



SIU	0	6	7	0	13
BYU	14	3	14	10	41

AUGUST 31, 2024
LAVELL EDWARDS STADIUM

TEAM NOTES

STARTING STRONG

- > With a 13-play, 65-yard touchdown drive capped by a 1-yard rushing score from Hinckley Ropati, BYU has now scored a touchdown on its opening drive of the season for the third-straight season. 2024 marks BYU's fifth-straight season-opening win.

OFFENSE AT-A-GLANCE

- > BYU's 527 yards of total offense came with 27 1st Downs, converting 7 of 15 3rd Downs and scoring on 5 of 6 trips to the red zone.

HAVOC PLAYS

- > BYU disrupted Southern Illinois' offense with two sacks, five tackles-for-loss, two quarterback hurries, a pass breakup and interception. The Cougars' two sacks are their most since recording four at Arkansas in 2023.

GOOD FROM 50

- > Will Ferrin's 50-yard field goal make in the second quarter is BYU's first make from 50 yards since Jake Oldroyd hit a 50-yarder versus San Diego State in 2020.

NEWCOMER NIGHT

- > Eighteen different underclassmen took the field for BYU on Saturday night, including eight true freshman

SPREADING THE BALL AROUND

- > Ten different receivers caught passes for BYU, the Cougars' most since 10 did so at Oregon in 2022.

PLAYER NOTES

JAKE RETZLAFF (QB)

- > Retzlaff posted career-highs in completion percentage (67%, 20-30), passing yards (348), passing TDs (3) and passer rating (197.1). Retzlaff's passer rating tonight is the best for a BYU QB since Jaren Hall's 216.6 versus Utah Tech in 2022. Retzlaff cleared the 300-yd mark 14 times and passed for 3 TDs 12 times in junior college.

LJ MARTIN (RB)

- > Martin recorded his second-career touchdown reception (Kansas, 2023) and first-career game with a rushing and receiving TD.

CHASE ROBERTS (WR)

- > With 7 receptions for 108 yards, Roberts recorded his third-career game with 100+ receiving yards and his fifth game leading BYU in receptions.

ISAIAH BAGNAH (DE)

- > Bagnah's sack for a loss of 11 yards in the first quarter was the second of his BYU career and 12th collegiate sack.

JOHN NELSON (DT)

- > Nelson's sack for a loss of 5 yards in the second quarter gives him 4.5 for his career and first since BYU's 24-23 win over SMU in the 2022 New Mexico Bowl.

JAKOB ROBINSON (CB)

- > With his ninth-career INT, Robinson ties his position coach, Jernaro Gilford, for third-most career INTs at BYU since 2000.

NOTABLE FIRSTS/CAREER HIGHS

CAREER FIRSTS

- > Mata'ava Ta'ase first career TD catch (19 yards)
- > Cody Hagen first career reception (11 yards)
- > Luke To'omalatai first career tackles (at BYU, 2, 0.5 TFL)
- > Koa Eldredge first career tackle (1)
- > Tommy Prassas first career tackle (1)
- > Viliami Po'uha first career tackle (1)

CAREER HIGHS

- > QB Jake Retzlaff - completion (57 yards)

- > WR Jojo Phillips - receptions (2), receiving yards (70), long reception (57 yards)
- > CB Evan Johnson - tackles (3)
- > LB Sione Moa - tackles (3)
- > LB Isaiah Glasker - tackles (2)
- > DE Bodie Schoonover - tackles (2)
- > K Will Ferrin - long FG make (50 yards) previous long 49 (vs. Oklahoma, 2023)

GAME INFO

Weather: 90°F, clear

Attendance: 63,712 (sellout)

Series Results: 1-0

Captains: Tyler Batty (DE), Jake Retzlaff (QB), Connor Pay (C), Chase Roberts (WR)

Coin Toss: BYU wins, defers to second half.

Uniforms: Royal helmet, royal face-mask, royal jersey, royal pants, white trim

BYU Flag Bearers

Alumni: John Betham (WR, 1972-74), Gary Shaw (DB, 1973-75), Gary Stoddard (OL, 1973-74, 77)

USA: Sam Dawe (OL)

Utah: Aisea Moa (LB)

Big 12: Payton Vansteenkiste (S)

Y Lighter: Brian Billick (TE, 1974-76)

100th Season: As part of its 100th season celebrations, BYU honored its 1974 Fiesta Bowl team prior to kickoff.



For a live feed of in-game notes follow **@BYUGameNotes** on X (Twitter) throughout gameday. Track milestones, news, notes and more.



Find more game materials including box scores, postgame audio/video files and more at byucougars.com/pressbox





KALANI SITAKE, BYU HEAD COACH

Opening Statement:

“It was good to get the win. We are glad to be playing football again and see these guys get on the field after the offseason. It wasn’t perfect, and it wasn’t even our best, but I’m really proud of the team and I am glad that we are 1-0 right now. I want to give a lot of praise and appreciation to all of the fans that were here. They are amazing and brought a lot of energy. So I just hope they know that we appreciate and love them.”

On defensive coordinator Jay Hill:

“He did not want this to be a distraction or be about him. He didn’t want the attention, but people love him. How could you not? He is such a good person. On behalf of him, I want to tell people thank you for thinking about him and praying for him. It worked, and he is doing really good.”

On quarterback Jake Retzlaff

“He’s just a tough kid. He has an amazing work ethic and great abilities. I love the person that he is, and he just happens to play great football.”

