

2008 Utah Football Bowl Media Guide

Utah vs. Alabama

January 2, 2009 • New Orleans, La.



K/P Louie Sakoda
All-America Kicker and Punter
Lou Groza and Ray Guy Finalist
Three-Time MWC Special Teams Player of the Year



QB Brian Johnson
2008 MWC Offensive Player of Year
Johnny Unitas Golden Arm Award Finalist
Manning Award Finalist

2008 Mountain West Conference Champions



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**The ORIGINAL
BCS BUSTERS:
Take 2**



DL Paul Kruger



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Associate Athletics Director/SID: Liz Abel
Associate Director: Kyle Harris
Assistant Director: Brooke Frederickson
Assistant Director: Mike DeVine
Office Manager: Kate Sturgeon

2008 Utah Football Schedule (12-0, 8-0 MWC - 1st)

Date	Opponent	TV	Time/Result
Aug. 30	at Michigan	ABC/ESPN2	W, 25-23
Sept. 6	UNLV*	The Mtn.	W, 42-21
Sept. 13	at Utah State	KJZZ	W, 58-10
Sept. 20	at Air Force*	VERSUS	W, 30-23
Sept. 27	Weber State (HC)		W, 37-21
Oct. 2	Oregon State	VERSUS	W, 31-28
Oct. 11	at Wyoming*	The Mtn.	W, 40-7
Oct. 18	Colorado State*	The Mtn.	W, 49-16
Nov. 1	at New Mexico*	The Mtn.	W, 13-10
Nov. 6	TCU*	CBS C	W, 13-10
Nov. 15	at San Diego State*	The Mtn.	W, 63-14
Nov. 22	Brigham Young*	The Mtn.	W, 48-24
Jan. 2	Alabama (Sugar Bowl)	Fox Sports	

HC-Homecoming ; *-Mountain West Conference game

Utah Hotel, SID Contacts

Team Hotel

New Orleans Marriott (555 Canal Street)

Utah Sports Information Director

Liz Abel (arrives New Orleans Dec. 27, 3:00 p.m.)
Cell: 801-209-6346; Email: label@huntsman.utah.edu

Utah Assistant Sports Information Director

Brooke Frederickson (arrives New Orleans Dec. 31)
Cell: 801-493-9254; Email: bfrederickson@huntsman.utah.edu

Media Access/Policies at the Sugar Bowl

Press Conferences

Times and days to be determined

Media at Practices / Interviews

1. Media may attend the last 30 minutes of practice.
2. TVs may shoot the last 15 minutes of practice.
3. Interviews will be conducted following practice.
4. Practice on Dec. 27 and the walkthrough on Jan. 1 are CLOSED

Utah's Bowl History (10-3)

Year	Bowl	Opponent	Result	Score
1939	Sun Bowl	New Mexico	Won	26-0
1964	Liberty Bowl	West Virginia	Won	32-6
1992	Copper Bowl	Washington State	Lost	31-28
1993	Freedom Bowl	USC	Lost	28-21
1994	Freedom Bowl	Arizona	Won	16-13
1996	Copper Bowl	Wisconsin	Lost	38-10
1999	Las Vegas Bowl	Fresno State	Won	17-16
2001	Las Vegas Bowl	USC	Won	10-6
2003	Liberty Bowl	Southern Miss	Won	17-0
2005	Fiesta Bowl	Pittsburgh	Won	35-7
2005	Emerald	Georgia Tech	Won	38-10
2006	Armed Forces	Tulsa	Won	25-13
2007	Poinsettia	Navy	Won	35-32

NO. 7 UTAH WILL PLAY NO. 4 ALABAMA IN ALLSTATE SUGAR BOWL 12-0 Utes, 12-1 Tide to meet on Jan. 2 in New Orleans

Location	New Orleans, La.
Date	Friday, Jan. 2
Site	Louisiana Superdome (72,000/FieldTurf)
Kickoff	7:17 p.m. CT
Television	Fox Sports
Radio	KALL 700AM Sports Radio, ESPN Radio

> No. 7 Utah (12-0) will play No. 4 Alabama (12-1) in the 75th Allstate Sugar Bowl on Friday, Jan. 2 in New Orleans. Kickoff is 7:17 p.m. CT (6:17 p.m. MT) in the 72,000-seat Louisiana Superdome. The game will be televised by Fox Sports.

> Utah ended the regular season ranked No. 6 in the BCS Standings and No. 7 in the *USA Today* Coaches, Associated Press and Harris polls.

> Utah's No. 6 BCS ranking ties its best in school history—which is also the best BCS ranking ever by a team from a non-automatic qualifying conference. The Utes, who have been ranked sixth in the BCS standings for the last three weeks, rose to No. 6 in the final BCS standings of 2004. The 2004 Utes finished with a No. 4 A.P. ranking, which is the best in school history.

> Utah is 12-0 for the second time ever—tying the school mark set in 2004.

> Utah owns the longest win streak in the nation at 13 games. Utah and Alabama were tied at 13 before the Tide's loss to Florida on Dec. 6. Utah has won 20 of its last 21 games.

> With the invitation, Utah becomes the first team from a non-automatic qualifying conference to play in two BCS bowl games. Utah was the original BCS Buster in 2004—beating Pittsburgh in the (2005) Fiesta Bowl to complete an undefeated season at 12-0.

> Utah has the second-longest current bowl win streak in the nation at seven games—one behind Boston College. Utah wins during the streak came against Fresno State (1999), USC (2001), Southern Miss (2003), Pittsburgh (2005/2004 season), Georgia Tech (2005), Tulsa (2006) and Navy (2007).

> With two wins over ranked teams this season (then No. 11 TCU and No. 14 BYU), Utah improved to 6-0 all-time in games when both Utah and its opponent were nationally ranked.

>The Sugar Bowl will feature two of the nation's stingiest defensive teams. Alabama ranks sixth in scoring defense (13.0), while Utah is 12th (17.2). On offense, Utah is ranked 15th in scoring (37.42) and Alabama is No. 30 (31.15). See pages 4-5 for complete rankings on the two teams.



Utah Game Notes

Utah General Information

Location: Salt Lake City, Utah
 President: Michael Young
 Athletics Director: Dr. Chris Hill
 Conference: Mountain West Conference
 Enrollment: 28,205
 Nickname: Utes
 Colors: Red, White (PMS 187, White)
 Stadium: Rice-Eccles (45,017/FieldTurf)

Utah Football Coach Kyle Whittingham

Year	School	Overall	MWC	Bowl
2005	Utah	7-5	4-4	W (Georgia Tech)
2006	Utah	8-5	5-3	W (Tulsa)
2007	Utah	9-4	5-3	W (Navy)
2008	Utah	12-0	8-0	
Totals		36-14	22-10	3-0

Education

Brigham Young
 Bachelor's in educational psychology (1984)
 Master's in athletic administration (1987)

Coaches' Game Day Locations

On The Field

Kyle Whittingham, Head Coach
 Gary Andersen*, Defensive Coordinator/Defensive Line
 Charlie Dickey, Offensive Line
 Jay Hill, Tight Ends/Special Teams
 Aaron Roderick, Wide Receivers
 Dave Schramm, Running Backs
 Kalani Sitake^, Linebackers
 Morgan Scalley, Safeties
 *New head coach at Utah State
 ^New defensive coordinator will begin his duties after the bowl

In the Press Box

Andy Ludwig, Offensive Coordinator/Quarterbacks
 Aaron Alford, Cornerbacks
 Zac Connors, Offensive Graduate Assistant
 Ilaisa Tuiaki, Defensive Graduate Assistant

2008 Team Captains

Brian Johnson, Robert Conley, Stevenson Sylvester, Brice McCain (special teams captain appointed by game)

BCS BEATERS

Utah has more wins against BCS schools (15) since 2000 than any other non-automatic qualifying BCS school. The Utes are 15-10 against BCS teams since 2000, 10-3 since 2004 and 2-0 this year. Since the BCS began in 1998, Utah is tied for the most wins (16) against BCS teams by a non-BCS team. The top non-BCS teams since 2000: Utah (15), Fresno State (14), Navy (13), TCU (12) and BYU (10). The top non-BCS teams since 1998: Utah (16), Navy (16), TCU (15), BYU (14) and Fresno State (14).

NEW ORLEANS TIES

Utah head coach **Kyle Whittingham** has lived in New Orleans twice. His father, Fred, played for the New Orleans Saints from 1967-68 (and part of 1969) during his seven-year NFL career. Kyle Whittingham also played in the Big Easy—spending the 1984 season with the USFL's New Orleans Breakers ... Backup safety **RJ Rice** (Salt Lake City) spent part of his childhood in New Orleans, where he played in his very first football game, meaning he will start and end his football career in New Orleans.

COACHES' BOX

The Utah coaching staff assignments will remain unchanged for the Allstate Sugar Bowl, even with **Gary Andersen** accepting the head coaching job at Utah State on Dec. 4. Andersen will continue to serve as Utah's defensive coordinator and defensive line coach through the bowl game. **Kalani Sitake**, who was announced as Utah's new defensive coordinator at the team's bowl announcement party on Dec. 7, will stay as the linebackers' coach for the bowl.

BOWL BITS

First-time Sugar Bowl invitee Utah will play an Alabama program that has appeared in 13 Sugar Bowls—tied for the most ever with LSU. Alabama last played in the Sugar Bowl in 1993, when it beat Miami for the national title ... Utah is designated as the visiting team in the Allstate Sugar Bowl ... Utah has played an indoor bowl game one other time in its history. The Utes beat West Virginia 32-6 in the 1964 Liberty Bowl in the Atlantic City Convention Center in what was billed as the first indoor major bowl game ... Utah is 10-3 all-time in bowl games and its 77-percent postseason winning percentage is the best in the nation for teams that have played in at least 10 bowl games ... This is only the second time in its 115-year football history that Utah has played on January 2. The Utes beat New Mexico in the Sun Bowl in El Paso, Texas, on Jan. 2, 1939.

CONSENSUS KING LOUIE

Utah senior **Louie Sakoda** is Utah's fourth all-time Consensus All-American and the first Ute to win first-team All-America honors at two different positions. Sakoda, just the second player from any school to be named a finalist for both the Lou Groza (kicker) and Ray Guy (punter) awards in the same year, was selected as a 2008 first-team All-America kicker by the Associated Press, American Football Coaches Association (AFCA), Football Writers Association of America (FWAA), Walter Camp Foundation and Sporting News. He is the first Utah football player to win first-team honors on all five of the teams that comprise the consensus team. Last year, Sakoda was named a first-team All-America punter by the FWAA and CBSSports.com. Other Ute Consensus All-Americans: DL



2008 Utah Honors (as of Dec. 17)

Louie Sakoda, PK/P • Consensus All-American

Associated Press First-Team All-America kicker
 AFCA First-Team All-America kicker
 FWAA First-Team All-America kicker
 Walter Camp First-Team All-America kicker
Sporting News First-Team All-America kicker
 Lou Groza Finalist
 Ray Guy Finalist
 MWC Special Teams Player of the Year
 First-Team all-MWC kicker
 First-Team all-MWC punter
 Five-time MWC Special Teams Player of the Week
 Draddy Trophy Finalist
 National Football Foundation Scholar Athlete
ESPN The Magazine First-Team Academic All-American
 Lowe's Senior Class Award Finalist
 Wuerffel Trophy Finalist

Kyle Whittingham, Head Coach

2008 Mountain West Conference Coach of the Year
 Eddie Robinson National Coach of the Year Finalist
 Liberty Mutual National Coach of the Year Finalist
 Paul 'Bear' Bryant Coach of the Year Finalist

2008 All-Mountain West Conference Utes

Coach of the Year: Kyle Whittingham

Offensive Player of the Year: Brian Johnson, QB

Special Teams Player of the Year: Louie Sakoda, PK/P

First-Team All-MWC

Zane Beadles, Jr. OL
 Robert Conley, Sr. OL
 Brian Johnson, Sr. QB
 Paul Kruger, So. DL
 Brice McCain, Sr. DB
 Louie Sakoda, Sr. PK
 Louie Sakoda, Sr. P
 Sean Smith, Jr. DB

Second-Team All-MWC

Freddie Brown, Sr. WR
 Koa Misi, Jr. DL
 Stevenson Sylvester, Jr. LB

Honorable Mention All-MWC

Greg Newman, Sr., DL; Zane Taylor, So., OL; David Reed, Jr., KR; Mike Wright, Jr., LB

2008 Utah MWC Players Of The Week

Sept. 1 Louie Sakoda, Special Teams
 Brian Johnson, Offense
 Sept. 22 Darrell Mack, Offense
 Sept. 29 Louie Sakoda, Special Teams
 Oct. 5 Louie Sakoda, Special Teams
 Mike Wright, Defense
 Nov. 3 Louie Sakoda, Special Teams
 Nov. 10 Brian Johnson, Offense
 Nov. 17 Deshawn Richard, Defense
 Nov. 24 Louie Sakoda, Special Teams
 Brian Johnson, Offense
 Paul Kruger, Defense

Luther Elliss (1994), OL Jordan Gross (2002) and DB Eric Weddle (2006). Sakoda is a three-time Special Teams Player of the Year and the league's all-time leader in career player of the week awards, with 12. He is also a first-team ESPN The Magazine Academic All-American and a National Football Foundation Scholar-Athlete, is a finalist for the Draddy, Wuerffel and Lowe's Senior Class awards.

UTES DOMINATE ALL CONFERENCE TEAM

Utah senior quarterback **Brian Johnson** and senior punter/kicker **Louie Sakoda** were named the Mountain West Conference Offensive and Special Teams Player of the Year, respectively, and **Kyle Whittingham** was the MWC Coach of the Year by vote of the league's head coaches and media. The undefeated Utes claimed over a third of the 22 first-team positions with a league-high eight selections, including Sakoda as both the punter and the kicker. Johnson, the first-team quarterback, was joined by two of his offensive linemen: junior **Zane Beadles** and senior **Robert Conley**. Defensive first-team Utes included sophomore DL **Paul Kruger**, senior DB **Brice McCain** and junior DB **Sean Smith**. Second-team Utes were senior WR **Freddie Brown**, junior DL **Koa Misi** and junior LB **Stevenson Sylvester**. Honorable mention picks were sophomore OL **Zane Taylor**, junior KR **David Reed**, senior DL **Greg Newman** and junior LB **Mike Wright**.

UTAH COACH KYLE WHITTINGHAM

Kyle Whittingham, the 2008 MWC Coach of the Year, is a finalist for the Eddie Robinson, Paul 'Bear' Bryant and Liberty Mutual National Coach of the Year awards. He is 36-14 in four years as Utah's head coach, including a school-record tying 12-0 record this season. Whittingham is 6-3 against BCS schools and 3-0 in bowl games. In his 15 total years on the Utah staff—he served as the defensive coordinator from 1995-2004 and as the defensive line coach in 1994—Utah has won nearly 70-percent of its games (122-55), played in nine bowl games (winning eight) and been ranked in the Associated Press Top 25 for a total of 49 weeks. Utah's current No. 6 BCS ranking heading into his 10th bowl game matches its best ever—first set by the 2004 team, for which he was the defensive coordinator.

INSIDE THE HUDDLE

Nine current Utes were on the 2004/2005 Fiesta Bowl team: **Brent Casteel**, WR; **Brad Clifford**, TE; **Robert Conley**, OL; **Afa Garigan**, LB; **Brian Johnson**, QB; **Paul Kruger**, DL; **John Peel**, WR; **Colt Sampson**, TE; **Ray Stowers**, RB. The only one who played that season was Johnson, who saw action in 10 games as a true freshman playing behind Alex Smith. Johnson did not play in the bowl game ... Utah has had 17 different players score a touchdown this season, which is tied for the second-most in the nation behind Miami (18). Here's a breakdown of how Utah has scored its touchdowns: rushing (23), receiving (26), interception returns (3), punt return (1) and fumble return (2) ... Kicker **Louie Sakoda** leads Utah (and the MWC) in scoring with 115 points, followed by running back **Matt Asiata** (72), receiver **Freddie Brown** (42), and a combination of defense and special teams (38) ... Six Utes have completed a pass: quarterbacks **Johnson** (241-353), **Corbin Louks** (4-7) and **Chad Manis** (3-4); running back **Asiata** (2-3), receiver **Jereme Brooks** (1-1) and punter/kicker **Sakoda** (1-2) ... Two true



Utah Game Notes

Utah Rankings on Offense

Category	AVG	MWC	NCAA
Rushing Offense	168.42	5	41
Passing Offense	236.83	4	41
Pass Efficiency	149.7	2	16
Total Offense	405.2	3	31
Scoring Offense	37.4	1	15

Utah Rankings on Defense

Category	AVG	MWC	NCAA
Rushing Defense	104.83	2	14
Passing Defense	191.1	3	40
Pass Efficiency Defense	108.64	2	22
Total Defense	295.92	2	18
Scoring Defense	17.25	2	12

Utah Individual Rankings

Player, Category	AVG	MWC	NCAA
Louie Sakoda, field goals	1.75	2	4
Louie Sakoda, scoring	9.58	1	7
Louie Sakoda, punting	41.72	3	31
Paul Kruger, tackles for loss	1.29	2	T-25
Paul Kruger, sacks	0.62	T-3	T-41
David Reed, kick return avg	25.57	2	29
Brian Johnson, pass efficiency	148.34	2	18
Brian Johnson, passing avg/gm	219.7	4	40
Brian Johnson, total off.	231.58	4	44
Sean Smith, interceptions	0.42	T-1	T-21
Sean Smith, passes defended	1.08	T-2	T-26
Freddie Brown, receptions/gm	5.42	4	44

Red Zone Report

Utah Opponent	No.	TD	FG	Scoring Pct.	TD Pct.
Michigan	5	2	1	60.0%	66.7%
UNLV	3	3	0	100%	100%
Utah State	8	6	2	100%	75.0%
Air Force	3	3	0	100%	100%
Weber State	6	4	1	100%	66.7%
Oregon State	5	2	3	100%	60%
Wyoming	2	2	0	100%	100%
Colorado State	2	2	0	100%	100%
New Mexico	2	1	0	50%	100%
San Diego St.	7	6	0	85.7%	100%
Brigham Young	7	5	2	100%	71.4%
Totals	52	37	10	90.4%	78.7%

Opponent Team	No.	TD	FG	Scoring Pct.	TD Pct.
Michigan	2	2	0	100%	100%
UNLV	3	3	0	100%	100%
Utah State	2	1	1	100%	50.0%
Air Force	2	2	0	100%	100%
Weber State	3	2	0	66.6%	66.6%
Oregon State	4	2	1	75%	50%
Wyoming	2	1	0	50%	100%
Colorado State	3	0	2	66.6%	0%
New Mexico	1	1	0	100%	100%
San Diego St.	2	1	0	50%	100%
Brigham Young	3	2	0	66.6%	100%
Totals	31	18	5	74.2%	78.3%

freshmen have played in games: OL **Tony Bergstrom** and DT **Sealver Siliga**. Six redshirt freshmen have played, including starting nose tackle **Derrick Shelby**.

OUTSIDE THE LINES

Utah is the only school ever to produce the No. 1 NFL and NBA draft pick in the same year. In April 2005, Ute quarterback **Alex Smith** was taken No. 1 by the San Francisco 49ers. Two months later, Ute center **Andrew Bogut** was the No. 1 NBA draft pick of the Milwaukee Bucks ... Utah set a school attendance record this year by averaging 45,542 to its home games. The attendance exceeds the seating capacity of Rice-Eccles Stadium, which is 45,017 ... A decal with the initials JBW will be displayed on the back of Utah's helmets at the bowl game in honor of Joseph B. Wirthlin, who played for Utah in the 1930s, and recently passed away. An Apostle in the Mormon Church, he was a big Ute football supporter his entire life ... The Fox Sports announce team for the game will be Kenny Albert, Daryl Johnston, Charissa Thompson and Chris Myers. The Utes are 0-2 all-time in games televised by Fox Sports.

NFL "SMITHS" GIVE BACK

Former Utah football stars and current NFL players **Alex Smith** (San Francisco) and **Steve Smith** (Carolina) have both made significant monetary contributions to the Utah athletics program in the last year. Alex Smith donated \$500,000 for the Alex Smith Strength and Conditioning Center—a renovation and expansion of Utah's existing facility. Steve Smith gifted \$250,000 to endow an annual Steve Smith Receiver Scholarship. Two Ute NBA players have also made key contributions in recent years. **Andre Miller** (Philadelphia) donated \$500,000 to the men's basketball program and **Andrew Bogut** (Milwaukee) gifted \$125,000, also to the men's basketball program.

LAST GAME

Utah won the Mountain West Conference title outright—capping an undefeated regular season with a 48-24 win over No. 14 Brigham Young on Nov. 22. **Brian Johnson** was brilliant in his final game in Rice-Eccles Stadium, completing 30-of-36 passes for 303 yards, four touchdowns and no interceptions. The second-largest crowd in school history (46,488) witnessed a close game for three quarters before the defense went on a rampage—intercepting BYU's Heisman hopeful Max Hall five times and stripping him of the ball to stop another drive. The interceptions (two by **Joe Dale**) put the ball back in Johnson's hands and he steered Utah to 21 unanswered fourth-quarter points. Senior receivers **Freddie Brown** (97 yards) and **Brent Casteel** (60 yards, 2 touchdowns) excelled in their home finale, and senior kicker/punter **Louie Sakoda** was perfect kicking—making both field goals and all six PAT attempts, while averaging 44.2 yards on his punts. Junior running back **Matt Asiata** ran for a touchdown and passed for another. **Paul Kruger** demoralized BYU with an interception (which he returned 30 yards to the Cougar 4-yard line), a fumble recovery, two pass breakups and six tackles. Other interceptions came from **Robert Johnson** and **Sean Smith**. **Mike Wright** led Utah with nine tackles.



Scouting The Opponent

Tide Watch

Complete information on Alabama can be found online at www.RollTide.com ... 12-1 overall ... won the Southeastern Conference Western Division ... After spending five weeks ranked No. 1 in the nation (Nov. 2-Dec. 6), the Tide slipped to No. 4 with their 31-20 loss in the SEC Championship game to Florida. It was the Tide's first appearance in the SEC title game since 1999 ... Four first-team AFCA All-Americans: offensive tackle Andre Smith, center Antoine Caldwell, defensive tackle Terrence Cody and defensive back Rashad Johnson ... Smith, Caldwell, Cody and Johnson were also first-team all-SEC selections, as were running back Glen Coffee and linebacker Rolando McClain ... Alabama is ranked in the top-10 in three major defensive categories: total defense (third - 256.92), rushing defense (fourth - 78.85) and scoring defense (sixth - 13.0) ... Nick Saban is 19-7 in his second year at Alabama and 125-66-1 in 15 years as a head coach.

Alabama Head Coach Nick Saban

Alma Mater, year: Kent State, 1973
 Career Record (year): 110-49-1 (13th year)
 Record at Current School (year): 19-7 (2nd year)

Alabama Schedule/Results (12-1, 8-0 SEC)

Date	Opponent	Result
8-30	vs. Clemson	W, 34-10
9-6	Tulane	W, 20-6
9-13	Western Kentucky	W, 41-7
9-20	at Arkansas	W, 49-14
9-27	at Georgia	W, 41-30
10-4	Kentucky	W, 17-14
10-18	Mississippi	W, 24-20
10-25	at Tennessee	W, 29-9
11-1	Arkansas State	W, 35-0
11-8	at LSU	W, 27-21
11-15	Mississippi State	W, 32-7
11-29	Auburn	W, 36-0
12-6	vs. Florida	L, 31-20

Alabama Offensive Rankings

Category	Avg.	SEC	NCAA
Rushing Offense	196.46	2	23
Passing Offense	170.69	8	96
Total Offense	367.15	6	56
Scoring Offense	31.15	3	30

Alabama Defensive Rankings

Category	Avg.	SEC	NCAA
Rushing Defense	78.85	1	4
Passing Defense	178.08	2	13
Total Defense	256.92	1	3
Scoring Defense	13.00	2	6

Alabama Individual Rankings

Player, Category	Avg.	SEC	NCAA
Javier Arenas, punt returns	14.42	2	13
Glen Coffee, rushing	103.62	3	21
Leigh Tiffin, field goals	1.46	2	21
Leigh Tiffin, scoring	7.77	5	43
Rashad Johnson, interceptions	0.38	4	T-31
John Parker Wilson, pass eff.	123.81	4	65
John Parker Wilson, total off.	163.15	5	87
Julio Jones, receptions/gm.	3.92	7	NR
P.J. Fitzgerald, punting	41.11	5	42

Alabama Bowl History (31-21-3)

1926	Rose	Washington	W, 20-19
1927	Rose	Stanford	T, 7-7
1931	Rose	Washington State	W, 24-0
1935	Rose	Stanford	W, 29-13
1938	Rose	California	L, 13-0
1942	Cotton	Texas A&M	W, 29-21
1943	Orange	Boston College	W, 37-21
1945	Sugar	Duke	L, 29-26
1946	Rose	Southern Cal	W, 34-14
1948	Sugar	Texas	L, 27-7
1953	Orange	Syracuse	W, 61-6
1954	Cotton	Rice	L, 28-6
1959	Liberty	Penn State	L, 7-0
1960	Bluebonnet	Texas	T, 3-3
1962	Sugar	Arkansas	W, 10-3
1963	Orange	Alabama	W, 17-0
1964	Sugar	Mississippi	W, 12-7
1965	Orange	Texas	L, 21-17
1966	Orange	Nebraska	W, 39-28
1967	Sugar	Nebraska	W, 34-7
1968	Cotton	Texas A&M	L, 20-16
1968	Gator	Missouri	L, 35-10
1969	Liberty	Colorado	L, 47-33
1970	Bluebonnet	Oklahoma	T, 24-24
1972	Orange	Nebraska	L, 38-6
1973	Cotton	Texas	L, 17-13
1973	Sugar	Notre Dame	L, 24-23
1975	Orange	Notre Dame	L, 13-11
1975	Sugar	Penn State	W, 13-6
1976	Liberty	UCLA	W, 36-6
1978	Sugar	Ohio State	W, 35-6
1979	Sugar	Penn State	W, 14-7
1980	Sugar	Arkansas	W, 24-9
1981	Cotton	Baylor	W, 30-2
1982	Cotton	Texas	L, 14-12
1982	Liberty	Illinois	W, 21-15
1983	Sun	SMU	W, 28-7
1985	Aloha	Southern Cal	W, 24-3
1986	Sun	Washington	W, 28-6
1988	Hall of Fame	Michigan	L, 28-24
1988	Sun	Army	W, 29-28
1990	Sugar	Miami	L, 33-25
1991	Fiesta	Louisville	L, 34-7
1991	Blockbuster	Colorado	W, 30-25
1993	Sugar	Miami	W, 34-13
1993	Gator	North Carolina	W, 24-10
1995	Citrus	Ohio State	W, 24-17
1997	Outback	Michigan	W, 17-14
1998	Music City	Virginia Tech	L, 38-7
2000	Orange	Michigan	L, 35-34 (OT)
2001	Independence	Iowa State	W, 14-13
2004	Music City	Minnesota	L, 20-16
2005	Cotton	Texas Tech	W, 13-10
2006	Independence	Oklahoma State	L, 34-31
2007	Independence	Colorado	W, 30-24



Utah Game Notes

MWC STANDINGS

Team	MWC	Overall
Utah	8-0	12-0
TCU	7-1	10-2
Brigham Young	6-2	10-2
Air Force	5-3	8-4
Colorado State	4-4	6-6
UNLV	2-6	5-7
New Mexico	2-6	4-8
Wyoming	1-7	4-8
San Diego State	1-7	2-10

QUARTERLY REPORT

Quarter Points	Utah	Opponents
First	96	54
Second	152	65
Third	76	33
Fourth	125	55

ALL-TIME RECORD

Utah's all-time football record is 594-417-31. The Utes are 365-173-16 at home (47-16 in Rice-Eccles Stadium, which opened in 1998), 213-230-13 in road games and 16-14-2 in games played at neutral sites.

UTAH VS. THE SEC

Utah is 0-6 all-time against the Southeast Conference, but has not played an SEC team since 1984. Here are the results of Utah's past meetings with the SEC:

Florida (0-1)

1977 L 29-38 Nov. 19 A

Louisiana State (0-2)

1974 L 10-35 Nov. 30 A

1976 L 7-35 Nov. 27 A

Tennessee (0-3)

1975 L 7-40 Nov. 8 A

1979 L 18-51 Sep. 22 A

1984 L 21-27 Sep. 15 A

MATCHING UP

Category	Utah Offense	Alabama Defense
Rushing	168.4	78.85
Passing	236.83	178.08
Total Yards	405.25	256.92
Scoring	37.42	13.0

Category	Alabama Offense	Utah Defense
Rushing	196.46	104.33
Passing	170.69	191.08
Total Yards	367.15	295.92
Scoring	31.15	17.25

OFFENSIVE OVERVIEW

> Utah placed three players on the all-MWC first team, including MWC Offensive Player of the Year **Brian Johnson**. Joining him on the first team were junior offensive tackle **Zane Beadles** and senior offensive guard **Robert Conley**.

> Utah leads the league and ranks No. 15 in the nation in scoring offense (37.4). The Utes are No. 16 in pass efficiency offense (149.7).

> Utah is eighth in the country in time of possession (32:39).

QB BRIAN JOHNSON NOTEBOOK

> Senior **Brian Johnson** was selected as the 2008 MWC Offensive Player of the Year and the first-team all-MWC quarterback.

> **Johnson** is the winningest quarterback in school history. He is 25-7 as the starter, breaking the record set by Alex Smith (21-1 in 2003-04).

> **Johnson** has played in 43 games in his career—getting in 10 games as a freshman backup in 2004, starting in 2005, 2007 and 2008, and redshirting in 2006.

> **Johnson** has won 20 of 21 games since he returned to the starting lineup from a shoulder injury last year. > **Johnson** was one of five finalists for the Johnny Unitas Golden Arm Award and one of 10 finalists for the Manning Award.

> **Johnson** was named MWC Player of the Week three times this year (Michigan, TCU, BYU) and four times in his career.

> **Johnson** won ESPN Helmet Stickers on Aug. 30 and Nov. 22 for wins over Michigan and BYU.

> **Johnson's** passing numbers this season rank in the top 10 in several categories at Utah: fourth in completions (241), eighth in attempts (353), second in completion percentage (68.3), 10th in yards (2,636), fifth in touchdowns (24).

> **Johnson** threw for a career-high five touchdowns against San Diego State—the second-most TD passes in a game ever by a Ute QB.

> **Johnson** has engineered three game-winning touchdown drives this season: versus Air Force, Oregon State and TCU.

> **Johnson** ranks second in the MWC and 18th in the nation in pass efficiency (148.3). He is fourth in the league in passing yards per game (219.7).

> **Johnson** has completed 66.2% of his career passes, which ranks second all-time at Utah and is the best percentage ever for a four-year player.

> **Johnson** has 54 touchdown passes in his career—including nine in the last two games—which ranks second all-time at Utah.

> **Johnson** rushed for a season-high 80 yards and a touchdown (on a 56-yard run) against UNLV.

> **Johnson's** 66 career combined passing (54)/rushing (12) touchdowns rank second all-time at Utah. Scott Mitchell owns the top mark (72 from 1987-89).

> For his career, **Johnson** has thrown for 7,517 yards, the second-highest total at Utah.

> **Johnson** is tied for second all-time in career 200-yard games with 20. He has thrown for at least 200 yards in the last three games.

> **Johnson** has seven 300-yard passing games (two this year), which ranks third all-time at Utah.



Ute Single Game Career Highs

Passing Yards

Brian Johnson	417 vs. San Diego State, 2005
Corbin Louks	37 vs. Colorado State, 2008
Chad Manis	24 vs. Weber State, 2008

Rushing Yards

Darrell Mack	163 vs. Louisville, 2007
Matt Asiata	116 vs. Air Force, 2008
Ray Stowers	123 vs. Colorado State, 2007
Corbin Louks	109 vs. Colorado State, 2008
Brian Johnson	98 vs. North Carolina, 2005
Eddie Wide	69 vs. Utah State, 2008

Receiving Yards

Freddie Brown	110 vs. San Diego State, 2008
Brent Casteel	105 vs. Oregon State, 2008
David Reed	87 vs. San Diego State 2008
Bradon Godfrey	84 vs. Michigan, 2008
Darrell Mack	45 vs. San Diego State, 2007
Jereme Brooks	55 vs. Michigan, 2008
Chris Joppru	41 vs. Weber State, 2008
Matt Asiata	39 vs. Michigan, 2008
Colt Sampson	28 vs. UNLV, 2008

Tackles

Mike Wright	15 vs. Oregon State, 2008
Stevenson Sylvester	14 vs. UNLV, 2007
Robert Johnson	12 vs. Brigham Young, 2007
Joe Dale	12 vs. Navy, 2007
Paul Kruger	10 vs. Utah State, 2007
	10 vs. Navy, 2007
RJ Rice	9 vs. Utah State, 2007
Koa Misi	9 vs. Navy, 2007
	9 vs. Air Force, 2008

Interceptions

Robert Johnson	2 vs. UCLA, 2007
Sean Smith	2, twice (last vs. Wyoming, 2008)
Deshawn Richard	2 vs. San Diego State, 2008
Joe Dale	2 vs. Brigham Young, 2008
Paul Kruger	1, twice (last vs. Brigham Young, 2008)
Stevenson Sylvester	1 vs. Utah State, 2006
Brice McCain	1, 3 times (last vs. Air Force, 2008)
RJ Rice	1 vs. TCU, 2007
Justin Jones	1 vs. Wyoming, 2007
Deshawn Richard	1 vs. UNLV, 2008
Greg Newman	1 vs. Wyoming, 2008
Chaz Walker	1 vs. Colorado State, 2008

Field Goal Long

Louie Sakoda	53 vs. Michigan, 2008
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Punt Long

Louie Sakoda	81 vs. Wyoming, 2008
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Kickoff Return Yards

David Reed	142 vs. Oregon State, 2008
Jereme Brooks	126 vs. Navy, 2007
Brent Casteel	102 vs. San Diego State, 2005
Brice McCain	84 vs. New Mexico, 2006
Elijah Wesson	26 vs. Utah State, 2007

Punt Return Yards

John Peel	49 vs. UNLV, 2008
Brent Casteel	41 vs. San Diego State, 2008
Aiona Key	19 vs. Wyoming, 2008

QUARTERBACKS CONTINUED

> Sophomore second-string quarterback **Corbin Louks** has played in nine of 12 games. He missed two games (UNLV and Utah State) with a shoulder injury. He did not play against BYU in Brian Johnson's senior home finale.

> **Louks** is Utah's third-leading rusher with 218 yards on 27 attempts (8.1 average). He also has three rushing touchdowns, which is tied for second on the team.

> **Louks**, Utah's fastest offensive back (4.42 40), has led the Utes in rushing twice—vs. Wyoming (50 yards) and Colorado State (career-high 109 yards).

> **Louks** is 4-for-7 passing for 104 yards.

> **Louks** also has a 33-yard reception.

> Sophomore **Chad Manis**, the No. 3 quarterback, has played in three games this season and in his career. Manis is 3-for-4 for 24 yards—all against Weber State.

RUNNING BACK NOTEBOOK

> Carrying the ball the bulk of the time for the Utes are junior **Matt Asiata** (133 carries, 678 yards, 11 TDs, 5.1 average) and senior starter **Darrell Mack** (119 rushes, 533 yards, 3 TDs, 4.5 yards per carry).

> **Asiata's** 11 rushing touchdowns ranks second in the conference.

> **Asiata** is sixth in the Mountain West Conference in rushing at 56.5 yards per game.

> **Asiata's** average rush of 5.1 yards ranks third in the MWC.

> **Asiata** (116 yards) and **Mack** (101 yards) both went over 100 yards against Air Force. It was a career-high for Asiata.

> **Mack** has seven career 100-yard games, which is tied for fifth all-time at Utah.

> Both **Asiata** and **Mack** have rushed for three touchdowns in a game this year—Asiata against Utah State and Mack against AFA.

> Including a receiving TD, **Asiata** has 12 total touchdowns and is tied for ninth in the MWC in scoring (6.0 points per game).

> The one-two punch is also neck-and-neck in receptions: **Asiata** has 13 catches for 111 yards and a TD, while **Mack** has 13 catches for 72 yards.

> **Asiata** has a formation named after him (the Asiata Formation), where he takes the direct snap. He has completed 2-of-3 passes for 36 yards and two touchdowns out of the formation.

> **Mack** ranks eighth in career rushing yards at the U with 2,057 net yards. He needs 93 yards to tie Mike Anderson (2,150 yards from 1998-99) for seventh place.

> **Mack** is sixth at Utah with 454 career carries, ranking behind Chris Fuamatu-Ma'afala (463 carries from 1995-97).

> Sophomore **Eddie Wide** has 30 carries for 183 yards (6.1 average). He rushed for a career-high 69 yards against Utah State.

> **Wide** has played in all 12 games this year and started in four (Oregon State, Wyoming, TCU and San Diego State).

> **Ray Stowers**, who has played in five games, has 17 rushes for 76 yards (4.5 average) and two touchdowns. Stowers was recently granted another year of eligibility by the NCAA, making him a junior.



Utah Game Notes

The Last Time

Utah shut out an opponent

Utah vs. Wyoming, Nov. 10, 2007 (50-0)

Utah held an opponent without a TD

Utah vs. Wyoming, Nov. 10, 2007

Utah was shut out

vs. UNLV, Sept. 22, 2007 (27-0)

Utah was held without a touchdown

vs. UNLV, Sept. 22, 2007

An interception was returned for a touchdown

By Utah: Deshawn Richard, 38 yards vs. San Diego St., 2008

By Opp: Oregon State, 2008

A kickoff was returned for a touchdown

By Utah: Morgan Scalley, 90 yards vs. UNLV, 2004

By Opp: North Carolina, 2005

A punt was returned for a touchdown

By Utah: Derrek Richards, 75 yards vs. USU, 2007

By Opp: Utah State, 2001

A fumble was returned for a touchdown

By Utah: RJ Rice, 0 yards vs. Wyoming, 2008

By Opp: Air Force, 2008

A blocked FG was returned for a touchdown

By Utah: Shaun Harper, 0 yards vs. UNLV, 2004

By Opp: Fresno State, 1999

A blocked punt was returned for a touchdown

By Utah: Aiona Key, 6 yards vs. Wyoming, 2008

By Opp: TCU, 2007

A safety was scored

By Utah: vs. Air Force, Sept. 20, 2008

By Opp: Utah State, 2003

Utah played an overtime game

Utah vs. TCU, Sept. 15, 2005 (1 OT) - L 23-20

Utah had two 100-yard rushers in a game

Sept. 20, 2008 vs. Air Force (Darrell Mack/Matt Asiatia)

Utah had two 100-yard receivers in a game

Sept. 2, 2004 vs. Texas A&M (Paris Warren/Steve Savoy)

2008 Utah Situational Record

When Utah scores first: 7-0

When the Opponent scores first: 5-0

When Utah has more rushing yards: 8-0

When Opponent has more rushing yards: 3-0

When Utah and Opponent tie rushing yards: 1-0

When Utah has more passing yards: 9-0

When Opponent has more passing yards: 3-0

When Utah plays at home: 6-0

When Utah plays on the road: 6-0

When Utah plays on grass: 2-0

When Utah plays on artificial turf: 10-0

When Utah plays a day game: 4-0

When Utah plays a night game: 8-0

When Utah leads at halftime: 9-0

When Utah trails at halftime: 2-0

When Utah is tied at halftime: 1-0

When Utah leads after 3 quarters: 9-0

When Utah trails after 3 quarters: 2-0

When Utah is tied after 3 quarters: 1-0

When outcome is 10 or more points: 7-0

When outcome is 7 or less points: 5-0

When the game goes into overtime: 0-0

RECEIVER NOTEBOOK

> Utah has three seniors with 1,000 career receiving yards: **Brent Casteel** (1,637), **Bradon Godfrey** (1,365) and **Freddie Brown** (1,233). Casteel has cracked the top 15 all-time at Utah, ranking 12th, and needs 109 yards to reach the top 10.

> **Brown**, a second-team all-MWC selection, is Utah's leading receiver with 65 catches for 775 yards (64.6 average). He averaged 76.6 yards a game in eight league games.

> **Brown's** seven touchdown catches is tied for third in the MWC.

> **Brown** ranks fourth in the MWC in receptions per game (5.42) and seventh in receiving yards per game (64.6).

> **Brown** has led Utah's receiving corps in the last five games, including back-to-back 100-yard games against TCU (105) and San Diego State (career-high 110).

> **Brown** caught the game-winning touchdown pass against TCU with 0:48 remaining and made three key grabs on Utah's final scoring drive.

> **Godfrey** is second on the team in receptions (50) and third in receiving yards (481). He ranks eighth in the MWC in receptions per game (4.17).

> **Casteel** is third on the team in receptions (42) and second in receiving yards (547).

> **Casteel** has three receiving touchdowns this season—including two against BYU—and 16 in his career, which is tied for seventh all-time at the U.

> **Casteel** had a career-high 105 yards on five catches against Oregon State. He has two 100-yard games in his career.

> **Casteel** has also rushed 17 times for 92 yards (5.4 average) and a touchdown.

> Sophomore **Jereme Brooks** has 26 receptions for 286 yards and a touchdown. His 55-yard reception against Michigan is Utah's longest pass play this season.

> **Brooks** also has 10 carries for 60 yards (6.0 average) and a touchdown, and is 1-of-1 passing for 33 yards.

> Junior **David Reed** has 23 receptions for 369 yards (16.0 average) and five touchdowns (tied for second on the team).

> **Reed** had a season-best 87 yards against San Diego State.

TIGHT END NOTEBOOK

> Senior **Colt Sampson** is Utah's top receiving tight end with 10 catches for 74 yards and five touchdowns (tied for second on the team).

> 46% of **Sampson's** career receptions (7-of-15) have been for touchdowns.

> Junior **Chris Joppru** has played in all 12 games this season with four starts. He has six receptions for 59 yards and a touchdown, which are also his career numbers.

OFFENSIVE LINE NOTEBOOK

> First-team all-conference senior **Robert Conley** is a four-year starter at right guard. Conley was named an SI.com honorable mention American.

> **Conley** has played in 49-of-50 games since his redshirt freshman season in 2005, starting 42. He played in 42 straight games before missing the Weber State game on Sept. 27 (knee).

> **Conley** has 30 pancake blocks (six against Oregon State), 16 knockdowns and 19 cuts.

> First-team all-conference junior **Zane Beadles** has started since his freshman year (the last two seasons at left tackle).

> **Beadles** has played in 37-of-38 games since his redshirt freshman season in 2006, starting in 36. He missed this year's UNLV game (knee).

> **Beadles** has 42 pancake blocks (seven against Wyoming), 40 knockdowns (best on the team) and 27 cuts (six against UNM).

> **Beadles** led the offensive line in pancake blocks (6) and knockdowns (7)



against Air Force—all his best single-game totals of the year.

- > Sophomore left guard **Caleb Schlauderaff** has a team-best 46 pancake blocks. He also has 31 knockdowns and 19 cuts.
- > **Schlauderaff's** 11 pancake blocks against Oregon State was a career high and the best by a Ute this season. He had nine pancakes against USU.
- > Senior left guard **Dustin Hensel** has 11 pancake blocks, 27 knockdowns and a team-best 28 cuts.
- > **Hensel** had five cuts against Michigan and four against Air Force. He had six knockdowns against BYU.
- > **Hensel** held the nation's sack and tackle for loss leader, Jerry Hughes of TCU, to a half sack.
- > In his first year starting at center, sophomore **Zane Taylor** was named honorable mention all-conference.
- > **Taylor** has 15 pancake blocks, 35 knockdowns (7 vs. Michigan) and 22 cuts.
- > Others who have played on the line this season and their numbers as OL: **Corey Seiuli** (6 games, 1 start, 3 pancakes, 8 knockdowns, 5 cuts), **Tony Bergstrom** (4 games, 1 start, 1 pancake, 3 knockdowns, 2 cuts), **Tyler Williams** (4 games, 2 pancakes, 2 knockdowns), **Louis Finner** (3 games, 1 pancake, 1 knockdown, 1 cut), **Walter Watts** (3 games, 1 pancake), **Daniel Bukarau** (1 game, 1 pancake), **Viliamu Nau** (1 game, no stats).

DEFENSIVE OVERVIEW

- > Three defenders were named to the all-conference first team: Sophomore DL **Paul Kruger**, senior cornerback **Brice McCain** and junior cornerback **Sean Smith**.
- > Utah is ranked No. 12 in the nation in scoring defense (17.2), 14th in rushing defense (104.8), 18th in total defense (295.9) and 22nd in pass efficiency defense (108.7).
- > Utah also has high national rankings in the following: No. 8 in opponent third-down conversions (30.3), tied for 13th in interceptions (17), tied for 14th in opponent first downs (194) and red zone defense (74.2), 16th in turnover margin (0.92) and tied for 16th in turnovers gained (28).
- > The Utes finished second in the league in nine defensive categories: scoring defense (17.2), rushing defense (104.8), total defense (295.9), pass efficiency defense (108.7), opponent first downs (194), opponent third-down conversions (30.3), opponent fourth-down conversions (40.0), tackles for loss (6.33) and red zone defense (74.2). Utah finished third in the MWC in pass defense (191.1) and sacks (21).
- > Utah has held opponents to under 20 yards rushing in more than half (25-of-48) of the total quarters played. Opponents have had a negative net in eight quarters.
- > Utah has held four teams to under 60 yards rushing: Michigan, Utah State, Air Force and Weber State.
- > Air Force rushed for just 53 yards against Utah—300 below its season average entering the game—and the lowest rushing total by an Air Force team since 1980.

DEFENSIVE LINE NOTEBOOK

- > Three of Utah's starting linemen won all-conference honors, led by first-team all-MWC sophomore end **Paul Kruger** (56 tackles, 15.5 TFL, 7.5 sacks). Junior end **Koa Misi** (63 tackles, 8.5 tackles for loss, 3.0 sacks) was named to the second team and senior tackle **Greg Newman** (46 tackles, 8.5 TFL, 1.5 sacks) earned honorable mention acclaim.
- > **Kruger** was named an SI.com honorable mention American.
- > **Kruger's** 15.5 tackles for loss is tied for the 24th-best total in the nation. His TFL average (1.29) is tied for 25th nationally and ranked second in the MWC.
- > **Kruger** tied for third in the league in sacks (7.5) and sack average (0.62).
- > **Kruger** is second on the team in pass breakups with seven and his two forced fumbles ties him for second on the team. He tipped passes that resulted in interceptions against Wyoming and Colorado State.
- > **Kruger's** four sacks (all solo) against Utah State tied the nation's best single-game performance of 2008 and also tied for the school record.
- > **Kruger's** five TFL against Utah State tied the second-best single-game total in school history.
- > **Kruger's** interception, which he returned 30 yards to set up a Utah score against Brigham Young, was nominated as an ESPN Pontiac Game Changing Performance. He also recovered a fumble against BYU.
- > **Misi** leads Utah in forced fumbles with three. He is tied for second on the team in TFL (8.5) and has three sacks and six pass breakups. He forced a fumble against BYU that led to a score.
- > **Newman**, tied for second on the team in TFL (8.5), leads Utah in fumble recoveries (2). He also has two pass breakups and an interception. Newman had eight tackles (including two for losses) against UNLV.
- > Redshirt freshman **Derrick Shelby**, a backup defensive end to start the year, has developed into one of the best tackles in the league. Just 245 pounds, Shelby has played in the last 11 games and has started in nine.
- > **Shelby** has 30 tackles, including 3.5 TFL (one sack), a forced fumble and a recovered fumble. He has two pass breakups.
- > Junior nose tackle **Kenape Eliapo** has played in four games since returning from a broken foot, and has played in five games total. He started against Michigan in the first game of the season, before missing the next seven games.
- > **Eliapo** is listed as the co-starter at tackle with Shelby for the Sugar Bowl.
- > True freshman **Sealver Siliga** (7 tackles, 0.5 TFL) is part of the regular tackle rotation.
- > Senior **Aaron Tonga** (4 tackles, 2.5 TFL) has also played at tackle, as has sophomore **Lei Talamaivao**—who is out for the season with a broken fibula suffered in his first career start against UNLV.



Utah Game Notes

LINEBACKER NOTEBOOK

- > Representing Utah's linebackers on the all-conference team were second-team selection **Stevenson Sylvester** and honorable mention choice **Mike Wright**.
- > **Sylvester** ranks second on the team in tackles with 66 from his rover position. He has 5.0 TFL, an assisted sack, four pass breakups and two forced fumbles.
- > **Sylvester** led the Utes with a season-high 10 tackles against TCU. He also had a half-sack in the game.
- > Junior middle linebacker **Mike Wright**, a one-time walk-on, leads the team in total tackles with 74. Wright also has a sack, four pass breakups and a fumble recovery.
- > **Wright** was named MWC Defensive Player of the Week on Oct. 5 for his career day against Oregon State. He recorded 15 tackles, two pass breakups and a sack against the Beavers.
- > Out for the bowl game is starting stud linebacker **Nai Fotu** (35 tackles, 5.5 TFL), who injured his knee against BYU on Nov. 22. Fotu finished his sophomore season with two sacks, a forced fumble, a fumble recovery and a pass breakup.
- > Replacing Fotu at stud will be junior **Kepa Gaison**. Gaison returned to play in the last three games of the regular season after missing the Colorado State and New Mexico games with a knee injury.
- > **Gaison** (23 tackles, 2 PBU) has seen significant time as the backup at both stud and rover.
- > Redshirt freshman **Mo Neal** has done a good job backing up Wright in the middle since coming back from a knee scope. Neal (9 tackles, 1 TFL) has played in the last six games and in eight games total.
- > Redshirt freshman backup **Chaz Walker** has played in all 12 games and has 18 total tackles (2.5 TFL) and an interception. He backs up at rover.
- > New to the linebacker depth chart after the season-ending injury to Fotu is **Deshawn Richard**. The senior will back up at stud and will continue to see time at safety as well.

