especially in the second half, we really started to separate ourselves from them. We shot the ball well and took care of it. Dawson Baker was able to play today and that was great having him back. I feel like everyone played well."

***On his confidence***

"I feel more confident playing with the guys. It is easy to play well when everybody wants to contribute, be better and shoot the ball."

***On sharing the ball***

"I feel more joy passing the ball and getting my teammates to score than myself. Obviously everyone likes to score, but I like it the same way when I pass the ball or get my teammates open by screening hard or running and transitioning to get them open."