On backup quarterback Gerry Bohanon

“The special thing about Gerry is he was so supportive, and he is a special, special human being. He and Jake have a great relationship. We needed both of them to compete like that, because I thought it made both of them better.”

On fourth downs

“I don’t want to keep going for it on fourth down all the time, but I don’t mind doing it either, especially when we are an efficient team. I want to be aggressive. We have four downs for a reason, so I don’t mind using it, but I would rather just get first downs early, get some junk yardage and get some scores.

On special teams

“I think we could have had more opportunities there. We didn’t catch the ball and get it secured, which really hurt our opportunity to get returns. But I know that we will get that taken care of. Coach Poppinga is a really good coach and he’s got those guys trained.”

JAKE RETZLAFF, BYU QUARTERBACK

On game one:

“It was a lot of fun to play football again. The guys around me played incredible at every position. The running backs ran the ball well today for 170 yards. Five hundred and twenty seven yards of offense, that is a total team effort if I’ve ever heard of one.”

On going for it on fourth:

“I mean that’s just our offense from day one; we go by the book. I hope to never see the punt team or field goal team on the field. I love going for it on fourth down, I have always loved to go for it on fourth down. The guys love it too because it just shows Coach [Aaron] Roderick’s belief in us. It’s a lot of fun to be able to have a coordinator who believes in you like that and a team who can perform like that.”

On the quarterback battle

“When you win any competition it makes you feel good, but there isn’t much time for that, so it becomes about preparation. Having a guy like Gerry in the room is awesome for that. He’s a veteran and has done it so many ways. He is a heck of a ballplayer, and so having him in that room is so valuable to me.”



JOHN NELSON, BYU DEFENSIVE TACKLE

On having Jay Hill at the game

“It was incredible. That’s just the kind of guy he is. He is always telling us to be tough, and for him to have a heart attack and make it to the game the next day is pretty tough-minded. Having him here was awesome, and seeing him there on the field with all of us was really motivating.”

On Jay Hill’s health struggles

“We got the news yesterday, and we were all shocked and surprised. He is so active and involved in what we do, and to get that news of what he was going through was devastating to say the least.”

“He pours his heart and soul into this program and believes in us, so we put our hearts out for him. He didn’t want us to change anything or do anything special. He wanted us to play the game the same.”

On defensive lapses

“We had some runs get away from us. There were times when they ran their quarterback and when we have three defensive line-men. We need to do a better job of knowing when the draw is coming, so we can contain it.”

LJ MARTIN, BYU RUNNING BACK

On the rushing duo of he and Hinckley Ropati

“He’s a good player. It was just: go out there and play. If he got tired, I would go in, and if I got tired he would go in. Just play football.”

On the rushing attack

“I feel like we did well. We were able to get some big runs, but I feel like there is stuff we could definitely clean up. We will get back to work on that and get ready for next week.

On the versatility of BYU’s skill position players

“You are able to see from the running back room that all of us are able to catch, run the ball, be physical and even the receivers and tight ends, you see them in the game blocking and catching. So you can see the versatility all throughout the field. That’s what the offense requires, and that is what the coaches preach to us, to be a complete player.

JAKOB ROBINSON, BYU CORNERBACK

On Jay Hill being at the game:

“It was definitely heartbreaking for us to see him up on the screen. You could tell that he was really sad and wanted to be there with us. It was super happy to have him back. It made my day to have him back.”

“Coach Hill wanted us to be quiet about it, because he really didn’t want it to get out on social media until after the game. All of us were just talking about that we were glad to have him here.”

On learning toughness from Jay Hill

“He talks about us being tough, then he’ll be tough. I can’t really say anything when he tells me to get up after I roll my ankle. He just had a heart attack, and he’s back here. It speaks a lot about our coach.”

On running back LJ Martin

“He can catch the ball, and he can run. I haven’t had the chance to tackle him, but I don’t really want to.”



SOUTHERN ILLINOIS HEAD COACH NICK HILL

Opening statement:

“A lot of respect for the team that we went against. I felt like they played really well. I’m disappointed that we didn’t make it a four-quarter game that we’ve done here in the past playing up, playing an FBS opponent, but they played really well. They played a clean game. In these games that we’ve won, we’ve turned them over. We won the turnover margin. We didn’t force any turnovers. We never really got the momentum on our side in any of the four quarters, so I tip my hat to them.”

On their touchdown drive after being down 14-0:

“There’s going to be some things that we can grow off of from this game. Like I told our team in the locker room, doing this for nine years now, the feel of knowing the guys that we have, we can have a good football team. It’s just going to be about our response. It’s going to be about how we come back to work and get in the building tomorrow night. I was proud of that drive. There’s some things that we can grow off of, some of the stuff that we can do in the quarterback game. There’s going to be some things that we’ve got to clean up, but again, they created a lot of those issues as well.

On BYU holding them to 231 yards of offense:

“I mean, obviously, for us, they have more scholarship players, they have everything that we don’t have. We come out here and know what we’re up against. They have an experienced group up front and they can put pressure on the quarterback. I think that they played well defensively. We always have expectations to go out there and play well, and we’ve done that before in the past, but the past doesn’t help you out. We’ll be better on offense going forward.”

On the play of quarterback DJ Williams:

“I thought that he played solid. He’s got a great demeanor out there. You can see his toughness. You can see the athleticism that he brings ... He took care of the ball, made good decisions, didn’t put the ball in harm’s way.”