SECONDARY NOTEBOOK

- > Strong safety **Joe Dale** leads the Ute secondary and is fourth on the team in tackles with 63. He had a season-high nine tackles against TCU.
- > **Dale** has 6.5 tackles for loss (which leads the defensive backs), three interceptions, a forced fumble and four pass breakups. He had two interceptions against BYU along with seven tackles.
- > First-team all-MWC cornerback **Sean Smith** is first in the league in interceptions (5/tie) and interception yards (151). Smith, a former receiver, is 21st in the country in interceptions per game (0.42).

- > **Smith** had two interceptions against Wyoming (one for a 25-yard touchdown), marking the second time in his career he has had two picks in a game.
- > **Smith** has 40 tackles and one TFL. He leads the team and is second in the MWC in passes defended with 13 (5 interceptions, 8 breakups).
- > **Smith** has nine career interceptions and 15 career pass breakups.
- > First-team all-MWC cornerback and three-year starter **Brice McCain** has 34 tackles, 2.0 TFL, a sack, an interception and five pass breakups. He had a season-high six tackles with a pass breakup against BYU.
- > Free safety **Robert Johnson** has 38 tackles, three pass breakups and a fumble recovery in 11 games (he missed the UNLV game with a sore hamstring). He has 10 starts.
- > **Johnson** had a key interception to stop TCU's last drive of the game. He also had a big pick in Utah's win over BYU.
- > Free safety **Terrell Cole** has played in all 12 games and started against UNLV, Air Force, Oregon State and BYU.
- > **Cole** has 33 tackles (2.5 for a loss) and two pass breakups. He recorded seven tackles against UNLV.
- > Nickel back **R.J. Stanford** has played in all 12 games, starting against UNLV, Oregon State and Wyoming. He has 36 total tackles and two sacks. He had a season-high six tackles against UNLV.
- > Backup safety **Deshawn Richard** was named the MWC Defensive Player of the Week after returning two interceptions for touchdowns on back-to-back defensive series against San Diego State.
- > **Richard** is one of two players in the nation this year to return two interceptions for touchdowns in a game. He also tied the school record for interceptions returned for touchdowns in a game.
- > **Richard** had 127 interception return yards against San Diego State, which is the most that a player has had in a game in the NCAA this season and the second-most in school history.
- > **Richard's** 89-yard interception return against SDSU is the eighth-longest interception return in the NCAA this year and the fourth-longest interception return in school history.
- > **Richard's** three interceptions this season (he also had one against Utah State) ties him for third in the MWC and he is also third in interceptions per game (0.27).



TWO FOR ONE

Louie Sakoda is just the second player ever to be named a finalist for both the Lou Groza (kicking) and Ray Guy (punting) awards in the same season. He is the first player in Utah football history to be named a first-team All-American at two different positions—winning FWAA and CBSSports.com first-team honors as a punter in 2007 and earning unanimous Consensus All-America status as a kicker this year. He is the first Ute ever to be named a first-team All-American on all five of the consensus teams: AP, AFCA, FWAA, Walter Camp Foundation and *Sporting News*. Sakoda has also won the MWC Special Teams Player of the Year award three years running. Owner of a league-record 12 career MWC Special Teams Player of the Week awards (five this year), Sakoda is arguably the best dual kicker/punter in the nation. Here's why:

- Second in the nation in kick-scoring points with 115. Ranks eighth in scoring from any position.
- Among the national leaders in field goal percentage (21-of-23, 91.3%) and punting average (41.7).
- Perfect (17-of-17) on his field goal attempts from 47 yards and in, and 2-of-3 from 50-plus yards. His longest makes are from 48, 49, 50 and 53 yards, while his two misses were from 48 and 54 yards.
- Tied for third in the nation in made field goals (21) and tied for fourth in field goals made beyond 40 yards (8) and field goals made beyond 50 yards (2).
- 86.15% career field goal percentage (56-of-65) ranks first among all active dual kicker/punters with more than 25 field goals.
- First in the nation for active dual kickers and punters in career punts (236) and career punt yards (9,917).

FIELD GOAL/PAT NOTEBOOK

- > **Louie Sakoda** is a 2008 Consensus (unanimous) first-team All-America kicker, making the AP, AFCA, FWAA, Walter Camp and *Sporting News*' teams.
- > **Sakoda** made the finals for the Lou Groza Award (top three).
- > **Sakoda** has made 21-of-23 field goals (91.3%). His only two misses were from 48 and 54 yards in extremely windy conditions.
- > **Sakoda's** 91.3 field goal percentage is second in the nation.
- > **Sakoda** ranks second in the nation in kick-scoring points with 115 and eighth in points scored from all positions. He leads the MWC and ranks seventh in the nation in scoring (9.58 ppg).
- > **Sakoda** is 17-of-17 in field goals from 47 yards, and in and is 2-of-3 from 50-plus yards.
- > **Sakoda** ranks tied for third in the country in made field goals (21) and tied for fourth in field goals made beyond 40 yards (8) and field goals made beyond 50 yards (2).
- > **Sakoda's** average made field goal is 39 yards, compared to an average miss of 51 yards.
- > **Sakoda's** 21 field goals is the school record for field goals in a season. Sakoda held the old record of 19, set in 2007.

> **Sakoda** is 52-of-53 in PATs this season (one was blocked), breaking the school record for PATs in a season. He tied the school record for PAT kicks in a game with a 9-for-9 effort against San Diego State.

> **Sakoda** has made a school-record 133 career PATs (of 139), breaking the previous school record of 125 (Andre Guardi, 1983-86). Sakoda once made 56 straight PATs during the 2006 and 2007 seasons.

> **Sakoda** kicked the second game-winning field goal of his career against Oregon State on Oct. 2—a 37-yarder with 0:00 on the clock as part of a 3-for-3 effort on the night. He also kicked a 37-yard game-winning field goal on the last play of the game against Air Force in 2006. Sakoda's 53-yard field goal in the third quarter against Michigan this fall also proved the game-winning score.

> **Sakoda's** four made field goals against Michigan tied his own school record for field goals in a game. He first made four field goals in the 2006 Armed Forces Bowl.

> **Sakoda** was recognized as one of three "Stars of the Week" by the Lou Groza Award committee on Sept. 1 and again on Nov. 3.

> **Sakoda** tied a school record for kicking points in a game vs. Weber State with 16.

> **Sakoda** is the school and MWC record-holder in career field goals (56).

> **Sakoda** is the school record-holder in career points scored (301)—breaking a 76-year-old scoring record set by fullback Frank Christensen back 1930-32.

> **Sakoda** has made 56-of-65 (86.15%) career field goal attempts and currently ranks as Utah's career field goal percentage leader.

> **Sakoda's** 86.15 career field goal percentage ranks first among all active NCAA FBS players with at least 50 makes.

> **Sakoda** made 15-consecutive field goals in 2007 to set a school record. His current streak is 14 in a row.

PUNTING NOTEBOOK

> Utah ranks third in the nation in punt coverage (3.11 yards per return). Opponents have returned only nine punts for 28 yards.

> Senior **Louie Sakoda**, a 2007 first-team All-America punter (Football Writers, CBSSports.com), is a 2008 Ray Guy finalist (top three). He is in his fourth year as Utah's starting punter.

> 42% of **Sakoda's** punts (21-of-50) have been downed inside the 20-yard line, including 12 inside the 15-yard line and five inside the 5-yard line.

> Against New Mexico, four of **Sakoda's** five punts landed inside the 20-yard line, including one on the 2-yard line and one on the 1-yard line (with 1:58 remaining in the game and Utah nursing a three-point lead).

> **Sakoda** is averaging 41.7 yards per punt, even though he sacrifices distance for placement and hang time.

> **Sakoda** has 12 punts of 50-plus yards, including an 81-yarder vs. Wyoming. He had three punts that went 50 yards or more against BYU.



Utah Game Notes

UTAH FOOTBALL

- > **Sakoda** also made an impact with his arm. On fake punts, he is 1-of-2 passing for nine yards this season and 3-of-4 for 51 yards in his career.
- > 42.8% (101-of-236) of **Sakoda's** career punts have been downed inside the 20-yard line.
- > **Sakoda** has had 22 punts downed inside the 5-yard line in his career.
- > **Sakoda** has 48 career punts of 50 yards or longer, tying the for school record with Marv Bateman, 1970-71.
- > **Sakoda** owns the school career record for punts (236) and punt yards (9,917). Both records had stood since 1969 until he broke them this year.
- > **Sakoda** ranks fourth in the nation among active players in career punts (236) and is fifth in career punt yards (9,917).
- > **Sakoda** is averaging 42.02 yards per punt in his career, which ranks third all-time at Utah.

SPECIAL TEAMS NOTEBOOK

- > **Louie Sakoda** is the most decorated weekly performer in MWC history. He has 12 career MWC Special Teams Player of the Week citations, including five this year. Sakoda broke former BYU quarterback John Beck's record of 10 career awards. See Kicking and Punting Notebooks for more on Sakoda.
- > Utah leads the MWC in kickoff coverage with a 48.0-yard net. The NCAA does not keep kickoff coverage stats.
- > Utah is second in the nation in touchbacks (44), trailing only Southern California (46).
- > Junior **Ben Vroman** has seen 51.7% (44-of-85) of his kick-offs go for touchbacks. He is averaging 68.4 yards per kickoff. Those are also Utah's team totals.
- > **Vroman**, in his third season on the job, has kicked off 227 times in his career and has 99 touchbacks.
- > Honorable mention all-MWC kick returner **David Reed** is third in the conference and 29th in the nation in kickoff return average (25.6). Reed has 23 returns for 588 yards.
- > **Reed** had a 79-yard kickoff return against Oregon State and 142 total kick return yards in the game.
- > **Aiona Key** has blocked a kick in three of the eight games he has played in this season. Key's blocks came in three straight games and included punt blocks against Wyoming and Colorado State, and a blocked a field goal at UNM.
- > **Key** returned his blocked punt against Wyoming for a six-yard touchdown. It was the first blocked punt for a touchdown by a Ute since 1992.
- > For the last three weeks, **Brent Casteel** has taken the lead role with punt returns and now has 10 returns for 91 yards (9.1 average), which includes a season-high 41 yards against San Diego State. Utah's punt return leader is **Terrell Cole** with 11 for 51 yards (4.6 average).

IN THE STANDS

Utah set a school attendance record this fall by packing 45,542 fans a game into 45,017-seat Rice-Eccles Stadium. The Utes drew over-capacity crowds against BYU (46,488), TCU (45,666), Oregon State (45,599), UNLV (45,587) and Weber State (45,117). The old attendance record of 44,112 was set in 2004. Rice-Eccles Stadium has been sold out 16 times since it opened in 1998. The school season ticket record has been broken all four years of **Kyle Whittingham's** head coaching tenure, during which time season sales have increased by 11,000, to a record 30,547 this season.

RICE-ECCLES STADIUM TOP CROWDS

1. California..... 2003..... 46,768
2. **Brigham Young** 2008..... **46,488**
3. **TCU** 2008..... **45,666**
4. Brigham Young..... 1998..... 45,634
5. **Oregon State** 2008..... **45,599**
6. **UNLV** 2008..... **45,587**
7. Arizona 2005..... 45,528
8. Texas A&M 2004..... 45,419
9. Brigham Young..... 2006..... 45,330
10. Brigham Young..... 2004..... 45,326
11. North Carolina..... 2004..... 45,319
12. Utah State 1999..... 45,224
13. Boise State..... 2006..... 45,222
14. Brigham Young..... 2002..... 45,167
15. **Weber State** 2008..... **45,117**



Utah Kicker/Punter Louie Sakoda

All-America Kicker

Awards and Honors

- 2008 Consensus All-American (Unanimous)
- 2008 First-Team All-American: AP, AFCA, FWAA, Walter Camp, *Sporting News*
- 2008 Lou Groza Finalist
- 2006-2007-2008 MWC Special Teams Player of the Year
- 2008 First-Team All-MWC Kicker
- Two-time Lou Groza Award Semifinalist (2007-08)
- 2008 Lou Groza Star of the Week twice (Sept. 1, Nov. 3)
- > 21-of-23 in field goals. Only two misses (48 and 54 yards) came in high winds.
- > 91.3 field goal percentage is second in the country.
- > 17-of-17 from 47 yards and in and 2-of-3 from 50-plus yards.
- > Average make is 38.8 yards and average miss is 51 yards.
- > Tied for third in the country in made field goals (21) and tied for fourth in field goals made beyond 40 yards (8) and field goals made beyond 50 yards (2).
- > Second in the nation in kick-scoring points with 115 and eight in points scored from all positions. He is seventh overall in points per game (9.58 ppg).
- > Game-winning 37-yard field goal against Oregon State with 0:00 remaining.
- > 53-yard field goal against Michigan proved the winning score.
- > Kicked four field goals against Michigan.
- > Five-time MWC Special Teams Player of the Week (record 12 career awards).
- > 52-of-53 in PATs (one was blocked).
- > Tied school record with 9 PATs against San Diego State.
- > 86.15 career field goal percentage (56-of-65) ranks first among all active NCAA FBS players with at least 50 makes.
- > 56-of-65 (86.15%) in career field goal kicking ranks him No. 1 all time at Utah.
- > School records for career points scored (301), career field goals (56), field goals in a season (21, 2008), consecutive field goals (15, 2007), points in a season (115, 2008), career PATs (133), PATs in a season (52, 2008).

All-America Punter

Awards and Honors

- 2008 Ray Guy Finalist
- 2007 First-Team All-American: FWAA, CBSSports.com
- 2006-2007-2008 MWC Special Teams Player of the Year
- 2007-2008 First-Team All-MWC Punter
- Three-time Ray Guy Top 10 Semifinalist (2006-08)
- Four-year starter
- > 42% of punts (21-of-50) have been downed inside the 20-yard line.
- > 12 punts downed inside the 15-yard line.
- > 5 punts downed inside the 5-yard line.
- > 41.7 punt average, despite the fact that he goes for field position and hang time over distance.
- > 12 punts have been 50 yards or longer (long of 81).
- > 42.8% (101-of-236) of his career punts downed inside the 20-yard line.
- > 22 punts downed inside the 5-yard line in his career.
- > 48 career punts of 50 yards or longer, which is tied for the school record.
- > Ranks fourth in the nation among active players in career punt yards (9,917) and is fifth in career punts (236). Holds the school record in both categories.
- > Averaging 42.02 yards per punt in his career.

2008 First-Team All-America Kicker (AFCA, FWAA, Walter Camp, *Sporting News*)

2007 First-Team All-America Punter (FWAA, CBSSports.com)

2008 Lou Groza Finalist

2008 Ray Guy Finalist

Three-Time MWC Special Teams Player of the Year

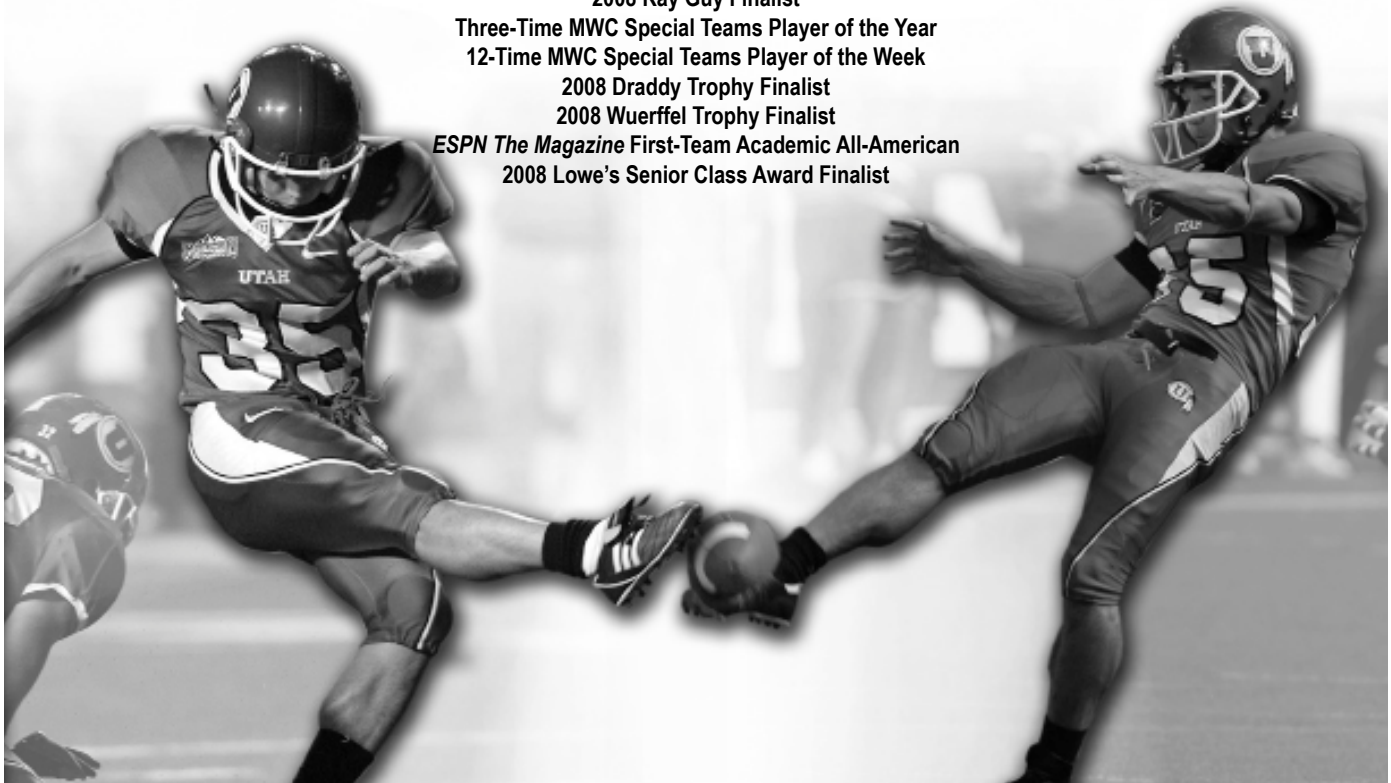
12-Time MWC Special Teams Player of the Week

2008 Draddy Trophy Finalist

2008 Wuerffel Trophy Finalist

ESPN *The Magazine* First-Team Academic All-American

2008 Lowe's Senior Class Award Finalist





Utah Depth Chart

Offense

Left Tackle

- 68 Zane Beadles (6-4, 305, Jr., 2VL)
- 70 Tony Bergstrom (6-6, 290, Fr., HS)

Left Guard

- 72 Caleb Schlauderaff (6-4, 305, So., 1VL)
- 78 Louis Finner (6-3, 295, Fr., RS)

Center

- 77 Zane Taylor (6-2, 305, So., 1VL)
- 57 Tyler Williams (6-1, 300, Jr., 2VL)

Right Guard

- 66 Robert Conley (6-1, 310, Sr., 3VL)
- 74 Corey Seiuli (6-3, 315, Sr., 2VL)

Right Tackle

- 65 Dustin Hensel (6-7, 307, Sr., 2VL)
- 71 Walter Watts (6-2, 300, So., 1VL)

Quarterback

- 3 Brian Johnson (6-1, 200, Sr., 3VL)
- 19 Corbin Louks (6-0, 195, So., 1VL)
- 18 Chad Manis (6-5, 230, So., RS)

Running Back

- 6 Darrell Mack (6-0, 220, Sr., 3VL)
- 4 Matt Asiata (5-11, 230, Jr., RS)
- 36 Eddie Wide (5-10, 200, So., 1VL)

Wide Receiver

- 81 Bradon Godfrey (6-3, 197, Sr., 2VL)
- 16 David Reed (6-0, 184, Jr., JC)

Wide Receiver

- 88 Freddie Brown (6-4, 215, Sr. 3VL)
- 9 Aiona Key (6-4, 209, Jr., JC)

Wide Receiver

- 5 Brent Casteel (5-10, 198, Sr., 3VL)
- 85 Jereme Brooks (5-7, 170, So., 1VL)

Tight End

- 80 Chris Joppru (6-6, 258, Jr., SQ) or
- 45 Colt Sampson (6-4, 250, Sr., 2VL)

Defense

Left End

- 41 Koa Misi (6-3, 263, Jr., 1VL)
- 94 Christian Cox (6-1, 255, So., RS)

Tackle

- 56 Greg Newman (6-4, 260, Sr., 2VL)
- 98 Sealver Siliga (6-3, 325, Fr., HS)

Nose Tackle

- 90 Derrick Shelby (6-3, 245, Fr., RS) or
- 92 Kenape Eliapo (6-0, 303, Jr., 2VL)

Right End

- 11 Paul Kruger (6-5, 265, So., 1VL)
- 96 Junior Tui'one (6-4, 260, So., JC)

Rover Linebacker

- 10 Stevenson Sylvester (6-2, 224, Jr., 2VL)
- 32 Chaz Walker (5-11, 220, Fr., RS)

Middle Linebacker

- 20 Mike Wright (6-2, 230, Jr., 2VL)
- 50 Mo Neal (6-2, 230, Fr., RS)

Stud Linebacker

- 59 Kepa Gaison (5-10, 230, Jr., 1VL)
- 31 Deshawn Richard (6-0, 195, Sr., 1VL)

Cornerback

- 1 Brice McCain (5-9, 182, Sr., 3VL)
- 24 Justin Jones (5-9, 180, Jr., 2VL)

Cornerback

- 4 Sean Smith (6-3, 214 Jr., 2VL)
- 27 Brandon Burton (6-0, 180, Fr., RS)

Nickel Back

- 25 R.J. Stanford (5-11, 180, Jr., 2VL)
- 14 Damilyn Tanner (5-10, 175, Jr., JC)

Free Safety

- 17 Robert Johnson (6-2, 195, Jr., 1VL)
- 21 Terrell Cole (5-11, 185, Sr., 1VL)

Strong Safety

- 12 Joe Dale (5-11, 197, Jr., 2VL)
- 7 RJ Rice (5-8, 185, Sr., 2VL)

Special Teams

Punter

- 35 Louie Sakoda (5-9, 178, Sr., 3VL)
- 30 Ben Vroman (6-0, 198, Jr., 2VL)

Place Kicker

- 35 Louie Sakoda (5-9, 178, Sr., 3VL)
- 30 Ben Vroman (6-0, 198, Jr., 2VL)

Kickoffs

- 30 Ben Vroman (6-0, 198, Jr., 2VL)
- 35 Louie Sakoda (5-9, 178, Sr., 3VL)

Snapper

- 39 Clint Mower (6-3, 215, Sr., 2VL)
- 83 Ben Hendy (6-2, 250, Jr., RS)

Holder

- 81 Bradon Godfrey (6-3, 197, Sr., 2VL)
- 7 RJ Rice (5-8, 185, Sr., 2VL)

Punt Returns

- 5 Brent Casteel (5-10, 198, Sr., 3VL)
- 16 David Reed (6-0, 184, Jr., JC)

Kickoff Returns

- 16 David Reed (6-0, 184, Jr., JC)
- 5 Brent Casteel (5-10, 198, Sr., 3VL)
- 8 Elijah Wesson (5-11, 175, Jr., 2VL)

Pronunciation Guide

A'asa, Neli Ah-ah-sa, Nelly
 Asiata Ah-see-ah-ta
 (Brooks), Jeremy Jeremy
 Bukurau Boo-koo-rau
 (Christopher), DeVonte Da-von-tay
 (Clifford), Tage rhymes with age
 (Cole), Terrell Ter-ELL
 (Cravens), Siaki See-ah-key
 Eliapo, Kenape Ee-lee-a-po, Ken-ah-pay
 (Finner), Louis Lewis
 Fonua Fo-new-a
 Fotu, Nai Fo-too, Ny
 Gaison, Kepa Guy-son, Keppa

(Garrigan), Afa Ah-fa
 (Godfrey), Bradon Bray-done
 Joppru Ja-proo
 (Key), Aiona I-own-a
 (King) Jamel Ja-mell
 Liefiting Leaf-ting
 Louks Lowks
 (Mack), Darrell Dur-ell
 Manis Man-iss
 Misi, Koa Mee-see, ko-a
 Moeai Mo-ee-ah-ee
 Mower rhymes with tower
 Sakoda Sa-code-a

Salanoa, Thor Sal-a-noa, Thore
 Schlauderaff, Caleb Schlah-der-off, Kay-leb
 Seiuli Say-oo-lee
 Shakerin, Sausan Shack-er-in, Sue-sawn
 Siliga, Sealver See-linga, Silver
 (Stevens), Tevita Ta-vee-ta
 Stowers rhymes with towers
 Talamaivao, Lei Tala-my-vow, Lay
 (Tanner), Damilyn Da-my-lin
 Tuimauga too-ee-maun (rhymes with down)-ga
 Tui'one Too-ee-oh-nay
 (Wesson) Elijah Ee-ly-ja

Select Utes Game By Game**Brian Johnson**

Opponent	Comp	Att	Int	Yards	TD	Long
Michigan	21	33	1	305	1	55
UNLV	15	24	1	183	2	32
Utah State	22	31	1	204	2	40
Air Force	16	23	1	243	1	47
Weber State	18	22	1	194	2	26
Oregon State	17	30	1	201	2	40
Wyoming	10	19	0	110	1	41
Colorado State	18	26	1	185	2	34
New Mexico	23	32	1	195	1	16
TCU	24	39	0	230	1	26
San Diego State	27	38	1	283	5	32
BYU	30	36	0	303	4	32

Darrell Mack

Opponent	Rush	Yards	Avg.	TD	Long
Michigan	8	17	2.1	0	5
UNLV	13	68	5.2	0	15
Utah State	14	75	5.4	0	15
Air Force	18	101	5.6	3	16
Weber State	12	58	4.8	0	12
Oregon State	12	44	3.7	0	11
Wyoming	6	15	2.5	0	3
Colorado State	8	33	4.1	0	6
New Mexico	10	54	5.4	0	26
TCU	3	12	4.0	0	6
San Diego State	6	16	2.7	0	7
BYU	9	40	4.4	0	8

Matt Asiata

Opponent	Rush	Yards	Avg.	TD	Long
Michigan	13	77	5.9	0	19
UNLV	11	34	3.1	1	6
Utah State	11	56	5.1	3	11
Air Force	19	116	6.1	0	28
Weber State	10	37	3.7	2	7
Oregon State	7	53	7.6	0	38
Wyoming	11	37	3.4	1	9
Colorado State	8	41	5.1	2	8
New Mexico	12	85	6.7	0	31
TCU	6	19	3.2	0	8
San Diego State	14	83	5.9	1	24
BYU	11	40	3.6	1	9

Bradon Godfrey

Opponent	Rec	Yards	Avg.	TD	Long
Michigan	7	84	12.0	1	19
UNLV	3	31	10.3	0	18
Utah State	6	57	9.5	0	13
Air Force	4	47	11.8	0	20
Weber State	2	31	15.5	1	21
Oregon State	5	52	10.4	1	25
Wyoming	2	19	9.5	0	15
Colorado State	3	24	8.0	0	12
New Mexico	5	40	8.0	0	16
TCU	7	48	6.8	0	14
San Diego State	3	33	11.0	0	13
BYU	3	15	5.0	0	8

Mike Wright

Opponent	UT	AT	TT	TFL	Sacks	PBU	FR
Michigan	1	2	3	0-0	0-0	1	0-0
UNLV	1	3	4	0-0	0-0	0	0-0
Utah State	0	0	0	0-0	0-0	1	0-0
Air Force	6	4	10	0-0	0-0	0	0-0
Weber State	1	5	6	0-0	0-0	0	1-0
Oregon State	5	10	15	1.0-9	1.0-9	2	0-0
Wyoming	2	3	5	0-0	0-0	0	0-0
Colorado State	2	3	5	0-0	0-0	0	0-0
New Mexico	3	4	7	0-0	0-0	0	0-0
TCU	1	4	5	0-0	0-0	0	0-0
San Diego State	3	2	5	0.5-2	0-0	0	0-0
BYU	6	3	9	1.0-3	0-0	0	0-0

Paul Kruger

Opponent	UT	AT	TT	TFL	Sacks	PBU	INT
Michigan	6	3	9	2.5-7	0.5-0	1	0
UNLV	1	4	5	1.5-2	0-0	1	0
Utah State	5	0	5	5.0-25	4.0-24	0	0
Air Force	2	3	5	2.5-6	0-0	1	0
Weber State	1	1	2	0-0	0-0	0	0
Oregon State	2	1	3	1.0-7	1.0-7	1	0
Wyoming	1	4	5	0-0	0-0	0	0
Colorado State	1	6	7	1.0-3	0-0	1	0
New Mexico	2	4	6	1.0-9	1.0-9	0	0
TCU	1	1	2	1.0-12	1.0-12	0	0
San Diego State	1	0	1	0-0	0-0	0	0
BYU	3	3	6	0-0	0-0	2	1

Koa Misi

Opponent	UT	AT	TT	TFL	Sacks	FF	PBU
Michigan	3	2	5	1.5-5	1.5-5	0	0
UNLV	2	4	6	1.5-10	1.0-9	1	0
Utah State	2	3	5	0-0	0-0	0	0
Air Force	2	7	9	2.0-7	0-0	0	0
Weber State	1	2	3	0-0	0-0	1	0
Oregon State	2	2	4	0-0	0-0	0	2
Wyoming	0	0	0	0-0	0-0	0	0
Colorado State	1	7	8	1.5-2	0-0	0	0
New Mexico	3	5	8	0.5-4	0-0	0	0
TCU	4	1	5	0.5-4	0.5-4	0	1
San Diego State	4	0	4	1.0-2	0-0	0	1
BYU	3	3	6	0-0	0-0	1	2

Joe Dale

Opponent	UT	AT	TT	TFL	PBU	INT	FF
Michigan	3	3	6	2.0-6	0	0	0
UNLV	2	4	6	0.5-1	1	0	0
Utah State	2	2	4	0-0	0	0	0
Air Force	0	2	2	0-0	0	1	0
Weber State	0	2	2	0-0	0	0	0
Oregon State	0	2	2	0-0	0	0	0
Wyoming	3	4	7	1.5-4	0	0	1
Colorado State	5	2	7	1.0-2	1	0	0
New Mexico	1	4	5	0.5-3	0	0	0
TCU	6	3	9	1.0-16	1	0	0
San Diego State	5	1	6	0-0	1	0	0
BYU	5	2	7	0-0	0	2	0



Charting The Utes

Game.....	Points	1st Downs	Rush Yds.....	Pass Yds	Total Yards	TOs
Utah.....	25	16	36	305	341	3
Michigan.....	23	11	36	167	203	3
UNLV.....	21	15	129	159	288	0
Utah.....	42	22	225	215	440	1
Utah.....	58	30	248	213	461	3
Utah State.....	10	8	27	89	116	3
Utah.....	30	24	197	243	440	3
Air Force.....	23	9	53	138	191	2
Weber State.....	21	19	56	303	359	2
Utah.....	37	23	180	270	450	1
Oregon State.....	28	20	92	313	405	1
Utah.....	31	18	136	201	337	2
Utah.....	40	11	123	119	242	0
Wyoming.....	7	14	184	68	252	6
Colorado State.....	16	18	110	188	298	1
Utah.....	49	25	327	222	549	1
Utah.....	13	17	193	195	388	1
New Mexico.....	10	16	119	170	284	0
TCU.....	10	20	165	251	416	2
Utah.....	13	17	45	230	275	0
Utah.....	63	30	198	322	520	1
San Diego State.....	14	19	73	247	320	3
BYU.....	24	25	214	205	419	6
Utah.....	48	27	108	307	415	0

2008 Utah Scoring Drives

Opponent	Qtr	PI-Yd	TOP	Scoring Play	Opponent	Qtr	PI-Yd	TOP	Scoring Play
Michigan	1	8-75	3:42	Louks 8 run	Wyoming	1	-	-	Smith 25 interception return
	2	14-66	6:14	Sakoda 28 field goal		1	6-16	2:15	Sakoda 50 field goal
	2	7-47	2:07	Sakoda 43 field goal		2	6-26	2:09	Sakoda 39 field goal
	2	8-58	3:21	Sakoda 41 field goal		2	-	-	Key 6 blocked punt return
	2	5-37	0:38	Godfrey 19 pass from Johnson		2	15-63	6:09	Asiata 3 run
	3	4-4	2:20	Sakoda 53 field goal		3	2-54	0:33	Asiata 13 pass from Johnson
UNLV	2	4-69	1:58	Johnson 56 run	4	-	-	Rice 0 fumble recovery	
		9-80	4:09	Asiata 2 run	Colorado State	1	6-60	2:22	Brown 32 pass from Johnson
		5-51	2:41	Brown 32 pass from Johnson		1	12-79	5:07	Asiata 3 run
		3-26	1:19	Reed 15 run		2	9-76	2:44	Asiata 3 run
		9-59	3:52	Sampson 8 pass from Johnson		2	4-75	0:48	Reed 33 pass from Johnson
		5-78	2:28	Brooks 32 pass from Asiata		3	5-51	2:17	Louks 21 run
Utah State	1	10-80	4:06	Asiata 4 run		4	4-56	1:38	Brooks 34 run
	1	6-9	2:49	Sakoda 48 field goal	4	4-84	1:52	Louks 69 run	
	1	-	-	Wesson 20 fumble recovery	New Mexico	1	12-44	5:54	Sakoda 43 field goal
	2	13-40	6:55	Sakoda 35 field goal		2	12-56	5:27	Sakoda 38 field goal
	2	4-6	1:23	Sakoda 24 field goal		3	9-69	4:34	Casteel 10 pass from Johnson
	2	12-74	3:58	Brown 10 pass from Johnson		TCU	1	8-40	3:33	Sakoda 49 field goal
3	9-74	4:27	Sampson 8 pass from Johnson	2			5-23	0:00	Sakoda 47 field goal
3	6-53	2:27	Asiata 4 run	4			9-80	2:00	Brown 9 pass from Johnson
4	13-80	7:03	Asiata 3 run	San Diego State	1		7-53	3:17	Sampson 2 pass from Johnson
4	7-53	4:02	Stowers 2 run		1		12-70	4:20	Brown 4 pass from Johnson
Air Force	1	6-81	3:03		Reed 47 pass from Johnson		2	2-40	0:35	Reed 32 pass from Johnson
	1	-	-		Team safety	2	11-44	5:50	Brown 5 pass from Johnson
	3	8-69	3:53		Mack 8 run	2	11-83	2:13	Reed 3 pass from Johnson
	4	12-67	5:57		Mack 1 run	4	11-77	5:32	Asiata 1 run
	4	11-80	4:08	Mack 9 run	4	5-65	2:08	Stowers 1 run	
	Weber State	1	8-80	3:52	Asiata 1 run	4	-	-	Richard 89 interception return
2		8-67	3:05	Sampson 6 pass from Johnson	4	-	-	Richard 38 interception return	
2		4-7	1:28	Sakoda 33 field goal	Brigham Young	1	12-60	5:12	Sakoda 37 field goal
2		10-81	4:33	Godfrey 10 pass from Johnson		1	10-80	4:02	Casteel 16 pass from Johnson
3		8-26	4:34	Sakoda 47 field goal		2	8-66	3:22	Asiata 5 run
3		5-41	2:05	Asiata 1 run		2	9-57	4:39	Sakoda 35 field goal
4	10-57	4:24	Sakoda 38 field goal	2		3-44	0:21	Reed 32 pass from Johnson	
Oregon State	1	13-68	6:19	Sakoda 33 field goal		4	4-31	0:37	Casteel 8 pass from Johnson
	2	7-4	3:06	Sakoda 28 field goal	4	1-4	0:04	Joppru 4 pass from Asiata	
	2	6-60	2:48	Brown 14 pass from Johnson	4	9-29	5:14	Sampson 1 pass from Johnson	
	2	5-27	1:56	Casteel 12 run					
	4	4-60	0:42	Godfrey 25 pass from Johnson					
	4	6-35	1:06	Sakoda 37 field goal					



2008 Utah Starters

2008 Utah Starters on Offense

POS.	MICH	UNLV	USU	AFA	WEBER	ORE ST	WYO	CSU	UNM	TCU	SDSU	BYU
LT	Zane Beadles	Tony Bergstrom	Zane Beadles	Zane Beadles	Zane Beadles	Zane Beadles	Zane Beadles	Zane Beadles	Zane Beadles	Zane Beadles	Zane Beadles	Zane Beadles
LG	Caleb Schlauderaff	Caleb Schlauderaff	Caleb Schlauderaff	Caleb Schlauderaff	Caleb Schlauderaff	Caleb Schlauderaff	Caleb Schlauderaff	Caleb Schlauderaff	Caleb Schlauderaff	Caleb Schlauderaff	Caleb Schlauderaff	Caleb Schlauderaff
C	Zane Taylor	Zane Taylor	Zane Taylor	Zane Taylor	Zane Taylor	Zane Taylor	Zane Taylor	Zane Taylor	Zane Taylor	Zane Taylor	Zane Taylor	Zane Taylor
RG	Robert Conley	Robert Conley	Robert Conley	Robert Conley	Corey Seiuli	Robert Conley	Robert Conley	Robert Conley	Robert Conley	Robert Conley	Robert Conley	Robert Conley
RT	Dustin Hensel	Dustin Hensel	Dustin Hensel	Dustin Hensel	Dustin Hensel	Dustin Hensel	Dustin Hensel	Dustin Hensel	Dustin Hensel	Dustin Hensel	Dustin Hensel	Dustin Hensel
QB	Brian Johnson	Brian Johnson	Brian Johnson	Brian Johnson	Brian Johnson	Brian Johnson	Brian Johnson	Brian Johnson	Brian Johnson	Brian Johnson	Brian Johnson	Brian Johnson
RB	Darrell Mack	Darrell Mack	Darrell Mack	Darrell Mack	Darrell Mack	Eddie Wide	Darrell Mack	Darrell Mack	Darrell Mack	Darrell Mack		Darrell Mack
WR	Bradon Godfrey	Bradon Godfrey	Bradon Godfrey	Bradon Godfrey	Bradon Godfrey	David Reed	Bradon Godfrey	Bradon Godfrey	Bradon Godfrey	Bradon Godfrey	Bradon Godfrey	Bradon Godfrey
WR	Freddie Brown	Freddie Brown	Freddie Brown	Freddie Brown	Freddie Brown	Freddie Brown	Freddie Brown	Freddie Brown	Freddie Brown	Freddie Brown	Freddie Brown	Freddie Brown
WR	Brent Casteel	Elijah Wesson	David Reed	Brent Casteel		Brent Casteel	Brent Casteel	Brent Casteel	Brent Casteel	Brent Casteel	Brent Casteel	Brent Casteel
RB/WR			Matt Asiata	Jereme Brooks			Eddie Wide	Jereme Brooks	Aiona Key	Eddie Wide	Eddie Wide	
TE/WR	Chris Joppru	Chris Joppru			Chris Joppru	Chris Joppru					Jereme Brooks	Jereme Brooks
TE					Colt Sampson							

2008 Utah Starters on Defense

POS.	MICH	UNLV	USU	AFA	WEBER	ORE ST	WYO	CSU	UNM	TCU	SDSU	BYU
LE	Koa Misi	Koa Misi	Koa Misi	Nai Fotu	Koa Misi	Koa Misi	Koa Misi	Koa Misi	Koa Misi	Koa Misi	Koa Misi	Koa Misi
T	Greg Newman	Greg Newman	Greg Newman	Greg Newman	Greg Newman	Greg Newman	Greg Newman	Greg Newman	Greg Newman	Greg Newman	Greg Newman	Greg Newman
NT	Kenape Eliapo	Lei Talamaivao	Derrick Shelby	Koa Misi	Derrick Shelby	Derrick Shelby	Derrick Shelby	Derrick Shelby	Derrick Shelby	Derrick Shelby	Derrick Shelby	Derrick Shelby
RE	Paul Kruger	Paul Kruger	Paul Kruger	Paul Kruger	Paul Kruger	Paul Kruger	Paul Kruger	Paul Kruger	Paul Kruger	Paul Kruger	Paul Kruger	Paul Kruger
RLB	Stevenson Sylvester	Stevenson Sylvester	Stevenson Sylvester	Stevenson Sylvester	Stevenson Sylvester	Stevenson Sylvester	Stevenson Sylvester	Stevenson Sylvester	Stevenson Sylvester	Stevenson Sylvester	Stevenson Sylvester	Stevenson Sylvester
MLB	Mike Wright	Mike Wright	Mike Wright	Mike Wright	Mike Wright	Mike Wright	Mike Wright	Mike Wright	Mike Wright	Mike Wright	Mike Wright	Mike Wright
SLB	Nai Fotu		Nai Fotu		Nai Fotu		Nai Fotu	Nai Fotu	Nai Fotu	Nai Fotu	Nai Fotu	Nai Fotu
CB	Brice McCain	Brice McCain	Brice McCain	Brice McCain	Brice McCain	Brice McCain	Brice McCain	Brice McCain	Brice McCain	Brice McCain	Brice McCain	Brice McCain
CB	Sean Smith	Sean Smith	Sean Smith		Sean Smith	Sean Smith	Sean Smith	Sean Smith	Sean Smith	Sean Smith	Sean Smith	Sean Smith
NB		R.J. Stanford				R.J. Stanford						
FS	Robert Johnson	Terrell Cole	Robert Johnson	Robert Johnson	Robert Johnson	Terrell Cole	Robert Johnson	Robert Johnson	Robert Johnson	Robert Johnson	Robert Johnson	Robert Johnson
SS	Joe Dale	Joe Dale	Joe Dale	Joe Dale	Joe Dale	Joe Dale	Joe Dale	Joe Dale	Joe Dale	Joe Dale	Joe Dale	Joe Dale
SAF				Terrell Cole								Terrell Cole
SAF				Deshawn Richard								

UTAH FOOTBALL

**2008 Utah Participation**

NO.	NAME	MICH	UNLV	USU	AFA	WSU	OSU	WYO	CSU	UNM	TCU	SDSU	BYU
1	Brice McCain	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
2	Ray Stowers		x	x		x					x	x	
3	Brian Johnson	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
4	Matt Asiata	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
4	Sean Smith	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
5	Brent Casteel	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
6	Darrell Mack	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
7	RJ Rice	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
8	Elijah Wesson	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
9	Aiona Key					x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
10	Stevenson Sylvester	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
11	Paul Kruger	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
12	Joe Dale	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
14	Damilyn Tanner	x	x	x	x	x		x	x		x	x	x
16	David Reed	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
17	Robert Johnson	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
18	Chad Manis			x		x		x					
19	Corbin Louks	x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
20	Mike Wright	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
21	Terrell Cole	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
23	Mookie Murphy			x									
24	Justin Jones	x	x	x	x	x			x	x		x	x
25	R.J. Stanford	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
27	Brandon Burton	x	x	x		x		x	x	x	x	x	x
29	Mychal Robinson								x	x	x	x	x
30	Ben Vroman	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
31	Deshawn Richard	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x
32	Chaz Walker	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
33	Justin Taplin-Ross	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x
34	Tysen Clements		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
35	Louie Sakoda	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
36	Eddie Wide	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
37	Lisi Leota	x				x		x	x				
39	Clint Mower	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
40	Bo Hikila			x	x	x			x	x	x	x	x
41	Koa Misi	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
42	Nai Fotu	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
43	Lei Talamaivao	x	x										
45	Colt Sampson	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
46	Trevor Moss		x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x
47	Tatum Drecksel	x	x			x			x	x	x	x	x
48	Junior Fonua		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
49	Greg Bird		x	x				x	x				
50	Mo Neal	x		x				x	x	x	x	x	x
52	Matt Martinez	x	x	x									
53	Afa Garrigan							x					
55	Tobius Titus					x							
56	Greg Newman	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
57	Tyler Williams			x		x		x	x			x	
59	Kepa Gaison	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x
65	Dustin Hensel	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
66	Robert Conley	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x
68	Zane Beadles	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
70	Tony Bergstrom		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
71	Walter Watts		x	x	x	x			x			x	x
72	Caleb Schlauderaff	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
73	Daniel Bukarau					x							
74	Corey Seiuli	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
75	Viliamu Nau			x									
77	Zane Taylor	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
78	Louis Finner			x		x	x	x	x			x	
80	Chris Joppu	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
81	Bradon Godfrey	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
82	John Peel	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
83	Ben Hendy	x		x		x	x	x	x			x	x
84	Brad Clifford								x				
85	Jereme Brooks	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
88	Freddie Brown	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
89	Neli A'asa	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x
90	Derrick Shelby		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
92	Kenape Eliapo	x								x	x	x	x
94	Christian Cox			x		x		x	x				
96	Junior Tui'one					x		x	x			x	
98	Sealver Siliga		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
99	Aaron Tonga	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x



2008 Final National Rankings

UTAH FOOTBALL

Associated Press Poll — Dec. 7, 2008				
No.	Team	Record	Pts	Pvs
1.	Florida (50)	12-1	1602	2
2.	Oklahoma (9)	12-1	1540	4
3.	Texas (6)	11-1	1530	3
4.	Alabama	12-1	1410	1
5.	USC	11-1	1372	5
6.	Penn State	11-1	1259	6
7.	Utah	12-0	1225	7
8.	Texas Tech	11-1	1193	8
9.	Boise State	12-0	1101	9
10.	Ohio State	10-2	1069	10
11.	TCU	10-2	921	11
12.	Cincinnati	11-2	863	13
13.	Oklahoma State	9-3	853	14
14.	Georgia Tech	9-3	761	15
15.	Oregon	9-3	710	16
16.	Georgia	9-3	599	17
17.	Brigham Young	10-2	477	20
18.	Pittsburgh	9-3	428	23
19.	Michigan State	9-3	423	21
20.	Mississippi	8-4	389	22
21.	Virginia Tech	9-4	318	NR
22.	Northwestern	9-3	262	24
23.	Ball State	12-1	249	12
24.	Oregon State	8-4	163	25
25.	Missouri	9-4	150	19

USA Today Coaches' Poll — Dec. 7, 2008				
No.	Team	Record	Pts	Pvs
1.	Oklahoma (31)	12-1	1482	2
2.	Florida (26)	12-1	1481	4
3.	Texas (4)	11-1	1408	3
4.	Alabama	12-1	1309	1
4.	USC	11-1	1309	5
6.	Penn State	11-1	1193	6
7.	Utah	12-0	1134	7
8.	Texas Tech	11-1	1132	8
9.	Boise State	12-0	1034	9
10.	Ohio State	10-2	1004	10
11.	TCU	10-2	877	11
12.	Cincinnati	11-2	830	12
13.	Oregon	9-3	747	14
14.	Oklahoma State	9-3	722	15
15.	Georgia Tech	9-3	690	16
16.	Brigham Young	10-2	541	18
17.	Georgia	9-3	537	19
18.	Michigan State	9-3	466	21
19.	Virginia Tech	9-4	337	NR
20.	Northwestern	9-3	334	22
21.	Pittsburgh	9-3	316	23
22.	Ball State	12-1	219	13
23.	Missouri	9-4	218	17
24.	Mississippi	8-4	160	25
25.	Oregon State	8-4	131	24

2008 Weeks in the Polls		
Utah	AP	Coaches
9-2	22	23
9-7	22	22
9-14	20	20
9-21	17	17
9-28	15	15
10-5	14	13
10-12	14	13
10-19	12	12
10-26	10	9
11-2	10	9
11-9	8	7
11-16	8	7
11-23	8	7
11-30	7	7
12-7	7	7
Alabama	AP	Coaches
8-31	13	17
9-7	11	16
9-14	9	13
9-21	8	10
9-28	2	4
10-5	2	4
10-12	2	2
10-19	2	2
10-26	2	2
11-2	1	1
11-9	1	1
11-16	1	1
11-23	1	1
11-30	1	1
12-7	4	4

Final BCS Standings— Dec. 7, 2008						
BCS Rank	BCS Avg	Pvs	Harris	Coaches	Computers	
1	Oklahoma	.9757	2	2	1	1
2	Florida	.9479	4	1	2	3
3	Texas	.9298	3	3	3	2
4	Alabama	.8443	1	4	T-4	6
5	USC	.8208	5	5	T-4	7
6	Utah	.7846	6	7	7	5
7	Texas Tech	.7840	7	8	8	4
8	Penn State	.7387	8	6	6	9
9	Boise State	.6980	9	9	9	8
10	Ohio State	.6354	10	10	10	11
11	TCU	.5848	11	11	11	10
12	Cincinnati	.5384	13	12	12	12
13	Oklahoma State	.4866	14	13	14	13
14	Georgia Tech	.4516	15	14	15	14
15	Georgia	.3775	16	17	17	15
16	BYU	.3580	18	16	16	16
17	Oregon	.3395	19	15	13	T-23
18	Michigan State	.2866	21	18	18	19
19	Virginia Tech	.2440	25	22	19	17
20	Pittsburgh	.2377	23	19	21	18
21	Missouri	.1627	20	24	23	T-20
22	Ball State	.1464	12	20	22	25
23	Northwestern	.1377	22	21	20	NR
24	Boston College	.1046	17	26	26	22
25	Mississippi	.0837	NR	23	24	NR



Utah's Ranking History

UTAH FOOTBALL

1947 Weeks in the Polls

Date	AP	Coaches	Opponent (rank)	Result	Site
11-10	18	N/A	Idaho	L, 6-7	N

1994 Weeks in the Polls

Date	AP	Coaches	Opponent (rank)	Result	Site
9-26	-	23	no game		
10-2	25	21	San Diego State	W, 38-22	A
10-9	21	18	Hawaii	W, 14-3	H
10-16	18	15	Colorado State (12)	W, 45-31	A
10-23	12	11	UTEP	W, 52-7	H
10-30	9	8	New Mexico	L, 21-23	A
11-6	12	14	Air Force	L, 33-40	A
11-13	21	20	Brigham Young (20)	W, 34-31	H
11-20	15	13	no game		
11-27	12	13	no game		
12-4	14	12	Arizona (15)	W, 16-13	N
1-3-95	10	8	Final 1994 rank		

1996 Weeks in the Polls

Date	AP	Coaches	Opponent (rank)	Result	Site
9-9	-	25	Stanford	W, 17-10	A
9-29	24	24	UTEP	W, 34-27	A
10-14	24	25	TCU	W, 21-7	H
10-21	21	22	Tulsa	W, 45-19	H
10-28	20	19	Rice	L, 10-51	A

2003 Weeks in the Polls

Date	AP	Coaches	Opponent (rank)	Result	Site
10-19	24	23	New Mexico	L, 35-47	H
12-7	25	25	Southern Miss	W, 17-0	N
1-5-04	21	21	Final 2003 rank		

2004 Weeks in the Polls

Date	AP	Coaches	Opponent (rank)	Result	Site
7-30	-	21	no game		
8-29	20	19	Texas A&M	W, 41-21	H
9-5	17	16	Arizona	W, 23-6	A
9-12	15	14	Utah State	W, 48-6	A
9-19	14	14	Air Force	W, 49-35	H
9-26	14	14	New Mexico	W, 28-7	A
10-3	11	11	no game		
10-10	11	10	North Carolina	W, 46-16	H
10-17	9	10	UNLV	W, 63-28	H
10-24	9	10	San Diego State	W, 51-28	A
10-31	7	8	Colorado State	W, 63-31	H
11-7	7	8	Wyoming	W, 45-28	A
11-14	5	6	Brigham Young	W, 52-21	H
11-21	5	6	no game		
11-28	5	6	no game		
12-5	5	6	Pittsburgh (19)	W, 35-7	N
1-4-05	4	5	Final 2004 rank		

2008 Weeks in the Polls

Date	AP	Coaches	Opponent (rank)	Result	Site
9-2	22	23	UNLV	W/42-21	H
9-7	22	22	Utah State	W/58-10	A
9-14	20	20	Air Force	W/30-23	A
9-21	17	17	Weber State	W/37-21	H
9-28	15	15	Oregon State	W/31-28	H
10-5	14	13	Wyoming	W/40-7	A
10-12	14	13	Colorado State	W/49-16	H
10-19	12	12	no game		
10-26	10	9	New Mexico	W/13-10	A
11-2	10	9	TCU (11)	W/13-10	H
11-9	8	7	San Diego State	W/63-14	A
11-16	8	7	Brigham Young (16)	W/48-24	H
11-23	8	7	no game		
11-30	7	7	no game		
12-7	7	7	no game		

Utah vs. Ranked Opponents (AP Poll -- Started in 1936)

Year	Opponent	Rank	Result	H/A/N	Utah Rank
1936	Texas A&M	15	L, 7-20	H	--
1945	Oklahoma A&M	15	L, 6-46	H	--
1949	Pacific	19	L, 6-45	A	--
1956	UCLA	17	L, 7-13	A	--
1957	Army	8	L, 33-39	A	--
1958	Air Force	14	L, 14-16	A	--
1959	UCLA	20	L, 6-21	A	--
1961	Colorado	8	W, 21-12	A	--
1968	Nebraska	14	L, 0-31	A	--
1968	Oregon State	18	L, 21-24	H	--
1970	Arizona State	11	L, 14-37	A	--
1971	Arizona State	15	L, 21-41	H	--
1971	Houston	15	L, 16-42	A	--
1973	Texas Tech	20	L, 22-29	A	--
1973	UCLA	16	L, 16-66	A	--
1973	Arizona State	8	W, 36-31	H	--
1974	Arizona	12	L, 8-41	H	--
1974	Arizona State	15	L, 0-32	A	--
1975	Arizona State	10	L, 14-40	H	--
1975	Arizona	11	L, 14-38	A	--
1977	Oklahoma	5	L, 24-62	A	--
1977	Houston	19	L, 16-34	H	--
1977	Brigham Young	14	L, 8-38	A	--
1979	Washington	14	L, 7-41	A	--
1979	Brigham Young	10	L, 0-27	A	--
1980	Nebraska	8	L, 9-55	A	--
1980	Brigham Young	13	L, 6-56	H	--
1981	Arizona State	20	L, 10-52	A	--
1981	Brigham Young	18	L, 28-56	A	--
1982	Arizona State	15	L, 10-23	A	--
1982	Texas	18	L, 12-21	A	--
1983	Brigham Young	9	L, 7-55	A	--
1984	Brigham Young	3	L, 14-24	H	--
1985	Brigham Young	11	L, 28-38	A	--
1986	Arizona State	9	L, 7-52	A	--
1988	Wyoming	12	L, 18-61	A	--
1989	Nebraska	4	L, 30-42	A	--
1989	Brigham Young	21	L, 31-70	A	--
1990	Brigham Young	5	L, 22-45	H	--
1992	Nebraska	11	L, 22-49	A	--
1992	Washington State	18	L, 28-31	N	--
1994	Colorado State	12	W, 45-31	A	18
1994	Brigham Young	20	W, 34-31	H	21
1994	Arizona	15	W, 16-13	N	14
1996	Kansas	20	W, 45-42	H	--
1996	Brigham Young	8	L, 17-37	H	--
1999	Brigham Young	19	W, 20-17	A	--
2001	Oregon	7	L, 10-24	A	--
2001	Brigham Young	8	L, 21-24	A	--
2002	Michigan	14	L, 7-10	A	--
2003	Oregon	19	W, 17-13	H	--
2005*	Pittsburgh	19	W, 35-7	N	5
2005	Georgia Tech	24	W, 38-10	N	--
2006	Boise State	22	L, 3-36	H	--
2007	UCLA	11	W, 44-6	H	--
2007	Brigham Young	23	L, 10-17	A	--
2008	TCU	11	W, 13-10	H	10
2008	Brigham Young	16	W, 48-24	H	8
2009+	Alabama	4			

*2004 season (Fiesta Bowl)

+2008 season (Sugar Bowl)



2008 Utah Game Recaps

UTAH FOOTBALL

Game 1 Aug. 30
UTAH 25, MICHIGAN 23
 Ann Arbor, Mich.
 Michigan Stadium [108,421]

ANN ARBOR—Brian Johnson, Louie Sakoda and a swarming defense led Utah to a 25-23 win over Michigan in the Big House before a capacity crowd of 108,421. Johnson passed for 305 yards and a touchdown while completing 21-of-33 passes. Sakoda put on a dazzling display before an ABC/ESPN 2 audience, making all four field goal attempts, including a career-long 53-yarder in the third quarter that gave the Utes a 25-10 lead. Sakoda also averaged 47 yards on six punts. Paul Kruger (9 tackles, 2.5 TFL, half a sack), Nai Fotu (7 tackles, 2.5 TFL, 1 sack) and Koa Misi (1.5 sacks) led a Ute defense that allowed Michigan just 203 yards (36 rushing). Michigan, held to four rushing yards in the first half, converted on only 3-of-14 third down attempts. Sean Smith had an interception and two pass breakups.

