



BYU MEN'S BASKETBALL

NOTES AND QUOTES | NO. 17 BYU VS. BELLARMINE | FRIDAY, DECEMBER 22, 2023

The following notes and quotes are from No. 17 BYU's 101-59 victory over Bellarmine Friday night at the Marriott Center.

Series Results: BYU leads 1-0

Attendance: 14,429

TEAM NOTES

Another Day, Another Opponent

Bellarmine is the 58th different school that BYU has faced under fifth-year head coach Mark Pope.

Keepin' The Streak Goin'

BYU extended its home win streak to 10 games, tied for the 20th longest streak in the country. They have also now won 12 straight non-conference games at the Marriott Center dating back to December 2022.

Leading At The Half

The Cougars extended their record to 80-10 when leading at the half under Pope with their victory over Bellarmine. BYU has yet to lose a game this season when leading at the half.

A Total Eclipse of the Hoop

BYU eclipsed the century mark for a third time this season with its 101-59 victory over the Knights, one less than the Cougars scored in the first four seasons of Pope's tenure in Provo.

Making It Rain

The Cougars made 16 3-pointers in the win, the seventh-most in a game in program history and tied for the third most at the Marriott Center.

No Jaxson, No Problem

Without its leading scorer, BYU's second unit tied a season-high with 46 points with Dawson Baker, Richie Saunders and Atiki Ally Atiki reaching double figures. Townsend Tripple also scored a career-high six points in three minutes of action.

PLAYERS NOTES

Fast Start

Atiki made an immediate impact off the bench scoring a team-high 10 points in the first half, two more than he has scored in the previous 11 games combined. He is the first Cougar to go perfect from the floor (min. 5 att.) since he did it against San Francisco on February 3, 2022.

Blocked

Atiki finished with a season-high three blocks, giving him 67 for his career which is one away from tying Fousseyni Traore for the 20th most in program history.

Second Half Sensation

Trevin Knell scored all of his 14 points in the second half, the most points he has scored in any half in his career. He also connected on three 3-pointers, the 18th time he has connected on three or more triples in the same game which is the 13th most in program history.

Stats Spencer

Spencer Johnson once again filled the statsheet as the senior finished with 14 points, eight rebounds and seven assists. It marks the sixth time this season he has finished with 10/5/5.

First Time for Something

Tanner Hayhurst and Marcus Adams Jr. scored their first career points in the win over Bellarmine.

Sharing is Caring

Aly Khalifa scored a season-high nine points including three 3-pointers to go along with four assists, giving him 34 assists to only two turnovers this season. His last turnover came against NC State in the final of the Vegas Showdown.

CAREER HIGHS

Points: Atiki Ally Atiki (12), Marcus Adams (2), Townsend Tripple (6), Tanner Hayhurst (2)

Rebounds: Marcus Adams Jr. (2), Trey Stewart (6), Townsend Tripple (3)

Assists: Marcus Adams Jr. (1), Richie Saunders (4), Tanner Hayhurst (1)

Blocks: Trey Stewart (2)

Field Goals: Atiki Ally Atiki (6), Marcus Adams Jr. (1), Townsend Tripple (3), Tanner Hayhurst (1)

Minutes: Marcus Adams Jr. (7:49), Jared McGregor (3:00)

SEASON HIGHS

Points: Dawson Baker (10), Aly Khalifa (9), Atiki Ally Atiki (12), Marcus Adams Jr. (2), Townsend Tripple (6), Tanner Hayhurst (2)

Rebounds: Dawson Baker (1), Marcus Adams Jr. (2), Trey Stewart (6), Townsend Tripple (3)

Assists: Dawson Baker (3), Marcus Adams Jr. (1), Richie Saunders (4), Tanner Hayhurst (1)

Steals: Dawson Baker (1), Spencer Johnson (3)

Blocks: Atiki Ally Atiki (3), Trey Stewart (2)

Field Goals: Dawson Baker (4), Atiki Ally Atiki (6), Aly Khalifa (3), Marcus Adams Jr. (1), Townsend Tripple (3), Tanner Hayhurst (1)

