



BYU MEN'S BASKETBALL

NOTES AND QUOTES | NO. 21 BYU VS. NO. 4 HOUSTON | TUESDAY, JANUARY 23, 2024

The following notes and quotes are from No. 21 BYU's 68-75 loss against No. 4 University of Houston Tuesday night at The Marriott Center in Provo, Utah.

Series Results: Houston leads 6-3

Attendance: 16,553

TEAM NOTES

Something New on a Tuesday

BYU trailed at halftime for the first time in Big 12 play, 41-34, as Houston closed the first half on a 6-0 run. The Cougars are now 1-2 when trailing at halftime this season and 15-31 during Pope's tenure.

Party Downtown

Six BYU Cougars drained at least one from beyond the arc. Noah Waterman (4), Jaxson Robinson (2), Aly Khalifa (2), Spencer Johnson (1), Trevin Knell (1), and Richie Saunders (1). Tuesday's game is Knell's eighth straight game with a made three and Jaxson Robinson's sixth.

Sharing is Caring

The Cougars combined for 16 assists on 25 made shots, with Jaxson Robinson tying his season high with four assists and Dallin Hall notching five in the first half.

34 is the Number of the Night

Both teams scored 34 points in the second half, with BYU scoring 34 in each half. The Cougars also notched 34 total team rebounds.

PLAYERS NOTES

The Rain Man

Noah Waterman connected on four 3-pointers tallying 17 team-high points. Along with knocking down four 3-pointers, he had three rebounds and a career-high two steals. This is the first BYU loss this season when Noah Waterman has scored in double figures.

Aly Khalifa

Starting right where he left off against Texas Tech on Saturday, Aly Khalifa drained the first two buckets for BYU, both of which came from downtown at the top of the key. Khalifa ended with eight points, five rebounds, and three assists.

SEASON HIGHS

Assists: Jaxson Robinson (4)

Steals: Noah Waterman (2)

CAREER HIGHS

Steals: Noah Waterman (2)



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Head Coach Mark Pope

Opening Statement

"I am really proud of our guys. We put ourselves in a position where we had a chance and we just couldn't quite get over the top of it. We'll keep battling. We have a really good team and a good group in this locker room, so our product will keep getting better."

The atmosphere in the Marriott Center

"The atmosphere was great. Marriott Center is incredibly special. Cougar nation played a large part in us trying to scrap back into this game. We need their help. Everybody in the gym was great tonight, and we're super grateful for that. It's pretty special to be able to play in this building."

On the last five minutes of the game

"The defensive glass was probably the most frustrating thing for us in the last five or six minutes, which is what Houston does. You know, they average 15 offensive rebounds a game, and they got their average. We got ourselves back into the game with a few possessions where we got a clean defensive rebound, and then down the stretch, it was really hard for us to do. Defensively, the guys forced a couple of turnovers, which gave us a chance. That's what these games are. The margin for error is pretty slim. We just didn't quite capitalize, but I have a ton of confidence that we will."

On the three bigs

"I'm still trying to learn. It's been rare to have all three bigs available. We're still in the process of figuring out who works where and when."

On Dallin Hall entering the game with four fouls in the last ten minutes...

"Dallin is a tremendously high-IQ player who takes in a ton of information. There was no conversation necessary. He knew we had to keep playing."

Sophomore guard Dallin Hall

On overcoming the 13-point deficit

"It was all about staying together. This league is super tough, and it beats you up. I think it tested our character tonight. Although things didn't finish as we would have hoped, I thought we did an excellent job of staying together and playing for each other. It's easy for teams to fall apart in those situations, but we really came together, and that'll be super important moving forward for us."

On staying in it with the No. 4 team

"I think it shows what we're capable of doing. It also showed us that we have even more room to grow, which is exciting. It's super frustrating to deal with all the emotions that all the guys are feeling in the locker room right now, but hopefully, we can clear that out, come back tomorrow, be ready to work and understand the opportunity that lies ahead of us."

On attacking the basket...

"I just tried to take what the defense gave me and execute our offensive game plan."

Houston Head Coach Kelvin Sampson

On playing BYU

"BYU is unique. They're just different from everybody you play because of the 3-point line. I'm thrilled for the win and happy for our kids. I thought that we hung in there. It's a tough place to play. This is the second time I've been here, and the student section, the administration, and how they create their home court advantage is Big 12-ish."

On Noah Waterman

"I don't think Noah Waterman took an easy three on that. He was flying into those things, and as soon as he caught it, it was out. Those are tough shots. Waterman made two huge moves in transition. If they were open, they would be good shots for him because he's an outstanding shooter. But those were hard shots because he was shooting them on the move so fast."

On BYU from the 3-point line

"Khalifa banked one in the first half, and Robinson nailed one from 40 feet with 20 on the shot clock. I mean, those are the shots you make in 'Hail Marys.' I think tonight tested our resolve. You have to be resilient playing here because they're (BYU) going to go on runs."