Utah.....6.....16.....3.....0.....25
 Michigan.....10.....0.....0.....13.....23

Scoring Summary

UM - Shaw 8 pass from Sheridan (Lopata kick) 11:20, 1st
 UU - Louks 8 run (Sakoda kick blocked) 7:38, 1st
 UM - Lopata 50 field goal 5:18 1st
 UU - Sakoda 28 field goal 14:04, 2nd
 UU - Sakoda 43 field goal 9:48, 2nd
 UU - Sakoda 41 field goal 3:15, 2nd
 UU - Godfrey 19 pass from Johnson (Sakoda kick) 00:13, 2nd
 UU - Sakoda 53 field goal 7:37, 3rd
 UM - Hemingway 33 pass Threet (Lopata kick) 8:42, 4th
 UM - McGuffie 3 run (Threet pass fail) 6:26, 4th

Team Statistics	UU	MICH
First Downs	16	11
Net Rushing	43-36	25-36
Passing	21-34-1	19-38-1
Passing Yards	305	167
Total Offense	341	203
Fumbles-Lost	4-2	3-2
Penalties	15-137	8-53
Interceptions-Yds	1-20	1-18
Punting	7-282	8-299
Punt Returns	2 (-2)	2-0
Kickoff Returns	5-92	4-90
Time of Possession	35:54	24:06
Third Down Conversions	5-19	3-14
Fourth Down Conversions	0-1	0-1
Sacks By	3-7	6-39

Individual Leaders

Rushing (Att-Yds-TD)—Utah: Asiata 13-77-0, Mack 8-17-0, Louks 1-8-1 **UM:** Minor 4-21-0, McGuffie 8-8-1.
Passing (Comp-Att-I-Yds-TD)—Utah: Johnson 21-33-1-305-1. **UM:** Sheridan 11-19-1-98-1, Threet 8-19-0-69-1.
Receiving (No-Yds-TD)—Utah: Godfrey 7-84-1, Brown 5-59-0, Casteel 5-49-0, Reed 2-19-0, Brooks 1-55-0, Asiata 1-39-0. **UM:** Mathews 3-54-0, Shaw 3-17-1, Hemingway 2-41-1, McGuffie 2-22-0.
Kickoff Returns—Utah: Brooks 2-31, Reed 2-38, McCain 1-23. **UM:** Harrison 2-54, Stonum 1-24, Shaw 1-12.
Punt Returns—Utah: Peel 1-(-1), Brooks 1-(-1). **UM:** Warren 2-0.
Utah Defensive Leaders—Tackles: Kruger 9, Fotu 7. **Sacks:** Misi 1.5-5, Fotu 1.0-2. **TFL:** Kruger 2.5-7, Fotu 2.5-3. **Interceptions:** Smith 1-20.

Game 2 Sept. 6
#23 (Coaches) / #22 (AP) UTAH 42, UNLV 21
 Salt Lake City, Utah
 Rice-Eccles Stadium [45,587]

SALT LAKE CITY—A 21-point third quarter boosted No. 22/23 Utah to a 42-21 victory over UNLV before the third-largest home crowd in Utah history (45,587). UNLV scored on its first possession of the game and led until Brian Johnson's 56-yard, second-quarter touchdown run. UNLV struck again to take a 14-7 lead, only to see Matt Asiata tie things up with his first career touchdown. The second half was all Utah—and including Asiata's second-quarter TD run—the Utes scored 35 unanswered points before UNLV would find the end zone again late in the game. Johnson passed for 183 yards and two touchdowns and rushed for 80 yards and a score. Stevenson Sylvester had nine tackles (1.5 for loss), and Koa Misi had six tackles, a sack, 1.5 TFL and a forced fumble for a Utah defense that held UNLV to just nine rushing yards in the second half.

UNLV7.....7.....0.....7.....21
 Utah.....0.....14.....21.....7.....42

Scoring Summary

LV - Summers 2 run (Watson kick) 9:49 1st
 UU - Johnson 56 run (Sakoda kick) 8:08 2nd
 LV - Summers 3 run (Watson kick) 5:01 2nd
 UU - Asiata 2 run (Sakoda kick) 00:52 2nd
 UU - Brown 32 pass from Johnson (Sakoda kick) 12:11 3rd
 UU - Reed 15 run (Sakoda kick) 8:45 3rd
 UU - Sampson 8 pass from Johnson (Sakoda kick) 3:20 3rd
 UU - Brooks 32 pass from Asiata (Sakoda kick) 13:33 4th
 LV - Payne 10 pass Clayton (Watson kick) 6:13 4th

Team Statistics	LV	UU
First Downs	15	22
Net Rushing	35-129	36-225
Passing	19-30-0	16-25-1
Passing Yards	159	215
Total Offense	288	440
Fumbles-Lost	1-0	1-0
Penalties	12-73	8-67
Interceptions-Yds	1-0	0-0
Punting	8-319	4-187
Punt Returns	0-0	4-49
Kickoff Returns	3-59	2-69
Time of Possession	30:14	29:46
Third Down Conversions	6-15	7-11
Fourth Down Conversions	1-1	0-0
Sacks By	0-0	1-9

Individual Leaders

Rushing (Att-Yds-TD)—Utah: Johnson 5-80-1, Mack 13-68-0, Asiata 11-34-1 **LV:** Summers 23-87-2, Trotter 2-34-0, Johnson 2-6-0.
Passing (Comp-Att-I-Yds-TD)—Utah: Johnson 15-24-1-183-2, Asiata 1-1-0-32-1 **LV:** Clayton 19-30-0-159-1.
Receiving (No-Yds-TD)—Utah: Casteel 4-35-0, Godfrey 3-31-0, Sampson 3-28-1, Brown 2-60-1 **LV:** Wolfe 9-61-0, Payne 4-63-1, Flair 3-32-0.
Kickoff Returns—Utah: Reed 2-69 **LV:** Johnson 3-59.
Punt Returns—Utah: Peel 4-49 **LV:** None
Utah Defensive Leaders—Tackles: Sylvester 9, Newman 8. **Sacks:** Misi 1.0-9. **TFL:** Newman 2.0-4; Misi 1.5-10. **Interceptions:** None.



2008 Utah Game Recaps

UTAH FOOTBALL

Game 3 Sept. 13
#22/22 UTAH 58, UTAH STATE 10
Logan, Utah
Romney Stadium [19,061]

LOGAN, UTAH—Utah trounced Utah State 58-10 in Logan – setting a record for the most points scored by either team in the rivalry series. The win began inauspiciously for the Utes, when they fumbled away a punt on their own 24-yard line to set up an Aggie score. But the Utes didn't do much else wrong after that – piling up a season-high 461 yards of total offense to 116 for USU. The Aggies produced just 39 first half yards against Utah's starting defense. Brian Johnson completed 22-of-31 passes for 204 yards and two touchdowns, Darrell Mack rushed for a season-high 75 yards, Matt Asiata rushed for 56 yards and three touchdowns, and Eddie Wide ran for a career-high 69 yards (all in the fourth quarter). Louie Sakoda made all three of his field goal attempts, including one from 48 yards, and set a personal record with seven PATs. Paul Kruger tied the school record with four sacks and all five of his tackles were for a loss. Utah's defense didn't have many chances to pad its stats: The Utes ran 82 plays compared to 48 for Utah State.

Utah.....1713.....14.....1458
Utah State.....703.....010

Scoring Summary

US - Nelson 9 pass from Setzer (Caldwell kick), 12:09, 1st
UU - Asiata 4 run (Sakoda kick), 8:03, 1st
UU - Sakoda 48 field goal, 3:34, 1st
UU - Wesson 20 fumble recovery (Sakoda kick), 3:24, 1st
UU - Sakoda 35 field goal, 10:23, 2nd
UU - Sakoda 24 field goal, 8:53, 2nd
UU - Brown 10 pass from Johnson (Sakoda kick), 0:23, 2nd
US - Caldwell 20 field goal, 12:45, 3rd
UU - Sampson 8 pass from Johnson (Sakoda kick), 8:11, 3rd
UU - Asiata 4 run (Sakoda kick), 4:19, 3rd
UU - Asiata 3 run (Sakoda kick), 8:31, 4th
UU - Stowers 2 run (Sakoda kick) 3:19, 4th

Team Statistics	UU	USU
First Downs	30	8
Net Rushing	50-248	25-27
Passing	23-32-1	9-23-1
Passing Yards	213	89
Total Offense	461	116
Fumbles-Lost	3-2	3-2
Penalties	7-80	7-82
Interceptions-Yds	1-11	1-0
Punting	0-0	8-274
Punt Returns	3-(-2)	0-0
Kickoff Returns	2-41	4-76
Time of Possession	39:38	20:22
Third Down Conversions	10-17	2-12
Fourth Down Conversions	4-4	0-0
Sacks By	4-24	1-11

Individual Leaders

Rushing (Att-Yds-TD)–Utah: Mack 14-75-0, Asiata 11-56-3, Wide 9-69-0. **USU:** Borel 11-23-0, Marsh 5-13-0.
Passing (Comp-Att-I-Yds-TD)–Utah: Johnson 22-31-1-204-2, Sakoda 1-1-0-9-0. **USU:** Borel 5-14-1-62-0, Setzer 4-9-0-27-1.
Receiving (No-Yds-TD)–Utah: Godfrey 6-57-0, Brown 4-37-1, Casteel 3-43-0, Asiata 3-16-0, Reed 2-20-0, Mack 2-16-0. **USU:** Marsh 3-51-0, Stanley 1-15-0, Nelson 1-9-1.
Kickoff Returns–Utah: Reed 2-41. **USU:** Marsh 2-36.
Punt Returns–Utah: Brooks 1-2. **USU:** None.
Utah Defensive Leaders–Tackles: Kruger 5, Misi 5. **Sacks:** Kruger 4.0-24. **TFL:** Kruger 5.0-25. **Interceptions:** Richard 1-11.

Game 4 Sept. 20
#20/20 UTAH 30, AIR FORCE 23
Colorado Springs, Colo.
Falcon Stadium [36,952]

COLORADO SPRINGS—Darrell Mack scored the go-ahead touchdown with 0:58 remaining on a 9-yard run, and Joe Dale intercepted an Air Force pass, to clinch a 30-23 Utah win over previously undefeated Air Force. The Falcons entered the game as the nation's second-ranked rushing offense (averaging 358.0 yards), but were held to just 53 ground yards. It was the lowest rushing total for Air Force since 1980. Mike Wright (10 tackles) and Koa Misi (9 tackles, 2.0 TFL) tied career highs to help Utah hold AFA to 191 total yards. Air Force totaled minus-three yards in the first quarter and 11 yards in the third quarter. Running backs Matt Asiata (116 yards) and Mack (101 yards, 3 touchdowns) paced the Ute offense, which came to life in the second half by scoring 21 points. David Reed had a career game with 73 receiving yards and a touchdown on just two catches.

Utah.....9.....071430
Air Force.....0.....160723

Scoring Summary

UU - Reed 47 pass from Johnson (Sakoda kick), 6:27, 1st
UU - Team safety, 4:38, 1st
AF - Harrison 44 field goal, 11:53, 1st
AF - Lumpkin 8 pass from Smith (Harrison kick), 5:53, 2nd
AF - Paulson 25 fumble recovery (Geyer pass failed), 3:35, 1st
UU - Mack 8 run (Sakoda kick) 11:04, 3rd
UU - Mack 13 run (Sakoda kick) 13:09, 4th
AF - Stephens 1 run (Harrison kick), 5:06, 4th
UU - Mack 9 run (Sakoda kick), 00:58, 4th

Team Statistics	UU	AF
First Downs	24	9
Net Rushing	53-197	42-53
Passing	16-24-1	7-13-2
Passing Yards	243	138
Total Offense	440	191
Fumbles-Lost	2-2	1-0
Penalties	7-40	3-25
Interceptions-Yds	2-0	1-0
Punting	2-96	5-180
Punt Returns	2-14	1-4
Kickoff Returns	5-345	6-374
Time of Possession	36:38	23:22
Third Down Conversions	6-14	5-15
Fourth Down Conversions	1-2	0-2
Sacks By	0-0	5-39

Individual Leaders

Rushing (Att-Yds-TD)–Utah: Asiata 19-116-0, Mack 18-101-3, Louks 2-14-0. **AF:** Lumpkin 12-36-0, Stephens 13-33-1.
Passing (Comp-Att-I-Yds-TD)–Utah: Johnson 16-23-1-243-1, Louks 0-1-0-0-0. **AF:** Smith 7-13-2-138-1.
Receiving (No-Yds-TD)–Utah: Godfrey 4-47-1, Casteel 3-62-0, Brown 3-37-0, Reed 2-73-1, Mack 2-5-0, Sampson 1-13-0. **AF:** Fogler 4-93-0, Cousins 2-37-0, Lumpkin 1-8-1.
Kickoff Returns–Utah: Brooks 1-11, Fonua 1-4. **AF:** Rember 2-37.
Punt Returns–Utah: Cole 2-14. **AF:** Rember 1-4.
Utah Defensive Leaders–Tackles: Wright 10, Misi 9. **Sacks:** None. **TFL:** Kruger 2.5-6, Misi 2.0-7. **Interceptions:** McCain 1-0, Dale 1-0.



2008 Utah Game Recaps

UTAH FOOTBALL

Game 5 Sept. 27
#17/17 UTAH 37, WEBER STATE 21
Salt Lake City, Utah
Rice-Eccles Stadium [45,117]

SALT LAKE CITY—Brian Johnson was 12-of-13 passing for 123 yards and two touchdowns in the decisive second quarter and Utah went on to beat Weber State 37-21. The Utes broke open a 7-7 game with a 17-0 second quarter run—aided by the best defensive period of the night. Weber was stuffed for minus-11 rushing yards and 25 total yards in the second quarter by a Ute defense that also pitched a shutout in the third quarter. After Utah scored 30 straight points to put the game out of reach, Weber scored twice in the fourth quarter against the Utes' second string defense. Louie Sakoda broke two school records on a night when he made all three field goals and was 4-of-4 in extra points. He moved his career scoring total to 238 points—breaking a 76-year-old school record in the process. Sakoda also made his 45th career field goal for another school record. In his three quarters of play, Johnson completed 18-of-22 passes for 194 yards and two touchdowns. Kepa Gaison and Mike Wright had six tackles each to lead the defense, while Greg Newman chipped in five tackles, two TFL (for 17 yards), a sack and a fumble recovery.

Weber State..... 7..... 0..... 0..... 14..... 21
Utah..... 7..... 17..... 10..... 3..... 37

Scoring Summary

UU - Asiata 1 run (Sakoda kick), 2:59, 1st
 WSU - Toone 35 pass from Higgins (Williams kick), 0:55, 1st
 UU - Sampson 6 pass from Johnson (Sakoda kick), 12:42, 2nd
 UU - Sakoda 33 field goal, 8:08, 2nd
 UU - Godfrey 10 pass from Johnson (Sakoda kick) 0:43, 2nd
 UU - Sakoda 47 field goal, 6:09, 3rd
 UU - Asiata 1 run (Sakoda kick) 1:51, 3rd
 UU - Sakoda 38 field goal, 10:13, 4th
 WSU - Nakamura 9 pass Higgins (Williams kick), 6:41, 4th
 WSU - Eteuanti 7 pass from Higgins (Williams kick) 0:12, 4th

Team Statistics	WSU	UU
First Downs	19	23
Net Rushing	23-56	39-180
Passing	24-38-0	23-29-1
Passing Yards	303	270
Total Offense	359	450
Fumbles-Lost	2-2	2-0
Penalties	3-15	6-60
Interceptions-Yds	1-10	0-0
Punting	4-129	2-66
Punt Returns	0-0	1-11
Kickoff Returns	1-16	2-47
Time of Possession	26:30	33:30
Third Down Conversions	5-12	5-10
Fourth Down Conversions	1-1	0-0
Sacks By	0-0	2-24

Individual Leaders

Rushing (Att-Yds-TD)—Utah: Mack 12-58-0, Asiata 10-37-2, Louks 5-35-0, Wide 5-34-0. **WSU:** Smith 18-68-0, Doyle 1-7-0.
Passing (Comp-Att-I-Yds-TD)—Utah: Johnson 18-22-1-194-2, Manis 3-4-0-24-0. **WSU:** Higgins 24-38-0-303-3.
Receiving (No-Yds-TD)—Utah: Brown 4-36-0, Joppru 3-41-0, Casteel 3-30-0, Reed 3-21-0, Godfrey 2-31-1, Sampson 2-19-1, Louks 1-33-0, Brooks 1-25-0, Key 1-19-0. **WSU:** Eteuanti 8-83-1, Toone 6-118-1, Smith 4-29-0, Phillips 3-57-0, Nakamura 2-11-1.
Kickoff Returns—Utah: Reed 2-47. **WSU:** Eteuati 1-16.
Punt Returns—Utah: Cole 1-11. **WSU:** None.
Utah Defensive Leaders—Tackles: Gaison 6, Wright 6. **Sacks:** Newman 1-14, Stanford 1-10. **TFL:** Newman 2.0-17. **Interceptions:** None.

Game 6 Oct. 2
#15/15 UTAH 31, OREGON STATE 28
Salt Lake City, Utah
Rice-Eccles Stadium [45,599]

SALT LAKE CITY—Brian Johnson executed the two-minute drill perfectly and Louie Sakoda booted the game-winning field goal as time expired in a 31-28 win over Oregon State. Johnson found his groove with Utah trailing 28-20 and 2:11 remaining in the game. He completed seven of his last eight passes for 91 yards—including a 25-yard touchdown pass to Bradon Godfrey—and then ran for the game-tying two-point conversion. Utah then forced the Beavers to punt, which set up Sakoda's 37-yard field goal. Brent Casteel had a career-best 105 receiving yards—with instrumental catches of 24 and 16 yards in Utah's final two scoring drives—and a rushing touchdown. Mike Wright led the defense with a career-high 15 tackles. Wright also had a 9-yard sack in the first quarter that resulted in OSU taking a field goal over a touchdown, and a critical fourth-quarter pass breakup in Utah territory that resulted in an OSU punt.

Oregon State..... 3..... 12..... 6..... 7..... 28
Utah..... 3..... 17..... 0..... 11..... 31

Scoring Summary

OSU - Kahut 37 field goal, 11:47, 1st
 UU - Sakoda 33 field goal, 5:23, 1st
 OSU - Afalava 26 interception return (Kahut kick failed), 14:51, 2nd
 UU - Sakoda 28 field goal, 11:30, 2nd
 UU - Brown 14 pass from Johnson (Sakoda kick), 7:04, 2nd
 UU - Casteel 12 run (Sakoda kick), 2:31, 2nd
 OSU - Morales 24 pass from Moevao (Rodgers, Jacq. rush failed), 1:13, 2nd
 OSU - Rodgers, Jacq. 7 run (Moevao pass failed), 12:33, 3rd
 OSU - Camp 2 pass from Moevao (Kahut kick), 2:18, 4th
 UU - Godfrey 25 pass from Johnson (Johnson rush), 1:29, 4th
 UU - Sakoda 37 field goal, 00:00, 4th

Team Statistics	OSU	UU
First Downs	20	18
Net Rushing	92	136
Passing	21-31-0	17-31-1
Passing Yards	313	201
Total Offense	405	337
Fumbles-Lost	3-1	2-1
Penalties	7-37	4-37
Interceptions-Yds	1-26-1	0-0
Punting	6-230	6-267
Punt Returns	3-4	2-2
Kickoff Returns	1-22	5-157
Time of Possession	31:06	28:54
Third Down Conversions	5-13	8-17
Fourth Down Conversions	0-0	1-1
Sacks By	4-23	3-22

Individual Leaders

Rushing (Att-Yds-TD)—Utah: Asiata 7-53-0, Mack 12-44-0, Casteel 3-20-1, Johnson 11-11-0. **OSU:** Rodgers, Jacq. 25-101-1, Rodgers, Jam 2-8-0.
Passing (Comp-Att-I-Yds-TD)—Utah: Johnson 17-30-1-201-2. **OSU:** Moevao 21-31-0-313-2.
Receiving (No-Yds-TD)—Utah: Casteel 5-105-0, Godfrey 5-52-1, Brown 4-30-1. **OSU:** Rodgers, Jam 5-82-0, Rodgers, Jacq 4-76-0, Morales 4-61-1, Camp, 3-23-1, Stroughter 2-32-0, Catchings 1-31-0.
Kickoff Returns—Utah: Reed 4-142. **OSU:** Rodgers, Jam 1-22.
Punt Returns—Utah: Cole 2-2. **OSU:** Stroughter 2-6.
Utah Defensive Leaders—Tackles: Wright 15. **Sacks:** Wright 1-9, Kruger 1-7, Shelby 1-6. **TFL:** Wright 1-9, Kruger 1-7, Shelby 1-6. **Interceptions:** None.



2008 Utah Game Recaps

Game 7 Oct. 11

#13 (Coaches) / 14 (AP) UTAH 40, WYOMING 7

Laramie, Wyo.

War Memorial Stadium [17,123]

LARAMIE, Wyo.—Utah found five different ways to score a touchdown, and along with field goals and PATs, crushed Wyoming 40-7. Sean Smith scored the game's first touchdown on a 25-yard interception return. The Utes, whose other touchdowns came on a rush, a pass, a blocked punt and a fumble recovery, were up 20-0 before they scored their first offensive touchdown. Louie Sakoda made both of his field goal attempts in frigid gusting winds, including a 50-yarder. Aiona Key blocked a punt and ran it in for a score—his first TD as a Ute and Utah's first touchdown off a blocked kick since 2004. Matt Asiata rushed for a touchdown and made his first career TD reception. Utah's final score came after RJ Rice recovered a fumble on a muffed punt in the end zone. Sakoda's punting pinned Wyoming deep in its own territory and his 81-yard boot in the fourth quarter was the longest by a Ute in 20 years.

Utah.....10 17 7 6 40
 Wyoming0 0 0 7 7

Scoring Summary

UU - Smith 25 interception return (Sakoda kick), 11:09, 1st
 UU - Sakoda 50 field goal, 04:22, 1st
 UU - Sakoda 39 field goal, 10:30, 2nd
 UU - Key 6 blocked punt (Sakoda kick), 9:34, 2nd
 UU - Asiata 3 run (Sakoda kick), 0:05, 2nd
 UU - Asiata 13 pass from Johnson (Sakoda kick) 10:36, 3rd
 WY - Bolling 18 pass from Stutzriem (Scott kick), 4th
 UU - Rice 0 fumble recovery (Godfrey rush failed), 3:19, 4th

Team Statistics

	UU	WY
First Downs	11	14
Net Rushing	123	184
Passing	11-20-0	10-23-3
Passing Yards	119	68
Total Offense	242	252
Fumbles-Lost	1-0	2-2
Penalties	3-30	5-28
Interceptions-Yds	3-56	0-0
Punting	9-361	9-334
Punt Returns	5-30-1	1-(-12)-0
Kickoff Returns	2-29-0	3-62-0
Time of Possession	32:27	27:33
Third Down Conversions	4-17	2-13
Fourth Down Conversions	2-2	0-2
Sacks By	1-7	3-13

Individual Leaders

Rushing (Att-Yds-TD)—Utah: Louks 9-50-0, Asiata 11-37-1, Wide 4-16-0, Mack 6-15-0. **WY:** Moore 23-106-0, Seldon 11-57-0, Stewart 5-18-0.

Passing (Comp-Att-I-Yds-TD)—Utah: Johnson 10-19-0-110-1, Louks 1-1-0-9-0. **WY:** Sween 8-18-3-52-0, Crum 0-2-0-0-0, Stutzriem 2-2-0-16-1

Receiving (No-Yds-TD)—Utah: Brown 4-57-0, Brooks 3-22-0, Godfrey 2-19-0, Asiata 1-13-1. **WY:** Stewart 4-21-0, Moore 2-(-4)-0, Boling 1-18-1, Sundberg 1-16-0.

Kickoff Returns—Utah: Reed 1-20. **WY:** Moore 2-42, Gipson, M. 1-20.

Punt Returns—Utah: Key 1-19, Cole 3-8. **WY:** Gipson, T. 1-(-12).

Utah Defensive Leaders—Tackles: Dale 7, Newman 7. **Sacks:** Stanford 1-7. **TFL:** Dale 1.5-4, Newman 1.5-2. **Interceptions:** Smith 2-56-1.

Game 8 Oct. 19

#13 (Coaches) / 14 (AP) UTAH 49, COLORADO STATE 16

Salt Lake City, Utah

Rice-Eccles Stadium [44,793]

SALT LAKE CITY—Utah's offense erupted for 49 points against Colorado State in a 49-16 win in Rice-Eccles Stadium on Oct. 18. The Utes, who scored on their first drive when Brian Johnson found Freddie Brown for a 32-yard touchdown pass, piled up a season-high 549 yards of total offense. Led by backup quarterback Corbin Louks' career-high 109 rushing yards, the Utes also produced a season-best rushing game with 327 net yards. Everyone from the offense got into the act, with Johnson throwing for 185 yards and two touchdowns, Louks scoring on touchdown runs of 21 and 69 yards, receivers Brown (78 yards) and David Reed (73 yards) having career days, and running back Matt Asiata scoring two touchdowns. Utah's defense got tough after giving up a touchdown on its first series and held CSU to three points in the second half. Stevenson Sylvester had nine tackles, a forced fumble and a pass breakup and CSU converted on just 3-of-15 third down attempts.

Colorado State...7.....6.....3.....016
 Utah.....14..... 14 7 14 49

Scoring Summary

UU - Brown 32 pass from Johnson (Sakoda kick), 12:38, 1st
 CS - Morton 29 pass from Farris (Smith kick), 7:59, 1st
 UU - Asiata 3 run (Sakoda kick), 2:46, 1st
 CS - Smith 25 field goal, 7:00, 2nd
 UU - Asiata 3 run (Sakoda kick), 4:09, 2nd
 UU - Reed 33 pass from Johnson (Sakoda kick), 1:18, 2nd
 CS - Smith 38 field goal, 00:00, 2nd
 CS - Smith 52 field goal, 7:36, 3rd
 UU - Louks 21 run (Sakoda kick), 2:20, 3rd
 UU - Brooks 34 run (Sakoda kick), 14:11, 4th
 UU - Louks 69 run (Sakoda kick), 9:30, 4th

Team Statistics

	CS	UU
First Downs	18	25
Net Rushing	110	327
Passing	22-38-1	19-27-1
Passing Yards	18	222
Total Offense	298	549
Fumbles-Lost	2-0	0-0
Penalties	3-13	8-80
Interceptions-Yds	1-55	1-0
Punting	7-302	4-159
Punt Returns	1-22-0	3-16-0
Kickoff Returns	3-48-0	2-40-0
Time of Possession	32:24	27:36
Third Down Conversions	3-15	5-9
Fourth Down Conversions	2-3	0-0
Sacks By	0-0	1-12

Individual Leaders

Rushing (Att-Yds-TD)—Utah: Louks 5-109-2, Asiata 8-41-2, Casteel 4-40-0, Brooks 3-36-1, Wide 3-35-0, Mack 8-33-0. **CS:** Johnson 20-95-0, Farris 4-8-0.

Passing (Comp-Att-I-Yds-TD)—Utah: Johnson 18-26-1-185-2, Louks 1-1-0-37-0. **CS:** Farris 19-33-1-166-1, Stucker 3-5-0-22-0.

Receiving (No-Yds-TD)—Utah: Brooks 6-34-0, Brown 4-78-1, Reed 3-73-1, Godfrey 3-24-0. **CS:** Morton 5-39-1, Mosure 5-25-0, Greer 3-67-0, Sperry 3-19-0, Johnson 1-13-0.

Kickoff Returns—Utah: Reed 1-24, Wesson 1-16. **CS:** Mosure 2-31, Myers 1-17.

Punt Returns—Utah: Cole 3-16. **CS:** Square 1-22.

Utah Defensive Leaders—Tackles: Sylvester 9, Misi 8. **Sacks:** Fotu 1-12. **TFL:** Misi 1.5-2, Walker 1.5-7. **Interceptions:** Walker 1-0.



2008 Utah Game Recaps

UTAH FOOTBALL

Game 9 Nov. 1
#9 (Coaches) / 10 (AP) UTAH 13, NEW MEXICO 10
Albuquerque, N.M.
University Stadium [40,094]

ALBUQUERQUE—Utah ran its record to 9-0 for just the second time in school history with a 13-10 victory over New Mexico. Brian Johnson became Utah's all-time winningest quarterback by completing 72-percent of his pass attempts (23-32) for 195 yards and a touchdown. He also rushed for 41 yards. Louie Sakoda scored seven of Utah's 13 points, making field goals of 43 and 38 yards and converting his lone PAT of the game. He also dropped four punts inside the 20-yard line, including a huge play with 1:58 remaining when he pinned the Lobos on their own 1-yard line. Koa Misi and Robert Johnson each had eight tackles to spearhead a Ute defense that shut out the Lobos in the first and fourth quarters. Utah held New Mexico to 100 yards below its season rushing average and limited league-leading rusher Rodney Ferguson to 34 yards—his lowest output of the season.

Utah.....3 3.....7 0 13
 New Mexico.....0 3.....7 0 10

Scoring Summary

UU - Sakoda 43 field goal, 5:54, 1st
 NM - Aho 38 field goal, 5:35, 2nd
 UU - Sakoda 38 field goal, 00:00, 2nd
 UU - Casteel 10 pass from Johnson, 3:15, 3rd
 NM - Ferguson 10 run (Aho kick), 00:00, 3rd

Team Statistics	UU	NM
First Downs	17	16
Net Rushing	193	119
Passing	23-33-1	16-26-0
Passing Yards	195	170
Total Offense	388	284
Fumbles-Lost	1-1	1-0
Penalties	9-79	6-41
Interceptions-Yds	0-0	1-0
Punting	5-197	6-230
Punt Returns	4-3	0-0
Kickoff Returns	2-43-0	1-32-0
Time of Possession	32:10	27:35
Third Down Conversions	5-13	3-13
Fourth Down Conversions	0-1	0-2
Sacks By	2-18	1-5

Individual Leaders

Rushing (Att-Yds-TD)—Utah: Asiata 12-80-0, Mack 10-54-0, Johnson 7-41-0, Brooks 1-11-0, Wide 1-4-0, Louks 3-2-0, Casteel 1-1-0. **NM:** Gruner 15-57-0, Ferguson 13-34-1, Scarlett 3-15-0, Baker 5-8-0.

Passing (Comp-Att-I-Yds-TD)—Utah: Johnson 23-32-1-195-1, Sakoda 0-1-0-0-0. **NM:** Gruner 16-25-0-170-0.

Receiving (No-Yds-TD)—Utah: Brown 7-69-0, Godfrey 5-40-0, Brooks 5-35-0, Casteel 4-32-1, Reed 1-11-0, Mack 1-8-0. **NM:** Williams 5-54-0, Hernandez 4-41-0, Mark 2-24-0, Bruno 2-8-0, Ferguson 1-35-0, Scarlett 1-6-0, McQueen 1-2-0.

Kickoff Returns—Utah: Reed 2-43. **NM:** Solomon 1-32.

Punt Returns—Utah: Reed 1-3, Casteel 3-0. **NM:** None.

Utah Defensive Leaders—Tackles: Misi 8, Johnson 8. **Sacks:** Kruger 1.0-9, Brice McCain 1.0-9. **TFL:** Shelby 2.0-2. **Interceptions:** None.

Game 10 Nov. 9
#9 (Coaches) / 10 (AP) UTAH 13, TCU 10
Salt Lake City, Utah
Rice-Eccles Stadium [45,666]

SALT LAKE CITY—Brian Johnson capped a last-minute, 80-yard drive by throwing a touchdown strike to Freddie Brown and Utah came from behind to beat No. 11 TCU 13-10. The Utes never led in the game until their final drive, which began with 2:48 remaining and Utah trailing 10-6. Johnson completed 7-of-9 passes in the last two minutes—including an 11-yard completion to Brown on fourth and five that got Utah to the TCU 15-yard line. Brown finished with a career-high 105 yards on nine catches. Others who made big plays on the game-winning drive were receivers Bradon Godfrey and Brent Casteel. But most of the game centered on two of the best defenses in the nation. After relinquishing 10 points in the first nine minutes of the game, Utah held the Horned Frogs scoreless the remainder of the way. TCU rushed for 99 yards and a 10-3 first quarter lead before the defense settled in—holding the Horned Frogs to minus-one yard in the second quarter and 15 rushing yards in the third quarter. Stevenson Sylvester led Utah with a season-high 10 tackles, and chipped in on one of the team's four sacks, which counted for a total 48 lost yards. Joe Dale had nine tackles and a 16-yard sack, and Sean Smith had an interception (which he returned 37 yards to set up a Louie Sakoda field goal) and two pass breakups.

TCU10 0.....0 0 10
 Utah.....3 3.....0 7 13

Scoring Summary

TCU - Evans 37 field goal, 9:54, 1st
 TCU - Christian 3 run (Evans kick), 6:16, 1st
 UU - Sakoda 49 field goal, 2:37, 1st
 UU - Sakoda 37 field goal, 0:00, 2nd
 UU - Brown 9 pass from Johnson, 0:48, 4th

Team Statistics	TCU	UU
First Downs	20	17
Net Rushing	165	45
Passing	16-37-2	24-41-0
Passing Yards	251	230
Total Offense	416	275
Fumbles-Lost	0-0	2-0
Penalties	11-70	2-10
Interceptions-Yds	0-0	2-37
Punting	6-246	8-294
Punt Returns	1-10	4-33
Kickoff Returns	2-34	3-73
Time of Possession	31:44	28:16
Third Down Conversions	8-19	4-15
Fourth Down Conversions	0-1	1-2
Sacks By	2-10	4-48

Individual Leaders

Rushing (Att-Yds-TD)—Utah: Asiata 6-19-0, Wide 4-14-0, Mack 3-12-0, Johnson 8-10-0. **TCU:** Brown 15-106-0, Christian 12-43-1, Dalton 11-11-0.

Passing (Comp-Att-I-Yds-TD)—Utah: Johnson 24-39-0-230-1, Asiata 0-1-0-0-0. **TCU:** Dalton 16-37-2-251-0.

Receiving (No-Yds-TD)—Utah: Brown 9-105-1, Godfrey 7-48-0, Casteel 5-77-0, Mack 2-6-0. **TCU:** Young 6-97-0, Christian 4-69-0, Brown 2-5-0, Johnson 1-52-0, Hicks 1-19-0.

Kickoff Returns—Utah: Reed 3-73. **TCU:** Brown 1-19, Hodge 1-15.

Punt Returns—Utah: Casteel 4-33. **TCU:** Sanders 1-10.

Utah Defensive Leaders—Tackles: Sylvester 10, Dale 9. **Sacks:** Kruger 1.0, Dale 1.0. **TFL:** Kruger 1.0, Dale 1.0. **Interceptions:** Smith 1, Johnson 1.



2008 Utah Game Recaps

Game 11 Nov. 15

#7 (Coaches) / 8 (AP) UTAH 63, SAN DIEGO STATE 14

San Diego, Calif.

Qualcomm Stadium [19,342]

SAN DIEGO—Brian Johnson threw five touchdown passes, Freddie Brown had a career-high 110 receiving yards and two TDs, and Deshawn Richard scored back-to-back touchdowns on interception returns to lead Utah to a 63-14 victory over San Diego State. Utah, which clinched a share of the conference title with the win, recorded 520 yards of total offense, converted on 13-of-14 third downs and never punted. Louie Sakoda tied the school record by making nine extra point kicks and was one of the only starters still playing in the fourth quarter. The rout began early when Stevenson Sylvester forced a fumble on SDSU's first drive and Koa Misi recovered. Johnson then marched the Utes 53 yards and found Colt Sampson in the end zone for his first of five first-half touchdowns.

Utah..... 14 21 0 28 63
 SDSU..... 0 7 7 0 14

Scoring Summary

UU - Sampson 2 pass from Johnson (Sakoda kick), 11:33, 1st
 UU - Brown 4 pass from Johnson (Sakoda kick), 2:41, 1st
 UU - Reed 32 pass from Johnson (Sakoda kick), 14:55, 2nd
 SD - Mougey 31 pass from Lindley (Yoshida kick), 11:01, 2nd
 UU - Brown 5 pass from Johnson (Sakoda kick), 5:11, 2nd
 UU - Reed 3 pass from Johnson (Sakoda kick), 0:15, 2nd
 SD - Shaw 16 pass from Lindley (Yoshida kick), 3:14, 3rd
 UU - Asiata 1 run (Sakoda kick), 12:42, 4th
 UU - Stowers 1 run (Sakoda kick), 9:00, 4th
 UU - Richard 89 interception return (Sakoda kick), 5:59, 4th
 UU - Richard 38 interception return (Sakoda kick), 4:49, 4th

Team Statistics

	UU	SD
First Downs	30	19
Net Rushing	198	73
Passing	28-40-1	23-41-2
Passing Yards	322	247
Total Offense	520	320
Fumbles-Lost	0-0	1-1
Penalties	6-55	10-72
Interceptions-Yds	2-127	1-9
Punting	0-0	5-216
Punt Returns	1-41	0-0
Kickoff Returns	3-82	8-152
Time of Possession	33:17	26:43
Third Down Conversions	13-14	4-12
Fourth Down Conversions	0-1	0-0
Sacks By	0-0	0-0

Individual Leaders

Rushing (Att-Yds-TD)—Utah: Asiata 14-83-1, Stowers 9-51-1, Johnson 7-31-0, Brooks 3-18-0, Mack 6-16-0, Louks 1-(-1)-0. **SD:** Campbell 5-40-0, Henderson 13-35-0, Wesley 1-(-2)-0.

Passing (Comp-Att-I-Yds-TD)—Utah: Johnson 27-38-1-283-5, Louks 1-2-0-39-0. **SD:** Lindley 23-41-2-247-2.

Receiving (No-Yds-TD)—Utah: Brown 11-110-2, Reed 4-87-2, Casteel 3-53-0, Godfrey 3-33-0, Brooks 3-28-0, Sampson 2-5-1, Asiata 1-5-0, Mack 1-1-0. **SD:** Henderson 6-29-0, Mougey 5-85-1, Wallace 3-47-0, Campbell 2-18-0, Wesley 2-18-0, Brown 2-17-0, Shaw 1-16-1, Sampson 1-12-0, Umuolo 1-5-0.

Kickoff Returns—Utah: Reed 2-48, Casteel 1-34. **SD:** Mauldin 6-107, Wesley 2-45.

Punt Returns—Utah: Casteel 1-41. **SD:** None.

Utah Defensive Leaders—Tackles: Dale 6, Wright 5. **Sacks:** None. **TFL:** Misi 1.0, Tonga 1.0. **Interceptions:** Richard 2.

Game 12 Nov. 22

#7 (Coaches) / 8 (AP) UTAH 48, BRIGHAM YOUNG 24

Salt Lake City, Utah

Rice-Eccles Stadium [46,488]

SALT LAKE CITY—Utah won the Mountain West Conference title outright—capping an undefeated regular season with a 48-24 win over No. 14 Brigham Young on Nov. 22. Brian Johnson was brilliant in his final game in Rice-Eccles Stadium, completing 30-of-36 passes for 303 yards, four touchdowns and no interceptions. The second-largest crowd in school history (46,488) witnessed a close game for three quarters before the defense went on a rampage—intercepting BYU's Heisman hopeful Max Hall five times and stripping him of the ball to stop another drive. The interceptions (two by Joe Dale) put the ball back in Johnson's hands and he steered Utah to 21 unanswered fourth-quarter points. Senior receivers Freddie Brown (97 yards) and Brent Casteel (60 yards, 2 touchdowns) excelled in their home finale, and senior kicker/punter Louie Sakoda was perfect kicking—making both field goals and all six PAT attempts, while averaging 44.2 yards on his punts. Junior running back Matt Asiata ran for a touchdown and passed for another. Paul Kruger demoralized BYU with an interception (which he returned 30 yards to the Cougar 4-yard line), a fumble recovery, two pass breakups and six tackles. Other interceptions came from Robert Johnson and Sean Smith. Mike Wright led Utah with nine tackles.

BYU..... 3 14 7 0 24
 Utah..... 10 17 0 21 48

Scoring Summary

UU - Sakoda 37 field goal, 9:48, 1st
 BY - Payne 40 field goal, 8:27, 1st
 UU - Casteel 16 pass from Johnson (Sakoda kick), 4:25, 1st
 UU - Asiata 5 run (Sakoda kick), 13:44, 2nd
 BY - Unga 23 run (Payne kick), 10:38, 2nd
 BY - Unga 2 run (Payne kick), 6:26, 2nd
 UU - Sakoda 35 field goal, 1:41, 2nd
 UU - Reed 32 pass from Johnson (Sakoda kick), 0:15, 2nd
 BY - Hall 11 run (Payne kick), 6:46, 3rd
 UU - Casteel 8 pass from Johnson (Sakoda kick), 14:31, 4th
 UU - Joppru 4 pass from Asiata (Sakoda kick), 12:00, 4th
 UU - Sampson 1 pass from Johnson (Sakoda kick), 2:48, 4th

Team Statistics

	BY	UU
First Downs	25	27
Net Rushing	214	108
Passing	21-41-5	31-37-0
Passing Yards	205	307
Total Offense	419	415
Fumbles-Lost	1-1	2-0
Penalties	9-85	5-51
Interceptions-Yds	0-0	5-77
Punting	2-109	4-177
Punt Returns	0-0	1-14
Kickoff Returns	8-226	3-70
Time of Possession	26:14	33:46
Third Down Conversions	4-12	4-11
Fourth Down Conversions	2-2	1-1
Sacks By	1-4	0-0

Individual Leaders

Rushing (Att-Yds-TD)—Utah: Mack 9-40-0, Asiata 11-40-1, Johnson 12-21-0, Casteel 2-9-0. **BY:** Unga 15-116-2, Hall 7-42-1, Vakapuna 4-36-0, Collie 2-14-0, Kariya 1-8-0.

Passing (Comp-Att-I-Yds-TD)—Utah: Johnson 30-36-0-303-4, Asiata 1-1-0-4-1. **BY:** Hall 21-41-5-205-0.

Receiving (No-Yds-TD)—Utah: Brown 8-97-0, Casteel 6-60-2, Brooks 5-49-0, Reed 4-60-1, Asiata 3-21-0, Godfrey 3-15-0, Joppru 1-4-1, Sampson 1-1-1. **BY:** Collie 10-104-0, Reed 5-58-0, Unga 3-5-0, Pitta 2-33-0, Kariya 1-5-0.

Kickoff Returns—Utah: Reed 2-43, Fonua 1-27. **BY:** Chambers 4-92, Collie 4-134.

Punt Returns—Utah: Casteel 1-14. **BY:** None.

Utah Defensive Leaders—Tackles: Wright 9, Dale 7. **Sacks:** None. **TFL:** Wright 1.0-3. **Interceptions:** Dale 2, Kruger 1, Johnson 1, Smith 1.