3 Pointers: Aly Khalifa (3), Dawson Baker (2), Spencer Johnson (3)

Minutes: Dawson Baker (18:18), Marcus Adams Jr. (7:49), Jared McGregor (3:00)



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Head coach Mark Pope

On Atiki's performance

"It was unbelievable how patient, poised and aggressive and dialed in he was today. He hasn't been that way the last few games because he's been carrying the stress of finals. I thought he was unbelievable today. I love his patience after the catch. It made him really special today on the offensive end. We made an adjustment with him early on in the game and his communication on the defensive end was spectacular."

On Marcus Adams Jr.

"I loved that he was absolutely fearless on the offensive end. I like young guys that are fearless. This is a high school senior right now who is on his third school in six months, and he got the surprise call that he was going to be able to play this year. He walked out on the court with eight minutes left in front of 15,000 fans for the first time in his life. For him to walk out there and be fearless is really great. He's going to have a great future. He's got a lot of growing to do and he's going to do it. He's really blessed to be around these players and to learn how to be a pro from these guys."

On team depth

"We have a lot of guys that want to play together. It sure feels like they love playing with each other. We're playing a lot of guys, which is fun. There's no hesitation to make plays for each other because they know it's coming right back to them. Our depth is important. We still haven't had a game with a healthy roster. I would like to do that at some point but these guys answer the bell in spite of all that for a really impressive two-month run."

On Spencer Johnson's near triple double performance

"The thing I'm most proud of with Spencer is that he's taken this onus on himself to be the defensive leader of this team... In the second half, we started out and it felt like we had made an agreement with Bellarmine that we're just going to both let each other score every time down the floor. The thing I love most about Spencer is that you look at his stat line and the thing he was most passionate and upset about was the way he started the second half defensively. There were a couple of miscues and he took it super personally. That's why he's a great leader, because he is on board with the rest of the team at holding ourselves to a standard on the defensive end."

Dawson Baker

On the victory

"I think great team game today. They were disciplined in the half court set to kind of run their plays and they were programmed really well and coached really well to do what they do, and we just had to be disciplined on our end to kind of match what they were doing. The thing I love about this team is that when we don't make shots, we keep shooting. It was a great team win and it's fun to get out there and get some more extended minutes and have an impact on the game."

On returning to 100 percent physically

"It's still a work in progress. We're trying to be hopeful about my foot and how it's going. Hopefully just playing through it that it will hopefully just get to 100 percent. But we're not there yet. So it's a process of you know, figuring out with doctors what to do and keep trying to stay at it and stay hopeful."

On capitalizing on turnovers

"I think the atmosphere has a big part to do with when we cause turnovers, everybody gets kind of rowdy and it kind of just leads to an offensive, good play for us. Forcing a lot of turnovers, and having wings kind of run sprint the floor. This team was kind of made up of a lot of guards. I think they were used to getting back and transitioning guarding the perimeter which led the rim kind of open, which allowed plays for us to kind of, you know, open space to make plays."

Trevin Knell

On the team's 100 point performance

"When it's time to go, it's time to go. We love to keep the standard. This team (Bellarmine) was really disciplined. How they ran their offense was a little different than what we're accustomed to guarding, but I feel like our guys were really ready to go. We got really excited when everybody finished finals. It's always a glorious time. When it's time to step across those white lines, it's go-time. I feel like we're a really mature team this year."

On his performance

"I think today was a great turning point for me and just like realizing that, you know, like what I was able to do the second half without, you know, getting in my head because of those two fouls was just like the maturity of this team. I had Jaxson (Robinson) come up to me. I had Dallin (Hall). I had Trey (Stewart). I had a ton of guys like, put their arms around me and they're like, hey, you've got a whole other have to play. Coach Pope had great conversations with me prior to this week, and then just took me aside at halftime and so to have guys like this and a coaching staff that has so much trust. It's really kind of nice. Just be like, hey, next play mentality and I think that's where the maturity and the specialness of this team kind of comes into play."