



BYU MEN'S BASKETBALL

NOTES AND QUOTES | NO. 19 BYU VS. UCF | TUESDAY FEBRUARY 13, 2024

The following notes and quotes are from No. 19 BYU's 90-88 win over UCF Tuesday evening at the Marriott Center in Provo, Utah.

Series Results: BYU leads 2-0

Attendance: 15,590

TEAM NOTES

Starting Hot, Staying Up

BYU started the game with a 10-0 run, its first run of that size since the win over Texas on Jan. 27. The Cougars lead from start to finish for the first time in Big 12 play and first time since their win over Georgia State.

Share the Wealth

Four Cougars scored in double figures during Tuesday's win against UCF. Jaxson Robinson (21), Noah Waterman (17), Trevin Knell (17) and Dallin Hall (10). BYU improved to 7-1 this season and 40-14 under head coach Mark Pope when four Cougars scored in double figures.

Up At The Half

Tuesday's game marks the fifth straight game that the Cougars have led at the break, as they led by 13 at 39-26. The last time the Cougars held their opponents to 26 points or lower in the first half was the first meeting with UCF on Jan. 13. BYU is now 17-3 this season when leading at the half.

Charity Stripe

BYU made 40 free throws on 46 attempts, tying the previous program and Marriott Center record set against Weber State on December 12, 1997. Tuesday's game marked the first time since March 2, 2019, that the Cougars made 14 freebies in the opening 20 minutes. At one point, the Cougars tallied 17 straight free throws.

BYU is one of three schools this season to make 40 free throws joining Auburn (vs. Alabama, 2/7/24) and Northeastern (Old Dominion, 12/2/23).

The Happiest Place on Earth

Both BYU men's and women's basketball took wins over UCF today, with Amber Whiting's team winning on the road, 64-60. This is the first time since January 14, 2023, that both teams beat the same opponent on the same day. (MBB 91-81/WBB 63-52 over Pepperdine)

The Long (K)night

Tuesday's game duration was 2 hours and 32 minutes, passing the game against Baylor on Jan. 9 by almost 20 minutes (2:13). With one minute left on the clock, there were 23 combined points scored between the Cougars and the Knights, with 9 of those being made free throws for the Cougars.

Double Trouble

Trevin Knell and Jaxson Robinson combined to go 12-of-26 from the free throw line marking the first time since December 2, 2014 at Utah State that two Cougars connected on 10 or more free throws in a single game.

PLAYERS NOTES

Knell'd It

Trevin Knell ignited the Cougars, scoring the first eight points of the night, leading to a 10-point first half. This marks the third time that Knell has scored in double figures in the first half, the fifth time in his career. The redshirt junior has now scored in double figures in eight straight starts dating back to BYU's win over Georgia State on Dec. 16.

Big Shot Rob(inson)

Jaxson Robinson extended his 3-point streak to 11 games as he went 3-of-5 from downtown. Tuesday's game marked the senior's 19th three 3-pointer game, tied for the 13th most in program history with Tyler Haws. With his second 3-pointer of the game and 117th of his BYU career, Robinson moved up to 19th on the all-time list, passing Michael Smith. Robinson went 12-of-13 from the charity stripe to end with 21 points.

Hall Pass

The Cougars are now 9-3 when Hall dishes the ball at least five times as he tallied five assists in the win against UCF. The sophomore scored all of his 10 points in the second half to go along with five rebounds and his first block of the season.

SEASON HIGHS

Free Throws: Trevin Knell (10), Aly Khalifa (4), Noah Waterman (9), Jaxson Robinson (12)

Blocks: Dallin Hall (1)

CAREER HIGHS

Free Throws: Trevin Knell (10), Aly Khalifa (4), Noah Waterman (9), Jaxson Robinson (12)

Blocks: Dallin Hall (1)



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Head Coach Mark Pope

On the lead changes in the Big 12

"I just think that's the nature of this league. You don't ever see teams win by big margins. The teams are too competitive and it's awesome. UCF was heroic in the last four minutes. They made incredible shots and that's how Big 12 teams. They just do really special things. I couldn't be more proud of how our guys responded. We're going to lose some games, this league is too hard. But it's this idea that if we're gonna go down, we're going to lose the game the way we play. We're going to lose them as the aggressor. In the last five or six minutes of this game our guys were making really courageous plays, against pressure, against a team that is probably as athletic or more athletic and longer than any team in this league. And I'm so proud of the guys. It was a brilliant performance by our team."

On turnovers

"We went through some stretches where we were on our heels, and we don't play that way. We actually don't function that way. That's not in our DNA. It's not who we are, and that will happen from time to time. But those 17 turnovers came at a huge cost in the 46 free throws."

On improved performance on the free throw line

"I should definitely be coach of the year that I managed to get our guy to a 50% free throw shooting team to an 87 percent. That's just who these guys are. We had a little bit of an anomaly last game, but we still won the game. That's the beauty of this team right now. I didn't know we would win a game this year getting to the free throw line 46 times, but I dig it. Give us another way that we can win a game."

Trevin Knell

Opening Statement

"That was a gritty, gritty win. I'm super proud of our guys. UCF threw us their best punch and we were able to respond. It's super fun to play with these guys and I feel like we showed our true colors. With three minutes left, it was a five-point game, and we kept responding. No matter what frustration happens, I feel like we've learned to respond with the fight and emergency."

On UCF's team dynamic

"They're super, super physical. They're also really big. They're a little different than other teams just by the way they are able to turn guys over. I feel like we really controlled that on the offensive end."

Jaxson Robinson

Opening Statement

"It was a very ugly win, but we'll take whatever we can get, especially in this league. This win means a lot to us, especially being in the win column."

On mindset attacking the rim with UCF's defense

"It was tough. In the first half and early in the second, we were being a little bit timid, and Coach kept emphasizing that we need to be on attack all the time. I think we made a great adjustment with that, especially at the end of the game making sure that we got to the free throw line and stayed on our toes."

UCF Head Coach Johnny Dawkins

Opening Statement

"I thought BYU played a terrific game, especially at the start. They jumped out 10-0 on us and we were battling uphill the entire rest of the way. I thought our guys did a great job and gave a great effort. I'm very proud of them for that. As BYU had it going offensively, our guys were able to make a run and try to cut the lead and come back. I'm proud of our guys' effort but BYU has a very good basketball team. They have a little bit of everything: shooters, scorers, and bigs."

On UCF's 27 points off of BYU's 17 turnovers

"That's kind of who we are. That's our style of play. We play the game in 94 feet, and we were fortunate today to get some turnovers, which led to some points for us. But that's just our style of play. We want to play in the full court and play fast."

On BYU's 46 free throw attempts

"We have to be better. For me, we have to make sure we guard without fouling. That's a big emphasis that we have. 'Play hard but don't foul'. They shot 46 free throws. Some of them we had to foul at the end, coming down the stretch. We had to foul to try to stop the clock so a number of times that happened probably ran their free throw number up as well."

On preparing to play BYU

"They have so many weapons out there. They're probably one of the few teams in the league that has weapons in three-point shooting threats at all five positions. That makes them very, very difficult to guard. When (Aly) Khalifa is in there, that's another guy that can knock down shots at a high clip."

UCF Guard Jaylin Sellers

On improving first half

"We've just got to listen to Coach Dawkins and do what he tells us to do. I feel like if we do that, then we'll be fine. We're not really executing what he's telling us to do and I think that's hurting us every time that we start a game. Our leaders have got to step up each and every day, in practice and in games."