2008 Utah Statistics



UTAH FOOTBALL

TEAM STATISTICS	UU	OPP
SCORING	449	207
Points Per Game	37.4	17.2
FIRST DOWNS	260	194
Rushing	109	73
Passing	137	95
Penalty.....	14	26
RUSHING YARDAGE	2021	1258
Yards gained rushing.....	2310	1570
Yards lost rushing	289	312
Rushing Attempts	475	382
Average Per Rush	4.3	3.3
Average Per Game	168.4	104.8
TDs Rushing.....	23	10
PASSING YARDAGE	2842	2293
Att-Comp-Int.....	373-252-9	379-207-17
Average Per Pass.....	7.6	6.1
Average Per Catch	11.3.....	11.1
Average Per Game	236.8	191.1
TDs Passing	26	14
TOTAL OFFENSE	4863	3551
Total Plays	848	761
Average Per Play	5.7	4.7
Average Per Game	405.2	295.9
KICK RETURNS: #-Yards	33-758	40-854
PUNT RETURNS: #-Yards	32-209	9-28
INT RETURNS: #-Yards	17-328	9-118
KICK RETURN AVERAGE	23.0	21.4
PUNT RETURN AVERAGE.....	6.5	3.1
INT RETURN AVERAGE	19.3	13.1
FUMBLES-LOST	20-8	20-11
PENALTIES-Yards.....	80-726	84-594
Average Per Game	60.5	49.5
PUNTS-Yards	51-2086	74-2868
Average Per Punt	40.9	38.8
Net punt average.....	36.8	34.9
TIME OF POSSESSION/Game.....	32:39	27:19
3RD-DOWN Conversions.....	76/167	50/165
3rd-Down Pct.....	46%	30%
4TH-DOWN Conversions	10/15	6/15
4th-Down Pct.....	67%	40%
SACKS BY-Yards.....	21-171	23-144
MISC YARDS	0	0
TOUCHDOWNS SCORED.....	55	26
FIELD GOALS-ATTEMPTS.....	21-23	10-16
ON-SIDE KICKS.....	0-0	0-0
RED-ZONE SCORES.....	47-52 90%	23-31 74%
RED-ZONE TOUCHDOWNS	37-52 71%.....	18-31 58%
PAT-ATTEMPTS	52-53 98%.....	21-22 95%
ATTENDANCE	273250	231800
Games/Avg Per Game	6/45542	6/38633
Neutral Site Games .....	.....	0/0

SCORE BY QUARTERS	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Total
Utah	96	152	76	125	449
Opponents	54	65	33	55	207

**2008 Utah Statistics**

RUSHING	GP	Att	Gain	Loss	Net	Avg	TD	Long	Avg/G
ASIATA, Matt	12	133	684	6	678	5.1	11	38	56.5
MACK, Darrell	12	119	552	19	533	4.5	3	26	44.4
LOUKS, Corbin	9	27	223	5	218	8.1	3	69	24.2
WIDE, Eddie	12	30	189	6	183	6.1	0	23	15.2
JOHNSON, Brian	12	104	365	222	143	1.4	1	56	11.9
CASTEEL, Brent	12	17	95	3	92	5.4	1	18	7.7
STOWERS, Ray	5	17	77	1	76	4.5	2	21	15.2
BROOKS, Jerome	12	10	73	13	60	6.0	1	34	5.0
WESSON, Elijah	12	10	37	5	32	3.2	0	11	2.7
REED, David	12	1	15	0	15	15.0	1	15	1.2
Team	7	7	0	9	-9	-1.3	0	0	-1.3
Total.....	12	475	2310	289	2021	4.3	23	69	168.4
Opponents.....	12	382	1570	312	1258	3.3	10	41	104.8

PASSING	G	Effic	Cmp-Att-Int	Pct	Yds	TD	Lng	Avg/G
JOHNSON, Brian	12	148.34	241-353-9	68.3	2636	24	55	219.7
LOUKS, Corbin	9	181.94	4-7-0	57.1	104	0	39	11.6
MANIS, Chad	3	125.40	3-4-0	75.0	24	0	13	8.0
ASIATA, Matt	12	387.47	2-3-0	66.7	36	2	32	3.0
SAKODA, Louie	12	87.80	1-2-0	50.0	9	0	9	0.8
Team	7	0.00	0-2-0	0.0	0	0	0	0.0
BROOKS, Jerome	12	377.20	1-1-0	100.0	33	0	33	2.8
MACK, Darrell	12	0.00	0-1-0	0.0	0	0	0	0.0
Total.....	12	149.74	252-373-9	67.6	2842	26	55	236.8
Opponents.....	12	108.66	207-379-17	54.6	2293	14	52	191.1

RECEIVING	G	No.	Yds	Avg	TD	Long	Avg/G
BROWN, Freddie	12	65	775	11.9	7	41	64.6
GODFREY, Bradon	12	50	481	9.6	3	25	40.1
CASTEEL, Brent	12	42	547	13.0	3	40	45.6
BROOKS, Jerome	12	26	286	11.0	1	55	23.8
REED, David	12	23	369	16.0	5	47	30.8
ASIATA, Matt	12	13	111	8.5	1	39	9.2
MACK, Darrell	12	13	72	5.5	0	13	6.0
SAMPSON, Colt	12	10	74	7.4	5	13	6.2
JOPPRU, Chris	12	6	59	9.8	1	26	4.9
LOUKS, Corbin	9	1	33	33.0	0	33	3.7
KEY, Aiona	8	1	19	19.0	0	19	2.4
STANFORD, R.J.	12	1	9	9.0	0	9	0.8
PEEL, John	12	1	7	7.0	0	7	0.6
Total.....	12	252	2842	11.3	26	55	236.8
Opponents.....	12	207	2293	11.1	14	52	191.1

PUNTING	No.	Yds	Avg	Long	TB	FC	I20	Blkd
SAKODA, Louie	50	2086	41.7	81	9	16	21	1
Team	1	0	0.0	0	0	0	0	0
Total.....	51	2086	40.9	81	9	16	21	1
Opponents.....	74	2868	38.8	68	4	14	15	2

KICKOFFS	No.	Yds	Avg	TB	OB	Retn	Net	YdLn
VROMAN, Ben	85	5815	68.4	44	0			
Total.....	85	5815	68.4	44	0	854	48.0	21
Opponents.....	48	3074	64.0	13	2	758	42.8	27

2008 Utah Statistics



FIELD GOALS	FGM-FGA	Pct	01-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-99	Lg	Blk
SAKODA, Louie	21-23	91.3	0-0	3-3	10-10	6-7	2-3	53	0

FG SEQUENCE	Utah	OPPONENTS
Michigan	(28),(43),(41),(53)	(50)
UNLV	-	-
Utah State	(48),(35),(24)	(20)
Air Force	48,54	(44)
Weber State	(33),(47),(38)	36
Oregon State	(33),(28),(37)	(37),43
Wyoming	(50),(39)	-
Colorado State	-	(25),(38),(52)
New Mexico	(43),(38)	41,(38)
TCU	(49),(37)	(37),26,35
San Diego State	-	47
Brigham Young	(37),(35)	(40)

Numbers in (parentheses) indicate field goal was made.

SCORING	TD	FGs	PATs					Saf	Points
			Kick	Rush	Rcv	Pass	DXP		
SAKODA, Louie	0	21-23	52-53	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	115
ASIATA, Matt	12	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	72
BROWN, Freddie	7	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	42
REED, David	6	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	36
SAMPSON, Colt	5	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	30
CASTEEL, Brent	4	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	24
GODFREY, Bradon	3	0-0	0-0	0-1	0	0-0	0	0	18
MACK, Darrell	3	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	18
LOUKS, Corbin	3	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	18
STOWERS, Ray	2	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	12
BROOKS, Jereme	2	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	12
RICHARD, Deshawn	2	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	12
JOHNSON, Brian	1	0-0	0-0	1-1	0	0-0	0	0	8
RICE, RJ	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	6
JOPPRU, Chris	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	6
KEY, Aiona	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	6
SMITH, Sean	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	6
WESSON, Elijah	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	6
Team	0	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0-0	0	1	2
Total.....	55	21-23	52-53	1-2	0	0-0	0	1	449
Opponents.....	26	10-16	21-22	0-1	0	0-3	0	0	207

KICK RETURNS	No.	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
REED, David	23	588	25.6	0	79
BROOKS, Jereme	3	42	14.0	0	21
FONUUA, Junior	3	46	15.3	0	27
WESSON, Elijah	1	16	16.0	0	16
MCCAIN, Brice	1	23	23.0	0	23
CASTEEL, Brent	1	34	34.0	0	34
HENDY, Ben	1	9	9.0	0	9
Total.....	33	758	23.0	0	79
Opponents.....	40	854	21.4	0	70

PUNT RETURNS	No.	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
COLE, Terrell	11	51	4.6	0	11
CASTEEL, Brent	10	91	9.1	0	41
PEEL, John	6	44	7.3	0	25
BROOKS, Jereme	2	1	0.5	0	2
REED, David	1	3	3.0	0	0
KEY, Aiona	1	19	19.0	1	6
JONES, Justin	1	0	0.0	0	1
Total.....	32	209	6.5	1	41
Opponents.....	9	28	3.1	0	22

**2008 Utah Statistics**

UTAH FOOTBALL

INTERCEPTIONS	No.	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
SMITH, Sean	5	151	30.2	1	38
RICHARD, Deshawn	3	138	46.0	2	89
DALE, Joe	3	9	3.0	0	9
JOHNSON, Robert	2	0	0.0	0	0
KRUGER, Paul	1	30	30.0	0	30
WALKER, Chaz	1	0	0.0	0	0
NEWMAN, Greg	1	0	0.0	0	0
MCCAIN, Brice	1	0	0.0	0	0
Total.....	17	328	19.3	3	89
Opponents.....	9	118	13.1	1	55

FUMBLE RETURNS	No.	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
WESSON, Elijah	1	20	20.0	1	20
RICE, RJ	0	0	0.0	1	0
Total.....	1	20	20.0	2	20
Opponents.....	2	29	14.5	1	25

TOTAL OFFENSE	G	Plays	Rush	Pass	Total	Avg/G
JOHNSON, Brian	12	457	143	2636	2779	231.6
ASIATA, Matt	12	136	678	36	714	59.5
MACK, Darrell	12	120	533	0	533	44.4
LOUKS, Corbin	9	34	218	104	322	35.8
WIDE, Eddie	12	30	183	0	183	15.2
BROOKS, Jereme	12	11	60	33	93	7.8
CASTEEL, Brent	12	17	92	0	92	7.7
STOWERS, Ray	5	17	76	0	76	15.2
WESSON, Elijah	12	10	32	0	32	2.7
MANIS, Chad	3	4	0	24	24	8.0
REED, David	12	1	15	0	15	1.2
SAKODA, Louie	12	2	0	9	9	0.8
Team	7	9	-9	0	-9	-1.3
Total.....	12	848	2021	2842	4863	405.2
Opponents.....	12	761	1258	2293	3551	295.9

ALL PURPOSE	G	Rush	Rec	PR	KOR	IR	Tot	Avg/G
REED, David	12	15	369	3	588	0	975	81.2
ASIATA, Matt	12	678	111	0	0	0	789	65.8
BROWN, Freddie	12	0	775	0	0	0	775	64.6
CASTEEL, Brent	12	92	547	91	34	0	764	63.7
MACK, Darrell	12	533	72	0	0	0	605	50.4
GODFREY, Bradon	12	0	481	0	0	0	481	40.1
BROOKS, Jereme	12	60	286	1	42	0	389	32.4
LOUKS, Corbin	9	218	33	0	0	0	251	27.9
WIDE, Eddie	12	183	0	0	0	0	183	15.2
SMITH, Sean	12	0	0	0	0	151	151	12.6
JOHNSON, Brian	12	143	0	0	0	0	143	11.9
RICHARD, Deshawn	11	0	0	0	0	138	138	12.5
STOWERS, Ray	5	76	0	0	0	0	76	15.2
SAMPSON, Colt	12	0	74	0	0	0	74	6.2
JOPPRU, Chris	12	0	59	0	0	0	59	4.9
PEEL, John	12	0	7	44	0	0	51	4.2
COLE, Terrell	12	0	0	51	0	0	51	4.2
WESSON, Elijah	12	32	0	0	16	0	48	4.0
FONUUA, Junior	11	0	0	0	46	0	46	4.2
KEY, Aiona	8	0	19	19	0	0	38	4.8
KRUGER, Paul	12	0	0	0	0	30	30	2.5
MCCAIN, Brice	12	0	0	0	23	0	23	1.9
STANFORD, R.J.	12	0	9	0	0	0	9	0.8
HENDY, Ben	8	0	0	0	9	0	9	1.1
DALE, Joe	12	0	0	0	0	9	9	0.8
Team	7	-9	0	0	0	0	-9	-1.3
Total.....	12	2021	2842	209	758	328	6158	513.2
Opponents.....	12	1258	2293	28	854	118	4551	379.2

2008 Utah Statistics



DEFENSIVE LEADERS

	GP	|-----Tackles-----|			TFL/Yds	|-Sacks-|		|---Pass Def---|		QBH	|-Fumbles-|		Blkd	
		Solo	Ast	Total		No-Yards	Int-Yds	BrUp	Rcv-Yds		FF	Kick	Saf	
20 WRIGHT, Mike	12	31	43	74	2.5-14	1.0-9	.	4	.	.	1-0	.	.	.
10 SYLVESTER, Stev	12	28	38	66	5.0-14	0.5-7	.	4	.	.	.	2	.	.
41 MISI, Koa	12	27	36	63	8.5-34	3.0-18	.	6	.	.	1-0	3	.	.
12 DALE, Joe	12	32	31	63	6.5-32	1.0-16	3-9	4	.	.	.	1	.	.
11 KRUGER, Paul	12	26	30	56	15.5-71	7.5-52	1-30	7	1	.	1-0	2	.	.
56 NEWMAN, Greg	12	17	29	46	8.5-33	1.5-17	1-0	2	.	.	2-0	.	.	.
4 SMITH, Sean	12	19	21	40	1.0-2	.	5-151	8	.	.	.	.	.	.
17 JOHNSON, Robert	11	16	22	38	0.5-6	.	2-0	3	.	.	1-0	.	.	.
25 STANFORD, R.J.	12	25	11	36	2.0-17	2.0-17	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
42 FOTU, Nai	12	15	20	35	5.5-18	2.0-14	.	1	1	.	1-0	1	.	.
1 MCCAIN, Brice	12	24	10	34	2.0-13	1.0-9	1-0	5	.	.	.	.	.	.
21 COLE, Terrell	12	14	19	33	2.5-6	.	.	2	.	.	.	.	.	.
90 SHELBY, Derrick	11	8	22	30	3.5-9	1.0-6	.	2	.	.	1-0	1	.	.
59 GAISON, Kapa	10	10	13	23	0.5-6	0.5-6	.	2	.	.	.	.	.	.
31 RICHARD, Deshawn	11	17	6	23	1.5-9	.	3-138	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
32 WALKER, Chaz	12	8	10	18	2.5-9	.	1-0	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
7 RICE, RJ	12	8	5	13	.	.	.	.	.	.	1-0	.	.	.
50 NEAL, Mo	8	4	5	9	1.0-3	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
8 WESSON, Elijah	12	3	5	8	.	.	.	.	.	.	1-20	.	.	.
24 JONES, Justin	10	6	2	8	.	.	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	.
92 ELIAPO, Kenape	5	4	4	8	1.5-3	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
82 PEEL, John	12	6	2	8	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
98 SILIGA, Sealver	11	1	6	7	0.5-1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
36 WIDE, Eddie	12	3	3	6	1.0-1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
37 LEOTA, Lisi	4	.	5	5	1.0-1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
46 MOSS, Trevor	10	2	2	4	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
33 TAPLIN-ROSS, Ju	11	3	1	4	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	.	.
14 TANNER, Damilyn	10	2	2	4	.	.	.	2	.	.	.	.	.	.
99 TONGA, Aaron	11	3	1	4	2.5-5	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
27 BURTON, Brandon	10	2	1	3	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
34 CLEMENTS, Tysen	10	1	1	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
81 GODFREY, Bradon	12	2	.	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
96 TUI'ONE Junior	4	1	1	2	0.5-1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
29 ROBINSON, Mychal	5	.	2	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
9 KEY, Aiona	8	1	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	3	.
52 MARTINEZ, Matt	3	.	1	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
4A ASIATA, Matt	12	.	1	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
45 SAMPSON, Colt	12	1	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
85 BROOKS, Jereme	12	.	1	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
43 TALAMAIVAO, Lei	2	.	1	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
49 BIRD, Greg	4	1	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
70 BERGSTROM, Tony	9	.	1	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
48 FONUA, Junior	11	.	1	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
39 MOWER, Clint	12	.	1	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
TM Team	7	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1-0	.	.	1
Total.....	12	371	416	787	76-308	21-171	17-328	53	2	11-20	11	3	1	1
Opponents.....	12	445	529	974	58.0-251	23-144	9-118	32	.	8-29	12	2	.	.

UTAH FOOTBALL

**Alphabetical Roster**

No.	Name	Pos.	Hgt.	Wgt.	Yr.	Exp.	B-Date	Age	Hometown/Previous School
89	Neli A'asa	TE	6-2	305	So.	1VL	2-16-88	20	Big Rapids, Mich./Big Rapids HS
	Boo Andersen	LB	6-1	230	Fr.	HS	12-14-89	18	Sandy, Utah/Alta HS
	Spencer Ashton	OL	6-0	247	Fr.	HS	9-2-89	18	Salt Lake City/Highland HS
4	Matt Asiata	RB	5-11	230	Jr.	RS	7-24-87	21	West Valley City, Utah/Snow College
	Bridger Battaglia	DB	6-1	173	Fr.	HS	5-30-90	18	Salt Lake City/Jordan HS
68	Zane Beadles	OL	6-4	305	Jr.	2VL	11-19-86	21	Sandy, Utah/Hillcrest HS
10	Bryce Bennion	DB	6-0	180	Fr.	HS	10-24-86	21	South Jordan, Utah/Bingham HS
	Jake Bentrude	TE	6-3	210	Fr.	RS	9-16-88	19	Draper, Utah/Juan Diego HS
70	Tony Bergstrom	OL	6-6	290	Fr.	HS	8-8-86	22	Salt Lake City/Skyline HS
97	Nick Binks	DE	6-5	220	Fr.	HS	9-11-87	20	Bountiful, Utah/Bountiful HS
49	Greg Bird	LB	6-2	230	Fr.	RS	6-17-86	22	Mesa, Ariz./Red Mountain HS
	Matt Black	DL	6-3	222	Fr.	HS	2-14-86	22	Washington, Utah/Southern Utah
85	Jereme Brooks	WR	5-7	170	So.	1VL	4-23-89	19	League City, Texas/Clear Creek HS
88	Freddie Brown	WR	6-4	215	Sr.	3VL	6-24-86	22	La Verne, Calif./Citrus JC
73	Daniel Bukarau	OL	6-1	285	So.	1VL	10-20-85	22	Kailua, Hawaii/Kailua HS
27	Brandon Burton	DB	6-0	180	Fr.	RS	7-31-89	19	Houston, Texas/Clear Creek HS
7	TJ Canales	QB	6-0	190	Fr.	HS	5-23-87	21	Layton, Utah/Northridge HS
5	Brent Casteel	WR	5-10	198	Sr.	3VL	7-12-85	23	San Francisco, Calif./Antioch HS
24	Lamar Chapman	DB	5-8	160	Jr.	JC	4-16-87	21	Compton, Calif./El Camino JC
15	DeVonte Christopher	QB/WR	6-1	195	Fr.	HS	4-17-90	18	Las Vegas, Nev./Canyon Springs HS
34	Tysen Clements	DB	5-11	195	So.	1VL	11-10-84	23	Salt Lake City/Skyline HS
84	Brad Clifford	TE	6-4	250	So.	1VL	3-7-86	22	Salt Lake City/Olympus HS
34	Tage Clifford	WR	6-1	215	Fr.	RS	7-16-85	23	Roy, Utah/Snow College
21	Terrell Cole	DB	5-11	185	Sr.	1VL	4-22-87	21	Long Beach, Calif./Cerritos College
66	Robert Conley	OL	6-1	310	Sr.	3VL	4-17-86	22	La Marque, Texas/La Marque HS
94	Christian Cox	DL	6-1	255	So.	RS	12-11-85	22	Bountiful, Utah/Southern Utah
	Siaki Cravens	LB	6-2	230	Fr.	HS	8-26-90	18	Temecula, Calif./Temecula Valley HS
38	Forrest Dabb	DB	5-10	190	Fr.	HS	3-19-90	18	Salt Lake City/Bingham HS
12	Joe Dale	DB	5-11	197	Jr.	2VL	12-18-86	21	Irving, Texas/Nimitz HS
37	Grayson Dart	DB	6-1	200	Fr.	HS	8-25-86	22	Layton, Utah/Northridge HS
47	Tatum Drecksel	DL	6-2	255	Jr.	1VL	7-31-85	23	Salt Lake City/Southern Utah
92	Kenape Eliapo	DT	6-0	303	Jr.	2VL	3-22-86	22	San Francisco, Calif./So. San Francisco HS
	Bryant Ezeji	WR	6-0	179	Fr.	HS	6-24-89	19	Stockton, Calif./St. Mary's HS
78	Louis Finner	OL	6-3	295	Fr.	RS	4-19-89	19	Plano, Texas/Plano East HS
48	Junior Fonua	RB	5-8	223	Jr.	RS	2-19-87	21	Rancho Cucamonga, Calif./Texas Southern
42	Nai Fotu	LB	6-0	235	So.	1VL	8-20-88	20	Laie, Hawaii/Kahuku HS
59	Kepa Gaison	LB	5-10	230	Jr.	1VL	3-20-87	21	Kaneohe, Hawaii/The Kamehameha School
53	Afa Garrigan	LB	6-2	230	So.	1VL	7-8-86	22	Hauula, Hawaii/Kahuku HS
81	Bradon Godfrey	WR	6-3	197	Sr.	2VL	10-17-85	22	Layton, Utah/Southern Utah
62	Patrick Greene	LS	6-2	205	Fr.	HS	2-20-90	18	Monrovia, Calif./Monrovia HS
	Randall Hansen	LB	5-9	184	Fr.	HS	11-30-89	18	Clarkston, Wash./Charles F. Adams HS
83	Ben Hendy	TE	6-2	250	Jr.	RS	9-9-86	21	Sandy, Utah/Temple
65	Dustin Hensel	OL	6-7	307	Sr.	2VL	11-22-85	22	La Palma, Calif./Golden West CC
86	Mike Hicken	WR	6-1	195	So.	1VL	3-19-88	20	Salt Lake City/Brighton HS
40	Bo Hikila	RB	5-10	230	Jr.	RS	9-17-85	22	Seattle, Wash./Dixie College
	Dallas Holbeck	DB	6-1	206	So.	HS	7-11-89	19	Sandy, Utah/Westminster College
3	Brian Johnson	QB	6-1	200	Sr.	3VL	2-16-87	21	Baytown, Texas/Robert E. Lee HS
17	Robert Johnson	DB	6-2	195	Jr.	1VL	2-13-87	21	Los Angeles, Calif./L.A. Southwest College
24	Justin Jones	DB	5-9	180	Jr.	2VL	6-6-88	20	Marshall, Texas/Marshall HS
80	Chris Joppru	TE	6-6	258	Jr.	SQ	2-6-87	21	Minnetonka, Minn./Minnetonka HS
	Benson Jordan	DB	5-11	195	Fr.	HS	2-5-90	18	Centerville, Utah/Judge Memorial HS
9	Aiona Key	WR	6-4	209	Jr.	JC	11-20-86	21	Citrus Heights, Calif./Mt. SAC
51	Jamel King	LB	6-2	225	So.	1VL	3-31-89	19	Murrieta, Calif./Vista Murrieta HS
44	Dave Kruger	DL	6-5	265	Fr.	HS	5-17-90	18	Orem, Utah/Timpanogos HS
11	Paul Kruger	DE	6-5	265	So.	1VL	2-15-86	22	Orem, Utah/Timpanogos HS
26	Ryan Lacy	WR	5-10	192	Fr.	HS	9-5-90	17	Antelope, Calif./Oakmont HS
46	Nick Lieferting	DB	6-1	185	Fr.	RS	5-9-85	23	West Valley City, Utah/Hunter HS
19	Corbin Louks	QB	6-0	195	So.	1VL	4-10-89	19	Danville, Calif./San Ramon Valley HS
20	Ben Macey	WR	6-1	180	Fr.	RS	10-29-85	22	Logan, Utah/Logan HS
6	Darrell Mack	RB	6-0	220	Sr.	3VL	10-10-86	21	Spring Valley, Calif./Monte Vista HS
18	Chad Manis	QB	6-5	230	So.	RS	2-13-88	20	Lakewood, Calif./Cerritos College
52	Matt Martinez	LB	6-0	230	So.	1VL	1-21-88	20	Murray, Utah/Cottonwood HS
61	Tim Mathis	P	5-8	185	Fr.	RS	11-26-88	19	Sandy, Utah/Alta HS
13	Luke Matthews	WR	6-1	205	Fr.	HS	11-10-89	18	Phoenix, Ariz./Desert Vista HS
1	Brice McCain	DB	5-9	182	Sr.	3VL	12-10-86	21	Terrell, Texas/Terrell HS
41	Koa Misi	DL	6-3	263	Jr.	1VL	1-17-87	21	Santa Rosa, Calif./Santa Rosa JC

Alphabetical Roster

No.	Name	Pos.	Hgt.	Wgt.	Yr.	Exp.	B-Date	Age	Hometown/Previous School
45	Kendrick Moeai	WR	6-5	200	Fr.	HS	3-28-90	18	West Jordan, Utah/Copper Hills HS
46	Trevor Moss	RB	5-11	196	Jr.	1VL	10-13-83	24	Sandy, Utah/Northwest CC
39	Clint Mower	SN	6-3	215	Sr.	2VL	11-2-84	23	Alpine, Utah/Dixie State College
23	Mookie Murphy	WR	5-9	177	So.	SQ	11-10-87	20	Salt Lake City/Juan Diego Catholic HS
75	William Nau	OL	6-6	318	Jr.	JC	4-24-87	21	Pomona, Calif./Mt. San Antonio College
	Will Naylor	DB	6-0	199	So.	TR	11-18-86	21	South Jordan, Utah/Utah State
50	Mo Neal	LB	6-2	230	Fr.	RS	1-2-88	20	Oakland, Calif./San Leandro HS
	Jordan Nelson	OL	6-5	345	Fr.	RS	3-14-87	21	Idaho Falls, Idaho/Idaho Falls HS
56	Greg Newman	DL	6-4	260	Sr.	2VL	2-1-86	23	Thousand Oaks, Calif./Colorado
82	John Peel	WR	6-1	191	Sr.	SQ	5-9-86	22	Scottsdale, Ariz./Chaparral HS
63	Coleman Petersen	K/P	6-2	179	Fr.	HS	3-31-88	20	Sandy, Utah/Brighton HS
16	David Reed	WR	6-0	184	Jr.	JC	3-22-87	21	New Britain, Conn./Pasadena City College
7	RJ Rice	DB	5-8	185	Sr.	2VL	9-14-84	23	Salt Lake City/Southern Utah
31	Deshawn Richard	DB	6-0	195	Sr.	1VL	5-12-86	22	Las Vegas, Nev./Victor Valley College
87	Collin Robinson	WR	5-11	180	So.	SQ	8-7-85	23	Draper, Utah/Alta HS
29	Mychal Robinson	WR	5-8	191	Fr.	RS	12-9-88	19	Salt Lake City/Juan Diego HS
35	Louie Sakoda	K/P	5-9	178	Sr.	3VL	10-28-86	21	San Jose, Calif./Branham HS
93	Thor Salanoa	DE	6-2	215	Fr.	HS	2-7-89	19	Honolulu, Hawaii/Radford HS
45	Colt Sampson	TE	6-4	250	Sr.	2VL	3-18-83	25	Pleasant Grove, Utah/Pleasant Grove HS
72	Caleb Schlauderaff	OL	6-4	305	So.	1VL	11-7-87	20	Shelton, Wash./Shelton HS
74	Corey Seiuli	OL	6-3	315	Sr.	2VL	8-19-84	24	Provo, Utah/Dixie State College
95	Sean Sellwood	K/P	6-3	200	Fr.	HS	7-11-90	18	Salt Lake City/Judge Memorial HS
22	Sausan Shakerin	RB	6-2	215	Fr.	HS	7-31-89	19	Sandy, Utah/Alta HS
90	Derrick Shelby	DE	6-3	245	Fr.	RS	2-7-89	19	Houston, Texas/Hightower HS
98	Sealver Siliga	DL	6-3	325	Fr.	HS	2-15-90	18	West Jordan, Utah/Copper Hills HS
4	Sean Smith	DB	6-3	214	Jr.	2VL	7-14-87	21	Pasadena, Calif./Blair HS
58	Andy St. Pierre	LB	6-2	200	Fr.	HS	8-3-89	19	Littleton, Colo./Rock Canyon HS
25	R.J. Stanford	DB	5-11	180	Jr.	2VL	5-6-88	20	Chino, Calif./Chino HS
54	Tevita Stevens	DL	6-1	275	Fr.	HS	7-4-87	21	Hemet, Calif./Hemet HS
2	Ray Stowers	RB	6-0	222	Jr.	2VL	2-2-85	23	Honolulu, Hawaii/Iolani HS
10	Stevenson Sylvester	LB	6-2	224	Jr.	2VL	7-18-88	20	Las Vegas, Nev./Valley HS
43	Lei Talamaivao	DT	6-2	285	So.	1VL	9-20-88	19	Rancho Cucamonga, Calif./Rancho Cucamonga HS
14	Damilyn Tanner	DB	5-10	175	Jr.	JC	10-26-87	20	Sacramento, Calif./El Camino College
33	Justin Taplin-Ross	DB	6-3	215	So.	1VL	3-26-89	19	Murrieta, Calif./Vista Murrieta HS
77	Zane Taylor	OL	6-2	305	So.	1VL	4-23-88	20	Moab, Utah/Grand County HS
55	Tobius Titus	LB	6-0	223	So.	SQ	3-28-83	25	Orem, Utah/EA Laney HS (N.C.)
99	Aaron Tonga	DT	6-2	292	Sr.	1VL	10-10-83	23	Pomona, Calif./Mt. San Antonio College
28	Reggie Topps	DB	5-11	180	Fr.	HS	12-19-88	19	Prunedale, Calif./N. Monterey County HS
67	Derek Tuimauga	OL	6-4	325	Fr.	HS	9-30-90	17	South Jordan, Utah/Bingham HS
96	Junior Tui'one	DE	6-4	260	So.	JC	12-5-85	22	Hawthorne, Calif./El Camino JC
30	Ben Vroman	K/P	6-0	198	Jr.	2VL	4-22-87	21	Salt Lake City/Skyline HS
	Zach Wade	WR	6-3	200	So.	JC	10-7-86	21	Salt Lake City/Dixie College
32	Chaz Walker	LB	5-11	220	Fr.	RS	9-30-88	19	Farmington, Utah/Davis HS
71	Walter Watts	OL	6-2	300	So.	1VL	10-11-88	19	Los Banos, Calif./Los Banos HS
8	Elijah Wesson	WR	5-11	175	Jr.	2VL	6-2-87	21	Compton, Calif./Dominguez HS
36	Eddie Wide	RB	5-10	200	So.	1VL	11-19-88	19	Las Vegas, Nev./Cimarron Memorial HS
57	Tyler Williams	OL	6-1	300	Jr.	2VL	2-28-87	21	Mililani, Hawaii/Kamehameha HS
20	Mike Wright	LB	6-2	230	Jr.	2VL	6-6-86	22	Bountiful, Utah/Southern Utah

Pronunciation Guide

A'asa, Neli Ah-ah-sa, Nelly
 Asiata Ah-see-ah-ta
 (Brooks), Jeremy Jeremy
 Bukurau Boo-koo-rau
 (Christopher), DeVonte Da-von-tay
 (Clifford), Tage rhymes with age
 (Cole), Terrell Ter-ELL
 (Cravens), Siaki See-ah-key
 Eliapo, Kenape Ee-lee-a-po, Ken-ah-pay
 (Finner), Louis Lewis
 Fonua Fo-new-a
 Fotu, Nai Fo-too, Ny
 Gaison, Kepa Guy-son, Keppa

(Garrigan), Afa Ah-fa
 (Godfrey), Bradon Bray-done
 Joppru Ja-proo
 (Key), Aiona I-own-a
 (King) Jamel Ja-mell
 Liefing Leaf-ting
 Louks Lowks
 (Mack), Darrell Dur-ell
 Manis Man-iss
 Misi, Koa Mee-see, ko-a
 Moeai Mo-ee-ah-ee
 Mower rhymes with tower
 Sakoda Sa-code-a

Salanoa, Thor Sal-a-noa, Thore
 Schlauderaff, Caleb Schlah-der-off, Kay-leb
 Seiuli Say-oo-lee
 Shakerin, Sausan Shack-er-in, Sue-sawn
 Siliga, Sealver See-linga, Silver
 (Stevens), Tevita Ta-vee-ta
 Stowers rhymes with towers
 Talamaivao, Lei Tala-my-vow, Lay
 (Tanner), Damilyn Da-my-lin
 Tuimauga too-ee-maun (rhymes with down)-ga
 Tui'one Too-ee-oh-nay
 (Wesson) Elijah Ee-ly-ja

**Numerical Roster**

No.	Name	Pos.	Hgt.	Wgt.	Yr.	Exp.	B-Date	Age	Hometown/Previous School
1	Brice McCain	DB	5-9	182	Sr.	3VL	12-10-86	21	Terrell, Texas/Terrell HS
2	Ray Stowers	RB	6-0	222	Jr.	2VL	2-2-85	23	Honolulu, Hawaii/Iolani HS
3	Brian Johnson	QB	6-1	200	Sr.	3VL	2-16-87	21	Baytown, Texas/Robert E. Lee HS
4	Matt Asiata	RB	5-11	230	Jr.	RS	7-24-87	21	West Valley City, Utah/Snow College
4	Sean Smith	DB	6-3	214	Jr.	2VL	7-14-87	21	Pasadena, Calif./Blair HS
5	Brent Casteel	WR	5-10	198	Sr.	3VL	7-12-85	23	San Francisco, Calif./Antioch HS
6	Darrell Mack	RB	6-0	220	Sr.	3VL	10-10-86	21	Spring Valley, Calif./Monte Vista HS
7	TJ Canales	QB	6-0	190	Fr.	HS	5-23-87	21	Layton, Utah/Northridge HS
7	RJ Rice	DB	5-8	185	Sr.	2VL	9-14-84	23	Salt Lake City/Southern Utah
8	Elijah Wesson	WR	5-11	175	Jr.	2VL	6-2-87	21	Compton, Calif./Dominguez HS
9	Aiona Key	WR	6-4	209	Jr.	JC	11-20-86	21	Citrus Heights, Calif./Mt. SAC
10	Bryce Bennion	DB	6-0	180	Fr.	HS	10-24-86	21	South Jordan, Utah/Bingham HS
10	Stevenson Sylvester	LB	6-2	224	Jr.	2VL	7-18-88	20	Las Vegas, Nev./Valley HS
11	Paul Kruger	DE	6-5	265	So.	1VL	2-15-86	22	Orem, Utah/Timpanogos HS
12	Joe Dale	DB	5-11	197	Jr.	2VL	12-18-86	21	Irving, Texas/Nimitz HS
13	Luke Matthews	WR	6-1	205	Fr.	HS	11-10-89	18	Phoenix, Ariz./Desert Vista HS
14	Damilyn Tanner	DB	5-10	175	Jr.	JC	10-26-87	20	Sacramento, Calif./El Camino College
15	DeVonte Christopher	QB/WR	6-1	195	Fr.	HS	4-17-90	18	Las Vegas, Nev./Canyon Springs HS
16	David Reed	WR	6-0	184	Jr.	JC	3-22-87	21	New Britain, Conn./Pasadena City College
17	Robert Johnson	DB	6-2	195	Jr.	1VL	2-13-87	21	Los Angeles, Calif./L.A. Southwest College
18	Chad Manis	QB	6-5	230	So.	RS	2-13-88	20	Lakewood, Calif./Cerritos College
19	Corbin Louks	QB	6-0	195	So.	1VL	4-10-89	19	Danville, Calif./San Ramon Valley HS
20	Ben Macey	WR	6-1	180	Fr.	RS	10-29-85	22	Logan, Utah/Logan HS
20	Mike Wright	LB	6-2	230	Jr.	2VL	6-6-86	22	Bountiful, Utah/Southern Utah
21	Terrell Cole	DB	5-11	185	Sr.	1VL	4-22-87	21	Long Beach, Calif./Cerritos College
22	Sausan Shakerin	RB	6-2	215	Fr.	HS	7-31-89	19	Sandy, Utah/Alta HS
23	Mookie Murphy	WR	5-9	177	So.	SQ	11-10-87	20	Salt Lake City/Juan Diego Catholic HS
24	Lamar Chapman	DB	5-8	160	Jr.	JC	4-16-87	21	Compton, Calif./El Camino JC
24	Justin Jones	DB	5-9	180	Jr.	2VL	6-6-88	20	Marshall, Texas/Marshall HS
25	R.J. Stanford	DB	5-11	180	Jr.	2VL	5-6-88	20	Chino, Calif./Chino HS
26	Ryan Lacy	WR	5-10	192	Fr.	HS	9-5-90	17	Antelope, Calif./Oakmont HS
27	Brandon Burton	DB	6-0	180	Fr.	RS	7-31-89	19	Houston, Texas/Clear Creek HS
28	Reggie Topps	DB	5-11	180	Fr.	HS	12-19-88	19	Prunedale, Calif./N. Monterey County HS
29	Mychal Robinson	WR	5-8	191	Fr.	RS	12-9-88	19	Salt Lake City/Juan Diego HS
30	Ben Vroman	K/P	6-0	198	Jr.	2VL	4-22-87	21	Salt Lake City/Skyline HS
31	Deshawn Richard	DB	6-0	195	Sr.	1VL	5-12-86	22	Las Vegas, Nev./Victor Valley College
32	Chaz Walker	LB	5-11	220	Fr.	RS	9-30-88	19	Farmington, Utah/Davis HS
33	Justin Taplin-Ross	DB	6-3	215	So.	1VL	3-26-89	19	Murrieta, Calif./Vista Murrieta HS
34	Tysen Clements	DB	5-11	195	So.	1VL	11-10-84	23	Salt Lake City/Skyline HS
34	Tage Clifford	WR	6-1	215	Fr.	RS	7-16-85	23	Roy, Utah/Snow College
35	Louie Sakoda	K/P	5-9	178	Sr.	3VL	10-28-86	21	San Jose, Calif./Branham HS
36	Eddie Wide	RB	5-10	200	So.	1VL	11-19-88	19	Las Vegas, Nev./Cimarron Memorial HS
37	Grayson Dart	DB	6-1	200	Fr.	HS	8-25-86	22	Layton, Utah/Northridge HS
38	Forrest Dabb	DB	5-10	190	Fr.	HS	3-19-90	18	Salt Lake City/Bingham HS
39	Clint Mower	SN	6-3	215	Sr.	2VL	11-2-84	23	Alpine, Utah/Dixie State College
40	Bo Hikila	RB	5-10	230	Jr.	RS	9-17-85	22	Seattle, Wash./Dixie College
41	Koa Misi	DL	6-3	263	Jr.	1VL	1-17-87	21	Santa Rosa, Calif./Santa Rosa JC
42	Nai Fotu	LB	6-0	235	So.	1VL	8-20-88	20	Laie, Hawaii/Kahuku HS
43	Lei Talamaivao	DT	6-2	285	So.	1VL	9-20-88	19	Rancho Cucamonga, Calif./Rancho Cucamonga HS
44	Dave Kruger	DL	6-5	265	Fr.	HS	5-17-90	18	Orem, Utah/Timpanogos HS
45	Kendrick Moeai	WR	6-5	200	Fr.	HS	3-28-90	18	West Jordan, Utah/Copper Hills HS
45	Colt Sampson	TE	6-4	250	Sr.	2VL	3-18-83	25	Pleasant Grove, Utah/Pleasant Grove HS
46	Nick Liefing	DB	6-1	185	Fr.	RS	5-9-85	23	West Valley City, Utah/Hunter HS
46	Trevor Moss	RB	5-11	196	Jr.	1VL	10-13-83	24	Sandy, Utah/Northwest CC
47	Tatum Drecksel	DL	6-2	255	Jr.	1VL	7-31-85	23	Salt Lake City/Southern Utah
48	Junior Fonua	RB	5-8	223	Jr.	RS	2-19-87	21	Rancho Cucamonga, Calif./Texas Southern
49	Greg Bird	LB	6-2	230	Fr.	RS	6-17-86	22	Mesa, Ariz./Red Mountain HS
50	Mo Neal	LB	6-2	230	Fr.	RS	1-2-88	20	Oakland, Calif./San Leandro HS
51	Jamel King	LB	6-2	225	So.	1VL	3-31-89	19	Murrieta, Calif./Vista Murrieta HS
52	Matt Martinez	LB	6-0	230	So.	1VL	1-21-88	20	Murray, Utah/Cottonwood HS
53	Afa Garrigan	LB	6-2	230	So.	1VL	7-8-86	22	Hauula, Hawaii/Kahuku HS
54	Tevita Stevens	DL	6-1	275	Fr.	HS	7-4-87	21	Hemet, Calif./Hemet HS
55	Tobius Titus	LB	6-0	223	So.	SQ	3-28-83	25	Orem, Utah/EA Laney HS (N.C.)
56	Greg Newman	DL	6-4	260	Sr.	2VL	2-1-86	23	Thousand Oaks, Calif./Colorado
57	Tyler Williams	OL	6-1	300	Jr.	2VL	2-28-87	21	Mililani, Hawaii/Kamehameha HS
58	Andy St. Pierre	LB	6-2	200	Fr.	HS	8-3-89	19	Littleton, Colo./Rock Canyon HS

Numerical Roster



No.	Name	Pos.	Hgt.	Wgt.	Yr.	Exp.	B-Date	Age	Hometown/Previous School
59	Kepa Gaison	LB	5-10	230	Jr.	1VL	3-20-87	21	Kaneohe, Hawaii/The Kamehameha School
61	Tim Mathis	P	5-8	185	Fr.	RS	11-26-88	19	Sandy, Utah/Alta HS
62	Patrick Greene	LS	6-2	205	Fr.	HS	2-20-90	18	Monrovia, Calif./Monrovia HS
63	Coleman Petersen	K/P	6-2	179	Fr.	HS	3-31-88	20	Sandy, Utah/Brighton HS
65	Dustin Hensel	OL	6-7	307	Sr.	2VL	11-22-85	22	La Palma, Calif./Golden West CC
66	Robert Conley	OL	6-1	310	Sr.	3VL	4-17-86	22	La Marque, Texas/La Marque HS
67	Derek Tuimauga	OL	6-4	325	Fr.	HS	9-30-90	17	South Jordan, Utah/Bingham HS
68	Zane Beadles	OL	6-4	305	Jr.	2VL	11-19-86	21	Sandy, Utah/Hillcrest HS
70	Tony Bergstrom	OL	6-6	290	Fr.	HS	8-8-86	22	Salt Lake City/Skyline HS
71	Walter Watts	OL	6-2	300	So.	1VL	10-11-88	19	Los Banos, Calif./Los Banos HS
72	Caleb Schlauderaff	OL	6-4	305	So.	1VL	11-7-87	20	Shelton, Wash./Shelton HS
73	Daniel Bukarau	OL	6-1	285	So.	1VL	10-20-85	22	Kailua, Hawaii/Kailua HS
74	Corey Seiuli	OL	6-3	315	Sr.	2VL	8-19-84	24	Provo, Utah/Dixie State College
75	Viliamu Nau	OL	6-6	318	Jr.	JC	4-24-87	21	Pomona, Calif./Mt. San Antonio College
77	Zane Taylor	OL	6-2	305	So.	1VL	4-23-88	20	Moab, Utah/Grand County HS
78	Louis Finner	OL	6-3	295	Fr.	RS	4-19-89	19	Plano, Texas/Plano East HS
80	Chris Joppru	TE	6-6	258	Jr.	SQ	2-6-87	21	Minnetonka, Minn./Minnetonka HS
81	Bradon Godfrey	WR	6-3	197	Sr.	2VL	10-17-85	22	Layton, Utah/Shelton Utah
82	John Peel	WR	6-1	191	Sr.	SQ	5-9-86	22	Scottsdale, Ariz./Chaparral HS
83	Ben Hendy	TE	6-2	250	Jr.	RS	9-9-86	21	Sandy, Utah/Temple
84	Brad Clifford	TE	6-4	250	So.	1VL	3-7-86	22	Salt Lake City/Olympus HS
85	Jereme Brooks	WR	5-7	170	So.	1VL	4-23-89	19	League City, Texas/Clear Creek HS
86	Mike Hicken	WR	6-1	195	So.	1VL	3-19-88	20	Salt Lake City/Brighton HS
87	Collin Robinson	WR	5-11	180	So.	SQ	8-7-85	23	Draper, Utah/Alta HS
88	Freddie Brown	WR	6-4	215	Sr.	3VL	6-24-86	22	La Verne, Calif./Citrus JC
89	Neli A'asa	TE	6-2	305	So.	1VL	2-16-88	20	Big Rapids, Mich./Big Rapids HS
90	Derrick Shelby	DE	6-3	245	Fr.	RS	2-7-89	19	Houston, Texas/Hightower HS
92	Kenape Eliapo	DT	6-0	303	Jr.	2VL	3-22-86	22	San Francisco, Calif./So. San Francisco HS
93	Thor Salanoa	DE	6-2	215	Fr.	HS	2-7-89	19	Honolulu, Hawaii/Radford HS
94	Christian Cox	DL	6-1	255	So.	RS	12-11-85	22	Bountiful, Utah/Southern Utah
95	Sean Sellwood	K/P	6-3	200	Fr.	HS	7-11-90	18	Salt Lake City/Judge Memorial HS
96	Junior Tui'one	DE	6-4	260	So.	JC	12-5-85	22	Hawthorne, Calif./El Camino JC
97	Nick Binks	DE	6-5	220	Fr.	HS	9-11-87	20	Bountiful, Utah/Bountiful HS
98	Sealver Siliga	DL	6-3	325	Fr.	HS	2-15-90	18	West Jordan, Utah/Copper Hills HS
99	Aaron Tonga	DT	6-2	292	Sr.	1VL	10-10-83	23	Pomona, Calif./Mt. San Antonio College
	Boo Andersen	LB	6-1	230	Fr.	HS	12-14-89	18	Sandy, Utah/Alta HS
	Spencer Ashton	OL	6-0	247	Fr.	HS	9-2-89	18	Salt Lake City/Highland HS
	Bridger Battaglia	DB	6-1	173	Fr.	HS	5-30-90	18	Salt Lake City/Jordan HS
	Jake Bentruide	TE	6-3	210	Fr.	RS	9-16-88	19	Draper, Utah/Juan Diego HS
	Matt Black	DL	6-3	222	Fr.	HS	2-14-86	22	Washington, Utah/Southern Utah
	Siaki Cravens	LB	6-2	230	Fr.	HS	8-26-90	18	Temecula, Calif./Temecula Valley HS
	Bryant Ezeji	WR	6-0	179	Fr.	HS	6-24-89	19	Stockton, Calif./St. Mary's HS
	Randall Hansen	LB	5-9	184	Fr.	HS	11-30-89	18	Clarkston, Wash./Charles F. Adams HS
	Dallas Holbeck	DB	6-1	206	So.	HS	7-11-89	19	Sandy, Utah/Westminster College
	Benson Jordan	DB	5-11	195	Fr.	HS	2-5-90	18	Centerville, Utah/Judge Memorial HS
	Will Naylor	DB	6-0	199	So.	TR	11-18-86	21	South Jordan, Utah/Utah State
	Jordan Nelson	OL	6-5	345	Fr.	RS	3-14-87	21	Idaho Falls, Idaho/Idaho Falls HS
	Zach Wade	WR	6-3	200	So.	JC	10-7-86	21	Salt Lake City/Dixie College

Pronunciation Guide

A'asa, Neli Ah-ah-sa, Nelly
 Asiata Ah-see-ah-ta
 (Brooks), Jeremy Jeremy
 Bukarau Boo-koo-rau
 (Christopher), DeVonte Da-von-tay
 (Clifford), Tage rhymes with age
 (Cole), Terrell Ter-ELL
 (Cravens), Siaki See-ah-key
 Eliapo, Kenape Ee-lee-a-po, Ken-ah-pay
 (Finner), Louis Lewis
 Fonua Fo-new-a
 Fotu, Nai Fo-too, Ny
 Gaison, Kepa Guy-son, Keppa

(Garrigan), Afa Ah-fa
 (Godfrey), Bradon Bray-done
 Joppru Ja-proo
 (Key), Aiona I-own-a
 (King) Jamel Ja-mell
 Liefiting Leaf-ting
 Louks Lowks
 (Mack), Darrell Dur-ell
 Manis Man-iss
 Misi, Koa Mee-see, ko-a
 Moeai Mo-ee-ah-ee
 Mower rhymes with tower
 Sakoda Sa-code-a

Salanoa, Thor Sal-a-noa, Thore
 Schlauderaff, Caleb Schlah-der-off, Kay-leb
 Seiuli Say-oo-lee
 Shakerin, Sausan Shack-er-in, Sue-sawn
 Siliga, Sealver See-linga, Silver
 (Stevens), Tevita Ta-vee-ta
 Stowers rhymes with towers
 Talamaivao, Lei Tala-my-vow, Lay
 (Tanner), Damilyn Da-my-lin
 Tuimauga too-ee-maun (rhymes with down)-ga
 Tui'one Too-ee-oh-nay
 (Wesson) Elijah Ee-ly-ja

Head Coach Kyle Whittingham

UTAH FOOTBALL



KYLE WHITTINGHAM

Utah Record: 36-14 (4 Years)
Career Record: 36-14 (4 Years)
Bowl Record: 3-0

Education

Brigham Young, 1984
 Bachelor's in educational psychology
 Brigham Young, 1987
 Master's in athletic administration

Personal Data

Birthdate: Nov. 21, 1959
 Hometown: Provo, Utah
 Family: Married to the former Jamie Daniels. Four children: Tyler, Melissa, Alex, Kylie.

