



# BYU MEN'S BASKETBALL

NOTES AND QUOTES | NO. 14 BYU VS. WYOMING | SATURDAY, DECEMBER 30, 2023

The following notes and quotes are from No. 14 BYU's 94-68 victory over Wyoming Saturday afternoon at the Marriott Center.

**Series Results:** BYU leads 106-69 including 66-16 in Provo.

**Attendance:** 18,987

## TEAM NOTES

### Controlling The History Books

Today's game marks the first matchup for both sides in 13 seasons, the last being the Cougars' 102-78 win on March 5, 2011.

### Defending The House

The Cougars' further extended their non-conference win streak to 13 games and overall home streak to 10 games.

### Non-Conference Control

BYU is 12-1 against non-conference opponents this season. This is the fourth time in the modern era of college basketball with 12 or more wins in the opening 13 games of the season for BYU (2023-24, 2010-11, 2009-10, 1987-88). Today's win also marks the 60th win over a non-conference team for the Cougars under Coach Pope.

### Runnin' Cougs

BYU's 18-0 run in the first half was its third largest of the season and most since scoring 20 straight in the Cougars win over Morgan State on November 18, 2023.

### Working As A Team

The Cougars recorded 27 assists as a team, the third most this season.

## PLAYERS NOTES

### Aly-All-Day-Long

Aly Khalifa filled the stat sheet for the Cougars as the junior finished with a season-high nine points and eight assists. He now has 42 assists to only three turnovers this season.

### Movin' Up The Charts

With his three 3-pointers on Saturday, Trevin Knell moved to 15th all-time for the Cougars in career 3-pointers made (128) surpassing both Mark Heslop and Terrell Lyday. Knell has also recorded three or more 3-pointers in 19 games in his career, tying Tyler Haws for 12th most in program history.

### Points With A Side Of Points Please

Atiki Ally Atiki went for 14 points, marking a career high for the junior as he has now scored in double figures in consecutive games for the first time in his career.

### Easy As ABC

With a block tonight, Atiki now has 68 blocks which is tied for the 20th most in program history with current teammate Fousseyni Traore.

### No, It's My Ball

Jaxson Robinson finished with a career-high four steals, eclipsing his previous career best of three achieved three times.

## CAREER HIGHS

**Points:** Atiki Ally Atiki (14)

**Steals:** Jaxson Robinson (4)

**Blocks:** Trey Stewart (2)

**Field Goals:** Trevin Knell (7), Atiki Ally Atiki (7)

**3-Pointers:** Trey Stewart (1)

## SEASON HIGHS

**Points:** Aly Khalifa (9), Atiki Ally Atiki (14)

**Rebounds:** Dawson Baker (1)

**Assists:** Aly Khalifa (8)

**Steals:** Jaxson Robinson (4), Dawson Baker (1), Atiki Ally Atiki (1)

**Blocks:** Trey Stewart (2)

**Field Goals:** Aly Khalifa (3), Trevin Knell (7), Atiki Ally Atiki (7)

**3-Pointers:** Trey Stewart (1)



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## Head Coach Mark Pope

### *Opening statement*

"I just like that our guys have a sense of who we're trying to be. That's really important. We have three words that we talk about as a staff and the key one is resilience. One of the key factors in being resilient is that you have a sense of your identity and a foundation that you can go back to when things get hard. I feel like our guys not only have an understanding of who they can be and are trying to be, but I think they kind of dig it. That's a good combination."

### *On the defensive improvements*

"We're actually performing at a higher level defensively than offensively. I'm really proud of what we are doing defensively. I think these were our two best defensive players of the game. This is really incredible for Atiki because he came here with very little basketball experience. He's physically capable and his defensive IQ has grown immensely, where now he tells me what to do on the defensive end, which is pretty exciting."

### *On entering Big 12 play*

"We're stepping into 18 straight really challenging games where we'll have all kinds of things happen to us but I think we have a chance. What I'm pleased about in this non-conference is that hopefully we put enough capital in the bank with a belief in who we are and what we can be that we're going to be able to do that in conference, through good and bad."

"We're so excited. In a sense, nothing changes because this has been about us for the last year and three months. Our keys of the game are not going to change next Saturday from what they were today. The identity that we are chasing is not going to change, from the way it was against Bellarmine, or Wyoming, or against Cincinnati, who was our first games in the Big 12. I think we have a lot of faith in our preparation. We are humble. We understand what we are walking into, but we know who we're trying to be. We're hopefully getting better at being us every single day, and that's what we're going to look forward to in this league."

## Atiki Ally Atiki

### *On playing as a team*

"I think we did a good job of sharing the ball and playing together as a team. We always come ready to play, so I think that was the most important thing today. Like Coach always says, 'You're going to play as a team.' That's who we are. We showed up."

### *On trusting his teammates*

"We are not selfish. We like to pass the ball. If someone is open, we are just going to share the ball. I think that is very important. It's hard for other teams to guard us when you move the ball a lot. "

### *On playing if he's playing the best basketball of his career right now*

"I would say yes. I'm more comfortable now. My team trusts me and I trust my team too. I feel like it's really important to trust yourself and go get some work in. I come here all the time and put some work in, so it's time to show my work on the court."

### *On next steps that he wants to improve on*

"Shooting the three."

## Trevin Knell

### *On showing depth on the defense*

"I feel like everybody has this DNA now. We believe this is who we are. Like Atiki said, everybody is trusting everybody. To be able to have Fousseyni (Traore) go down and then have Aly (Khalifa) step up and then my boy Attiki step up, is super amazing. It's going to be fun once Fousse is healthy to have him back, and I think we are going to be a scary front court team."