Four years after Utah's Kyle Whittingham served as the co-head coach at the 2005 Fiesta Bowl, he is taking the Utes back to a BCS Bowl—this time on his own. Under his direction, Utah—the original 'BCS Buster'—has set another standard by becoming the first school from a non-automatic qualifying conference to play in two BCS bowl games.

Whittingham, the 2008 Mountain West Conference Coach of the Year, is a finalist for the Eddie Robinson, Liberty Mutual and Paul 'Bear' Bryant National Coach of the Year awards. He has a 36-14 career record, which includes a school-record tying 12-0 mark this season. As the head coach, he has a 6-3 record against BCS schools and a 3-0 bowl record.

In his 15 total years on the Utah staff—he served as the defensive coordinator from 1995-2004 and as the defensive line coach in 1994—Utah has won nearly 70-percent of its games (122-55) and has played in nine bowl games (winning eight).

Utah's current No. 6 BCS ranking matches its best ever—first set by the 2004 team. Since Whittingham joined the staff in 1994, Utah teams have been ranked in the Associated Press Top 25 for a total of 49 weeks and finished the season with a top 10 ranking twice previously (No. 4 in 2004 and No. 10 in 1994).

As a first-year head coach in 2005, Whittingham inherited a team missing many of the biggest stars off the undefeated 2004 team, including five draft picks—among them No. 1 NFL draft pick and Heisman Trophy finalist Alex Smith. Nonetheless Utah went on to beat No. 24 ranked Georgia Tech in the Emerald Bowl. A year later, his 2006 team capped an 8-5 season with a win over Tulsa in the Armed Forces Bowl. In 2007, Utah (9-4) overcame numerous injuries to win eight of its last nine games and beat Navy in the Poinsettia Bowl.

Whittingham's Head Coaching Record

Year	School	Overall Record	MWC Record	Bowl Game
2005	Utah	7-5	4-4	Emerald (Georgia Tech)
2006	Utah	8-5	5-3	Armed Forces (Tulsa)
2007	Utah	9-4	5-3	Poinsettia (Navy)
2008	Utah	12-0	8-0	Sugar (Alabama)
Totals	Utah	36-14	22-10	

On an individual level, Whittingham has coached four All-Americans, including Consensus first-team All-America defenders Luther Elliss, DL (1994) and Eric Weddle, DB (2006). Louie Sakoda, the only player in Utah football history to win first-team All-America honors at two different positions, was a first-team punter in 2007 and is a first-team kicker this year. Safety Morgan Scalley was a second-team All-American in 2004.

He's also helped several Utes win MWC Player of the Year honors. A Ute won MWC



Kyle Whittingham is a finalist for the Eddie Robinson, Bear Bryant and Liberty Mutual Coach of the Year awards.

Defensive Player of the Year three years running (Scalley in 2004 and Weddle in 2005 and 2006), while Sakoda won three straight MWC Special Teams Player of the Year awards from 2006-08. Quarterback Brian Johnson was named the 2008 MWC Offensive Player of the Year. Whittingham has mentored 36 first-team all-conference players total as either a defensive coach or head coach at Utah.

He has sent 22 players to the NFL—12 as draft picks and 10 as free agents. Whittingham protégés on active NFL rosters are Martail Burnett, Jonathan Fanene, Quinton Ganther, Ma'ake Kemoeatu, Gabe Long, Sione Pouha, Brett Ratliff, Paul Soliai, Kelly Talavou and Weddle.

As a first-year Ute assistant in 1994, he coached the defensive line for a team that led the league in every defensive category.

In 1995, he became the defensive coordinator, replacing his father Fred, who left for a job in the NFL. Utah led the conference in total defense three times under his direction (2000, 2001 and 2002). In 2002, Utah ranked No. 1 in the MWC in total defense, scoring defense and rushing defense. Utah led the league in scoring defense four times from 1999-2005 (ranking No. 2 in 2003, 2004 and 2005). The Ute defense recorded 14 top-20 statistical rankings from 1995-2004.

Whittingham began his coaching career in 1985-86 as a graduate assistant at Brigham Young. He went from there to the College of Eastern Utah as the defensive coordinator in 1987. Next came Idaho State, where he spent six years (1988-93), his last two as the defensive coordinator.

A linebacker for Brigham Young from 1978-81, Whittingham earned first-team all-WAC and WAC Defensive Player of the Year honors in 1981. He played in the Hula and Japan Bowls, then launched a professional career that included stints with the Denver Broncos (1982 training camp) and the U.S. Football League (USFL) Denver Gold (1983) and New Orleans Breakers (1984). He played on the Los Angeles Rams' replacement squad in 1987.

Whittingham graduated from BYU in 1984 and received his master's in 1987. Born Nov. 21, 1959, he was raised in Provo, Utah. He is married to the former Jamie Daniels. They have four children: Tyler, Melissa, Alex and Kylie.



4

MATT ASIATA

Running Back
5-11, 230, Jr.
RS

West Valley City, Utah
Snow College

UTAH: Considered the co-starter at running back ... fully recovered from the broken leg that forced him to redshirt last season ... takes the direct snap in the 'Asiata Formation' ... big, strong and tough to tackle.

2008— Played in all 12 games, starting against Utah State ... Utah's rushing leader with 133 carries and 678 yards ... ranked sixth in the MWC in rushing yards per game (56.5) ... tied for ninth in the conference in scoring (6.0 ppg) ... second on the team with 72 points and 714 yards of total offense ... first 100-yard rushing game came against Air Force (116) on a career-high 19 carries ... 77 yards on 13 carries against Michigan ... 14 carries against San Diego State, rushing for 83 yards ... 85 yards on 12 carries vs. New Mexico ... also has 13 receptions for 111 yards and one touchdown, including a 39-yard catch vs. Michigan ... receiving touchdown came against Wyoming, a 13-yard catch ... had three catches against both Utah State (16 yards) and BYU (21 yards) ... is 2-for-3 passing with two touchdowns ... had a 32-yard touchdown pass against UNLV.

2007— Broken leg in the first game of the season at Oregon State resulted in a redshirt year ... prior to the injury, he rushed four times for 16 yards.

PRIOR TO UTAH: 2006 junior college All-American was also first-team all-Western States Football League ... led the WSFL and Snow College in rushing with 1,365 yards and 15 touchdowns in 2006 ... averaged 6.3 yards per carry and 136.5 yards per game ... rushed for 238 yards in a win over Scottsdale CC ... Snow won the WSFL championship in 2006 and bowl games in 2005 and 2006 ... rated the No. 79 JC recruit by Rivals.com ... 2003 and 2004 all-state and all-region selection for Hunter High (Utah) ... earned three letters in football and basketball ... Hunter was the 2003 state champion in both football and basketball.

PERSONAL: Son of Pete and Faulole Asiata ... two brothers and two sisters ... brother Shawn plays linebacker and fullback for Snow College ... married to Tangi Atiga ... two daughters and one son ... human development and family studies major ... full name is Matthew Rentinai Asiata (pronounced ah-see-ah-ta) ... born July 24, 1987 in Santa Ana, Calif.

YEAR	G/GS	RUSH	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG
2007	1/0	4	16	4.0	0	9
2008	12/1	133	678	5.1	11	38
Totals	13/1	137	694	5.1	11	38



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ZANE BEADLES

Offensive Line
6-4, 305, Jr.
2VL
Sandy, Utah
Hillcrest HS

UTAH: All-conference offensive lineman might be the best left tackle in the MWC ... started at guard as a redshirt freshman and at tackle as a sophomore ... body type and style of play is reminiscent of former Ute All-American (and current Carolina Panther) Jordan Gross ... can bench press 375 pounds and squat 500 pounds ... preseason honorable mention All-American by NationalChamps.net ... 2008 first-team ESPN The Magazine Academic All-District VIII ... member of Utah's Student Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC).

2008— First-team All-MWC ... started in 11 games, missing the UNLV game with a knee injury ... has 42 pancake blocks ... leads the team with 40 knockdowns ... has 27 cuts ... led the line in pancake blocks (6) and knockdowns (7) against Air Force ... seven pancake blocks against Wyoming ... six cuts against New Mexico ... on the watch list for the Lombardi Award.

2007— Second-team all-conference ... started all 13 games at left tackle ... moved from guard to tackle in preseason camp after a season-ending injury to the scheduled starter ... participated in 856 plays in the regular season (bowl stats were not kept) to rank second on the line ... averaged 71.4 plays per game ... totaled 22 pancake blocks, 37 knockdowns and 17 cuts in regular season play ... season-high eight knockdowns vs. BYU ... achieved the best overall grade on the line in six games ... season-best grade of 89% was against Louisville ... Academic all-MWC ... made Utah's Athletics Academic Honor Roll.

2006— Played in all 13 games and started 12 at left guard (came off the bench against BYU after missing practice with a concussion) ... in 12 regular season games (bowl stats were not kept), he participated in 696 plays ... totaled 10 pancake blocks, 10 cut blocks and 19 knockdowns in regular season play ... received the highest grade (83%) of the Utah offensive linemen in his very first college game, which was against UCLA ... season-best grade of 87% against both Northern Arizona and TCU

... made the Dean's List and Utah's Athletics Academic Honor Roll.
2005— Redshirt.

HIGH SCHOOL: First-team all-state, all-region lineman played both ways for Hillcrest High (Utah) ... Hillcrest team captain and three-year starter did not miss a game during his high school career ... won his team's "Top Lineman" award as a senior after recording 93 tackles, six sacks and an interception for the defense and not allowing a sack as an offensive tackle ... lettered three years in baseball and two in basketball ... honorable mention all-state and first-team all-region baseball player in 2005 ... baseball team captain was a second-team all-region player in 2004 ... National Honor Society ... ranked 37th out of a class of 542 with a 3.92 GPA.

PERSONAL: Son of Brad Beadles and Jamie Legerski ... parents are both graduates of Wyoming ... mother played basketball for Wyoming and father played baseball for Hutchinson Junior College ... stepfather Joe Legerski is the women's basketball coach at Wyoming and a former Utah assistant ... stepmother, Jill, started at point guard for Concordia Lutheran, which qualified for the NAIA Final Four in 1993-94 ... has two brothers and two sisters ... mechanical engineering major ... full name is Zane Dae Beadles ... born in Casper, Wyo., on Nov. 19, 1986.



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JEREME BROOKS

Wide Receiver
5-7, 170, So.
1VL

League City, Texas
Clear Creek HS

UTAH: Has played regularly since his true freshman season ... extremely quick ... option to return punts and kicks.

2008— Appeared in 12 games and made four starts ... 26 catches for 286 yards with one touchdown ... averaged 11 yards per catch ... had a career-long and team-best 55-yard reception at Michigan ... scored on a 32-yard reception against UNLV ... five catches for 49 yards against BYU ... rushed 10 times for 60 yards ... three carries for 36 yards, including a 34-yard touchdown run against Colorado State ... completed only pass attempt of the season, a 33-yard completion to Corbin Louks against Weber State ... three kickoff returns for 42 yards ... 389 all-purpose yards.

2007— Played in 12 games and started two as a true freshman ... only game he did not play



Player Bios

UTAH FOOTBALL

in was the first ... 15 receptions for 183 yards with two touchdowns ... longest reception of the season (28 yards) came against New Mexico ... rushed 21 times for 129 yards (6.1 average) and three touchdowns ... scored on a 23-yard touchdown run in Utah's win over Navy in the Poinsettia Bowl ... had two rushing TDs against Wyoming ... threw a seven-yard touchdown pass against New Mexico ... 12 kickoffs for 267 yards (22.2 average) ... five kickoff returns for 126 yards in the Poinsettia Bowl ... returned four kicks for 71 yards against BYU ... long kickoff return of 38 yards against TCU ... academic all-conference ... also made the Utah Athletics Academic Honor Roll.

HIGH SCHOOL: First-team all-district as a junior and senior ... honorable mention all-state ... first-team Texas Prepstar.com ... first-team all-Galveston County ... second-team all-Greater Houston Class 5A ... 70 receptions led the greater Houston area ... 850 receiving yards (9 touchdowns) and over 1,000 all-purpose yards ... three-time MVP of Clear Creek High School ... also lettered in baseball.

PERSONAL: Son of Warren Brooks and Judy James ... brother Warren Jr. ... undecided on a major ... name is pronounced Jeremy ... born April 23, 1989.

YEAR	G/GS	REC	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG
2007	12/2	15	183	12.2	2	28
2008	12/4	26	286	11.0	1	55
Totals	24/6	41	469	11.4	3	55

YEAR	RUSH	YDS	AVG.	TD	LONG
2007	21	129	6.1	3	28
2008	10	60	6.0	1	34
Totals	31	189	6.1	4	34

YEAR	KOR	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG
2007	12	267	22.2	0	38
2008	3	42	14.0	0	21
Totals	15	309	20.6	0	38



88

FREDDIE BROWN

Wide Receiver**6-4, 215, Sr.****3VL****La Verne, Calif.****Citrus JC**

UTAH: Has developed into one of the best receivers in the MWC ... great hands and leaping ability (32.5 inch vertical jump) ... can make the tough catch over the middle ... used his redshirt year prior to coming to Utah.

2008—Second-team All-MWC ... started in all 12 games ... leads Utah with 65 catches for 755 yards ... team-high seven receiving

touchdowns ... ranked fourth in the MWC in receptions per game (5.42) and is seventh in receiving yards per game (64.6) ... third on the team in all-purpose yards (755) ... career highs with 11 catches and 110 yards vs. San Diego State ... had over 100 yards receiving in back-to-back games against TCU (105) and San Diego State (110) ... caught the game winning touchdown against TCU, a 9-yard pass over the middle with 48 seconds left ... three catches for 27 yards on Utah's nine play, 80-yard game-winning touchdown drive vs. TCU ... two touchdown grabs vs. San Diego State ... 97 yards on eight catches against BYU ... longest catch of the year was a 41-yard catch at Wyoming ... 4 catches for 78 yards against Colorado State.

2007—Played in 12 games ... 20 receptions for 219 yards ... best game was against Navy in the Poinsettia Bowl, when he had three catches for 41 yards.

2006—Played in all 13 games, with two starts ... 17 receptions for 196 yards ... season highs for yardage (63) and receptions (4) against Air Force ... also had a season-long reception of 42 yards at Air Force ... made Utah's Athletics Academic Honor Roll.

2005—Played in four games, making two catches for 43 yards ... academic all-MWC.

PRIOR TO UTAH: Redshirted at Citrus College in 2004 ... at Damien High (Calif.), he was first-team all-league in both football and basketball ... lettered three times in both sports ... 45 catches for 685 yards and 5 touchdowns as a senior in 2003 ... set the school record for longest reception (97 yards) ... career numbers were 61 receptions, 895 yards and 6 touchdowns ... Damien High won back-to-back league titles (2002-03) ... honor roll student all four years.

PERSONAL: Son of Fred and Susan Brown ... one sister ... father is a counselor for LAUSD ... cousin played for the Washington Redskins ... graduated last May with a bachelor's degree in human development and family studies ... began work on another undergraduate degree in the fall ... born June 24, 1986.

YEAR	G/GS	REC	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG
2005	4/0	2	43	21.5	0	37
2006	13/2	17	196	11.5	0	42
2007	12/0	20	219	10.9	0	29
2008	12/12	65	775	11.9	7	41
Totals	41/14	104	1233	11.9	7	42



5

BRENT CASTEEL

Wide Receiver**5-10, 198, Sr.****3VL****San Francisco, Calif.****Antioch HS**

UTAH: Exciting playmaker has started full-time two years and part-time as a redshirt freshman ... lost most of the 2007 season to a knee injury ... fast, strong, instinctive player ... also a big-play threat running the ball.

2008—Played in 12 games with nine starts ... third on the team with 547 yards receiving and 42 catches ... three receiving touchdowns on the year ... career-high 105 receiving yards against Oregon State ... two touchdown grabs on six catches for 60 yards against BYU ... season long grab was 40 yards, done against both Utah State and Oregon State ... five catches for 77 yards against TCU ... rushed 17 times for 92 yards ... 40 yards rushing on four carries against Colorado State ... led Utah in punt return yardage with 91 yards on 10 returns, including a 41-yard return against San Diego State ... four returns for 33 yards against TCU ... also had one kick return for 34 yards against SDSU ... 764 all-purpose yards (4th on the team).

2007—Played in and started the first two games ... season-ending knee injury in the second game (against Air Force) required surgery ... led Utah with seven catches for 64 yards and a touchdown in the first game against Oregon State ... injured early in game two and did not have any stats ... lettered.

2006—Second-team all-Mountain West Conference ... named Utah's Top Wide Receiver ... played in all 13 games, with 11 starts ... a quarter of his 39 receptions went for touchdowns ... 10 touchdown receptions led Utah and ranked third in the MWC ... second on the team in both receiving (600) and rushing (262) yards ... averaged 15.4 yards per catch and 5.1 yards per carry ... led Utah in MWC games with 468 receiving yards ... averaged 77.3 all-purpose yards per game — best on the team ... season-high 100 yards receiving against BYU included a 19-yard TD reception that put Utah ahead 31-27 with 1:19 remaining in the game ... also had outstanding games against Colorado State (92 receiving yards) and UNLV (86 receiving yards) ... led Utes with 66 rushing yards (9.4 yards per carry) against Tulsa in the Armed Forces Bowl ... also had one catch for 18 yards and a touchdown vs. Tulsa ... eight kickoff returns for 143 yards (17.9 average).

2005—Honorable mention Freshman All-American by *The Sporting News* ... played in all 12 games and started in five ... 39



receptions ranked third on the team and 426 yards rated fourth ... 35 rushes for 208 yards ... led Utah and ranked fourth in the MWC with 20 kickoff returns for 464 yards ... averaged 10.9 yards per catch, 5.9 yards per rush, 23.2 yards per kick return and 91.5 all-purpose yards per game ... season-best 77 receiving yards against TCU ... season-high seven receptions for 46 yards and a score against UNLV ... other big games came against Air Force (47 yards) and New Mexico (46 yards, 1 TD) ... rushed for a career-high 74 yards and a TD against Arizona ... returned 4 kicks for 102 yards against San Diego State.

2004—Redshirt.

HIGH SCHOOL: First-team all-league and all-conference ... Antioch High (Calif.) team captain ... also lettered in basketball.

PERSONAL: Son of Charles Casteel and Jacqueline Broden ... has three sisters ... enjoys playing in pool tournaments ... sociology major ... full name is Brenton Casteel ... born July 12, 1985.

YEAR	G/GS	REC	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG
2005	12/5	39	426	10.9	2	41
2006	13/11	39	600	15.3	10	49
2007	2/2	7	64	9.1	1	36
2008	12/9	42	547	13.0	3	40
Totals	39/27	127	1637	12.9	16	49

YEAR	RUSH	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG
2005	35	208	5.9	1	59
2006	51	262	5.1	1	21
2007	3	(-13)	0.0	0	0
2008	17	92	5.4	1	18
Total	106	549	5.2	3	59



21
TERRELL COLE
Defensive Back
5-11, 185, Sr.
1VL
Long Beach, Calif.
Cerritos College

UTAH: Has moved into a critical role as a senior free safety ... earned a scholarship shortly after walking on to the team in 2007.

2008—Played in 12 games and made four starts ... 33 total tackles ... 2.5 tackles for loss for a total of six yards ... two pass breakups ... career-high seven tackles against UNLV ... five tackles against Oregon State ... had a pass breakup and a four-yard tackle for loss at Utah State ... returned 11 punts for 51 yards ... three returns for 16 yards against Colorado State.

2007—Played in 13 games ... 25 total tackles included two sacks/tackles for loss ... forced three fumbles ... forced a fumble on his only tackle in the Poinsettia Bowl ... season-high four tackles with a sack and a forced fumble against UCLA ... three tackles, a sack and a forced fumble against Wyoming.

PRIOR TO UTAH: All-conference and team captain as a sophomore at Cerritos College.

HIGH SCHOOL: Named all-league and to the *Press-Telegram* Dream Team as senior ... team captain ... earned three letters in football.

PERSONAL: Son of Charles and Cathy Cole ... full name is Terrell Marquent Cole ... enjoys movies, Playstation 3, music and cooking ... two brothers and two sisters ... economics major ... born April 22, 1987 in Riverside, Calif.

YEAR	G/GS	UT	AT	TOT	TFL	PBU	INT
2007	13/0	14	11	25	2.0-16	0	0
2008	12/4	14	19	33	2.5-6	2	0
Totals	25/4	28	30	58	4.5-22	2	0



66
ROBERT CONLEY
Offensive Line
6-1, 310, Sr.
3VL
La Marque, Texas
La Marque HS

UTAH: 2008 Rivals.com third-team All-America ... all-MWC lineman ... four-year starter at right guard ... strong and athletic, he is one of Utah's most durable and productive offensive linemen ... benches 415 pounds – second most on the team.

2008—Rivals.com third-team All-America ... first-team All-MWC pick started in all 12 games ... 30 pancake blocks ... 16 knockdowns ... 19 cuts ... six pancake blocks against Oregon State ... five cuts against TCU ... preseason honorable mention All-American by NationalChamps.net ... on the watch list for the Lombardi Award.

2007—Second-team all-Mountain West Conference selection started all 13 games ... in 12 regular season games (no stats were kept for the bowl game), he participated in 852 plays, averaging 71 plays per game ... led the Utes in pancake blocks (40) and cuts (28) ... also had 35 knockdowns ... season-high nine pancake blocks against TCU, which was also the best by a Ute in 2007 ... recorded a season-high eight knockdowns against Utah State ... 90% grade against Utah State was the best by a Ute offensive lineman in 2007 ... won team's

Iron Ute and Top Offensive Lineman awards.

2006—Honorable mention all-conference ... started all 13 games at right guard ... in 12 regular season games (no stats were kept for the bowl game), he led Utah's offensive linemen in total plays (809) ... 34 pancake blocks also topped the team ... recorded 26 knockdowns and 20 cuts ... season-best six pancake blocks against both San Diego State and TCU.

2005—Played in all 12 games, starting the last five at right guard ... most of his 523 total plays came in the games he started ... nine pancake blocks and seven knockdowns ... led Utah with three pancake blocks against Georgia Tech in Emerald Bowl victory ... two knockdowns against New Mexico and BYU.

2004—Redshirt was named to the Utah Athletics Academic Honor Roll.

HIGH SCHOOL: First-team all-state, all-district and all-county as a senior in 2003 ... helped La Marque HS (Texas) win 2003 4A Division II State Championship ... 68 pancake blocks in 2003 ... also lettered in power-lifting (465-pound bench and 700-pound squat) ... *Who's Who Among Young Americans.*

PERSONAL: Son of Ezzard Conley and April Williams ... two sisters (Christina and Chasmine) ... scheduled to graduate in summer of 2008 with a bachelor's degree in economics ... plans to begin work on another undergraduate degree this fall ... full name is Robert Blake Conley ... born April 17, 1986.



12
JOE DALE
Defensive Back
5-11, 197, Jr.
2VL
Irving, Texas
Nimitz HS

UTAH: In his first year as the starting strong safety ... groomed for the job by earning Defensive MVP recognition at the 2007 Poinsettia Bowl ... member of Utah's Student Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC).

2008—Started all 12 games ... leads the Ute secondary and is tied for third on the team with 63 tackles ... tied for second on the team with three interceptions ... leads the defensive backs with 6.5 tackles for loss ... had a season-high nine tackles against TCU including a sack for a 16-yard loss ... broke up four passes ... intercepted a pair of passes against BYU ... interception against Air Force clinched Utah's victory in the final seconds ... forced a fumble and had seven tackles (1.5 TFL) at Wyoming.



Player Bios

2007—Played in all 13 games and started in three ... Defensive MVP of the Poinsettia Bowl had a season-high 12 tackles and the game-saving interception ... 40 tackles on the season ... 2.5 tackles for loss and a half sack ... forced one fumble and recovered a fumble ... seven tackles and a forced fumble against Colorado State ... six stops, an assisted sack, and a fumble recovery against Air Force ... four tackles included two for loss against UCLA ... made Utah's Athletics Academics Honor Roll.

2006—Played in 10 games ... six tackles ... three solo tackles against San Diego State ... broke up a pass against UNLV.

HIGH SCHOOL: First-team all-district ... lettered three years in both football and basketball at Nimitz High School (Texas).

PERSONAL: Son of Joe and Shirley Dale ... two brothers and one sister ... parks, recreation and tourism major ... born Dec. 18, 1986 in St. Louis, Mo.

YEAR	G/GS	UT	AT	TOT	TFL	PBU	INT
2006	10/0	4	2	6	0-0	1	0
2007	13/3	24	16	40	2.5-8	1	1
2008	12/12	32	31	63	6.5-32	4	3
Totals	35/15	60	49	109	9.0-40	6	4

**92****KENAPE ELIAPU****Defensive Tackle****6-0, 303, Jr.****2VL****San Francisco, Calif.
So. San Francisco HS**

UTAH: Back to playing 30-35 snaps a game after missing eight games with a broken foot ... has been in the defensive tackle rotation since his redshirt freshman season ... 550-pound squat is tied for third on the team ... can bench press 365 pounds.

2008—Appeared in five games ... started opening game at Michigan before being sidelined by a broken foot ... returned to the rotation against New Mexico ... eight tackles on the season ... season-high five tackles against TCU ... had three tackles including 1.5 for loss at Michigan.

2007—Played in all 13 games, with two starts ... 29 tackles, 2.5 for loss and a sack ... season-high six tackles against Air Force ... five stops vs. Oregon State.

2006—Saw action in 10 games, with one start ... start came at nose guard against Tulsa in the Armed Forces Bowl ... seven total tackles included a tackle for loss and a 12-yard sack.

2005—Redshirt.

HIGH SCHOOL: First-team all-league linebacker for South San Francisco HS (Calif.) ... conference player of the year.

PERSONAL: Son of Kenape and Tunufai Eliapo ... both parents are in the ministry ... one brother ... name is pronounced ken-ah-pay, ee-lee-ah-po ... enjoys singing and basketball ... sociology major ... born Mar. 22, 1986.

YEAR	G/GS	UT	AT	TOT	TFL	SACK
2006	10/1	5	2	7	1.0-12	1.0-12
2007	13/2	15	14	29	2.5-16	1.0-11
2008	5/1	4	4	8	1.5-3	0.0-0
Totals	28/4	24	20	44	5.0-31	2.0-23

**42****NAI FOTU****Linebacker****6-0, 235, So.****1VL****Laie, Hawaii
Kahuku HS**

UTAH: Extremely athletic 'stud' linebacker has quietly developed into one of the best linebackers in the league.

2008—Played in all 12 games, starting eight ... suffered a knee injury during the BYU game and will not play in the bowl ... leads the linebackers with 5.5 tackles for loss ... 35 total tackles ... 2.5 tackles for loss (including a sack), and a season-high seven tackles at Michigan ... three tackles and a forced fumble against Weber State ... five tackles, a sack, and a pass breakup against Colorado State ... four tackles, including one TFL, against UNLV.

2007—Played in all 13 games as a true freshman ... began the season as a defensive end, but was moved to linebacker where a special package was created for him ... played on special teams in every game ... 11 total tackles, 3.5 for loss and 2.5 sacks ... best game was against San Diego State, when he had three tackles, two tackles for loss, a sack and a forced fumble ... recorded a sack against both New Mexico and Colorado State.

HIGH SCHOOL: First-team all-state Honolulu Advertiser ... second-team all-state Honolulu Star Bulletin ... 47 tackles, 11 tackles for loss and 10 sacks as a senior ... helped Kahuku High School (Hawaii) win the 2005 and 2006 state championships ... also lettered three years in rugby.

PERSONAL: Son of Timote and Florence Fotu ... youngest of 12 children (eight boys, four girls) ... name is pronounced Ny Fo-too

... full name is Timote Nai Fotu ... undecided on a major ... born Aug. 20, 1988 in Montclair, Calif., and spent most of his childhood in Tonga.

YEAR	G/GS	UT	AT	TOT	TFL	SACK
2007	13/0	7	4	11	3.5-18	2.5-17
2008	12/8	15	20	35	5.5-18	2.0-14
Totals	25/8	22	24	46	9.0-36	4.5-31

**59****KEPA GAISON****Linebacker****5-10, 230, Jr.****1VL****Kaneohe, Hawaii
The Kamehameha School**

UTAH: Utah's first substitute at 'stud' linebacker also sees a lot of time in the middle ... athletic, aggressive player ... one-time walk-on was awarded a scholarship in the fall of 2007 ... came to Utah as a punter.

2008—Played in 10 games ... 23 tackles ... recorded three six-tackle games: Weber State, Oregon State and TCU ... had a half-sack against TCU.

2007—Played in 12 games ... 13 tackles included two for loss and a sack ... three tackles and a sack against Brigham Young ... recovered a fumble against New Mexico ... lettered ... Academic all-MWC.

2006—Played for the scout teams.

2005—Redshirt.

HIGH SCHOOL: First team all-state in 2004 and a second-team honoree in 2003 ... punted and saw action on the offensive line ... led Kamehameha to the Division I state title in 2004 ... lettered in football, track and soccer ... honor roll.

PERSONAL: Son of Blaine and Donnalei Gaison ... father played safety for the Atlanta Falcons from 1981-84 and is now the athletics director at The Kamehameha School ... two brothers and one sister ... enjoys surfing ... business major ... name is pronounced Keppa Guy-son ... full name is Bart-Jonah Iokepa Gaison ... born March 20, 1987.

YEAR	G/GS	UT	AT	TOT	TFL	SACK
2007	12/0	5	8	13	2.0-10	1.0-9
2008	10/0	10	13	23	0.0-0	0.5-6
Totals	22/0	15	21	36	2.0-10	1.5-15



81

BRADON GODFREY

Wide Receiver
6-3, 197, Sr.
2VL
Layton, Utah
Southern Utah

UTAH: Starting receiver and holder ... fearless receiver over the middle ... go-to player on third and fourth downs ... originally walked on before earning a scholarship.

2008— Played in 12 games with 11 starts ... second on the team with 481 receiving yards on 50 catches ... eighth in the MWC with 4.17 receptions per game ... three receiving touchdowns ... career-high 84 yards on seven catches at Michigan ... caught a season-long 25-yard touchdown pass over the middle with 48-seconds remaining against Oregon State to help Utah tie the game ... five catches for 52 yards vs. Oregon State ... 57 yards receiving against Utah State ... seven catches for 48 yards against TCU.

2007— Played in all 13 games, starting six ... second on the team in receptions (50) and receiving yards (524) ... three touchdowns catches was tied for the team lead ... season-best 83 yards on seven catches against Air Force ... 78 yards against Louisville and 77 vs. New Mexico.

2006— Played in 10 games, starting one ... missed games against Utah State, San Diego State and Boise State with an ankle injury ... ranked fifth on team with 22 receptions ... team-high 16.4 yards per reception ... 360 receiving yards and one touchdown ... season-best game 80-yard outing against Northern Arizona (averaged 20.0 yards per catch) ... left NAU game with an ankle injury, suffered on a 24-yard TD reception early in the third quarter ... season-long 36-yard reception against Colorado State.

2005— Redshirt practiced with the scout teams but could not play per NCAA transfer rules.

PRIOR TO UTAH: Played as a freshman at Southern Utah (2004) and was named Great West Freshman of the Year ... prepped at Layton HS (Utah) ... lettered three times each in football, basketball and track ... two-time all-state and a three-time all-region honoree in football ... team captain ... also all-state in basketball and track ... honor roll.

PERSONAL: Son of Kirk and Heidi Godfrey ... one brother and three sisters ... speech communication major ... first name is pronounced bray-dunn ... full name is Bradon Cache Godfrey ... born Oct. 17, 1985.

YEAR	G/GS	REC	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG
2006	10/1	22	360	16.4	1	36
2007	13/6	50	524	10.5	3	27
2008	12/11	50	481	9.6	3	25
Totals	35/18	122	1365	11.2	7	36



65

DUSTIN HENSEL

Offensive Line
6-7, 307, Sr.
2VL
La Palma, Calif.
Golden West CC

UTAH: Two-year starter at right tackle ... has developed skills to match his size.

2008— Started in all 12 games at right tackle ... has a team-best 28 cuts ... 11 pancake blocks ... 27 knockdowns ... five cuts against Michigan and four against Air Force ... six knockdowns against BYU ... held the nation's sack and tackle for loss leader, Jerry Hughes of TCU, to a half sack.

2007— Started all 13 games at right tackle ... took part in 808 plays, an average of 67.3 per game, during the regular season (bowl stats were not kept) ... totaled eight pancake blocks, 20 knockdowns and 26 cuts ... had the line's highest grade against UNLV (87%) and Wyoming (89%) ... Academic all-MWC.

2006— Played in nine games, mostly for special teams ... participated in 20 offensive plays as a backup tackle.

PRIOR TO UTAH: Second-team all-Mission Conference in 2004 while playing for Golden West JC ... one of his junior college coaches was former Ute player and assistant coach Alex Gerke ... first-team all-Empire League in 2003 as a senior at John F. Kennedy High (California) ... earned three letters in football and two in basketball.

PERSONAL: Son of Mitch Hensel and Linda Fleming ... youngest of four children ... sister Kristy played softball at San Diego State and sister Traci played softball at Long Beach State ... history major ... full name is Dustin Jon Hensel ... born Nov. 22, 1985.



3

BRIAN JOHNSON

Quarterback
6-1, 200, Sr.
3VL
Baytown, Texas
Robert E. Lee HS

UTAH: Three-year starter is the winningest quarterback in school history (25-7) ... 2008 MWC Offensive Player of the Year ... 2008 finalist for the Johnny Unitas Golden Arm Award and the Manning Award ... 2008 first-team All-MWC quarterback ... Offensive MVP of the 2007 San Diego Poinsettia Bowl ... second-team all-conference in 2005 ... three-time Academic all-MWC selection ... played as a true freshman backup to Alex Smith in 2004, and started in 2005, 2007 and 2008 ... redshirted in 2006 season while recovering from knee surgery ... extremely efficient passer has a strong, accurate arm ... also a very good runner ... team leader.

CAREER RECORD WATCH

Completions: 646 (2nd)
Pass Attempts: 976 (2nd)
Completion Pct: 66.2 (2nd)
Yards per Completion: 11.6 (3rd)
Passing Yards: 7,517 (2nd)
Touchdown Passes: 54 (2nd)
Combined Touchdowns: 66 (2nd)
Passing Efficiency: 143.61 (4th)
300-yard Passing Games: 7 (3rd)
200-yard Passing Games: 20 (2nd-Tie)
Total Offense Plays: 1,338 (1st)
Total Offense Yards: 8,380 (2nd)
Total Offense per Game: 194.9 (9th)
Yards per Play: 6.3 (9th)

2008— Led Utah to a 12-0 record as the starting quarterback ... MWC Offensive Player of the Year ... finalist for the Johnny Unitas Golden Arm Award and the Manning Award ... first-team All-MWC quarterback ... three MWC Player of the Week awards coming after the Michigan, TCU and BYU games ... won ESPN Helmet Stickers on Aug. 30 and Nov. 22 for wins over Michigan and BYU ... in the top 10 at Utah in several categories: fourth in completions (241), eighth in attempts (353), second in completion percentage (68.3), 10th in yards (2,636), fifth in touchdowns (24) ... threw a career-high five touchdowns against San Diego State, which is second on the all-time list at Utah ... engineered game-winning touchdown drives against Air Force, Oregon State and TCU ... second in the MWC and 18th in the nation in pass efficiency (148.3) ... fourth in the league in passing yards per game (219.7) ... had two 300 yard games - 305 yards against Michigan and 303 yards vs. BYU ... seven 200-yard games ... 30-of-36 (including



Player Bios

UTAH FOOTBALL

four touchdown passes) against BYU for a 83.3 completion percentage, which ranks third all-time in a game at Utah ... rushed for a season-high 80 yards and a touchdown (on a 56-yard run) against UNLV ... threw two or more touchdown passes in seven games ... season-long 55-yard pass to Jereme Brooks against Michigan.

2007—Played in 11 games, starting 10 ... 8-2 as the starter ... San Diego Poinsettia Bowl Offensive MVP led Utah to eight wins in its last nine games after returning to the starting lineup from a shoulder injury ... injured his shoulder in the first game of the season (Oregon State) and missed two complete games ... named Utah's Most Valuable Player ... finished fourth in the MWC in pass efficiency with a 129.6 rating ... led the MWC quarterbacks in completion percentage (66.5%) ... 66.5% completion percentage was the third-best ever in a season by a Ute ... completed 181-of-272 pass attempts for 1,847 yards (167.9 yards per game) and 11 touchdowns ... 10.2 yards per completion is tied for fifth in a season by a Ute ... threw for 312 yards against Louisville and completed 77% of his passes (24-of-31) ... also passed for over 200 yards against San Diego State (220 yards, 22-of-29, 1 TD) and Navy (226 yards, 20-of-25, 1 TD) ... completed 11 straight passes and 20 of his final 22 throws in Utah's win over Navy in the Poinsettia Bowl ... also rushed for 69 yards (6.3 average) and a score against Navy ... Academic all-MWC ... named to Utah's Athletics Academic Honor Roll.

2006—Redshirt played for the scout teams while recovering from knee surgery the previous December.

2005—Second-team all-conference quarterback started in the first 10 games before suffering a season-ending knee injury against New Mexico on Nov. 12 (surgery on Dec. 1) ... 5-5 as the starter ... finished No. 1 in the MWC and No. 4 in the nation in total offense (337.0 yards per game) ... also No. 1 in the MWC (11th in the nation) in pass efficiency (151.0) ... No. 2 in the MWC in passing yards per game (289.2 average) ... completed 63.6% of his passes (210-of-330) for 2,892 yards and 18 touchdowns ... seven interceptions was tied for the fewest of any MWC QB ... four 300-yard passing games: 417 yards vs. San Diego State, 384 yards vs. Wyoming, 370 vs. New Mexico and 305 yards vs. Air Force ... four touchdown passes against Wyoming and New Mexico tied the Mountain West Conference sophomore record held by former Utes Brett Elliott (2002) and Alex Smith (2003) ... broke the school and tied the MWC single-game record for completion percentage in just his second career start, completing 85.7% of his pass attempts (18-of-21) against Utah State ... made Utah's single-season top 10 in these categories: 200-yard passing games (10, tied

for second), 300-yard passing games (4, No. 4, tie), total offense per game (337.0, No. 2), total yards (3,370, No. 4), total plays (482, No. 4), pass efficiency (151.01, No. 5), yards per completion (8.76, No. 5), yards per play (6.99, No. 6), completions (210, No. 6), completion percentage (63.6, No. 6), touchdown passes (18, No. 7), passing yards (2,892, No. 7), passing yards per game (289.2, No. 5) ... team's second-leading rusher carried the ball 152 times for 478 yards (3.1 yards per rush) ... averaged 47.8 rushing yards per game and led the Utes in rushing TDs (8) ... rushed for 70-plus yards three times: 98 vs. North Carolina, 73 vs. UNLV and 70 vs. Utah State ... MWC Offensive Player of the Week against Wyoming completed 32-of-45 passes for 384 yards and four touchdowns, and also led Utah in rushing with 67 yards and a TD ... three TDs and 264 passing yards in a 20-of-29 performance against UNLV ... completed 21-of-29 passes for 305 yards and two scores against Air Force (also rushed for 3 TDs) ... rushed for a career-high 98 yards and a TD on 22 carries against North Carolina ... Academic all-MWC ... also named to Utah's Athletics Academic Honor Roll.

2004—True freshman appeared in 10 games as the backup to 2005 No. 1 NFL draft pick and Heisman Trophy finalist Alex Smith ... one passing and one rushing touchdown ... pass efficiency of 129.7 ... season-best 53 yards and a touchdown on 5-of-8 passing vs. Utah State ... rushed for a season-best 55 yards and a TD vs. Colorado State ... Academic all-MWC ... named to the Utah Athletics Academic Honor Roll.

HIGH SCHOOL: First-team all-district and second-team all-state quarterback for Robert E. Lee High (Texas) ... District MVP ... passed for 2,900 yards and 33 touchdowns and rushed for 540 yards and 12 touchdowns in 2003 ... completed 71.6% of his pass attempts ... also lettered in basketball.

PERSONAL: Son of Stacey and Shonna Johnson ... father played football for UTEP ... two sisters, Bianca and Britteny ... graduated last May with a bachelor's degree in mass communication ... began work on another undergraduate degree in the fall ... full name is Brian Delance Johnson ... born Feb. 16, 1987.

YEAR	G/GS	COM	ATT	INT	PCT	YDS	TD	LONG
2004	10/0	14	21	1	66.7	142	1	33
2005	10/10	210	330	7	63.6	2892	18	60
2007	11/10	181	272	10	66.5	1847	11	40
2008	12/12	241	353	9	68.3	2636	24	55
Totals	43/32	646	976	27	66.2	7517	54	60

YEAR	G/GS	RUSH	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG
2004	10/0	21	92	4.4	1	16
2005	10/10	152	478	3.1	8	26
2007	11/10	85	150	1.8	2	28
2008	12/12	104	143	1.4	1	56
Totals	43/32	362	863	2.4	12	56



17
ROBERT JOHNSON
Defensive Back
6-2, 195, Jr.
1VL
Los Angeles, Calif.
L.A. Southwest College

UTAH: Starting free safety is tall, fast and athletic ... ranked in the top five on the team in the agility tests conducted in the spring ... held out of contact drills in the spring due to Jan. 3 shoulder surgery ... member of Utah's Student Athlete Mentors (SAMS).

2008—Played in 11 games with 10 starts ... missed the UNLV game with an injured hamstring ... had two interceptions on the year ... six tackles against TCU and made the game-clinching pick against in the final seconds ... five tackles with an interception against BYU ... three pass breakups ... had a season-high eight tackles against New Mexico with a pass breakup ... 38 total tackles (16 solo).

2007—Honorable mention all-MWC ... played in 12 games and made seven starts at free safety ... injured his shoulder in the third game of the season and played at less than full strength for the remainder of the season ... missed one complete game and played in a limited capacity in several others ... the game prior to the injury, he was named the Bronco Nagurski National Defensive Player of Week, MWC Defensive Player of the Week, and won an ESPN Helmet Sticker for his work in Utah's win over No. 11 UCLA ... against UCLA, he had two interceptions, a pass breakup, six tackles and a forced fumble into the end zone for a touchback ... season-high 12 tackles and a pass breakup against Brigham Young ... six tackles (including five solo) and a pass breakup vs. Navy in the Poinsettia Bowl ... 44 total tackles ... caused a team-high five turnovers (three interceptions and two forced fumbles).

HIGH SCHOOL: Honorable mention junior college All-American in 2006 ... also all-conference, all-district and all-state in '06 ... 96 total tackles, five interceptions, two fumble recoveries and one forced fumble for L.A. Southwest College ... also ran track for L.A. Southwest ... 21.65 clocking in 200 meters and 47.52 in 400 meters ... 6'8" high jumper



... as a senior at Fremont High School (Calif.), he was named to L.A. Times 2005 all-region team and its "top defensive back" ... 2005 defensive co-player of the year in the Coliseum League ... also lettered in track and basketball ... all-district basketball player.

PERSONAL: Son of Wanda and the late Wayne Johnson ... three brothers and two sisters ... brother Elijah played wide receiver for L.A. Southwest College ... sociology major ... born Feb. 13, 1987.

YEAR	G/GS	UT	AT	TOT	TFL	PBU	INT
2007	12/7	26	18	44	0.5-1	4	3
2008	11/10	16	22	38	0.5-6	3	2
Totals	23/17	42	40	82	1.0-7	7	5



80

CHRIS JOPPRU

Tight End
6-6, 258, Jr.
SQ
Minnetonka, Minn.
Minnetonka HS

UTAH: One of the team's most improved players ... has become a key part of the game plan at tight end after playing in just two games total (on special teams) his first three seasons on campus ... member of Utah's Student-Athlete Mentors (SAMS).

2008—Played in all 12 games and made four starts ... six receptions for 59 yards for a 9.8 average ... scored first career touchdown against BYU on a four-yard catch ... season-high three catches for 41 yards, including a long of 26 yards against Weber State.

2007—Played against UCLA.

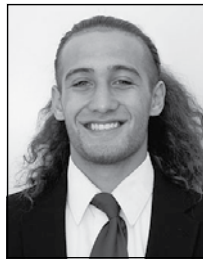
2006—Played against UNLV.

2005—Redshirt.

HIGH SCHOOL: All-state, all-conference, all-metro ... as a senior in 2004, had 47 receptions for 725 yard and six TDs ... led Minnetonka High (Minn.) to the class 5A state championship ... team also won Classic Lake Conference and sectional title ... also lettered in track and basketball ... basketball team captain and Most Improved Player.

PERSONAL: Son of Sheldon and Kay Joppru ... father played basketball and football at North Dakota and later played in the World Football League ... brother Bennie was an All-America tight end at Michigan and a second-round draft pick of the Houston Texans ... brother J.J. lettered two years at Arizona ... parks, recreation and tourism major ... full name is Christopher Mark Joppru ... born Feb. 6, 1987.

YEAR	G/GS	REC	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG
2006	1/0	0	0	0	0	0
2007	1/0	0	0	0	0	0
2008	12/4	6	59	9.8	1	26
Totals	14/4	6	59	9.8	1	26



9

AIONA KEY

Wide Receiver
6-4, 209, Jr.
JC
Citrus Heights, Calif.
Mt. SAC

UTAH: Did not enroll in classes until the second week of September due to academic issues ... outstanding athlete immediately became a major part of Utah's special teams and is finding more time at receiver each game ... great leaper with blocked kicks in three games.

2008— Played in eight games, mostly on special teams ... blocked three kicks (two punts and one field goal) in three-straight games during the season ... scored his first touchdown on a blocked punt against Wyoming for a six-yard return, Utah's first blocked punt return for a touchdown since 1992 ... blocked a punt against Colorado State and a field goal against New Mexico ... one catch for 19 yards against Weber State.

PRIOR TO UTAH: 2007 all-conference player for Mount San Antonio College ... set a Mt. SAC touchdown reception record with 17 ... 80 receptions for 1,112 yards ... also blocked four punts and returned one for a touchdown in 2007 ... initially signed with Boise State, redshirting in 2005 and playing for special teams and as a backup receiver in 2006 (no stats) ... plays for the Mt. SAC basketball team and is currently averaging 12 points and nine rebounds a game ... prepped at Mesa Verde High (Calif.) ... first-team all-state and all-league as a wide receiver ... first-team all-league defensive back ... 36 receptions for 618 yards and nine touchdowns; 80 tackles, three sacks and two interceptions as a senior in 2004 ... also returned six punts for 118 yards ... second-team all-metro as a junior when he had 16 receptions for 410 yards and three touchdowns, as well as 61 tackles, one sack, four interceptions and 303 return yards ... also lettered in basketball and track ... personal best 7'3" in the high jump ... won the national championship with a 7'1" jump.

PERSONAL: Son of Sale and Kaye Key ... two brothers and three sisters ... brother Sale Jr., played for Idaho State and now plays for the New Orleans Voodoo of the AFL (he previously played for AFL teams in Memphis,

Utah and Stockton, Calif.) ... full name is Aiona Romney Swaner Key ... name is pronounced I-own-a ... born Nov. 20, 1986 in Independence, Mo.

YEAR	G/GS	REC	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG
2008	8/0	1	19	19.0	0	19



11

PAUL KRUGER

Defensive End
6-5, 265, So.
1VL
Orem, Utah
Timpanogog HS

UTAH: One of the best defensive ends in the nation made the Hendricks midseason watch list ... big, fast and strong... signed with Utah as a quarterback in 2004 ... redshirted in 2004, then went on an LDS Church mission—returning in January 2007.

2008—First-team All-MWC defensive lineman (one of two sophomores named to the first team) ... Midseason All-American by CBSSports.com ... 15.5 tackles for loss is the 24th best in the nation ... TFL average (1.29) tied for 25th nationally and second in the MWC ... tied for third in the league in sacks (7.5) and sack average (0.62) ... four sacks (all solo) against Utah State tied the school record and is the most in the country ... five TFL against USU tied for second in school history ... made first career interception against BYU and had two pass breakups, recovered a fumble and made six tackles ... second on the team with seven pass breakups and tied for second with two forced fumbles ... tipped passes that resulted in interceptions against Wyoming and Colorado State ... season-high nine tackles (including 2.5 for loss) against Michigan ... forced fumbles against Utah State and Oregon State ... seven tackles with a TFL and a pass breakup against CSU.

2007—*Sporting News* and Scout.com second-team Freshman All-American ... CollegeSportsReport.com first-team Redshirt Freshman All-American ... honorable mention all-MWC ... played in all 13 games and started the last 11 at right end ... 63 tackles was the most among league's freshman linemen and the second-best freshman total at any position ... 63 tackles ranked fourth on the team ... also had 7.5 tackles for loss, 3.0 sacks, five pass breakups, three fumble recoveries, a forced fumble and an interception ... two double-figure tackle games (10 vs. Utah State and Navy) ... 10 tackles, 1.5 tackles for loss and a sack against Navy in bowl win ... eight tackles and a pass breakup versus UNLV ... six tackles, 1.5 sacks, a forced fumble and

UTAH FOOTBALL

Player Bios

UTAH FOOTBALL

a fumble recovery against New Mexico ... returned an interception 24 yards against UCLA.

2004—Redshirt.

HIGH SCHOOL: All-conference and preseason All-America quarterback as a senior in 2003 ... Timpanogos High (Utah) team captain lettered all four years ... ranked in the top 30 quarterbacks nationally by *Student Sports* ... honor roll.

PERSONAL: Son of Paul and Jennifer Kruger ... both parents played sports at Oregon State (father football; mother track and field) ... one of six children ... brother Dave is a freshman defensive lineman at Utah ... enjoys skiing (snow and water), snowboarding and rock climbing ... undecided on a major ... born Feb. 15, 1986 in Rexburg, Idaho.

YEAR	G/GS	UT	AT	TOT	TFL	SACK	PBU	INT
2007	13/11	24	39	63	7.5-33	3.0-22	5	1-24
2008	12/12	26	30	56	15.5-71	7.5-52	7	1-30
Totals	25/23	50	69	119	23-104	10.5-74	12	2-54



19

CORBIN LOUKS

Quarterback
6-0, 195, So.
1VL
Danville, Calif.
San Ramon Valley HS

UTAH: Second string QB has his own package of plays for every game ... blazing speed (4.42 40 was third-fastest on the team in spring tests) ... also throws the ball well ... came out of a redshirt year as a freshman in 2007 when starter Brian Johnson was hurt.

2008— Played in nine games, missing two due to a shoulder injury ... third on the team with 223 yards rushing ... three rushing touchdowns ... team-high 8.1 yards per carry ... best game of the year was against Colorado State with 109 yards rushing with two touchdowns and 1-for-1 passing for 37 yards ... had Utah's longest run of the season, a 69-yard rush for a score against CSU ... injured shoulder on his first play of the season, an 8-yard touchdown run against Michigan ... 4-for-7 passing for 104 yards ... 1-for-2 passing for 39 yards against San Diego State ... also caught a 33-yard pass against Weber State.

2007— Played in 10 games after coming out of a planned redshirt year in the third game ... finished as Utah's third-leading rusher with 33 carries for 162 yards (4.9 average) and a touchdown ... had a 41-yard run against SDSU ... rushed for a 16-yard TD against Louisville

... completed 5-of-8 passes for 41 yards and two touchdowns ... threw touchdown passes against UCLA and San Diego State ... completed both pass attempts (for 12 yards) and rushed for 25 yards against Navy in the Poinsettia Bowl ... Academic all-MWC ... made the Utah Athletics Academic Honor Roll.

HIGH SCHOOL: First-team all-East Bay Athletic League ... North Coast Section Offensive Player of the Year ... San Francisco Chronicle regional player of the year, 2005 and 2006 second-team all-metro QB ... Contra Costa Times first-team quarterback ... third-team all-state ... No. 3-ranked player in Cream of the Crop (Bay Area top 20) ... won Peter Villa Award as the tri-valley's most outstanding football player ... San Ramon Valley High (Calif.) MVP and team captain passed for 2,489 yards and 28 touchdowns (7 interceptions) ... won San Ramon's Iron Man award ... scholar-athlete.

PERSONAL: Son of Rob and Kelly Louks ... father played wide receiver for the University of Evansville ... sister Madison and brother Logan ... undecided on a major ... name rhymes with ow (l-ow-ks) ... born April 10, 1989.

YEAR	G/GS	CMP	ATT	INT	PCT	YDS	TD	LONG
2007	10/0	5	8	0	62.5	41	2	12
2008	9/0	4	7	0	57.1	104	0	39
Totals	19/0	9	15	0	60.0	145	2	39

YEAR	G/GS	RUSH	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG
2007	10/0	33	162	4.9	1	41
2008	9/0	27	218	8.1	3	69
Totals	19/0	60	380	6.4	4	69



6

DARRELL MACK

Running Back
6-0, 220, Sr.
3VL
Spring Valley, Calif.
Monte Vista HS

UTAH: Starter is splitting carries this year after rushing for 1,204 net yards in 2007 (the third-most in a season by a Ute) ... big, strong, punishing runner is also a receiving threat ... excellent pass and run blocker.

2008— Played in 12 games with 10 starts ... second on the team with 533 yards on 119 carries ... season-high 101 yards rushing on 18 carries with three touchdowns against Air Force, scoring the game-winning TD on a 9-yard rush ... was named MWC Player of the Week after the Air Force game and the final touchdown was nominated as an ESPN Pontiac Game-Changing Performance ... 75 yards on

14 carries against Utah State ... 13 receptions for 72 yards ... two catches for 16 yards vs. Utah State ... longest catch was a 13-yard grab against UNLV.

2007— Second-team all-Mountain West Conference ... played in 12 games and started the last 11 ... originally planned to redshirt and did not play in the first game ... finished second in the MWC and 33rd in the nation in rushing (100.3 yards per game) ... became the school's ninth all-time 1,000 yard rusher ... 100.3 rushing yards per game ranks ninth in a season at Utah ... 1,204 net yards is the third-most in a season at Utah ... led Utes with 253 carries for 1,204 yards (4.8 average) ... 12 rushing touchdowns is tied for the third-most ever in a season at Utah ... also had 21 catches for 144 yards to rank fourth on the team ... three receiving touchdowns was tied for first ... tied the school record with five-consecutive 100-yard rushing games ... six total 100-yard games: UCLA (107), Utah State (132), Louisville (163), San Diego State (131), TCU (100) and Colorado State (151) ... career-high 163 yards on 32 touches against Louisville ... scored three touchdowns in Utah's win at Louisville ... 76 yards and two touchdowns in Utah's bowl win over Navy ... in addition to 131 rushing yards against San Diego State, he caught six passes for 45 yards and a TD ... named Utah's Most Valuable Offensive Back.

2006— Played in eight games ... 43 rushes for 173 yards (4.0 average) ... scored a touchdown against Northern Arizona ... season high 14 carries and 46 yards at San Diego State ... long run of 29 yards vs. Colorado State ... also had two receptions for seven yards.

2005— True freshman played in nine games ... 39 rushes for 147 yards ... averaged 3.8 yards per rush ... also caught three passes for 13 yards ... rushed for a season-high 65 yards on 16 touches against Wyoming ... 36 yards on nine carries against Utah State ... 23 yards on six rushes against Georgia Tech in the Emerald Bowl ... caught two passes for nine yards against Wyoming.

PRIOR TO UTAH: First-team all-state, all-CIF and all-league as a senior in 2004 ... East County MVP and *Union Tribune* first team ... rushed 247 times for 2,452 yards and 27 touchdowns in 2004 ... as a junior, he made first-team all-CIF and all-league and was East County Rookie of the Year ... MVP of the CIF Championship after rushing 52 times for 254 yards ... 2003 season rushing totals: 237 attempts for 1,626 yards.

PERSONAL: Raised by grandparents Fairleigh and the late Larry Moore ... enjoys deep sea fishing and golf ... mass communication major ... first name is pronounced DER-ell ... born Oct. 10, 1986.



YEAR	G/GS	RUSH	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG
2005	9/0	39	147	3.8	0	18
2006	8/0	43	173	4.0	1	29
2007	12/11	253	1204	4.8	12	41
2008	12/10	119	533	4.5	3	26
Totals	41/21	454	2057	4.5	16	41



1
BRICE MCCAIN
Defensive Back
5-9, 182, Sr.
3VL
Terrell, Texas
Terrell HS

UTAH: Three-year starter has played in 48 games since his true freshman season ... excellent cover corner is critical to Utah's man defense ... fastest player on the team runs the 40 in 4.28 seconds ... also received the best score in the spring agility drills and ranked in the top two in the broad jump (10.04 feet) and standing triple jump (32'5").

2008- First team all-MWC pick started all 12 games at cornerback ... 34 tackles ... five pass breakups ... one interception came against Air Force ... season-high six tackles vs. BYU ... a TFL and three tackles vs. UNLV ... a sack and a pass breakup vs. New Mexico

2007- Second team all-MWC defensive back started all 13 games ... tied the school's single-game record for pass breakups with four against New Mexico ... 11 pass breakups is tied for fifth all-time at Utah in a season and was tied for third in the MWC in 2007 ... finished fifth in the MWC in passes defended with 12 (11 breakups and 1 interception) ... 28 tackles and one forced fumble ... season-best five tackles against Air Force ... four tackles in bowl win over Navy ... had a pass breakup and an interception versus UNLV ... on the kickoff return team for the first seven games and led the team with 18 KOR for 419 yards (23.3 average) ... career-best 102 yards in kickoff returns against UCLA (long of 46).

2006- Honorable mention all-Mountain West Conference kick returner also started 12 games at cornerback (played in all 13) ... led Utes with five pass breakups ... season-high three pass breakups vs. BYU ... had an interception against Colorado State ... 28 total tackles included a career-tying five tackles at New Mexico ... began returning kickoffs in game five and finished fourth in the MWC in kick return average (22.4 average) ... long returns of 54 yards at New Mexico and 43 yards at Wyoming.

2005- Appeared in 10 games with one start at cornerback ... 12 total tackles included 10 solo stops ... season-high five tackles against Colorado State ... two tackles against Utah

State, San Diego State and Brigham Young ... academic all-MWC.

HIGH SCHOOL: All-state and all-area ... all-district as a running back and defensive back ... county and Terrell High (Texas) MVP ... played cornerback, wide receiver and running back and returned punts and kickoffs ... also lettered in basketball and track ... ran 100 meters in 10.3 seconds ... on 400 meter relay team that placed second in the state (40.6 seconds).

PERSONAL: Son of Darrell Brockins and Tammie McCain ... has six siblings and two stepbrothers ... brothers Tony and Ricky play college basketball ... economics major ... born Dec. 10, 1986.

YEAR	G/GS	UT	AT	TOT	INT	PBU
2005	10/1	10	2	12	0	0
2006	13/12	15	13	28	1-(-4)	5
2007	13/13	22	6	28	1-0	11
2008	12/12	24	10	34	1-0	5
Totals	48/38	71	31	102	3-(-4)	21

YEAR	KOR	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG
2006	18	404	22.4	0	54
2007	18	419	23.3	0	46
2008	1	23	23.0	0	23
Totals	37	846	22.8	0	54



41
KOA MISI
Defensive Line
6-3, 263, Jr.
1VL
Santa Rosa, Calif.
Santa Rosa JC

UTAH: Strong, athletic defensive end is one of the best defensive linemen in the league ... best suited for end, he can also play tackle, where he started in 2007 ... 34-inch vertical jump ranks fourth on the team a is the best of the Ute linemen ... 10.04 foot broad jump is tied for the second-best on the team.

2008- Second-team all-MWC lineman ... started all 12 games, starting the Air Force game at tackle and the rest at end ... leads the Utes and is tied for fourth in the conference in forced fumbles with three ... tied for second on the team in tackles for loss (8.5) ... three sacks and six pass breakups ... forced a fumble against BYU that led to a score and had two pass breakups ... also forced fumbles against UNLV and Weber State ... 1.5 sacks against Michigan ... tied his career-high with nine tackles against Air Force, including two for losses ... two pass breakups against Oregon State.

2007- Played in all 13 games and started the last 11 ... played defensive end for the first two games, moving to tackle when injuries struck ... third on the team in tackles with 67 ... leading tackler on the line also had 8.0 tackles for loss, 2.5 sacks, two pass breakups and two fumble recoveries ... season-high nine tackles in bowl win over Navy ... eight tackles, including two sacks, and a fumble recovery against UCLA ... seven stops versus Utah State ... six tackles against New Mexico and UNLV ... recovered a fumble and returned it 28 yards against New Mexico ... academic all-MWC.

PRIOR TO UTAH: First-team all-conference defensive end helped Santa Rosa Junior College to a division title and a bowl invitation ... two-time first-team all-conference player for Montgomery High School (Calif.) ... Defensive Player of the Year ... Montgomery went 13-0 in 2005 and won the league title ... also lettered in baseball and basketball ... honor roll student.

PERSONAL: Son of Kathy Moix, Sione Misi and stepmother Melissa Misi ... father played football for Hawaii ... one sister ... enjoys snowboarding and wakeboarding ... name is pronounced ko-a mee-see ... full name is Nawa'akoa Lisiate Foti Analeseanoa Misi ... sociology major ... born Jan. 17, 1987.

YEAR	G/GS	UT	AT	TOT	TFL	SACK
2007	13/11	29	38	67	8.0-31	2.5-10
2008	12/12	27	36	63	8.5-34	3.0-18
Totals	25/23	56	74	130	16.5-65	5.5-28



39
CLINT MOWER
Snapper
6-3, 215, Sr.
2VL
Alpine, Utah
Dixie State College

UTAH: Three-year starting snapper has the rare role as both the long and short snapper ... extremely reliable and accurate ... one-time walk-on earned scholarship.

2008- Played in all 12 games for all of Utah's snaps (long and short) ... one tackle on special teams against TCU.

2007- Played in all 13 games ... special teams starter handled every one of Utah's long and short snaps ... also had six tackles on special teams ... Academic all-MWC ... made Utah's Athletics Academic Honor Roll.

2006- Starting snapper in all 13 games ... began the season as the long snapper (punts), and added short snapping duties (field goal/



Player Bios

PAT) in the final four games ... did not make a bad snap all season (59 long snaps/20 short snaps) ... made Dean's List and Athletics Academic Honor Roll.

PRIOR TO UTAH: Transfer from Dixie State College ... played in NJCAA National Championship, the 2003 Dixie Rotary Bowl ... lettered four times in football and baseball at Lone Peak High (Utah) ... named second team all-state in 2002 ... team captain ... helped Lone Peak to 2002 regional title and state championship berth ... honor roll student

PERSONAL: Son of Douglas and Jody Dolton Mower (rhymes with flower) ... one of seven children ... biology major ... born Nov. 2, 1984.

**50****MO NEAL**

Linebacker
6-2, 230, Fr.
RS
Oakland, Calif.
San Leandro HS

UTAH: Knee problems that slowed him seem to be solved with midseason scope ... backup "mac" linebacker has enormous potential ... improves weekly.

2008—Played in eight games, including the final six games of the year ... nine tackles with one tackle for loss ... season-high four stops against San Diego State ... three tackles against Colorado State.

2007—Redshirt ... made Utah's Athletics Academic Honor Roll.

HIGH SCHOOL: 2006 Cream of the Crop and preseason All-American ... first-team all league and second-team all-East Bay ... played for two-time HAAL champion San Leandro High School (Calif.) ... 48 tackles, two interceptions for touchdowns, four forced fumbles, and two fumble recoveries his senior year.

PERSONAL: Son of Ginger Neal and Gary Dugger ... brother Anthony ... enjoys cooking ... undecided on a major ... full name is Maurice Neal ... born Jan. 2, 1988.

YEAR	G/GS	UT	AT	TOT	TFL	SACK
2008	8/0	4	5	9	1.0-3	0.0-0

**56****GREG NEWMAN**

Defensive Line
6-4, 260, Sr.
2VL
Thousand Oaks, Calif.
Colorado

UTAH: One of the best defensive tackles in the league ... extremely tough ... initially walked on to the squad but was placed on scholarship in 2007.

2008—Started all 12 games at tackle in a breakout season ... leads Utah in fumble recoveries (2) which is tied for the sixth-most in the MWC ... tied for second on the team with 8.5 tackles for loss ... two pass breakups ... first career interception, seven tackles (1.5 for loss) against Wyoming ... eight tackles (including two for losses) against UNLV ... five tackles (two for loss, one sack) along with a fumble recovery against Weber State ... had a pass breakup against UNLV and Utah State.
2007—Played in all 13 games and started four (two games at right end, two at tackle) ... 12 total tackles ... two tackles for loss and one sack ... two pass breakups ... four tackles against Air Force ... three stops, two tackles for loss and a sack, against TCU ... broke up a pass against UCLA and Brigham Young.
2006—Played in all 13 games as a backup defensive end ... 11 total tackles ... 2.0 tackles for loss and one fumble recovery.
2005—Transfer from Colorado could practice but not play due to NCAA transfer rules.

PRIOR TO UTAH: Redshirted at Colorado in 2004 ... in high school, he was named a *PrepStar* All-American and all-West, as well as *SuperPrep* all-Far West ... Defensive Player of the Year for Ventura County and the Marmonte League ... twice named first-team all-CIF, all-Marmonte League and all-Ventura County ... second team all-league honoree as a sophomore ... MVP of the CIF Championships, when he had 14 tackles, two for loss, and an interception ... had 115 tackles his senior season ... three-year starter on defense for Westlake HS (Calif.) also played some fullback ... helped Westlake reach the state finals twice, going 14-0 and winning the title his senior year.

PERSONAL: Son of Terry and Yvonne Newman ... hobbies include snowboarding, cars and computers ... attained the Star rank in Boy Scouts ... second cousin, Jentry Beckstead, pitches in the Colorado Rockies farm system ... economics major ... born Feb. 1, 1986.

YEAR	G/GS	UT	AT	TOT	TFL	SACK	INT
2006	13/0	6	5	11	2.0-3	0-0	0-0
2007	13/4	4	8	12	2.0-8	1.0-7	0-0
2008	12/12	17	29	46	8.5-33	1.5-17	1-0
Totals	38/16	27	42	69	12.5-44	2.5-24	1-0

**82****JOHN PEEL**

Wide Receiver
6-1, 191, Sr.
SQ
Scottsdale, Ariz.
Chaparral HS

UTAH: Playing for the first time since 2005 after recovering from back injury ... plays mostly for special teams but also has designed plays as a receiver ... plans to apply for a hardship extension after the season.

2008—Appeared in all 12 games, primarily on special teams ... six punt returns for 44 yards, a 7.3 average ... had four punt returns for a 49 yards against UNLV ... caught a seven-yard pass against Weber State ... eight tackles on special teams.

2007—Could not practice or play due to back problems.

2006—Could not practice or play due to back problems.

2005—Played in seven games total, including the first six games of the season and the final game (the Emerald Bowl) ... all of his tackles were on special teams ... three total tackles ... two solo stops against TCU.

2004—Redshirt injured his knee in preseason camp and had surgery ... named to the Utah Athletics Academic Honor Roll.

HIGH SCHOOL: Two-time first-team all-region and all-state ... Junior All-American in 2002 ... Super All-State team ... N.E. Valley Player of the Year ... set state records for most touchdowns in a career (40) ... holds every receiving record at Chaparral High (Ariz.) ... as a senior, had 55 receptions for 1,180 yards and 19 TDs ... career stats included 145 receptions, 2,700 yards and 40 TDs ... Chaparral was 2002 Arizona 4A state champion ... team made 4A state semi-finals and was East Sky region champ in 2003.

PERSONAL: Son of Dan and Claudia Peel ... father played football and mother played tennis and ran track at Northern Illinois ... mother now runs marathons ... sister Jamie is a student at Arizona State ... economics major ... full name is Jonathon Daniel Peel ... born May 9, 1986 in Bloomington, Ind.



YEAR	G/GS	REC	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG
2005	7/0	0	0	0	0	0
2006	0/0	0	0	0	0	0
2007	0/0	0	0	0	0	0
2008	12/0	1	7	7.0	0	7
Totals	19/0	1	7	7.0	0	7



16
DAVID REED
 Wide Receiver
 6-0, 184, Jr.
 JC
 New Britain, Conn.
 Pasadena City College

UTAH: Speedy receiver makes a bigger impact each week ... only thing holding him back is three senior starters ahead of him ... league's best kick returner.

2008—Honorable mention All-MWC kick-returner ... played in 12 games at both kick returner and receiver ... ranked 29th in the NCAA and third in the conference in kick return average (25.6) ... 23 returns for 588 yards ... four returns for 142 yards, including a season-long 79-yard return, against Oregon State ... three returns for 73 yards against TCU ... 69 yards on two returns with a long of 49 yards vs. UNLV ... scored five touchdowns on 23 catches for 369 yards at receiver ... four catches for 87 yards with two touchdowns against San Diego State ... a 47-yard touchdown catch against Air Force and had two catches for 73 yards in the game ... three receptions for 73 yards and a touchdown vs. Colorado State ... one rush for 15 yards to score a touchdown against UNLV.

PRIOR TO UTAH: First-team *JC Gridwire* All-American ... set national junior college reception record with 111 catches in 10 games in 2007 ... averaged 166.1 yards per game receiving ... broke every game and career reception record at Pasadena City College ... PCC's Offensive Player of the Year in 2007 ... first-team all-conference ... prepped at New London High (Conn.), where he was first-team all-conference and all-state ... New London won two state championships.

PERSONAL: Son of Karen Reed ... one brother and one sister ... full name is Brandon David Reed ... born Mar. 22, 1987 in Dubuque, Iowa.

YEAR	G/GS	REC	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG
2008	12/0	23	369	16.0	5	47

YEAR	KOR	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG
2008	23	588	25.6	0	79



7
RJ RICE
 Defensive Back
 5-8, 185, Sr.
 2VL
 Salt Lake City
 Southern Utah

UTAH: One-time walk-on backs up at strong safety ... plays a crucial role on Utah's special teams.

2008—Saw action in all 12 games, primarily on special teams ... returned a fumble on an errant punt for a touchdown at Wyoming ... 13 total stops ... season-high three tackles against Colorado State ... two tackles each against San Diego State and BYU.

2007—Played in all 13 games, starting four at free safety ... also played on special teams ... 22 total tackles ... two tackles for loss ... in his first start, he had a career-high nine tackles (two for loss) against Utah State ... three tackles and an interception against TCU ... three stops and a fumble recovery against New Mexico ... Academic all-MWC.

2006—Played in 12 games, missing the Colorado State contest with an injury ... special teams standout made eight tackles, most coming on kickoff and punt coverage.

PRIOR TO UTAH: Attended Southern Utah in 2003 before leaving for an LDS church mission ... first team all-state and all-region in high school ... Olympus High (Utah) team captain ... set school single-season records for total yards (1,666), touchdowns (22) and rushing TDs (21) ... lettered three years in football.

PERSONAL: Son of Reynold T. and Sandra Rice ... two brothers and one sister ... father graduated from Utah ... business major ... full name is Reynold J. Rice ... born Sept. 14, 1984.

YEAR	G/GS	UT	AT	TOT	TFL	INT
2006	12/0	6	2	8	0-0	0-0
2007	13/4	10	12	22	2-0-4	1-3
2008	12/0	8	5	13	0-0-0	0-0
Totals	37/4	24	19	43	2-0-4	1-3



31
DESHAWN RICHARD
 Defensive Back
 6-0, 195, Sr.
 1VL
 Las Vegas, Nev.
 Victor Valley College

UTAH: Most of his playing time comes on special teams ... also sees some quality minutes at safety ... member of the 2007 signing class came to school as a mid-year junior college transfer.

2008—Played in 11 games on both special teams and at safety and was one of four safeties to start against Air Force ... tied for third in the MWC with three interceptions and third in interceptions per game (0.27) ... named the MWC Defensive Player of the Week after returning two interceptions for touchdowns on back-to-back defensive series against San Diego State, tying the school record ... 127 return yards against SDSU is the second-most in school history ... 89-yard interception return against SDSU is the third-longest in school history ... also had a pick against Utah State ... 23 tackles on the year ... season-high five tackles against Air Force.

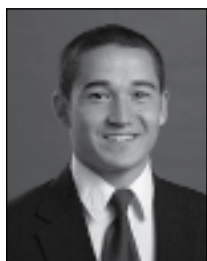
2007—Played in all 13 games, primarily on special teams ... six total tackles ... season-high two tackles against Wyoming.

PRIOR TO UTAH: 2006 second-team all-conference safety for Victor Valley College ... prepped at Rancho High School in Las Vegas, Nev. ... Rancho Valley's defensive MVP and Athlete of the Year as a junior and senior ... lettered in football, basketball and track ... honor roll student.

PERSONAL: Son of Janice Richard ... one brother and one sister ... sociology major ... born May 12, 1986.

YEAR	G/GS	UT	AT	TOT	PBU	INT
2007	13/0	3	3	6	0	0-0
2008	11/1	17	6	23	0	3-138
Totals	24/1	20	9	29	0	3-138

Player Bios



35

LOUIE SAKODA

Kicker/Punter
5-9, 178, Sr.
3VL
San Jose, Calif.
Branham HS

UTAH: 2008 Ray Guy and Lou Groza award top-three finalist has started at punter since his true freshman season and as the place kicker for the past three years ... only the second player ever to make the finals of the Ray Guy and Lou Groza awards in the same season ... 2008 Consensus All-America kicker, earning first-team honors from the American Football Coaches Association (AFCA), Football Writers Association (FWAA), Walter Camp and The Sporting News ... 2008 Draddy Trophy finalist and National Football Foundation Scholar-Athlete (which came with an \$18,000 postgraduate scholarship) ... 2008 ESPN The Magazine first-team Academic All-America kicker ... finalist for the Lowe's Senior Class Award and Wuerffel Trophy ... 2008 Midseason All-America place kicker by CBSSports.com, The Sporting News Today and Rivals.com ... 2007 first-team All-America punter by the FWAA and CBSSports.com ... 2007 first-team All-America place kicker by Rivals.com ... three-time Mountain West Conference Special Teams Player of the Year (2006-08) ... named MWC Special Teams Player of the Week a league-record 12 times in his career ... three-time Ray Guy top 10 semifinalist (2006-08) ... two-time Lou Groza Award semifinalist (2007-08) ... holds most of Utah's kicking and punting career records (see Career Record Watch) ... holds the MWC record with 56 career field goals ... 301 points broke Utah's 76-year old career scoring record ... 86.15 career field goal percentage ranks first among all active NCAA FBS players with at least 50 makes ... made 56 consecutive PATs from 2006-07 ... 42.8% (101-of-236) of career punts downed inside the 20-yard line ... 22 punts downed inside the 5-yard line in his career ... fourth nationally among active NCAA FBS punters in career punts (236) and fifth in career punt yards (9,917) ... first in the nation for active dual kickers and punters in career punts (236) and career punt yards (9,917) ... 3-for-4 for 51 yards passing on fake punt plays in his career, along with 32 yards rushing ... three-time MWC Scholar Athlete and Academic All-MWC student carries a 3.73 cumulative GPA in business ... Vice President of Utah's Student Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) ... participated in a campaign with the governor's office to combat drunk driving.

CAREER RECORD WATCH

Field Goal Pct.: .861 (1st)
Field Goals Made: 56 (1st)
Field Goal Attempts: 65 (2nd)
PAT Made: 133 (1st)
PAT Attempts: 139 (1st)
Scoring (Overall): 301 (1st)
Punts: 236 (1st)
Punt Yards: 9,917 (1st)
Punt Average: 42.02 (3rd)
50-yard Punts: 48 (1st/T)

2008—Second player ever to be named a top-three finalist for both the Lou Groza (place-kicking) and Ray Guy (punting) awards ... Consensus All-America kicker, earning first-team honors from the AFCA, FWAA, The Sporting News and Walter Camp ... Draddy Trophy finalist and National Football Foundation Scholar-Athlete ... ESPN The Magazine first-team All-America kicker ... finalist for the Lowe's Senior Class Award and Wuerffel Trophy ... Midseason All-America place-kicker by CBSSports.com, The Sporting News Today and Rivals.com ... MWC Special Teams Player of the Year ... first-team All-MWC punter and kicker ... five-time MWC Special Teams Player of the Week ... two-time Lou Groza 'Star of the Week' (Sept. 1 and Nov. 3) ... 21-of-23 field goals (91.3%) ... only two misses were from 48 and 54 yards in extremely windy conditions ... average make is 38.8 yards, average miss 51 yards ... second in the nation in kick-scoring points (115) and eighth in points scored from all positions ... leads the MWC and is seventh in the nation in scoring (9.58 ppg) ... 91.3 field goal percentage ranks second in the nation and is the second-best percentage in a season at Utah ... 17-of-17 from 47-yards and in and 2-of-3 from 50 yards and out ... tied for third in the country in made field goals (21) and is tied for fourth in field goals made beyond 40 yards (8) and field goals made beyond 50 yards (2) ... has a current streak of 14 consecutive field goals ... set Utah single-season records for field goals (21), PATs (52), points (115) and points per game (9.58) ... 52-of-53 in PATs (one was blocked) ... tied the school record for PAT kicks in a game with a 9-for-9 effort against San Diego State ... kicked the second game-winning field goal of his career against Oregon State — a 37-yarder with 0:00 on the clock as part of a 3-for-3 effort on the night ... career long 53-yard field goal in the third quarter against Michigan proved the game-winning score (also tied for the fourth-longest field goal in school history) ... tied the school record for field goals in a game with four against Michigan ... tied the school record for kicking points in a game vs. Weber State with 16 ... averaging 41.7 yards per punt even though he sacrifices distance for placement and hang time ... Utah is third in the nation in

punt coverage (3.11 yards per return) ... 42% (21-of-50) of punts downed inside the 20-yard line, including 12 inside the 15-yard line and five inside the 5-yard line ... downed four of five punts against New Mexico inside the 20-yard line, including one on the 2-yard line and one on the 1-yard line (with 1:58 left in the game and Utah holding a three-point lead) ... 12 punts of 50-plus yards ... career-long 81-yard punt against Wyoming (the fifth-longest in school history) ... three punts of 50 yards or more against BYU ... 1-of-2 passing for nine yards on fake punt plays.

2007—First-team All-America punter by the FWAA and CBS.com ... SI.com and College Football News' second-team All-America punter ... Rivals.com first-team All-America kicker ... second-team All-America kicker by Phil Steele and College Football News ... MWC Special Teams Player of the Year ... first-team all-conference punter and second-team all-MWC kicker ... Ray Guy Award semifinalist (top 10) ... Lou Groza Award semifinalist ... four-time MWC Special Teams Player of the Week ... finished No. 1 in the MWC and No. 11 in the nation in punting average (44.3) ... ranked third in the nation among dual punters/kickers in yards per punt ... 73 punts ranks third all-time in a season at Utah ... 3,231 yards ranks second in a season ... 28-of-73 total punts downed inside the 20-yard line ... had six punts fall inside the 5-yard line ... 21 punts of 50 yards or longer is the second-best season total in school history ... four 60-yard punts included a long of 67 ... set a school record with 19 field goals (which he broke again in 2008) ... tied for third in the nation in field goal percentage (86.4%) for kickers with at least 20 attempts ... made 19-of-22 field goals ... third in the country in field goals made from beyond 40 yards (10) ... 10-of-13 from 40 yards and out and 1-of-2 from beyond 50 yards ... only misses were from 45, 48 and 51 yards ... kicked a (then) career-long 51-yard field goal against San Diego State ... 59% of his field goal attempts were from beyond 40 yards ... averaged 38.6 yards per made field goal ... perfect inside 40 yards (9-of-9) ... made 15 consecutive field goals — a school record — before missing a 48-yarder wide left ... made three field goals against UCLA, San Diego State and Wyoming ... 38-of-40 in PATs ... led team in scoring with 95 points ... in fake punt situations, he was 2-of-2 passing for 42 yards (long of 41 against Wyoming) and rushed twice for 26 yards ... MWC Scholar Athlete, Academic all-MWC and member of Utah's Athletics-Academics Honor Roll.

2006—MWC Co-Special Teams Player of the Year ... Armed Forces Bowl MVP ... honorable mention all-MWC place-kicker and punter ... Ray Guy Award semifinalist



(top 10) ... honorable mention Sophomore All-American by CollegeFootballNews.com ... three-time MWC Special Teams Player of the Week ... averaged 44.0 yards per punt, which ranked second in the MWC and 13th in the nation ... led Utah to a No. 1 national ranking in net punting (41.6) by placing more than 50% (30-of-59) of his punts inside the 20-yard-line... 14 punts for 50 yards or longer season-long punt of 75 yards against Northern Arizona ... made 80% (16-of-20) of his field goal attempts ... two of his four FG misses were from 47 yards or longer ... 91 kick-scoring points ... led the MWC in PAT scoring, making 43-of-43 attempts ... Armed Forces Bowl MVP made all four field goal attempts, including a season-long 45-yarder ... four field goals vs. Tulsa tied the school single-game record ... also averaged 47.3 yards punting in Utah's bowl win – placing two of his three punts inside Tulsa's 20-yard line ... kicked a 37-yard game-winning field goal against Air Force as time expired ... made his first collegiate field goal attempt, a 44-yarder at UCLA ... made his first seven field-goal attempts before missing a 50-yarder ... rushed for 32 yards on two fake punts ... MWC Scholar Athlete and Academic all-MWC ... also made the Athletics Academic Honor Roll.
2005– Played and started in 11 games at punter ... also handled kickoffs ... punted 54 times for an average of 37.1 yards ... 22 of his punts (41%) were downed inside the opponent's 20-yard line ... season-best 52-yard punt came against Colorado State ... MWC Scholar Athlete and Academic all-MWC.

HIGH SCHOOL: Two-time all-league player for Branham HS (San Jose, Calif.) ... named Most Outstanding Special Teams Player ... two-time all-academic team ... made 98-of-103 PATs ... had a long field goal of 47 yards as a senior ... averaged 51 yards per punt as a junior ... also helped baseball team to league title in 2004 ... three-year varsity baseball player at pitcher and center field.

PERSONAL: Son of Raymond and Mary Sakoda ... business major ... born Oct. 28, 1986.

YEAR	G	PUNT	YDS	AVG	LONG	I20
2005	12	54	2002	37.1	52	22
2006	13	59	2598	44.0	75	30
2007	13	73	3231	44.3	67	28
2008	12	50	2086	41.7	81	21
Totals	50	236	9917	42.0	81	101

YEAR	G	PAT	PCT	FG-A	PCT	LONG
2006	13	43-43	1.000	16-20	.800	45
2007	13	38-40	.943	19-22	.864	51
2008	12	52-53	.981	21-23	.913	53
Totals	38	133-139	.957	56-65	.862	53



45
COLT SAMPSON
 Tight End
 6-4, 250, Sr.
 2VL
 Pleasant Grove, Utah
 Pleasant Grove HS

UTAH: Utah's leading receiving tight end has exceptional career touchdown-to-reception ratio (7:15).
2008–Appeared in all 12 games, starting against Weber State ... 10 receptions for 74 yards (7.4 average) and five touchdowns ... career-high three receptions for 28 yards and a touchdown against UNLV ... two catches for five yards and a touchdown at San Diego State ... also caught touchdown passes against Utah State and BYU.
2007–Played in nine games, starting two ... injured his knee in late August and missed the first four games ... two catches for 15 yards (long of nine yards) ... Academic all-MWC ... named to Utah's Athletics Academic Honor Roll.
2006–Played in all 13 games, starting two ... two touchdowns on three receptions ... totaled 18 receiving yards ... hauled in scoring passes against UNLV and BYU.
2005–Played for the scout teams.
2004–Redshirt was named to the Athletics Academic Honor Roll.

HIGH SCHOOL: All-state as a senior in 2000 ... Pleasant Grove High (Utah) team captain ... lettered three years in football, basketball and baseball ... set school record in basketball for blocked shots ... Pleasant Grove High student of the month and student of the day ... Eagle scout.

PERSONAL: Son of Dale and Cindy Sampson ... father played football at Southern Utah ... married (Patrice) ... enjoys hunting and fishing ... parks, recreation and tourism major ... full name is Colt Jay Sampson ... born Mar. 18, 1983.

YEAR	G/GS	REC	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG
2006	13/2	3	18	6.0	2	12
2007	9/2	2	15	7.5	0	9
2008	12/1	10	74	7.4	5	13
Totals	34/5	15	107	7.1	7	13



72
CALEB SCHLAUDERAFF
 Offensive Line
 6-4, 305, So.
 1VL
 Shelton, Wash.
 Shelton HS

UTAH: Two-year starting left guard ... stepped in as an injury replacement his freshman season and won the job permanently.
2008–Started all 12 games at left guard ... posted a team-best 46 pancake blocks ... 31 knockdowns and 19 cuts ... 11 pancake blocks against Oregon State was a career-high and the best by a Ute this season ... nine pancakes at Utah State.
2007–Played in all 13 games and started at left guard in the last 10 ... in on 686 plays in the regular season (bowl stats were not kept) ... 27 pancake blocks, 31 knockdowns and 24 cuts ... season-best eight pancake blocks against UCLA ... five knockdowns against both Louisville and San Diego State ... Academic all-MWC.
2006–Redshirt.

HIGH SCHOOL: All-stater in 2005 was a three-time all-conference and two-time all-region selection ... played in the all-state game ... ranked in the top 25 recruits in Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Alaska by the *News Tribune* and in the top 15 juniors in Washington by the *Seattle Times* ... two-year Shelton High (Wash.) team captain ... Shelton won the Narrows League championship in 2004 ... won three letters in football and one in basketball ... set 15 school records in the weight room ... grew four inches and gained 50 pounds his freshman year ... member of the National Honor Society.

PERSONAL: Son of Mark and Pam Schlauderaff ... father graduated from Minnesota and mother from Washington ... dad is a doctor and mom is a nurse ... two brothers ... oldest brother plays football for Eastern Oregon ... undecided on a major ... name is pronounced kay-leb schlah-der-off ... full name is Caleb Hunter Schlauderaff.

UTAH FOOTBALL

Player Bios


74
COREY SEIULI

Offensive Line
6-3, 315, Sr.
2VL
Provo, Utah
Dixie State College

UTAH: Backup left guard also plays on special teams ... before enrolling in the U. in 2006, he had not played football in four years.
2008—Saw playing time in 12 games, mostly on special teams ... six games on the offensive line, including a start at right guard against Weber State ... posted three pancake blocks ... eight knockdowns and five cut blocks.
2007—Played in 12 games, starting the first three at left guard ... ankle injury caused him to miss one game (UNLV) and slowed him for the remainder of the season ... participated in 188 plays in the regular season (bowl stats were not kept), which was the most of the non-starters on the line ... five knockdowns and a cut ... also played on special teams.
2006—Played in 11 games, including a start at left guard in the regular-season finale against BYU ... in regular season games (stats were not kept for the bowl game), he participated in 123 offensive plays ... seven knockdowns and two pancake blocks ... also contributed on special teams.

PRIOR TO UTAH: 2002 all-conference player for Dixie State College ... Dixie won the 2002 conference title and Rotary Bowl ... prepped at Timpview High (Utah) ... second-team all-region ... won three letters in football, two in track and one in wrestling ... made the honor roll as a junior and senior.

PERSONAL: Guardians are his aunt and uncle, Peti and Brad Taylor ... two siblings ... served an LDS church mission ... mass communication major ... last name is pronounced say-oo-lee ... full name is Corey Ili Seiuli ... born Aug. 19, 1984 in Los Angeles.


90
DERRICK SHELBY

Defensive End
6-3, 245, Fr.
RS
Houston, Texas
Hightower HS

UTAH: The biggest surprise of the 2008 season ... former end is having an outstanding season as an undersized (245-pound) nose tackle ... 33.5 inch vertical jump.
2008—Appeared in 11 games, starting eight after injuries at the tackle position ... 30 tackles with 3.5 for loss ... tied career high with six tackles against Oregon State, including a sack and a forced fumble ... six tackles at Wyoming ... broke up passes against TCU and BYU ... recovered a fumble at Utah State.
2007—Redshirt ... made Utah's Athletics Academic Honor Roll.

HIGH SCHOOL: All-district first team as a senior in 2006 ... recorded 15 sacks ... Hightower High School (Texas) won the 2006 district championship ... also lettered two years in track ... won an academic excellence award.

PERSONAL: Son of Alisa and Derrick Shelby Sr. ... one sister ... undecided on a major ... full name is Derrick Shelby II ... born Mar. 4, 1989.

YEAR	G/GS	UT	AT	TOT	TFL	INT
2008	11/8	8	22	30	3.5-9.0	0.0-0


98
SEALVER SILIGA

Defensive Tackle
6-3, 325, Fr.
HS
West Jordan, Utah
Copper Hills HS

UTAH: True freshman is in the regular rotation at tackle ... also sees time on special teams.

2008—Played in 11 games ... had a tackle in his first appearance of the season against UNLV ... had three two-tackle games against Weber State, Wyoming and Colorado State.

HIGH SCHOOL: All-state and all-conference ... lettered four years in football at Copper Hills High (Utah) ... 2007 state power lifting champion can squat 560, bench press 390, clean 315 and dead lift 600 pounds ... No.

25 ranked prep defensive tackle in the nation according to scout.com.

PERSONAL: Son of Siala and Sinatala Siliga ... has 10 siblings (five brothers and five sisters) ... full name is Tupaimoefitpo Siliga and nickname is Sealver ... name is pronounced silver see-linga ... born April 26, 1990.

YEAR	G/GS	UT	AT	TOT	TFL	INT
2008	11/0	1	6	7	0.5-1	0-0


4
SEAN SMITH

Defensive Back
6-3, 214, Jr.
2VL
Pasadena, Calif.
Blair HS

UTAH: Converted receiver has developed into one of the best cornerbacks in the nation ... nine career interceptions and 15 pass breakups in two seasons ... great size (6'3") for a corner ... also has long arms and good instincts ... came to Utah as a running back, moved to receiver in 2006, then defensive back.

2008—First-team All-MWC cornerback ... played in all 12 games, starting 11 ... tied for first in the league in interceptions (5) and is first in interception yards (151) ... leads the team and is second in the MWC in passes defended with 13 (five interceptions, eight breakups) ... had two interceptions against Wyoming, one for a 25-yard touchdown ... had his longest return of the year against BYU, a 38-yard return ... one interception and two pass breakups against both Michigan and TCU ... 40 tackles and one TFL ... season-high six tackles against Oregon State ... five tackles (one for loss) vs. Colorado State.

2007—Played in all 13 games, starting 10 ... nine of his starts were at corner and one came at nickel back ... four interceptions led Utah and tied the third-best individual total in the MWC ... seven pass breakups was the second most by a Ute ... 32 total tackles ... one tackle for loss ... tied the school's single-game record with four pass breakups against New Mexico ... two interceptions against Oregon State ... one pick, three tackles and a tackle for loss vs. San Diego State ... season-high six tackles against Utah State.

2006—Played in all 13 games ... played receiver in the first 11 games and then moved to cornerback for the last two ... seven rushes for 63 yards (9.0 average) and one reception for 12 yards ... 30-yard rush vs. Colorado State ... after moving to defense, he had an assisted tackle against both BYU and Tulsa.

2005—Redshirt.



HIGH SCHOOL: All-conference, all-state, All-American ... league Offensive Back of the Year ... led Blair High School (Calif.) to its best record in 10 years as a senior ... rushed for over 1,500 yards, with 18 rushing touchdowns ... also had 547 receiving yards and over 400 yards in kickoff returns.

PERSONAL: Son of Barbara Smith ... mass communication major ... born July 14, 1987.

YEAR	G/GS	UT	AT	TOT	INT	PBU
2006	13/0	0	2	2	0-0	0
2007	13/10	20	12	32	4-0	7
2008	12/12	19	21	40	5-151	8
Totals	38/22	39	35	74	9-151	15



25

R.J. STANFORD

Defensive Back
5-11, 180, Jr.
2VL
Chino, Calif.
Chino HS

UTAH: Starting nickel back ... second fastest player on the team runs a 4.29 second 40 ... recruited as a running back—making the switch to defense late in his true freshman season.

2008—Played in all 12 games, starting three in the nickel package ... 36 tackles ... recorded sacks against Weber State and Wyoming ... season-high six tackles against UNLV.

2007—Played in all 13 games, and made seven starts ... four starts were at corner and three at nickel ... 33 total tackles ... two tackles for loss were both sacks ... five pass breakups ... had five tackles and a sack against New Mexico ... four tackles and two pass breakups against Brigham Young ... two pass breakups against Oregon State.

2006—True freshman played in 12 games, missing only the season opener ... moved from running back to defensive back during the first week of November ... prior to the switch, he had 11 rushes for 48 yards (4.4 average) ... also played on special teams ... five tackles included two stops against TCU ... recovered a fumble against UNLV.

PRIOR TO UTAH: First-team all C.I.F. and all-league ... conference offensive player of the year in 2004-05 ... Chino High (Calif.) MVP ... carried the ball 233 times without a fumble as a senior, when he rushed for 1,800 yards and 28 touchdowns ... Chino HS was the Sierra League champion in 2003-04 ... won three letters in football and track ... 2004 league 100-, 200- and 400-meter champion.

PERSONAL: Son of La Shawn Stanford ... one sister ... undecided on a major ... full name is Raymond Perry Stanford Jr. ... born May 6, 1988.

YEAR	G/GS	UT	AT	TOT	TFL	PBU	FR
2006	12/0	3	2	5	0-0	0	1
2007	13/7	25	8	33	2.0-12	5	2
2008	12/3	25	11	36	2.0-17	0	0
Totals	37/10	53	21	74	4.0-29	5	3



10

STEVENSON SYLVESTER

Linebacker
6-2, 224, Jr.
2VL
Las Vegas, Nev.
Valley HS

UTAH: All-conference player is the starting rover linebacker... has started at least part-time since his true freshman season ... ideal profile for the position: rangy, fluid and fast.

2008—Second-team all-MWC ... started in all 12 games ... second on the team in tackles with 66 ... led Utah in tackles in conference games (53) ... led the Utes with a season-high 10 tackles against TCU, along with a half-sack ... nine tackles with 1.5 TFL against UNLV ... forced a fumble on the second play of the game against San Diego State that led to a score ... a forced fumble, pass breakup and nine tackles vs. Colorado State ... two pass breakups against New Mexico ... also had a pass breakup against Michigan ... eight tackles (1.5 for loss) vs. Air Force.

2007—Honorable mention all-MWC ... played in all 13 games, starting eight at rover linebacker ... second on the team in both tackles (86) and tackles for loss (10) ... five pass breakups and a forced fumble ... career-high 14 tackles, including 2.5 for loss, led the Utes against UNLV ... nine tackles against both TCU and Wyoming ... eight tackles against San Diego State ... recorded sacks against UCLA, Utah State and Louisville ... six tackles in bowl win over Navy.

2006—True freshman played in 11 games, making three starts (two at rover and one at middle linebacker) ... injured his knee on the opening kickoff against Wyoming and missed the next week's game at New Mexico ... started games against Northern Arizona, Utah State and TCU ... 23 tackles with 1.5 tackles for loss and 0.5 sacks ... also had a pass breakup, forced fumble and interception ... returned interception 45 yards for a score at Utah State.

PRIOR TO UTAH: First-team all-state and all-league linebacker and tight end in 2005 ... Valley High (Nevada) MVP and team captain

... recorded 67 tackles (44 solo) in 2005 ... also had 22 tackles for loss, five sacks, four caused fumbles and give pass breakups ... had over 400 receiving yards and six touchdowns as a senior tight end ... won three letters in football and two in basketball ... hoops team won the 2004 conference and region titles ... also played in the band for two years.

PERSONAL: Son of Worrel Sylvester and Angela Levi ... mother played basketball for Southern Utah for four years ... raised with his two brothers and four cousins from age four to 15 before moving to Las Vegas ... brother Jason played basketball for Santa Rosa JC ... cousin Geno Odong plays football at Utah State ... cousin Jennifer played basketball for Cerro Coso CC ... coached in basketball by his mother, who critiqued him after every football, basketball, baseball and soccer game he ever played ... played the saxophone from fifth through 10th grade ... communication major ... nickname is Sly ... full name is Stevenson Ellis Sylvester ... born July 18, 1988.

YEAR	G/GS	UT	AT	TOT	TFL	SACK	PBU
2006	11/3	7	16	23	1.5-2	0.5-1	1
2007	13/8	45	41	86	10.0-47	3.0-30	5
2008	12/12	28	38	66	5.0-14	0.5-7	4
Totals	36/23	80	95	175	16.5-63	4.0-38	10



77

ZANE TAYLOR

Offensive Line
6-2, 305, So.
1VL
Moab, Utah
Grand County HS

UTAH: First-year starting center ... one of the team's strongest players, he can bench press 405 pounds and squat 550 pounds.

2008—Honorable mention all-MWC ... started all 12 games at center ... 15 pancake blocks ... 35 knockdowns ... 22 cuts ... seven knockdowns vs. Michigan.

2007—Played in eight games, mostly on special teams ... backed up at right guard and participated in 20 offensive plays ... had two pancake blocks ... Academic all-MWC ... made the Dean's List and Utah's Athletics Academic Honor Roll.

2006—Redshirt ... won the team's Future Award for Offense ... made the Athletics Academic Honor Roll.

HIGH SCHOOL: All-state and state MVP as a junior and senior ... Rivals.com Top 70 defensive tackle ... led Grand County High (Utah) to the 2005 2A state championship ... won four letters in football, wrestling and track and field ... three-time 2A state wrestling

UTAH FOOTBALL



Player Bios

champion (2004-06) ... 2006 state shot put and discus champion ... senior class president participated in student government all four years of high school ... National Honor Society.

PERSONAL: Son of Tom Taylor and Kristin Millis ... both parents graduated from Utah State ... three sisters and a brother ... grandfather (Sam Taylor) played football for Westminster College (Utah) ... enjoys hiking, river rafting, acting and movie trivia ... undecided on a major ... full name is Zane Charles Taylor ... born April 23, 1988.

**30****BEN VROMAN**

Kicker/Punter
6-0, 198, Jr.
2VL
Salt Lake City
Skyline HS

UTAH: Three-year starter on kickoffs ... might be the best in the country at the position ... extremely strong leg ... 46.6% of career kickoffs gone for touchbacks (99-of-227) ... one-time walk-on went on scholarship in 2007. **2008**—Kicked off in all 13 games ... 85 kickoffs with 44 touchbacks (51.7%) ... averaging 68.4 yards per kickoff. **2007**— Played in all 13 games and handled every kickoff ... had 71 kickoffs with 17 touchbacks ... averaged 65.0 yards per kickoff ... made the Utah Athletics Academic Honor Roll. **2006**—Played in all 13 games and handled every kickoff ... kicked off 71 times and had 28 touchbacks ... averaged 62.2 yards per kickoff ... lettered. **2005**—Kicked off vs. Air Force but received a medical hardship year after the season.

HIGH SCHOOL: Second team all-state kicker ... lettered twice each in football and soccer ... all-region and team captain in soccer.

PERSONAL: Son of Hedayat Kazemini and Shelly Vroman ... one of five children ... economics major ... born April 22, 1984.

**32****CHAZ WALKER**

Linebacker
5-11, 220, Fr.
RS
Farmington, Utah
Davis HS

UTAH: Backup rover linebacker also plays on special teams ... walked on to the team as a safety in August of 2007 and was awarded a scholarship during camp.

2008—Played in all 12 games, mostly on special teams ... 18 stops including 2.5 tackles for loss ... totaled four tackles (1.5 TFL) and had an interception against Colorado State ... had a season-best five tackles at Weber State ... four tackles, one for a loss, at Wyoming. **2007**—Redshirt ... made the Dean's List and the Utah Athletics Academic Honor Roll.

HIGH SCHOOL: All-America, all-state, all-region and all-county safety ... region and county MVP ... Davis HS (Utah) team captain ... led the state with eight interceptions in 2006 ... led Davis High with 132 tackles as a senior ... Davis was the 2004 5A state champion ... also lettered in baseball and basketball ... an all-state, all-region and all-area baseball player ... high honor roll.

PERSONAL: Son of Kevin and Troy Walker ... father played football at BYU ... has two sisters and a brother ... enjoys golf and karate ... won the state karate championship ... sister Ricki is a black belt in karate ... undecided on a major ... full name Kevin Chaz Walker ... born Sept. 30, 1988.

YEAR	G/GS	UT	AT	TOT	TFL	SACK	INT
2008	12/0	8	10	18	2.5-9	0.0-0	1-0

**8****ELIJAH WESSON**

Wide Receiver
5-11, 175, Jr.
2VL
Compton, Calif.
Dominguez HS

UTAH: Played cornerback for all of his freshman and half of his sophomore seasons before moving to the offense ... receiver also gets to run the ball.

2008—Appeared in all 12 games and started against UNLV ... 10 carries for 32 yards ... rushed four times for 20 yards against UNLV ... returned a fumble for a 20-yard touchdown on special teams at Utah State ... returned

a kickoff 16 yards and rushed for six yards against Colorado State ... also played on special teams ... had eight tackles. **2007**—Played in all 13 games, splitting the season between cornerback and receiver ... started at wide receiver against BYU ... played defense the first half of the season and played both ways against Louisville and San Diego State before moving to the offense full-time ... finished with five receptions for 15 yards and 18 rushes for 116 yards (6.4 average) ... rushed for 34 yards against Colorado State ... 25 rushing yards against Louisville and New Mexico ... also played on special teams ... logged seven tackles. **2006**—Played as a true freshman in 11 games, mostly on special teams, but also as a cornerback ... recorded eight tackles (7 solo) ... recovered a fumble.

HIGH SCHOOL: Tallied back-to-back 1,000-yard rushing seasons for Dominguez High School ... helped lead Dominguez to a league championship in 2005 ... lettered in both football and track and field ... set a school record in the 300-meter intermediate hurdles.

PERSONAL: Son of Eloise Purfoy and Gilbert Wesson ... has two brothers and two sisters ... civil engineering major ... nickname is Eli ... full name is Elijah Herbert Jerome Wesson ... born June 2, 1987.

YEAR	G/GS	REC	YARDS	AVG	TD	LONG
2006	11/0	0	0	0	0	0
2007	13/1	5	15	3.0	0	10
2008	12/1	0	0	0.0	0	0
Totals	36/2	5	15	3.0	0	10

YEAR	G/GS	RUSH	YARDS	AVG	TD	LONG
2006	11/0	0	0	0	0	0
2007	13/1	18	116	6.4	0	24
2008	12/1	10	32	3.2	0	11
Totals	36/2	28	148	5.3	0	24

**36****EDDIE WIDE**

Running Back
5-10, 200, So.
1VL
Las Vegas, Nev.
Cimarron Memorial HS

UTAH: Utah's change-up running back is small, shifty and fast ... team's fastest running back runs a 4.47-second 40.

2008—Appeared in 12 games ... started against Wyoming, TCU, and San Diego State ... rushed 30 times for 183 total yards, a 6.1 average ... rushed for a season-high 69 yards on nine carries, including a 23-yard touchdown, at Utah State ... five carries for



34 yards against Weber State ... gained 35 yards on three carries against Colorado State ... rushed five times for 21 yards at Wyoming ... also played on special teams and made six tackles on the season ... two tackles and a TFL against Air Force.

2007—Played in 12 games as a true freshman ... rushed 19 times for 44 yards ... 10 carries for 28 yards against Wyoming ... also played on special teams and had six total tackles ... Academic all-MWC ... made Utah's Athletics Academic Honor Roll.

HIGH SCHOOL: All-state running back ... all-region running back and defensive back ... Gatorade Player of the Year for the state of Nevada ... Cimarron Memorial High School (Nev.) team captain ... as a senior in 2006, rushed 202 times for 1,743 yards (8.6 average) and 23 touchdowns, and totaled 31 tackles, three interceptions and one fumble recovery ... rated the No. 5 player in the state of Nevada by Rivals.com.

PERSONAL: Son of Eddie Wide, Jr. ... father played football for UNLV ... sisters Shanta, Calais and Mariah ... undecided on a major ... full name is Eddie Lee Wide III ... born Nov. 19, 1988.

YEAR	G/GS	RUSH	YARDS	AVG	TD	LONG
2007	12/0	19	44	2.3	0	7
2008	12/4	30	183	6.1	0	23
Totals	24/4	49	227	4.6	1	23



20 MIKE WRIGHT

Linebacker
6-2, 230, Jr.
2VL
Bountiful, Utah
Southern Utah

UTAH: One-time walk-on is now the team's leading tackler ... starting "mac" linebacker is the signal caller of the secondary ... does a great job of moving the defenders into position ... smart and athletic ... earned a scholarship in January of 2008 ... only non-lineman in the team's top 10 in squat tests (500 pounds).

2008—Honorable mention All-MWC ... started all 12 games ... leads the team in total tackles with 74 ... four pass breakups ... named MWC Defensive Player of the Week on Oct. 5 against Oregon State, recording 15 tackles, two pass breakups and a sack ... 10 tackles against Air Force ... nine tackles (one TFL) against BYU ... recovered a fumble in a six-tackle effort against Weber State ... seven tackles vs. New Mexico ... pass breakups against Michigan and Utah State.

2007—Played in all 13 games ... began the season playing primarily on special teams, but became a contributor at middle linebacker by midseason ... 22 total stops included 4.5 tackles for loss and 3.0 sacks ... season-high seven tackles against Colorado State ... also

had three TFL, two sacks and a pass breakup against CSU ... four tackles, 1.5 tackles for loss and a sack against Wyoming.
2006—Played in 10 games on special teams ... four total tackles.

PRIOR TO UTAH: Attended Southern Utah from 2004-05 and participated on the football team ... prepped at Bountiful High (Utah) ... first-team all-state and all-region in football as a senior ... Bountiful was the 2003 Utah state champion ... also lettered in basketball and baseball ... second-team all-state and first-team all-region baseball player ... high honor roll.

PERSONAL: Son of Richard and Jane Wright ... mother is a Utah graduate ... business major ... full name is Michael Richard Wright ... born June 6, 1986.

YEAR	G/GS	UT	AT	TOT	TFL	INT
2006	10/0	1	3	4	0	0
2007	13/0	12	10	22	4.5-30	3.0-26
2008	12/12	31	43	74	2.5-14	1.0-9
Totals	35/12	44	56	100	7.0-44	4.0-35

UTAH FOOTBALL



DESERET
Morning News

Utah Utes football: Johnson sets sights on big year

By Dirk Facer

Deseret Morning News

Published: March 30, 2008

Utah quarterback Brian Johnson has a long list of things to do this spring. The senior is determined to become an even greater student of the game and work on the little details it takes to help win games. He's also dedicated to giving proper treatment to his throwing shoulder — an injury suffered in last year's season opener at Oregon State.

Johnson wound up playing in 11 games in 2007 but needed arthroscopic surgery in the offseason to clean out scar tissue. He considers himself 85 percent healthy as the Utes wrapped the first third of 15 spring practices.

"I'll be 100 percent by the time the season starts," said Johnson. "It's a long process."

Even so, he's committed to spending whatever time it takes in rehab and the training room to get it done.

"It's definitely frustrating. But that's part of football. You've got to find a way to work your way back through it and put yourself in a position to be healthy by the fall," said Johnson, who missed the entire 2006 campaign while recovering from a serious knee injury. "That's my main focus. I want to be healthy for fall."

Johnson is participating in spring ball — albeit at a conservative pace.

"Brian's feeling better every day. He's throwing at about 70 percent, but it's pain-free. We just don't want to wear him out," said Utah coach Kyle Whittingham. "We're just going to keep gradually working him back in. Hopefully, by the end of spring he'll be 100 percent."

Johnson, he explained, didn't throw much at all over winter conditioning and is a bit rusty in that regard. However, Whittingham noted that Johnson is "a confident kid and very positive."

When asked if any individuals stood out in Saturday's practice, Whittingham mentioned Johnson first and said the quarterback looked "pretty sharp."

Despite leading the Utes to eight wins in his 10 starts last season, including an offensive MVP performance in the Poinsettia Bowl victory over Navy, Johnson wasn't satisfied. His statistical output was down sharply from 2005 — due in large part to his injury and the alteration of the playbook to keep him healthy. As a junior, the Texan threw for 1,055 fewer yards and ran for 328 less yards than he did as a sophomore.

"I'm not pleased at all with the way I played last season. Unfortunately we had some circumstances that were a little bit out of my control," said Johnson. "It is what it is, and I have to make the most of it. So I'm looking forward to this year."

Winning the Mountain West Conference championship isn't his only priority.

"I want to play well my senior year," said Johnson. "And make sure that we end this thing right."

EXTRA POINTS: While junior **Tyler Williams** recovers from a shoulder injury, the coaching staff has moved sophomore **Daniel Bukarau** up the depth chart. He'll enter next week's practices as the No. 2 center behind sophomore **Zane Taylor**. The Utes also plan to give some reps to sophomore **Neli**

D E S E R E T
Morning News

Utah Utes football: Close call — After brush with death, Kruger happy to be back in pads

By Doug Robinson
Deseret Morning News

Published: April 2, 2008

Paul Kruger didn't understand what was bothering him, but something seemed wrong. As he left a party on the night of Jan. 19, he was filled with a sense of dread. He would recall this several times to his mother after it was all over and he was in a hospital stabbed and bleeding.

Kruger had just finished his freshman season of football at the University of Utah. A converted quarterback, he won a starting position at defensive end months after returning from a two-year LDS Church mission in Missouri. On this night last January, he and the rest of his party — his brother David and sister Jessica, his best friend Ryder Olsen, teammate Greg Newman, and two other friends, Jason Burg and Meredith Mangum — were en route to the Park City Film Festival. Along the way, they stopped at a Salt Lake party to say hello to friends. They stayed only 15 minutes, and while leaving the house Kruger had that ominous feeling come over him.

"Some people call it intuition, I guess," says Kruger. "It was just an uneasy feeling."

Moments later, three carloads of young men — most of them estimated to be in their 20s — drove by shouting obscenities. Suddenly, Kruger understood his feeling of dread.

"I didn't know what to think about the way I had felt, but when the cars pulled up I knew what was going on," he says.

Angry words were returned. Newman threw a snowball. Newman and David ran ahead to where one of the cars had stopped. There was a confrontation. Two other cars pulled up and more men joined the scrum.

Within moments, they realized the hoodlums had knives and were eager to use them. That was terrifying enough even without knowing this — Kruger has just one kidney and no spleen.

Almost everywhere he goes, the request is the same. People want Kruger to show them his scars. He patiently complies, lifting his shirt to reveal a maze of zippered red lines. There's a small slice in the middle, where the knife entered, and another 3-inch gash on the side, where the knife entered again and sliced downward, but it's obscured by the long surgical slices that surgeons made — side to front and down the center of his abdomen.

Kruger bared his scars for newspaper photographers last weekend at spring football practice. Remarkably, some eight weeks after the attack, he began football drills. For the most part, he participates on a limited basis — no tackling, light contact — but he did manage a few plays in a scrimmage at the end of Saturday's practice.

"That's the first time I've gone live for a while," he said. "I feel fully recovered."

But not quite. He still experiences a "tightness" in the stomach area. "It takes seven to eight months to fully heal from surgery," he says ... A special pad has been ordered to cover his stomach. That will join the special pad he wore last season to protect his lone kidney.

"We're still being fairly conservative with him," says Utah head coach Kyle Whittingham. "He will do very little, if any, live reps, and no real heavy lifting in the weight room. The doctors have cleared him for a gradual return. It's really a matter of what he can tolerate."

Kruger's mother, Jennifer, says, "We did not expect him to participate in spring ball at all. The biggest concern is that his abdomen will herniate. He's being careful. He pulls himself out of drills when he needs to. The coaches are being very understanding."

For his part, Kruger is relieved to be back on the field and to resume the life he had started for himself at Utah. Thinking back, he says, "It opened my eyes to a lot of things — how valuable life is and to take advantage of it, and to be around good people; put yourself in good situations."

But hadn't Kruger done exactly that when things went so wrong? He was with good people in a seemingly innocuous situation when the first car drove past his group.

"Sometimes you're just in the wrong place at the wrong time," he says ...

The men in Kruger's group must have presented an imposing spectacle that night — Newman and both of the Kruger men check in at about 6-foot-4 and more than 250 pounds — but they were badly outnumbered and their attackers must have been emboldened by their weapons. They quickly surrounded Newman and David. Paul, the sense of dread rising in him, hurried to the scene to stop trouble from escalating.

"This isn't worth fighting about," he told them.

The hoodlums thought otherwise; they were spoiling for a fight — some of them showed up at the scene already wearing brass knuckles. They wanted this, and now there was no turning back for Kruger and his company. There is no reasoning with a brainless mob that smells blood. A snowball and angry words were enough to drive the attackers to attempted murder.

"We were walking away," Jessica says. "Then a kid spit in Burg's face and it erupted."

In the melee that followed, each of the men in Kruger's group were forced to fight three assailants at once, according to Jessica, who watched the scene. David was being kicked and punched while he lay helpless on the ground. He managed to scramble to his feet, but two men jumped on his back as he fought with another man. Then someone from behind delivered a cowardly blow with a hard blunt object, perhaps brass knuckles or a pipe. Newman was stabbed twice in the back with a screwdriver.

Paul Kruger suffered the most serious wounds. He punched one man in the face and dropped him. "I kept thinking about my brother and sister," he recalls. He threw another man down to the ground, dropped on top of him and pummeled him with blows until someone from behind struck him twice — once in the abdomen and once in the side. Kruger rose to his feet and felt pain in his side.

"I thought he had just punched me hard, but it burned," he says. "I put my hand down there and there was blood, and I realized I had been stabbed."

As Jessica would recall later, Kruger had two men on his back at one point. She remembers that even after being stabbed, Kruger managed to throw two men into a fence, and then he called out, "Where's David?" Jessica had already seen to that. Seeing her brother bloodied and outnumbered, she had raced into the melee and escorted him to the car.

"No one touched me," she recalls. "I yelled for Paul. Paul kept yelling, 'Where's David?' I told him, 'I've got him.' Someone yelled, 'They've got knives,' and everyone dispersed."

The seven of them drove away from the scene. While Mangum drove toward the hospital, Jessica was on the phone with the hospital while also reaching over from the front passenger seat to apply pressure on Kruger's wounds as he lay on the back seat. She noted that part of his intestine was protruding through the wound in the abdomen, and he was bleeding. After driving only a short way, Kruger complained of dizziness. They pulled over and waited for an ambulance. Mangum, who is a nursing student, applied pressure to Kruger's wounds. Jessica remembered to tell Mangum, and later the EMTs, that her brother has only one kidney and no spleen.

Kruger had been in a serious accident years earlier. He was 13 when a Jeep rolled over him, leaving him in critical condition for three weeks. It cost him a kidney and spleen.

"We didn't think he was going to survive," says Kruger's mother, Jennifer. "He was on life support."

Now Kruger was badly injured again. Surgeons followed the line of the years-old incision to make the new incision to repair the front knife wound, and then made another foot-long incision in his side. In a four-hour operation, doctors pulled out his bowel, stomach and intestine to check them for damage. Most of the damage occurred in the side wound, where surgeons discovered a nicked artery, a chipped rib and a lung that had collapsed after filling up with blood. It took about 50 staples to close the incisions and wounds.

"They said his size and musculature probably saved his life," Jennifer says.

His lone kidney was also spared damage — it was on the opposite side of the knife wound.

"He has guardian angels that he's wearing out," Jennifer Kruger says.

Newman and David were hospitalized one night and recovered quickly from their injuries; Kruger was hospitalized five nights.

Not surprisingly, Jennifer counts herself fortunate. "The week after Paul got home from the hospital, two people were stabbed in Salt Lake, and the next week another one was stabbed and killed," she says. "There's one every week, it seems. I feel so — I'm going to cry — I could have had three children lost. I'm just grateful to have them."

Police have never captured the assailants, which frustrates the Krugers. As Paul says, "They should be caught. They're dangerous."

The one thing all involved have learned is that Kruger's friends would have been wise not to respond to the bait that was offered by their assailants, whether that bait is spitting, profanity or taunts. It would have been better to walk away with a wounded pride than puncture wounds.

No one put it more aptly than Whittingham: "In this day and age, you keep your mouth shut. You never know who's packing a gun or knife. The day of the tough guy is over."

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D E S E R E T
Morning News

Utah Utes football: Taylor's sacrifice pays off as he moves to front of line

By Jody Genessy
Deseret Morning News

Published: April 4, 2008

During his Grand County High School days, Zane Taylor wasn't exactly always the life of the party.

While many of his friends went to hang out and have fun, Taylor often headed straight to the weight room. (Party at the barbell rack!) At times, his social life was squat — or squatting maybe.

The sacrifice and hard work didn't go unnoticed.

"I think that's one of the biggest things that got me into college, because in high school I didn't do a whole lot extracurricular-wise besides lifting after school," he said. "A lot of friends would go out and party, but I'd stay in the weight room and pump iron. I think my physical attributes are what interested the coaches more."

They still impress Utah's staff, said Ute coach Kyle Whittingham. Taylor's dedication to dumbbells — the ones in the weight room, not at teen parties — is one of the big reasons the bulky 6-foot-3 sophomore is projected to replace departed Kyle Gunther at the front and center of Utah's offense.

"He's got great size. He's 305 pounds and very thick," Whittingham said of his new center, who's taking first-team reps this spring. "He's tremendously strong in the weight room and he's got good field strength."

Taylor also has arms that look as big as telephone poles, which is why he leads the team in the popular 225-pound bench-press drill with 31 consecutive reps. His bench-press max is 405 pounds, and he also squats 550 pounds. In high school, he even power-cleaned 365 pounds as a junior.

"It was all worth it," he said after a practice this week. "I was doing it because I knew I couldn't afford to pay for college and I knew that's the way to go."

That muscular base will come in handy this fall when teams try to exploit the only new guy up front. All the other Ute linemen around him — Zane Beadles (LT), Caleb Schlauderaff (LG), Robert Conley (RG) and Dustin Hensel (RT) — return with starting experience in the trenches.

Originally recruited for the defensive line, the soon-to-be-20-year-old switched over to the hogs in his first fall camp. He redshirted the 2006 season and then saw special-teams action last year as a shield blocker on punts. Since then, he's continued to develop his snapping and offensive line play-calling skills. He's spent a lot of this offseason meeting with O-line coach Charlie Dickey and working on plays. Now he's trying to get the timing right with veteran quarterback Brian Johnson.

"A lot of the calls start with the center and the quarterback. So a lot of what I do is crucial to having a successful play," said Taylor, who was a defensive lineman and pulling guard in high school. "It was a little different at first, but I think I'm starting to sink into the position and starting to get a lot more comfortable. It feels like the right spot for me."

Junior Tyler Williams is the No. 2 center, but he's missed part of spring drills with a shoulder injury. Neli A'asa and Daniel Bukarau have also gotten snapping action in practice. But the starting job is Taylor's for now.

"It all starts with the snap. It's a very critical position..." Whittingham said. "Zane has done a nice job

DESERET
Morning News

Utah Utes football: Casteel working his way back into Utes' rotation

By Dirk Facer
Deseret Morning News

Published: April 9, 2008

Brent Casteel is working his way back into the rotation.

For the first time since suffering a season-ending knee injury in a loss to Air Force on Sept. 8, the all-conference wide receiver got his name on a stat sheet. Though he wasn't involved in full-contact situations, Casteel was credited with a pair of catches and two rushes in last Saturday's scrimmage at Rice-Eccles Stadium.

"I'm feeling better," said Casteel, who is taking things one day at a time while working on his routes and getting his timing down with quarterback Brian Johnson. "My knee's fine. I'm just going out there and making sure I'm catching everything that's thrown to me."

Casteel is one of several players, including fellow offensive stars Johnson and running back Matt Asiata, who are being held back this spring for precautionary reasons after recovering from injuries suffered last season. They're in a "thud" group that can get wrapped up but not tackled to the ground.

Utah coach Kyle Whittingham noted that Casteel is able to do everything on his once-injured knee.

"We just don't feel we want to bring him to the ground (on a tackle) until the fall," said Whittingham.

Despite the limitations, the senior receiver is a happy camper.

"The bottom line is it's very, very awesome to be back out here," said Casteel, who is confident he'll bounce back from his injury and eventually take his skills to the next level.

"It was a mental thing in the beginning. But as far as right now, since I've been out here playing, it's not a mental thing," said Casteel. "I know I can run. I know I can play on it. There's nothing I can't do right now. So the mental part is out. Once the summer comes, I'm going to be training very hard so when I come into the season I should be fine."

Casteel's recovery is going well. He's already squatting 485 pounds and believes the knee is stronger than it used to be.

That's good news for a Utah offense that could have used his abilities a year ago — on offense and returning kicks. Casteel's versatility resulted in 1,026 yards receiving, 470 yards rushing and 607 yards on kickoff returns over the 2005 and 2006 seasons combined. He scored 15 touchdowns for the Utes, including one in last year's season-opener at Oregon State.

A week later, though, Casteel got hurt and was sidelined for the remainder of the 2007 season.

The outspoken athlete, who once spoke of winning the Heisman Trophy, stepped out of the spotlight during his recovery. Although he enjoyed watching his teammates, it was difficult not to participate. In addition, Casteel didn't want to be a distraction.

Contrary to rumors that were circulating, the talented athlete wasn't going to pursue a pro career if all had gone well last season.

"I would have stayed. I want to get my diploma and graduate from college," said Casteel. "(The injury) didn't derail me at all. I had no intentions of leaving early or anything like that."

Utah football notes

Ute football: Not sitting this one out

Beset by back injuries, receiver John Peel tries one last-ditch comeback

By Lya Wodraska

The Salt Lake Tribune

Salt Lake Tribune

Article Last Updated:04/09/2008 01:33:48 AM MDT

John Peel catches a short pass, gives a little head shake to stall defenders, then cuts between them into the open field.

If only he could make such a play in a game, not just spring practice.

Peel, a 6-foot-2 senior on the Utes' team, has spent more time in the training room than on the field during his college career.

He redshirted after he tore his patella tendon in the 2004 preseason, got limited action in 2005, then took a hit that badly sprained his neck and affected a nerve, which led to arm weakness. During his rehab, he overcompensated on one side, which led to a herniated disk, he said.

"There were days when I couldn't even get out of bed or sit in class for more than five minutes," he said. "There were a lot of times when I thought that was probably it for me."

The doctors who performed surgery on his back thought it was the end of his career too, recommending he pursue activities that would be a little kinder to his back than taking hits on a football field. Peel listened to their advice, gave it some thought, then got antsy.

"I couldn't just come and watch practice; that was killing me," he said. "It was hard to be sitting there. I saw what it was like not being an athlete or a player, and I didn't like it."

So he rehabbed, rehabbed and rehabbed some more. He has been through almost two years of rehab, hoping to mend a part of the body that can be the most complicated to recover, especially for a football player.

"Sports load that area up and it takes a lot of time to heal," said Bill Bean, Utah's Director of Sports Medicine. "You have to do a lot of cardio stuff like swimming and core exercises to stabilize the low back and build flexibility. There is a lot involved."

Peel knows all about the regimen; what he wants to become familiar with again is the feeling of being on a football field in live action. No one can say if that will be a possibility in 2008, but at least Peel is part of spring practice. He can't go 100 percent yet, and takes himself out of drills when he feels his back flare up.

"It's still not where I want it to be, but it feels good to be back actually catching footballs and playing," he said. "I'm trying to just get through spring ball so I can take the summer to get ready."

Peel, from Scottsdale, Ariz., starred as a receiver in high school, but was switched to the defensive side when he joined the Utes. He was switched back to the receivers before he was hurt in 2006.

If he's healthy, he has the skills to be in the rotation, receivers coach Aaron Roderick said.

"I know he wants to give it a try, and we're taking it one day at a time," he said. "We're not looking too far ahead, but evaluating each day to see where he is."

While he can't help but look ahead to the season, Peel is OK with taking one day at a time for now, especially when there is a football involved.

"A lot of doctors have said I should stop playing for good, but right now, things are better," he said. "I want to get as good as I can be."

lwodraska@sltrib.com

John Peel file

Height, weight: 6-2, 196

Deseret News

Utah Utes football: Utes have a very good 'problem': They're real deep at running back

By Dirk Facer
Deseret News

Published: April 18, 2008

Utah coach Kyle Whittingham has a problem — a situation that will carry over into fall camp.

It's a depth issue at running back. The Utes have lots of it.

Besides headliners Darrell Mack and Matt Asiata, there's Ray Stowers and Eddie Wide. Highly touted Alta High star Sausan Shakerin joins the mix this summer.

"It's a good problem," said Whittingham. "All I can say is it's a very good problem to have."

Though they've been limited this spring for precautionary reasons, Mack and Asiata are poised to lead the ground attack next season. Mack, a senior, rushed for 1,204 yards in 2007 — the third-best single-season tally in Utah history. Asiata, a prized junior college transfer, is regaining his form after breaking his leg in last year's season-opening loss at Oregon State.

"We'll see how that unfolds. We're hoping that that's the case — where they're both healthy and ready to go," said Whittingham. "If all goes as planned, we should have a pretty good situation at running back in the fall."

Mack, he added, is a proven commodity who did a great job last season. Whittingham also said that Stowers is a quality back and that Wide has made tremendous strides. Asiata, meanwhile, is projected to resume full-contact situations when two-a-days begin.

"I think there can be room for as many as you want," said Mack, who explained that the key will be making the most of opportunities — shining when you get in there and doing things right. "There's enough room for all of us."

The role of primary ball-carrier, though, is most likely a two-man race between Mack and Asiata — or a combination thereof.

"I don't think it's competing. Darrell and I got real close during the offseason and during spring. It really doesn't matter to me, just as long as we play as a team. We have that one-two punch to get into the end zone and win," said Asiata. "We're both pushing each other real good. When it comes down to the games, we've got to step it up."

Asiata admits his surgically repaired leg still gets sore sometimes but expects it to be fully healed soon.

"I don't even think about it," said Asiata. "When I get the ball, I just have to do my job and just run."

So far, so good.

"We're making each other better. I think we're both real good running backs," said Mack, who is just the ninth Utah running back to rush for 1,000 yards in a season. "So we might as well work together and make each other better and stuff like that. That's the way I see it."

Mack added that he's just ready to win.

"I always like to have a competitive mindset. But at the same time, I want to help people around me

— make them better, I guess," he explained. "I just see it as when it's my turn to get in there, I've got to make the most of the opportunity."

Case in point: Last season when Mack was pulled out of a planned redshirt year following Asiata's injury. Despite missing a game, Mack topped the 1,000-yard milestone.

It was a special accomplishment.

"I guess you can say it was one of my personal goals growing up to be a 1,000-yard rusher in college," said Mack. "But the main thing is being consistent with what I do. I'm just glad I had that year and I'm looking forward to another great year individually and as a team."

EXTRA POINTS: Teams have been chosen for Saturday's Red & White Game. Former Ute **Eric Weddle** and strength coach **Doug Elisaia** will serve as head coaches. ... Quarterback **Brian Johnson** will play for both teams this weekend. He'll play the entire first quarter before sitting out the rest of the game. ... 21 players will not participate in the spring finale because of injuries or for precautionary reasons ... Several Utes made position changes during spring ball. The list includes **Troy Bunting** (LB to DL), **Christian Cox** (TE to DL), **Zac Eldridge** (RB to TE), **Mookie Murphy** (DB to WR) and **Chaz Walker** (DB to LB).

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The Salt Lake Tribune

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Ute football: Johnson knows he has a lot to prove on the field

By Lya Wodraska
The Salt Lake Tribune
Salt Lake Tribune

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HENDERSON, Nev. - Ute quarterback Brian Johnson wasn't surprised to see his name left out of preseason lists during the MWC media days. After missing a season because of a knee injury and another season in which his game was limited by a bum shoulder, he knows he has to prove himself on the field before any accolades are bestowed upon him.

It's a task he believes he is fit enough to handle. The shoulder he injured in the first game of the season that hampered his effectiveness is finally strong again and his off-season workouts have trimmed almost 10 pounds off his frame to 200 pounds.

"Compared to where I finished the season last year, I'm not even close. Everything feels a ton better," he said. "I'm excited to be healthy and finally play to my full potential."

The Utes downplayed how much Johnson's shoulder was hurting during the second half of the season. However, it wasn't hard to tell Johnson wasn't at his best.

He rarely threw down field and when he did he was often inaccurate. When the Utes needed to run, freshman Corbin Louks often replaced Johnson. Despite being pinned in the pocket, Johnson led the Utes to eight wins in their last nine games and earned bowl offensive MVP honors. While he admitted the injury frustrated him, Johnson believes it has made him a better quarterback going into the 2008 season because it forced him to rely on his teammates more, something he didn't always do earlier in his career.

"It gives you a whole different perspective of football," he said. "Usually I was trying to find a way to win a football game and utilizing different weapons and different tools. It wasn't about me trying to take over every play and be Superman. My job was to really get the ball to the playmakers and let them do it. It was a different experience."

His teammates responded well enough for the Utes to finish 9-4 and Louks earned some valuable experience as a freshman. But even so, the offensive production wasn't what coach Kyle Whittingham wanted it to be.

The Utes ranked just 79th nationally in total offense (369.6) and 68th in scoring offense (26.2).

Getting more output is one of the Utes' biggest goals for 2008, Whittingham said, and he is placing the duty of crafting the needed scoring drives on Johnson. Louks will still have a set package of plays, but Whittingham made it clear there won't be a two-quarterback system.

"I don't want to make any grey area there," Whittingham said. "Some teams have a two-guy deal, but that isn't the case with us. To subject Brian to those hits didn't make sense so Corbin filled that void for us. He'll play some for us this year but we'll pick our spots. He is there and available to us, but Brian Johnson is the quarterback of the University of Utah."

Ideally, Whittingham would like Johnson to run the ball eight or 10 times a game. That amount should keep defenses honest and hopefully keep Johnson healthy to the level he was in 2005 when he led the conference in total offense.

He injured his knee against New Mexico in the 11th game of the season and subsequently missed the 2006 season recuperating.

The Utes went 8-5 in 2006 without him and had a successful season in 2007 when he wasn't 100 percent, but all want to see what Johnson can do if he stays injury-free.

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Deseret News

Utah Utes football: Sylvester emerging as team's defensive leader

By Dirk Facer
Deseret News

Published: August 7, 2008

Stevenson Sylvester has suddenly become the veteran of Utah's linebacking corps.

The junior, who recently turned 20, is the most experienced starter in the middle of the Ute defense. After playing alongside Joe Jiannoni, Malakai Mokofisi and Kyle Brady, who graduated, Sylvester finds himself in a new role.

"He needs to become the leader within our defense and he's doing a good job with that," said defensive coordinator Gary Andersen. "We expect him to be an all-conference performer on the field. I know he expects that and we expect him to be a great leader for us."

Sylvester made 45 tackles last season, including 10 behind the line of scrimmage. He also broke up five passes and had three sacks.

"He's a core leader on that linebacking group for us," said Andersen, who added that Sylvester hasn't lost any speed while adding 12 pounds to his 6-foot-2 frame over the offseason.

At 224 pounds, Sylvester is adding size to his impressive athleticism. Utah coach Kyle Whittingham hopes the former Las Vegas prep star bulks up even more, getting to around 230-235 as a senior.

"Coach made it an issue and it was my responsibility to get there," Sylvester said of his weight gain — attained through hard work in the weight room.

The transformation, Whittingham said, is an example of how Sylvester "is taking charge" with the linebackers. Sylvester tops the depth chart at rover, while junior Mike Wright and sophomore Nai Fotu are the probable starters at the middle and stud spots, respectively.

"I feel like the leader, but everybody has their own role. I don't try to force anything on anybody. Our linebacker crew is very responsible," Sylvester said.

"Everybody knows the effort they need to give. That's what is great about our linebacking corps. We're young, but we're smart and we have a veteran feel to us. I love that. Everybody loves to study and everybody loves to be around football."

The game is something Sylvester is passionate about. He particularly enjoys the contact.

"I just love to hit. I love the defensive feel. I've got to react to other people's movements and that's just the type of player I am," Sylvester said. "Linebacker is the perfect position for me. I could imagine myself in another position."

Utah's defense, he explained, is like a family and everybody comes together to get the job done.

And there's plenty of work to do, even after leading the nation in pass efficiency last season.

"There's always room for improvement," said Sylvester. "We're younger and have a faster feel to us. We've just got to stay down there and get our core together."

The Salt Lake Tribune

<http://www.sltrib.com>

Kragthorpe: Two Utes welcome drudgery of camp

By Kurt Kragthorpe
Tribune Columnist
Salt Lake Tribune

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Preseason football practice is drudgery at its finest. It is hot, boring and difficult, with the reward of spending Saturday afternoons in sold-out stadiums far in the distance.

University of Utah veterans Paul Kruger and Brent Casteel are enjoying every bit of it.

Well, that might be a stretch, because football in early August is not fun for anyone. Let's just say they do not mind it nearly as much as they once did, after the game almost was taken away from them.

Kruger, a defensive end, was stabbed in the abdomen during an assault after leaving a party in January. Casteel, a receiver, was among several Utes whose 2007 seasons were short-circuited by major injuries.

They were very happy to be back on the field Monday when the Utes opened practice. How long that feeling will last as August plods along is a fair question, but if there's a fantasy draft for the last players to complain about the demands of camp, these certainly would be two guys to take.

"Last year, I came in hating camp," Casteel said, "but right now, I love being out here. I love football."

Casteel injured his knee in the second quarter of the second game last year, ending his junior season right then and there.

"That injury made me realize that football is very important to me," he said. "I loved every minute I was out there, and it made me appreciate it more."

Kruger is even more thankful - and not just for being able to play football. His injuries required four hours of surgery, and the wounds from that knife just missed being even more severe.

"Every day is a day that you're blessed to be alive and blessed to be doing what you're doing," he said.

Kruger will keep reminding himself of that during every practice, as the Utes and football players everywhere mark off the days until their first game. The Utes' Aug. 30 opener at Michigan is an opportunity for them to make a national splash, a game their fans are looking forward to with much anticipation. It also means another camp will be over. Whether a team's opening game is with Michigan or Northern Iowa or UNLV, its arrival begins the weekly flow of the season with the buildup to the games. For now, it's just one practice after the next, one drill after another.

"The toughest part is just the repetition of everything," Kruger said. "It's very monotonous. That's critical to being effective and being a sound football team, but that's really what gets to me the most, just day after day - same plays, same people, the routine of things.

"But it's fun."

He said that last part just earnestly enough to make it believable. "Having gone through what I did, I feel very excited and very blessed to be able to be here," he added.

Casteel could be forgiven for dreading another August, having gone through the punishment last summer with ultimately little payoff. Yet he's acting refreshed, and there's a reason.

While recovering from his injury, talking with fellow students who peppered him with questions about what it was like to play made him realize college football is not something that just anybody can do, and he's thankful for one last season as a Utah player.

So now, the clock is ticking slowly through August toward the start of his senior year.

"Twenty-six days 'til Michigan," someone reminded Ute coach Kyle Whittingham after Monday's session.

"Twenty-eight practices," Whittingham clarified.

"We know it's going to be a grind," Kruger said.

But for Kruger, Casteel, Matt Asiata, Matt Martinez and others who have come back happily, the drudgery is more welcome than ever.

Deseret News

Utah Utes notebook: Healthy Casteel is ready to make plays

By Dirk Facer
Deseret News

Published: August 6, 2008

Brent Casteel is back where he wants to be — on the field.

After missing most of last season with a knee injury, the wide receiver is excited to be back in the mix.

"My health is 100 percent. I feel stronger, I feel faster and I feel smarter out there running the routes, reading the defenses and everything like that," Casteel said. "Being out for that year gave me the opportunity to study film, study my opponents and study bad habits that they do. I feel like I did a great job with that."

The senior, who has made 85 catches for 1,090 yards and 13 touchdowns in his career at Utah, injured his knee in the second game last season — leaving the competitor on the sidelines for the rest of the campaign.

"It was hard to watch, but they stepped in and didn't really miss a beat with that seven-game winning streak they went on," Casteel said. "But being out and watching it, it was hard. Because I wanted to be out there making those plays."

The return of Casteel's athleticism and skills have added to Utah's optimism for the coming season.

Utah coach Kyle Whittingham used two words when asked what Casteel brings to the team: big plays.

"That's what he did for us in '06. ... We missed him sorely last year. He's an explosive receiver," Whittingham said. "Brent Casteel is a guy we missed last year with his big-play capability."

BACK IN THE SADDLE: Quarterback **Brian Johnson's** return to full health is expected to broaden Utah's offensive scheme this season.

"Now that he's healthy we've got to go ahead and reintroduce the quarterback run game with him," said Whittingham, who noted the Utes couldn't do that a year ago because of Johnson's ailing shoulder.

In 2005 when Johnson replaced **Alex Smith** as Utah's starter, he threw for 2,892 yards and rushed for 478.

The dynamics changed last season. Johnson passing yardage fell to 1,847 and his rushing numbers to just 150.

THE RANKINGS: Although Whittingham appreciates the recognition for the program, he isn't putting too much stock in Utah's near-inclusion in the top 25 coaches poll. The Utes were among the others receiving votes, ranking 28th overall.

"I don't pay much attention to that. I think things will settle themselves out three or four weeks into the season," Whittingham said. "I don't think you have a good grasp on that until about that time. Up until then it's all speculation."

EXTRA POINTS: Highly touted receiver **David Reed**, a junior college transfer, drew praise for his play in practice Tuesday. Defensive backs **Brandon Burton** and **Deshawn Richard** were also

The Salt Lake Tribune

Utah

<http://www.sltrib.com>

Ute football: New starter in his Wright mind

Junior Mike Wright brings a change of attitude to the position

By Lya Wodraska
The Salt Lake Tribune
Salt Lake Tribune

Article Last Updated: 8/6/08

Mike Wright hesitates a little when asked if he is going to carry on the recent tradition of sporting a mohawk as Utah's starting middle linebacker.

"I'm getting a little thin on top," he said. "I don't know if I could have one if I wanted to."

Better he doesn't anyway, it wouldn't fit the rest of his persona.

The mohawk was perfect for last season's starter, Joe Jiannoni, a gimpy-ankled but determined player who showed off his emotions as much as he showed off his tattoos.

Wright, by contrast, comes across as someone with more brains than brawn. He is a business major who spent his summer taking classes in corporate finance and operations management and approaches football from a more calculated perspective than Jiannoni.

"Joe would get upset and overpower you on the next play," he said. "With me, I'm going to get upset and I'm going to outsmart you on the next play."

It's good to be smart on a football field, but better to be smart and talented. Gradually, Wright is showing he has both attributes.

As a high schooler in Bountiful, Wright was a local star but never drew serious looks from any of the state's major football programs. He went to Southern Utah in 2004 intent to prove he deserved more than congratulations after helping Bountiful win the 2003 state title.

"I knew I could play at the Division I level," he said. "I went down there with a chip on my shoulder."

After playing for a season and then serving a mission, Wright was invited to walk on at Utah. He played in 10 games on special teams in 2006, then solidified himself as Jiannoni's backup last season when Utah's vocal leader was hampered by ankle troubles.

Wright's best game came against Colorado State, when he had seven tackles, three for a loss, and two sacks and a pass breakup.

"Getting more serious playing time helped me," he said. "Being out on the field a little more, I started to learn what to expect."

In January Wright was awarded a scholarship. With it came the responsibilities of replacing Jiannoni. The linebackers don't have a senior among them, but the position isn't a huge concern for coach Kyle Whittingham, who called his linebackers "young but smart."

That description fits Wright perfectly, and as the guy with the most experience in Utah's program he'll be expected to lead even as he learns his starting role. Wright expects there will be doubters, but he's confident once again he'll prove his worth.

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Wright file

Height/weight: 6-foot-2, 230 pounds

Year: Junior

High school: Bountiful

Notes: He transferred from SUU after one season. Had 22 tackles in 2007.

Deseret News

Utah Utes football: 2 backs, zero problem for Utes

By Dirk Facer
Deseret News

Published: August 6, 2008

Problem? What problem?

As far as Kyle Whittingham is concerned, Utah's running back situation is nothing to worry about.

Having Darrell Mack and Matt Asiata competing for the top spot is a good thing.

"We don't consider it a problem. We consider it a luxury to have those two guys back there battling it out," Whittingham said. "There's a good chance you're going to see both of them in the backfield a good percentage of the time."

There's a lot of reps to go around, he insists, while ranking the backs as 1 and 1-A at the beginning of camp.

"The running back position is a very punishing position. You take a lot of hits. It's difficult to go through an entire season with just one back," said Whittingham, who compared Mack and Asiata to Utah's successful duo of Marty Johnson and Quinton Ganther in 2004. "If we can get that 1-2 combination going that we've had in the past, that will be a positive for us."

Mack, a senior who rushed for 1,204 yards last season (the third-best total in Ute history), and Asiata, a former junior college All-American who broke his leg in the 2007 season-opener, headline Utah's list of position battles this fall.

"Those are two competitive guys that want the ball in their hands. And that's a win for all of us," said offensive coordinator Andy Ludwig. "Two good hard-running guys: A proven player in Darrell Mack and a lot of promise in Matt Asiata. Ray Stowers and Eddie Wide are good players as well. We've got a good arsenal there to draw from."

Choosing a lead back, however, won't be easy. Mack and Asiata are expected to contend for the job throughout camp.

"Those guys are very capable — very talented guys obviously," said quarterback Brian Johnson. "We're fortunate to have both."

Johnson noted that Mack is proven and that the team leaned on him heavily last season. Asiata, he added, is a talented back as well.

"We're both great football players. We're both good at what we do," Mack said. "If I come off the field or he comes off the field, then there's another great guy coming on the field to do his thing."

The role of being No. 1, he admits, is something new.

"I've never gone into camp in this situation before," Mack said while recalling his journey up the depth chart. "It feels good going into camp being the starter, but I feel like I've got to go out there, prove myself and just enjoy it."

Mack, however, isn't setting his sights on Asiata.

"I don't really think about all that. I just go out there and compete against everybody," he said. "It's not just one person, it's everybody out there. That's how I see it."

Despite last season's success, Mack is confident things can get even better.

"I just want to win every game and just do better than I did last year individually," he explained. "That's pretty much it. Those two goals."

Asiata, meanwhile, is 100 percent healthy and trying not to think too much about his surgically repaired leg.

The same goes for his friendly battle with Mack.

"I don't think it's really a competition. I think it's a team effort," said Asiata, who is hopeful both players will get in, do their work and win. "I think it'll be a 1-2 punch, but everybody has to work together as a team."

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Utah

Ute football: Pair's duel friendly

Mack and Asiata say helping Utes win is their main goal as they compete in camp

By Lya Wodraska
The Salt Lake Tribune
Salt Lake Tribune

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Utah running backs Darrell Mack and Matt Asiata are good friends who say they don't mind sharing the rushing duties with each other for the Utes in 2008.

However, they don't like each other enough to simply give up their carries to the other.

"Competition is good," said Mack.

It will be for the running backs, whose battle for the starting role should be one of the most intriguing competitions in the Utes' fall camp.

Utah's camp started Monday with 104 players in attendance, one short of the maximum allowed. The final slot is being saved for receiver Aiona Key, a junior college transfer who should be in camp by the end of the week.

Utah coach Kyle Whittingham said he saw a lot of positives from his team in its first workout for the 2008 season, which kicks off at Michigan on Aug. 30.

By then, maybe the Utes will have a starting running back - or not. Asiata and Mack both worked out with the starters Monday. Whittingham referred to the players as "1 and 1-A" and said the competition between the backs should be nothing but a positive for the Utes. He wasn't concerned about having a designated starting back in time for the season opener.

"It's a great problem to have and there is a good chance we'll see both in the backfield a lot," he said. "There are plenty of reps for both those guys to go around."

A perfect situation to him would be similar to 2004, when the Utes used Marty Johnson (165 carries, 802 yards, 14 touchdowns) and Quinton Ganther (109 carries, 654 yards, two touchdowns) as a combo to wear down defenses.

Sometimes splitting duties like that between players can be a distraction as each tries to establish himself as the main guy. For now, both Asiata and Mack are buying into the possibility of such a shared system.

"I just want us to win," Mack said. "As long as we do better as a team, I don't care what I do individually."

Mack enters the season as the proven back, a position he never thought he'd be in a year ago when he was tabbed to be redshirted while the much-hyped JC transfer Asiata was designated as the Utes' starter.

Everything changed for the two when Asiata broke his leg after just four carries in the season-opening loss at Oregon State.

Mack not only won the starting job, but finished with 1,204 yards, the third-highest total season total by a Ute. While he no longer feels like an underdog who must prove he deserves carries, he knows he can't coast in fall camp either, especially with Asiata healthy again.

"I've never been in this situation before, and it feels good, going into camp as a starter," Mack said. "But I have a lot of things I want to improve on. I know I can do better."

For his part, Asiata is eager to show he deserves all the hype he has received since he earned junior college All-America honors at Snow College.

He had surgery to repair his broken leg shortly after the injury and was held out of contact in spring ball. There will be no such restraints as he competes with Mack for carries.

"As long as I participate, I'll be happy," he said. "We both want to win."

Notes: Quarterback Brian Johnson and receiver Brent Casteel both looked good in Monday's workout and showed no ill effects of the injuries from 2007.

Johnson overthrew Casteel on one pass, but took it as a good sign.

"I couldn't overthrow anyone to save my life last season," he said. "It's a lot easier to take some off the passes than put some on."

Johnson said the team's high expectations for the season led to a focused practice, something he believes will be a characteristic of all the Utes' practices this season.

"This team is tired of underachieving," he said. "We are tired of seven-, eight-, nine-win seasons. We have the talent to do better than that and we realize it's up to us."

* Sophomore Neli A'asa has been moved from offensive line to tight end. . . . JC signee tight end Dudley LaPorte is not eligible this fall, but plans to enroll in January. . . . Redshirt freshman Jordan Nelson, an offensive lineman, is out indefinitely with a broken foot. . . . Freshmen Sam Brenner and Zach Davila will enroll in the winter instead of the fall because of injuries. . . . Utah's first day in pads will be Friday, and the first of six two-a-days is Saturday.

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Ute running backs

DARRELL MACK

Spring Valley, Calif.

6-0, 220 pounds, Sr.

Claim to fame: Became the school's ninth 1,000-yard rusher in 2007

Fall camp question: Can he duplicate his performance in 2008, or will he go back to being a backup?

MATT ASIATA

West Valley City

5-11, 230 pounds, Jr.

Claim to fame: Led the Western States football league in rushing with 1,365 yards and 15 touchdowns in 2006

Fall camp question: Known as a hard-hitting back, will Asiata trust his surgically repaired leg to go all out in games?

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Deseret News

Utah Utes football: Reed excited about being a Ute

New receiver fitting in after starring in junior college

By Dirk Facer
Deseret News

Published: August 8, 2008

David Reed doesn't mince his words when it comes to playing for the University of Utah.

The record-setting wide receiver, who caught 111 passes in 10 games for Pasadena City College last season, is a walking, talking endorsement for Ute football.

"It's great. I love every bit of it. I love everything. I love the team. I love the offense. I love the coaches. I love the facilities — everything," said Reed, a junior college All-American.

"I'm so happy to be here. It's the best part of my life right here. I'm very happy to be here."

Reed didn't join the team until camp began last Monday. He had academic requirements to complete over the summer before transferring to Utah, causing him to miss the offseason conditioning program and opportunity to get more familiar with the Utes' offense.

"I definitely wish I was here," Reed said. "But I can't really dwell on that."

It is what it is. Even so, Reed and the coaching staff are confident things will work out just fine.

"It's just a matter of getting him in shape and getting him exposed to the scheme," said Utah coach Kyle Whittingham. "He's got to learn first. We've got to give him certain parts to the scheme on a day-to-day basis. He's not going to get it all at once. We've just got to implement that on a day-to-day basis."

After four days of camp, it's working. Progress is being made.

Whittingham said Reed is getting better each day and making quite an impression.

"He's as advertised. He caught 111 balls in junior college and it's easy to see why when you watch him operate out here," said Whittingham, who noted that Reed is very smooth, an athletic route runner and a nice set of hands.

Reed, a former Connecticut prep star, credits the coaches and players for helping him make a smooth transition to Utah.

"They're working with me real good. (Receivers) coach (Aaron) Roderick is doing a good job showing me and teaching me a lot of stuff," Reed said. "I'm studying hard. Every night I read the playbook. The other receivers are helping me. Everybody is helping me."

Reed believes he's in the right place at the right time.

"It's the best situation for me. I've got Brian Johnson and a bunch of great guys around me," he said. "There isn't any better place for me than Utah."

As an added bonus, Reed added, the season opener at Michigan will provide national exposure that will allow his family and friends, who are scattered from Connecticut, Iowa and California, an opportunity to see him play.

If his junior college career is any indication, Reed is capable of putting on quite a show. He was named Pasadena City College's Offensive Player of the Year after breaking every game and career receiving record at the school.

"My coach back there in junior college, he had a lot of faith in me and he gave me the opportunity to do well and I stepped up," Reed said. "I was very fortunate — very, very fortunate."

The 6-foot, 184-pound junior downplays his 111 receptions (a national junior college record) last season. The catches accounted for an average of 166.1 yards per game.

"I ran a lot of screens and stuff," Reed said. "So that's a big part of that."

Now, Reed's expected to be a big part of things at Utah — cracking the depth chart as soon as he arrived on campus. It's an opportunity that is relished.

"This is the best place for me," Reed said. "There's no other place for me but Utah."

Reed and Aiona Key, another highly touted junior college transfer, add talent and depth to a receiving corps that includes returning veterans Bradon Godfrey, Freddie Brown, Brent Casteel, Jereme Brooks and Elijah Wesson.

Camp central

Utah

First down: The Utes completed the NCAA's acclimatization period Thursday and will don full pads in a single practice this morning.

The first double session of camp is set for Saturday.

Head-turner: Utah coach **Kyle Whittingham** said some newcomers are beginning to emerge and make their presence felt. He praised the play of wide receiver **David Reed**, defensive back **Damilyn Tanner** and tight end **Brad Clifford** after Thursday's practice. Whittingham also noted that the running back group continues to be a strength.

Injury report: Nothing new. Tight end **Neli A'asa** had a successful scope on his sore knee and will be sidelined until Monday, Aug. 18.

Whittingham said there were no surprises and everything went well.

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Deseret News

Utah Utes football: Dale gets a chance to step up

By Dirk Facer
Deseret News

Published: August 9, 2008

A game-saving interception and a career-high 12 tackles in Utah's 35-32 win over Navy in the Poinsettia Bowl brought safety Joe Dale into the spotlight. The sophomore was named the game's defensive MVP.

"It boosted my confidence a lot," he said. "It was good to know that my coaches and my teammates trusted in me for me to be out there. I was just happy I came through for them and made some plays."

Dale's humble demeanor, however, belies his play on the field. The former Texas prep star appeared in all 13 games last season, starting three times and making 40 tackles.

"We were confident last year when Joe stepped in," said cornerback Brice McCain. "Whenever Joe is on the field, he's good enough and smart enough. I'm always confident with Joe. The team is always confident with Joe because he always makes plays when he's in."

Dale contributed to a secondary that helped Utah lead the nation in pass efficiency. Now he's the leading candidate to replace all-conference strong safety Steve Tate, who graduated, as a regular starter.

"Both of them are great players," McCain said. "I don't think we'll miss a step with Joe Dale. He's athletic."

Dale credits Tate for preparing him for the opportunity.

"I learned a lot from Tate when he was here. He taught me a lot about leadership, playing hard and working hard. It just carried over into my game and I try to do some of the things he did."

As such, a seamless transition is expected in the secondary. Tate is the only player to depart. McCain and Sean Smith return at the corners and Robert Johnson is back at free safety.

Johnson said Tate helped all of them understand the defense better and shared tips with each player. As such, he expects things to be smooth.

"Whoever is in the game will be good," Johnson said.

Key word: whoever.

"Joe is doing a nice job. In fact, we have three or four safeties back there that are doing a nice job," head coach Kyle Whittingham said. "They're competing."

As the first week of camp concludes, Johnson and Dale are in a competitive battle with Deshawn Richard and R.J. Rice for the safety positions. Senior Terrell Cole is also in the mix.

"Safety is a position we have a lot of depth at," Whittingham said.

The challenge is something Dale relishes.

"Competition is always good. Whatever we can do to better the team is great," Dale said.

"We've got a lot of good safeties and I know whichever safety is on the field, it's going to be a great player."

Playing time has provided great motivation.

"You've always got to stay hungry at this level," he said. "You can't lose your edge at all. You've got to go into every offseason hungry."

It's an approach the entire secondary has adopted. Dale said leading the nation in pass-efficiency defense — something that Whittingham says requires a good pass rush as well — was a huge deal, even if they didn't get a lot of attention for it.

"We feel like we didn't get some of the recognition we deserved," he said. "But we're going to try to make some noise this year and get the recognition that we deserve."

And lots of it.

"This defense has a chance to do a lot of great things," Dale said. "I believe that there's no weakness on this defense and we've got a chance to be the No. 1 defense in the country."

Johnson admits winning the statistical category last year was big for the secondary, but this time around the entire defense is seeking such accolades.

McCain agreed.

"We always try to be No. 1," he said. "Not just in pass efficiency. No. 1 in total defense, No. 1 in all-around defense. That's what our goal is."

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The Salt Lake Tribune

Utah notes

<http://www.sltrib.com>

Ute football: Safety Johnson faces competition for starting job

Junior college transfer Richard, who spent most of 2007 on special teams, fights for a bigger role

By Lya Wodraska
The Salt Lake Tribune
Salt Lake Tribune

Article Last Updated: 08/10/2008 03:06:12 AM MDT

The Utah Utes didn't think they'd have much of a decision to make at free safety, where starter and big playmaker Robert Johnson returns for the 2008 season.

But a week into fall camp, the coaches are pondering who should be the starter, thanks to the improved play of Deshawn Richard.

Richard, a junior college transfer who spent most of 2007 contributing on special teams, is pushing Johnson for starting duties.

The two are splitting reps with the first team, and defensive coordinator Gary Andersen said it has turned into a legitimate battle between the two.

"Both are extremely talented, but Deshawn has taken off," he said. "He is a good tackler and a smart kid and he is seeing a lot of opportunities so far."

Richard had only six total tackles in 2007, then improved his play immensely during spring practice. He has continued to impress the coaches and hopes his increased effort means more playing time.

"It's pretty competitive out there," he said. "Everybody wants to be on the field."

His improvement could mean Joe Dale, who is pegged as the starting strong safety, needs to keep showing off for the coaches, too.

Andersen said the 6-foot, 195-pound Richard could play both free and strong safety. His goal is to get the best 11 guys on the field, no matter who they are.

"The strong safety is Joe Dale's spot right now, with R.J. Rice backing him up, but things could change drastically," he said.

On practice

Saturday was the first of six two-a-days for the Utes, a day coach Kyle Whittingham called "good, not great."

"It wasn't a bad practice, it just wasn't as clean and crisp relative to what we've had," he said of Saturday morning's practice. The afternoon session received a similar assessment.

The Utes are completing their first week on pace where Whittingham wants the team to be. They'll have today off before facing another hard week ahead with scrimmages scheduled for Tuesday and Saturday.

"The first week was a productive one," he said. "There is always a lot we have to do, but we got a lot of work done."

In the pit

Utah made it through the first week relatively unscathed by injuries. Receiver David Reed tweaked his groin and will be held out of practices until Monday as a precautionary measure. Brice McCain was back on the field after spraining his ankle Friday. Defensive end Thor Salanoa broke his hand Saturday morning and will undergo further examinations, but it isn't thought to be a serious break.

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Deseret News

Utah Utes football: Healthy Johnson has offense running smooth

By Dirk Facer
Deseret News

Published: August 10, 2008

When asked who stood out in Saturday morning's practice, Utah coach Kyle Whittingham had a swift response.

"Brian Johnson," he said. "He's playing well. He's making good decisions and running the offense very effectively."

It's been that way throughout the first week of camp.

Johnson, who is healthy after battling injuries the past couple of years, has gotten the offense off to a smooth start.

"We're starting fast and that's what we wanted to do as an offense," Johnson said. "It helps that we have a ton of veteran guys who have been here and done it before, that have been involved with the offense and have made a lot of plays for us before."

Johnson and his primary receivers spent a lot of time over summer getting ready.

"I think it's definitely paid off and our offense seems to be clicking a lot better this year," said receiver Bradon Godfrey, who believes the extra work has paid definite dividends in terms of timing and chemistry. "It makes camp a lot better. Usually it takes the offense awhile to get going and clicking, but when you come out on Day 1 it makes it a lot more fun when you're tearing up the defense in camp."

Though it's still early, Utah's offense is executing well. The offensive line and running backs have also gotten into the act. As a point of emphasis in camp, the running backs are playing a more effective role in the throwing game.

So far, so good.

It's all part of an overall process that began in the offseason with individual work, providing some momentum going into camp and supervised practices.

"We've kind of taken it upon ourselves as players to take ownership of what we are doing," he said. "And try to have the confidence to come out and match it every day."

Johnson threw passes to his teammates three times a week in June and upped it to five in July.

"That's what you need in this age of college football. To make sure you keep your edge, you've got to be out there throwing," he explained. "As hard as it is to find a rhythm and keep that rhythm, it's easier to lose it. You've got to make sure you stay sharp."

Utah's challenges were compounded by Johnson's shoulder woes last season and Brent Casteel's comeback from knee surgery.

"I feel like I'm 100 percent and Brian is 100 percent," Casteel said. "His arm looks great. He's putting that ball on the money, and we're going to take it to the next level."

With the Aug. 30 season-opener at Michigan drawing near, Johnson and company are determined to keep getting better. The focus and concentration, Johnson notes, is greater than it's been the past couple of years.

"I think this entire team understands what's at stake this season for us," Johnson said. "I think this entire team understands what we're capable of doing."

There's an extreme determination to capitalize on the opportunity, especially for Johnson and the other seniors.

"Obviously it gives you a sense of urgency," Johnson said. "You see the light at the end of the tunnel and you see that your college career is coming to an end. So you really don't want to underachieve.

"You want to take advantage of that moment."

To do so, however, the Utes invested heavily in preparation. Johnson said throwing to his receivers helped his rehab from shoulder surgery and improved team chemistry.

"It worked out great for us," said Casteel, who added that the relationship between a quarterback and his receivers is critical on several fronts. "We all feed off of each other."

Johnson, though, knows his role is a bit different. As the starting quarterback and a senior, his responsibilities include leadership. He was a captain last season and will likely be elected to the post again.

"My approach is exactly the same. The only thing I've tried to do more is make sure that I can get guys to rally around. Rally the troops to make sure we don't have a bad practice — kind of set the tempo," Johnson said. "That's what I try to take upon myself. I know some of the other seniors feel that way as well. We kind of want to set the tempo of the way we work, the way we practice and make sure we always have high energy."

And that's not all.

"We have a lot of potential and there's a lot of talent coming back," Johnson said. "We have a chance to do some good things. The guys (who) are out here are working hard and they want to be great. We've just got to come out here and keep getting better."

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Deseret News

Utah Utes football: Low profile, big impact for Utes' long snapper

By Dirk Facer
Deseret News

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Clint Mower resides in relative anonymity.

Despite making significant and consistent contributions to the University of Utah football team, the senior doesn't get a lot of recognition. Such is life for the guy who does all the snaps on punts and placekicks for the Utes.

"It's not a high profile position because it's not necessarily the most technically skilled position," Mower said. "But it is something you have to refine."

And Mower has. He literally sets up the success of All-American Louie Sakoda.

"I don't mind living in his shadow. But I do take a lot of pride in what I do," Mower said. "(Louie's) great. We're good friends. Our group (which includes holder Bradon Godfrey) gets along real well. He's a hard worker."

Sakoda has good things to say in return.

"He's a stud. He makes my life easy both on field goals and punts," Sakoda said. "You see teams where snaps are all over the place and that's just another thing kickers have to worry about. Having them there every time let's me focus on everything I need to."

Working relationships between a snapper-kicker and a snapper-holder, he added, include an unspoken bond of sorts.

"You're almost on the same brainwave sometimes," Sakoda explained. "He'll be thinking the same thing, and everything out there is just automatic."

Utah coach Kyle Whittingham said that's the way is supposed to be.

"You don't realize the snappers until they mess up. As long as they're doing their job they don't get much credit or much recognition. But when they mess up, boy it's a disaster," Whittingham said while noting that Mower has been a valuable commodity for the Utes. "Clint has done a great job for us the last couple of years. We're lucky to have him, Louie and Bradon Godfrey. That kicking battery, I guess you can call them, are all back for their senior years."

It's an aspect of Utah's game that is in very good hands.

"We've got an All-American kicker in Louie and that makes my job and Mower's job easy when he's making them all. It makes us all look good," Godfrey said. "I think we've got good chemistry. I think we work really well together."

Not everyone, though, shares in the publicity.

Sakoda has earned a lot of accolades and more are expected. Godfrey doesn't get a lot of attention as a holder, but he does draw notice as one of Utah's top receivers. Mower, meanwhile, labors outside the spotlight — even though the former walk-on has earned a scholarship for his skills.

"It's definitely a position that get much notice or glory," said Sakoda, who pointed out that Mower plays a two-fold part in Utah's net punting success.

"Mower is the first guy down there on punts. He makes countless tackles," Sakoda continued. "People don't realize that he forces the punt returner to make moves he doesn't want to."

Whether its punts or placekicking, Mower plays a pivotal part in Utah's scheme.

"It all starts with Clint Mower on the line," said Godfrey, who stressed the importance of a good snap. "It's a thankless job. He plays a huge role because that's where it all starts."

Mower began his career as a long snapper in ninth grade because someone on his team needed to do it. He didn't perfect his skills, however, until he arrived at Utah, where he is slated to start for a third-consecutive season.

"I really learned how to snap — all the technique and everything, the fundamentals of it," said Mower, who played for Dixie State as a freshman. He was a running back and safety at Lone Peak High School. "First thing, you've got to have speed on the ball."

A skill, he added, that can't necessarily be coached.

"I've never looked at it as a big deal until I did only this. So it's just kind of what you do," Mower said. "It's not that hard, really. But you've got to do it well."

EXTRA POINTS: The Utes took Sunday off. They'll practice twice today at the Ute Baseball Field with sessions scheduled for the morning and afternoon ... The first scrimmages of camp are planned for Tuesday and Saturday at Rice-Eccles Stadium ... Camp is closed to the public.

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Deseret News

Utah Utes football: Utes feel they have found a center in Taylor

By Mike Sorensen
Deseret News

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With four starters back from last year, the Utah offensive line had one big hole to fill this year — at the center position, which Kyle Gunther manned the past two years.

Before camp started, it looked like a two-man battle between sophomore Zane Taylor and junior Tyler Williams. However, Taylor took control and looks like he'll be the starter when the Utes open the season at Michigan in two weeks.

"Zane Taylor's working hard and having a good camp," said offensive line coach Charlie Dickey. "He's starting right now and he's going to have to get beat out. It's not a lock — he needs to keep working to get better."

Taylor never planned to play center when he was recruited out of Grand County High School in Moab.

"I think the last time I played center was in Little League," Taylor said. "I played mostly guard in high school. Coach Dickey wanted to give me a chance to compete because he knew I could play."

Dickey acknowledged he was looking for someone to play center after Gunther graduated, and Taylor fit the bill.

"We had to find some centers," he said. "We felt he had the body and the demeanor to play that, and he's smart. At center, you've got to snap it and then you've got to block. You're calling out stunts and blocking schemes, which all start with the center."

Taylor said he grew up as a Ute fan in Moab and, although he was recruited by BYU and had interest from Arizona State and Cal, he never considered anywhere else but Utah.

"I was always a Ute fan, especially after the '04 season," he said. "I couldn't think of a better place to go. As soon as they showed interest in me, I let them know this is where I wanted to go. I didn't even give anyone else a look."

He came to Utah as a defensive lineman, but after fall camp in 2006 he was switched to offensive guard. He played on the scout team and last year backed up Robert Conley, seeing some action on special teams and in blowout victories. In the spring he switched to center, where the Utes had a shortage of players with the graduation of Gunther.

Williams, who hails from Millilani, Hawaii, has been the backup center for two years, getting 20 snaps in each of the last two seasons. It didn't help that he rolled his ankle at practice earlier this week, but he has a chance to see time along with Taylor.

"I'm competing and I know Tyler is," Taylor said. "I can still learn from him and he learns from me. After a good spring, I don't feel I'm the new guy that has to catch up. I'm trying to be a leader on the O-line."

Although he's adapted to the center position rather well, Taylor doesn't plan to change his

number, 77, which usually is reserved for tackles or defensive linemen (in college, centers aren't required to wear numbers in the 50s like in the NFL).

"I'm keeping it," he said. "I was hoping I'd get my old number from high school (72), but Caleb Schlauderaff got it. I like it."

One starting spot on the offensive line is still up for grabs as Schlauderaff and Corey Seiuli battle for the left guard position. Seiuli, a senior, started the first three games last year before being sidelined by an injury, and Schlauderaff took over, even though he was a true freshman.

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Deseret News

Utah Utes football: Defensive-line tandem has coaching staff smiling

By Dirk Facer
Deseret News

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Koa Misi and Paul Kruger are formidable forces on the University of Utah's defensive line.

The ends are making quite an impact as the Utes prepare for their Aug. 30 season-opener at Michigan.

"They've both had tremendous camps, and they're both very talented kids," defensive coordinator Gary Andersen said while noting that expectations are high.

"I think they're one of the best sets of defensive ends in the country," he added. "I've said that for a long time, and I'm going to stick by that. I truly believe that. They're doing a nice job."

Misi had three sacks in Utah's first scrimmage early this week, and Kruger was recently named to the Mountain West's preseason all-conference team.

"I really like those guys," said Utah coach Kyle Whittingham. "I think that they're going to give us pressure on the quarterback."

And that, he explained, makes the play in the secondary even more effective. The Utes led the nation in pass-efficiency defense in 2007.

"I think we're going to be good. Paul helps push the quarterback my way, and I help push the quarterback his way," Misi said. "I think we'll be a pretty good tandem."

Kruger played in all 13 games last season and made 63 tackles to earn Freshman All-America honors. Misi also appeared in every game. He made 67 stops while showing his versatility by filling in a tackle when injuries mounted after two games.

"Koa played good football for us last year," Whittingham said.

"But he'll be a full-time end if everything goes as planned, and that's really where he's most comfortable."

Misi, a 6-foot-3, 263-pound junior from Santa Rosa, Calif., led the defensive line in tackles. He made eight stops behind the line of scrimmage, including 2.5 sacks. In addition, Misi broke up two passes and recovered two fumbles.

"Koa's an amazing player," said Kruger, who acknowledged the pair are good friends and are having fun manning the starting end positions. They push each other and have a friendly competition.

"We're both excited for the season," he added. "There's a lot of anticipation."

Plus size and speed.

Kruger, who was a quarterback at Timpanogos High School, gives Utah a 6-foot-5, 265-pound body on the right end.

Add Misi and projected starting tackles Kenape Eliapo and Greg Newman to the mix, and the Utes have 1,091 pounds of pressure on the defensive line to attack opposing offenses. A trio of athletic linebackers and a veteran secondary round out Utah's first unit.

"Our defense is getting pretty strong right now," Misi said. "I think we'll be good this year."

They certainly were in Tuesday's scrimmage — making 12 tackles for loss, nine sacks and four pass breakups.

"I think it went pretty good," Misi said. "Everybody was pretty assignment-sound."

► **Camp central**

First down: The Utes practiced once Thursday. Their third two-a-day of the week is scheduled for Friday.

Head-turner: Utah coach **Kyle Whittingham** said it was great to get linebacker **Stevenson Sylvester** (knee tendinitis) back on the field. He's a playmaker, said Whittingham, who also liked how defensive end Koa Misi, safety **Robert Johnson**, running back **Darrell Mack** and wide receiver **Freddie Brown** performed Thursday.

Injury report: Defensive tackle **Aaron Tonga**'s recovery from an MCL strain is ahead of schedule. He may be able to return in a week or so. Wide receiver **David Reed** (wisdom tooth extraction) returned to action Thursday.

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The Salt Lake Tribune

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Season opener

Ute football: Mack emerges as No. 1 RB

By Lya Wodraska
The Salt Lake Tribune
Salt Lake Tribune

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Saturday's scrimmage ended earlier than expected for Utah running back Darrell Mack, but not before he secured the starting role for the Utes.

Mack, who rushed for 1,204 yards in 2007, left Saturday's scrimmage early after his left Achilles' tendon tightened up causing him to hobble off the field.

While the tendon is a concern for Utah's coaching staff, especially after linebacker Kyle Brady ruptured his last season, Whittingham feels good enough about Mack to name him the starter.

Matt Asiata, Utah's JC transfer who broke his leg in the 2007 opener, continues to be sidelined with a sprained ankle. He injured the ankle last week and was expected to be out only a day or so. Now, a week later, he is only about 75 percent healthy according to Whittingham. He didn't participate Saturday.

Asiata missed most of fall camp in 2007 with a foot strain. That injury lingered longer than it was expected, much like his current ailment.

His absence has turned what was one of the most anticipated battles of fall camp into a frustrating situation instead. Whittingham said there was still a chance plans could change, but with the opener only two weeks away, feels time is too short for Asiata to get the necessary reps to be the starter.

"If you aren't on the field, you can't compete," he said. "No one feels worse about it than Matt, but the bottom line is he isn't ready for live reps."

While Whittingham hopes Asiata will be able to get some reps in Wednesday's scrimmage, Mack will probably get more rest than work in the coming days because he has proven himself and Whittingham would prefer to give his Achilles' tendon time to rest.

"It worries you because Kyle Brady had it last year, but this time off will be good," he said.

Mack had just three carries for eight yards in the scrimmage before he hobbled off the field. Most of the starters were held to limited minutes as the focus was put on settling rotations and getting the inexperienced would-be starters reps. Brian Johnson went 9-for-13 for 83 yards with a 5-yard touchdown pass to Bradon Godfrey. Backup quarterback Corbin Louks went 7-for-8 for 68 yards and Chad Manis went 3-for-4 for 18 yards.

John Peel led the receivers with four catches for 55 yards, followed by Freddie Brown with four catches for 38 yards and Jereme Brooks with four catches for 33 yards.

Freshman Sausan Shakerin led the running backs with seven carries for 39 yards and Ray Stowers rushed four times for nine yards. While the team improved from Tuesday's scrimmage to Wednesday's, Utah's offense continues to draw too many penalties.

Many of the penalties came courtesy of some smart play by the defense as it coaxed the offense offsides, Johnson said.

"They've been doing it for about two or three years now," he said. "You gotta expect the move call is going to happen and that the defense is going to try and bait you to jump offsides. The ref isn't going to be able to hear that when you have 110,000 people, so you have to be disciplined."

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Deseret News

Utes hope keeping it fun = wins

By Mike Sorensen
Deseret News

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One day it was a golf competition between three players who had hardly ever played golf before. Another day coaches sat on each other's shoulders and tried to block placekicks. One day, loudspeakers blasted out the 1960s hit "Louie, Louie," while kicker Louie Sakoda attempted to make a field goal amid distractions from his teammates and coaches. One time the big, 300-pound linemen tried to field punts. Another time an assistant coach raced a freshman through a convoy of players to determine whether the coaches or players ran windsprints at the end of practice.

Welcome to Utah football 2008.

No, the Utes fall football camp hasn't turned into one big fun-o-rama. But it's definitely not as serious as it used to be, either.

The Utes are taking themselves a little less seriously, while trying to build some camaraderie and team unity at the same time. Their hope is that better team chemistry, added to a bunch of talented individuals, will result in a special season.

Whether they want to admit it or not, the Utes haven't always been the best at harboring team chemistry. One year there was a rift between the offense and the defense that caused division on the team. Some past players have confided to the media about communication problems between coaches and players or among players. Sure, those things happen on most teams, but the Utes are trying to minimize conflicts and build better team camaraderie this year.

"It's a huge point of emphasis that cannot be overstated or addressed enough, because it's such a vital part of our success," said Ute coach Kyle Whittingham. "Chemistry and leadership are those intangibles that often make the difference."

The players have noticed a difference this year.

"It seems like when I first came here (in 2005) with a new staff, there was a very rigid coaching style," said Sakoda. "Now the coaches are realizing things they can do to make it a little more fun. I don't know if 'relaxed' is the word because we still practice at a high tempo. But we're placing a huge emphasis on team unity and leadership this year."

Sakoda acknowledged that in the past he hasn't even known some of the other players on the team, but that has changed this year.

"This year there's a brotherhood atmosphere, and that really reflects how players play on the field," he said.

Tight end Colt Sampson is the oldest player on the team and has been around as long as anyone in the Ute program as a fifth-year senior.

"Definitely the coaches have done a good job of keeping a positive atmosphere," he said. "It's nice to have those little things to help your teammates come together and get to know your teammates a little better. We put in our work, and then we have a little relaxing time. We keep a good balance."

Another player who has been around for five years and likes the new approach is quarterback Brian Johnson.

"It can get to be a grind out here, and guys can start to be ornery and sick of each other," Johnson said. "We just try to keep it fun and keep this team going because we have a chance to be really good. We have tough practices, and then it's nice to end it on a fun note."

Whittingham hasn't assigned anyone to be the "fun coordinator" and acknowledged he comes up with most of the ideas.

"I lie in bed at night trying to think of ways to create some diversions," he said. "The monotonies of two-a-days can really get to you. It's always nice to have a diversion here and there, as long as it doesn't take away from your focus."

In the golf competition, Sakoda and Johnson competed along with defensive tackle Koa Misi to see which group — the offense, defense or special teams — didn't have to do "gassers" that day. Wearing full gear, each had to hit an 8-iron toward a hoop at the other end of the field.

Sakoda, who said he's never played golf before in his life, was the closest. "My short game stinks," complained Johnson. They were both grinning when they talked about it.

Who knows what Whittingham and his staff will come up with this week to make their players smile. Whatever the Utes can do to develop good team chemistry could make this quite a fun year in Uteville in more ways than one.

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Deseret News

Utah Utes football: Louks preparing like starter

By Dirk Facer
Deseret News

Published: August 18, 2008

Corbin Louks isn't just biding his time as Utah's backup quarterback. He's too busy.

"If you're the No. 2 guy, you've always got to be ready. You've always got to be prepared," Louks said. "You're one play away. You've got to prepare for each and every game like you're going to get in."

With starting quarterback Brian Johnson having battled knee and shoulder problems the past couple of years, Louks is well aware how quickly his role could change.

As a freshman, he played behind Johnson and Tommy Grady — running a specific offensive package similar to what former Ute star Eric Weddle operated. Louks wound up as the team's third-leading rusher in 2007, racking up 162 yards on 33 carries.

Now that Grady is out of the picture, Louks has moved up the depth chart and his responsibilities have increased. If something happens to Johnson this time around, he is slated to take over.

"He did a great job in his role last year," said Utah coach Kyle Whittingham. "If he's thrust into the position of being the guy, we'd have to see how he responds. My guess is he'd respond very well."

Louks, he added, is much further along than a year ago.

"You never know how a guy is going to perform when the bullets are live," Whittingham said. "You get him in a football game and everybody responds a little differently. Some guys make that transition very well."

Since arriving at Utah, Louks has added 25 pounds and maintained his quickness. The 6-foot, 195-pounder from Danville, Calif., is the third-fastest player on the team. He's got 4.42 speed in the 40 and lot's of determination.

"I'm going to do my best to push the No. 1 guy. I'll make him better, and it'll make the team better. I'm going to prepare each and every week like I may get a shot," Louks said. "So I'm just going to do my best to push Brian and he'll push the team. It'll have a wrinkle effect and just make the team better."

After being pulled out of a planned redshirt year in the third game last season, Louks went on to appear in 10 contests. The bulk of his work came on the ground.

Louks threw just eight passes in his first season of college ball, completing five for 41 yards and two touchdowns.

"He's got a strong arm. We're not trying to hide his arm or trying to conceal something," Whittingham said. "It's just last year as a true freshman his role was to come in and primarily be the quarterback run guy, which he did effectively. It wasn't a case that he can't throw."

At San Ramon Valley High School, Louks earned MVP honors after throwing for 2,489 yards and 28 touchdowns.

"I'm confident in my throwing ability. I'm confident in my receivers and I'm confident in my line. It takes all of us to complete the pass — not just the quarterback," Louks said. "Even though I ran the ball a lot last year, I still feel like I can throw the ball well."

It's part of the job, he noted.

Louks doesn't dwell on the past or worry about the future. He's firmly entrenched on the present, refusing to even speculate on 2008 and his possible move to the starting job.

"Next year is next year. This year is this year," Louks said.

"I'm focused right now on what I've got to do this year to help the team out in any way I can, push Brian and have him lead the team — help out wherever the team needs me. When next year comes, next year will come."

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Deseret News

Utah Utes football: Peel is finally healthy and poised for a big year

By Mike Sorensen
Deseret News

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He was recruited by Urban Meyer nearly five years ago, but John Peel has yet to catch a pass for the University of Utah football team.

Peel, a highly regarded receiver out of Scottsdale's Chaparral High School, has battled a variety of injuries as well as a position change in his five seasons but is back at receiver and having his best success as a Ute.

"John's had a very good fall camp," said Ute coach Kyle Whittingham. "He's finally healthy, knock on wood, and we've got to keep him that way. He's made it to every practice without issues and if that continues, he'll help us this fall."

Offensive coordinator Andy Ludwig is pleased with the progress Peel has made this fall and envisions him being a key part of the Utes' offense.

"John Peel is one of the most improved players on the offense," said Ludwig. "He had a great summer and now has found his way into the two-deep rotation. He's a key player for us. In the four-wideout system, you've got to have seven, eight guys ready to go and he's in the mix. I'm glad he's with us — he's having a great camp."

For Peel, just getting on the field has been an accomplishment.

He was part of Meyer's second recruiting class in early 2004 along with the likes of fellow seniors Brian Johnson, Robert Conley and Brent Casteel, after setting an Arizona state record for career touchdown receptions.

In his first fall camp in 2004, he tore a tendon in his knee and missed most of the season and used his redshirt year. In 2005 he was mostly used on the special teams, but missed the second half of the season with a groin injury before returning to play in the Emerald Bowl.

In the spring of 2006, the Utes needed help in the defensive backfield, so Peel switched to safety. He was playing well until midway through camp when he was taken by ambulance from practice one day with neck and back injuries. It turned out he blew out a couple of discs in his back, which caused him to miss the '06 as well as the 2007 seasons.

Peel doesn't believe he has a fragile body, saying, "It's just bad luck. You've got to fight on and take it one day at a time. This is the healthiest I've ever been since I've been at Utah,"

When asked what his strengths are as a receiver, Peel prefers not to talk much about himself.

"I wouldn't say I have one specific trait," he said. "I'm just trying to do as much as I can in every aspect as a receiver."

Ludwig knows what makes Peel an effective receiver.

"He's really fast and he can catch the heck out of the ball," Ludwig said. "He caught that deep ball on Sean Smith in the scrimmage the other day and you don't see that happen very often on Sean Smith."

Even though he's listed as senior, Peel hopes to get another year after appealing to the NCAA. After all, if former teammate Darryl Poston could get seven years to play because of injuries, then Peel ought to get another year.

"Technically I'm a senior, but I'm going to press for a medical (redshirt) because of all the time I've been out," he said. "It's looking pretty positive I'll get another year back after this."

First, Peel would just love to get through this year without any more medical issues and be an integral part of the Utah offense.

► Utah camp central

First down: The Utes practiced once Tuesday. They'll hold their final scrimmage of camp this morning and begin Michigan preparations in a light practice this afternoon.

Head-turner: Utah coach Kyle Whittingham was pleased with the entire offense. He said the Utes executed well and showed a big improvement over the last few days.

Injury report: The Pit is beginning to clear out. Defensive tackle **Aaron Tonga** (MCL strain) and running back **Darrell Mack** (irritated Achilles), who was held out for precautionary reasons, did not practice.

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Deseret News

Utah Utes football preview: Kicker Sakoda is staying grounded

By Mike Sorensen
Deseret News

Published: August 24, 2008

It's not that often that University of Utah football players earn all-America honors and almost never do they do it two years in a row.

Louie Sakoda has that chance to become a rare two-time first-team all-American at the U.

The Utes' senior placekicker/punter earned some all-America honors last year and has been named to several preseason all-American teams this year.

Think about former Ute all-Americans and nearly every one was honored in his senior season, from Luther Elliss to Jordan Gross to Eric Weddle. Two exceptions were quarterback Lee Grosscup, who was honored as a junior in 1957, but not as a senior, Alex Smith, who was honored as a junior, but turned professional. The only player to be a first-team all-American twice was another punter/placekicker, Marv Bateman, in 1970-71.

Already this year, Sakoda has been named a preseason all-American by Athlon Magazine, Lindy's and Phil Steele's College Football Preview and is on the Ray Guy and Lou Groza watch lists. Last year, Sakoda won first-team all-America honors by the Football Writers Association and CBSSports.com as a punter and by Rivals.com as a kicker. He's also a two-time Mountain West Conference Special Teams Player of the Year.

All of the awards and preseason hype aren't going to Sakoda's head. He said it's not putting any additional pressure on him.

"People ask if it puts any extra pressure on you with all the extra accolades," he said. "I've always felt it sets the bar high and I've set the bar even higher for my senior year. If I don't work as hard as I can, how am I going to reach that standard? I'm taking the same approach this season."

Sakoda is a soft-spoken, humble individual, but he's honest enough to admit he enjoys the attention, especially for the special teams.

"Obviously it's nice to get the recognition and to show how important the special teams really is," he said. "Special teams win a lot of games as it's been shown in recent years. I want to be the guy that goes in there and the coaches know that I'll do my job and we'll get things done."

Sakoda has handled punting duties for the Utes since his freshman season when he averaged 37.1 yards. He improved to 44.0 as a sophomore and 44.3 last year with 30 and 28 inside the 20, respectively.

Not only is Sakoda one of the top punters in the country, he's also one of the top placekickers.

As a sophomore, he made all 43 PAT attempts and 16 of 20 field goals with a long of 45 yards. Last year, he made 38 of 40 PATs and 19 of 22 field goals with a long of 51.

"He's very reliable — a great weapon to have on the football team," said Ute coach Kyle Whittingham. "He's as good as anyone in the country in pinning opponents inside the 20-yard

line. The field-goal phase of his game is very dependable. He's one of the rare dual kicking threats in the country."

So how does Sakoda handle both the punting and placekicking duties and do them both so well?

"It's tough to juggle," he said. "It's tough not to overkick when you're training for both. You have to refine your technique and limit yourself. So that's one thing I've really been working on is less physical kicks and more putting myself in the mindset that every kick is a Michigan kick so that my job will be easier when I get in there."

With all of his talent and credentials, Sakoda could very well find himself kicking in the NFL next year.

"That's always the ultimate goal, that would be nice," he said. "But I'm just taking it one step at a time. I want to finish my senior year strong and we'll take it from there."

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The Salt Lake Tribune

<http://www.sltrib.com>

Utah football

Ute football: U.'s Whit making plays for support

By Lya Wodraska
The Salt Lake Tribune
Salt Lake Tribune

Article Last Updated:08/24/2008 08:18:50 AM MDT

With a veteran defense and an offense boasting a variety of talent, the Utah Utes are expected to contend for the Mountain West Conference title and possibly break into the BCS.

It could be the season in which the Utes put the success of the 2004 team far behind them and claim their own identity as something more than just a great bowl team.

It could be a pivotal year for the team, but perhaps even more so for the coach who leads them.

When Urban Meyer left for Florida following the 2004 season, defensive coordinator Kyle Whittingham was quickly hired to replace him. At the time the hiring was considered a victory for Utah athletic director Chris Hill because Whittingham turned down BYU to remain with the Utes.

Hill rewarded Whittingham by giving him a yearly package worth \$675,000, making him the second-highest paid coach in the MWC behind TCU's Gary Patterson, who made \$1.1 million at the private school in 2005.

Meanwhile, the Cougars tabbed Bronco Mendenhall as the man to restore their program to its past glory.

Now three years into their coaching careers, it's hard to say Utah got the better deal. Mendenhall has led the Cougars through two undefeated seasons in MWC play, two bowl victories and national rankings. The Cougars were ranked No. 17 in the final 2007 BCS standings and are starting the season ranked No. 16 in the AP Poll.

Last season BYU showed its satisfaction with Mendenhall by giving him a contract extension through the 2011 season reportedly worth \$1 million annually.

Under Whittingham, the Utes have stretched their bowl winning streak to seven games and have managed to overcome critical injuries to starters to have successful seasons. However, the Cougars have what Utah doesn't: league titles, a 2-1 edge over their rival school and a near-constant presence in the national rankings.

Utah's Hill has given Whittingham vocal support, but hasn't given him the security of a contract extension. He won't say when he'll evaluate Whittingham's situation, saying only that "every year is an important year."

But now, with Whittingham going into the fourth season of his six-year contract with a team expected to rival BYU for the league title, it could be viewed as a season for him to prove himself as a head coach. He is no longer in the top tier of highest paid coaches, although his base salary doesn't include apparel and retirement packages like others do - and the Utes are no longer the top dog in the conference.

He doesn't care about the money, he says, but he does care about the final standings and knows it's time for him to deliver. Winning a MWC championship is his priority.

"A three-year absence, it has been too long," he said. "This program is at the level we should have that in our sights every year."

Utah has been there and showed the potential of a MWC contender, but hasn't finished.

Where Meyer's short time with the Utes will be defined by that undefeated season, so far Whittingham's tenure has been defined by losses that many believe shouldn't have happened.

Losing to BYU hurts immensely on one level, but losing to teams such as San Diego State, New Mexico and UNLV in games many thought the Utes should have won hurts in a whole other way. Those were the losses that quarterback Brian Johnson was thinking of when he said the Utes have underachieved in recent seasons.

In that respect, Whittingham's guidance in 2008 might be better judged for how his team plays in would-be gimme games like Utah State, UNLV and San Diego State, not how it does against Michigan, Oregon State or BYU.

Losing a well-played game is acceptable, losing one because a team underachieved isn't.

"It's my main responsibility as a head football coach to make sure the team is ready to play each and every week," said Whittingham, who has taken the blame for the 27-0 loss at UNLV.

Can Whittingham get the job done? Those around him say he can and point to the way he has changed as a coach as evidence. He doesn't run the program like a dictatorship as he tended to do in the past, but does a better job of listening to his assistants and his players and considering their input.

"He's continually adjusting his ideas and views throughout the program and developing it," defensive coordinator Gary Andersen said. "He is a smart guy. Kids change and times change, and people who are successful adjust to that."

Leading up to the season, Whittingham did more team-bonding activities such as retreats and rope courses with his staff. With the team he has instituted more motivational tactics, such as gassers for coaches when players beat a coach in a foot race and so forth.

"He has changed in a big way," said receiver John Peel, one of the few players who were on the roster in 2004. "He has become more comfortable as a head coach and more understanding of us."

Now is the test to see if all that change and his unity with the players and coaches pays off in wins. If it does, it could pay off in dollar signs, too, not that he is thinking about that possibility.

"All I think about is beating Michigan," he said.

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Ute football: Utes hope to create '04 team mentality

By Lya Wodraska
The Salt Lake Tribune
Salt Lake Tribune

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As a redshirt freshman, receiver Brent Casteel was only on the periphery of the buzz that surrounded the 2004 Utah team.

However, he saw enough to remember how that team carried itself. He remembers how Alex Smith exploited defenses with the variety of weapons Utah's offense had, how Morgan Scalley exerted himself daily as a vocal leader, and how the team took the cliché of playing one game at a time and really did focus on each game.

"I remember how after winning that first game, each game got more and more intense after that," he said. "As the winning kept going, the overall atmosphere in the locker room kept getting higher and higher. The whole week was spent focusing on that game that week. There was a lot of leadership."

Now the key players left from that undefeated team, a list which includes Casteel, quarterback Brian Johnson, offensive lineman Robert Conley, defensive end Paul Kruger and receiver John Peel, hope they can draw on their experience from that season to guide the Utes into 2008.

"There were times when that team didn't want to be out there practicing, it was hot and stuff, but that's football," Johnson said. "When one got down another would pick him up and say 'Come on, let's go to work.' We've got that same kind of rapport as far as the fifth-year seniors go. We've put in the work and we are ready for the payoff."

Of the group, only Johnson played in 2004, getting into 10 games as a true freshman. But many are in key positions in 2008. As the quarterback, Johnson is the natural leader on the team, but also has exerted himself more and more as he has matured into a senior. Conley was elected a co-captain by the team, Kruger is a star in the making on defense as a sophomore, and Casteel is the flashy receiver intent on making his last season his best after missing most of 2007 with a knee injury.

"I learned a lot from being around Morgan Scalley," he said. "He can be a goofy guy, but the way he carried himself in the locker room and the way Brian does now taught me a lot about what we need for this season."

In 2004, Utah started the season ranked No. 19 and opened at home against Texas A&M, which finished the season 7-5, including the 41-21 loss to Utah.

This week, the Utes open against the Wolverines, who are ranked No. 24. How good Michigan is going to be is really anyone's guess since the Wolverines have a young offense, a new system and a new coach.

But Conley said the key to a good start for Utah is for the Utes to focus on themselves and how they go into the game rather than being too concerned with Michigan's situation. It's the same attitude he saw the 2004 seniors instill in their teammates.

"The '04 team played with a lot of swagger and confidence," he said. "You knew when the game started it was going to be a great game. It's good to experience that kind of stuff and absolutely I can say it's all about playing with swagger."

Having players who are intent on being a strong influence on the team make coach Kyle Whittingham's job that much easier, he said.

"A coach can yell and scream all he wants, but unless the players are taking ownership from within, you're going to struggle," he said.

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Then and now

The Salt Lake Tribune

<http://www.sltrib.com>

Utah football

Ute football: Receiver ready for Big House

By Lya Wodraska
The Salt Lake Tribune
Salt Lake Tribune

Article Last Updated:08/28/2008 01:15:52 AM MDT

If all goes as planned Saturday, David Reed will introduce himself to Utah fans as the latest talented receiver to wear a Ute uniform by having a big game at Michigan.

Afterward, if all goes as planned, he'll re-introduce himself to his mother, Karen.

Reed, who came to Utah in the summer after earning an associate's degree at Pasadena City College, hasn't seen his mother since Christmas. She'll be in Michigan's Big House on Saturday, watching her son play for the first time since he was in high school at New London High in Connecticut.

"It's a lot of money to travel coast to coast," Reed said.

A lot of money to get to that desired destination, and in Reed's case, a lot of hard work.

Reed, one of Utah's most highly touted newcomers for the 2008 season, has journeyed from one coast to another to finally end up in the middle of Utah's deep receiving corps.

His journey started in New Britain, Conn., as one of three children born to Karen Reed. She and his father split when David was 5, so most of his memories are of his mother, and of sports.

"He played everything," his mother said. "Whatever sport it was he played hard."

Football was the one that stuck with him, though, and eventually got him through high school. He loved the sport enough to take care of his grades in season but let them slide out of season when his coach didn't ride him as much.

"I was something else," he said. "Not a troublemaker, I just didn't do everything right all the time."

By the time he was a senior and helped New London win two state championships, Reed had the skills but not the grades to interest large schools.

Luckily for him a Connecticut high school referee was friends with Pasadena City College coach Kenny Lawler and placed a call.

Lawler, like most coaches, didn't get too hyped up about someone else's opinion and waited for the footage to arrive. What he saw was Reed blazing through defenses, over defenders and returning punts and kicks for large gains.

"He was incredible," Lawler said. "Then, the same thing I saw on film he was doing here for two years."

Feeling like he'd missed his shot at major college ball once, Reed didn't let a second opportunity go by him. He said goodbye to his family and flew to a city where he knew no one.

It didn't take long for the small school to know who he was. He made an immediate impact his freshman year, finishing with 32 catches for 711 yards and 11 touchdowns.

In his spare time he took care of his other business and got his academics in order. Between football, school and a tight budget, Reed only went home for a few days at Christmas and a surprise birthday party for his mother.

"It was hard, but I wisened up and got dedicated and disciplined," he said.

Reed also got better on the football field, establishing new receiving records at the school. His only fault, Lawler said, was his habit of going through defenders rather than around them.

"I'd tell him, 'David, that is a 6-3, 245-pound guy, outmaneuver him, you're not a fullback,'" Lawler said. "But he'd lower his shoulder and just go."

Kentucky, Arizona State, Oregon and other schools joined Utah in recruiting Reed. Utah line coach Charlie Dickey did the best sales job and earned his commitment.

"I don't know who was happier when he got his degree," said his mother. "Me or coach Dickey."

Often players come from JC schools to big programs with inflated stats and hype and struggle at the major levels of college football. No one is predicting that with Reed. Despite joining Utah's workouts later than most players, he has worked his way into Utah's rotation and may return kicks.

"He'll be a household name pretty soon," Utah quarterback Brian Johnson predicted. "He has some unbelievable abilities, very natural at catching the football and unbelievably fast."

His debut comes Saturday in one of college football's biggest stages where he'll play hard for a new team and a mother who can finally point to a field and say, 'that's my son.'

"I've missed a lot of things since I haven't been around him," she said. "I can't wait to see him. I may just sit there and cry."

David Reed file

Ht/Wt: 6 feet,

184 pounds

Hometown: New Britain, Conn.

Notes: Set national JC reception record with 111 catches in 10 games in 2007. . . . Averaged 166.1 yards per game receiving. . . . Broke every game and career reception record at Pasadena City College.

Season opener

UTAH at MICHIGAN

Saturday, 1:30 p.m., Ch. 4

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BRIAN JOHNSON, Utah quarterback on receiver David Reed

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August 29, 2008

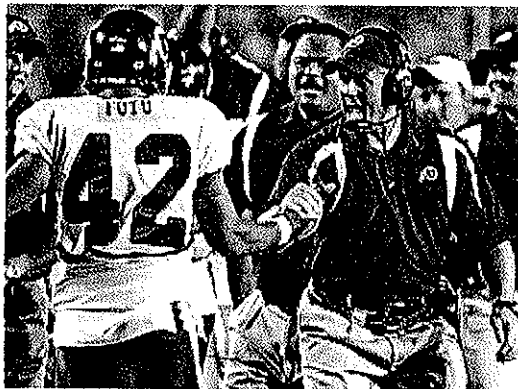
A Saner Approach to College Football

As salaries for college-football coaches spiral into the millions of dollars, two Utah schools -- Brigham Young and the University of Utah -- are winning without breaking the bank. Darren Everson investigates.

By **DARREN EVERSON**
August 29, 2008; Page W1

College-football coaches have it pretty good these days. Some might say too good.

Five years ago, there were three coaches making \$2 million a year in the college ranks. This season there will be 21. Alabama's second-year coach, Nick Saban, makes six times more than the president of the university. And it's not just premier programs paying big bucks: Southern Methodist's new coach, June Jones, will earn about \$2 million per season -- four times what his predecessor made.



Associated Press

At right, Utah coach Kyle Whittingham.

While the wisdom of this strategy is open to debate, there is one pocket of the football nation that's holding out -- and so far, holding its own. The two major football programs in Utah, Brigham Young University and the University of Utah, won a combined 20 games last season. BYU's Bronco Mendenhall, whose team finished 11-2 and earned a No. 14 ranking, earned no more than \$1 million, while Utah coach Kyle Whittingham (9-4) earned about \$680,000. Their combined pay is less than at least two dozen of their major college coaching peers earn by themselves.

Their secret is a philosophy that revolves around building up-to-date facilities, finding up-and-coming coaches and holding the line on compensation. "We know we're not going to be able to compete for the highest-paid coaches," says Tom Holmoe, BYU's athletic director. "But I'm not convinced that they're the best."

Four coaches were known to have compensation topping \$3 million last season -- Alabama's Mr. Saban, Oklahoma's Bob Stoops, Florida's Urban Meyer and Iowa's Kirk Ferentz. All of these coaches have had highly ranked teams in the past -- Mr. Stoops and Mr. Meyer have won national championships at their schools. But their results last year were uneven: Oklahoma finished ranked in the top 10, Florida went 9-3 but lost its bowl game, Alabama lost six games including a shocker to Louisiana-Monroe and 6-6 Iowa didn't play in a bowl.

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Notre Dame's Charlie Weis, whose 10-year compensation package is estimated to be worth between \$30 and \$40 million, produced one of the most disappointing seasons in coaching history. The Fighting Irish set a school record by losing nine games. A Notre Dame spokesman declined to comment.

This explosion in compensation is relatively new. As recently as the early 1990s, some college coaches still operated under handshake deals with their athletic departments. The difference between a high salary and a low one was in the hundreds of thousands. But as the spoils of college football grow, schools are not only raising salaries, they're creating "compensation packages" that include extras like guaranteed radio and television appearances, alumni engagements, shoe-company contracts and football camps. In Mr. Saban's case, these add-ons add up to more than \$3.5 million.

After winning the 1984 national championship with a renowned passing attack under coach LaVell Edwards, BYU began a slow slide into mediocrity. Many followers of the program blamed its conservative, tight-fisted ways. As early as 1980, Mr. Edwards had pleaded for a new indoor practice field, but the school didn't actually break ground until 2002.

The facility cost \$9 million, which was lavish by the school's standards. The finished building was more impressive than the indoor practice facility at Michigan and comparable to a new football practice building at Oklahoma. Mr. Holmoe said the benefits in recruiting and practice quality made the building well worth the expense -- and it still cost less than hiring a celebrity coach.

In 2004, after three straight losing seasons, Mr. Holmoe, then an associate athletic director, replaced Gary Crowton with current coach Bronco Mendenhall, who had been Mr. Crowton's defensive coordinator. The hiring was unusual for big-time college football. Typically, when a coach is fired or resigns under pressure, a school will clean house and look to hire a coach from elsewhere. BYU did look at outside candidates (current Utah coach Kyle Whittingham turned it down) but ultimately decided to stick with the unproven Mr. Mendenhall, whose starting compensation was less than \$500,000, according to experts and press reports. BYU says it does not release salary figures.



BYU coach Bronco Mendenhall

BYU Photo

Mr. Mendenhall had never been a head coach before and his defenses were "good, not great," Mr. Holmoe says. But Mr. Holmoe liked the effort Mr. Mendenhall got from his players. A former coach at California himself -- an unsuccessful one, he admits -- Mr. Holmoe says he developed an understanding of the leadership qualities a coach needs to win, and felt Mendenhall had them.

In the last two seasons, BYU has gone 11-2 and beaten Oregon and UCLA in bowl games. In recognition of his success, Mr. Mendenhall was given a contract extension and a raise in the summer of 2007. Mr. Holmoe wouldn't disclose the contract figures, but said that at the time, Mr. Mendenhall's compensation package was not the largest in the nine-team Mountain West Conference, where the highest salary was about \$1 million.

Mr. Mendenhall says he was "frustrated" by his salary before his recent raise. That said, he recalls

the days before anyone considered him a coaching genius. "I had to remind myself I'm the same guy from two years ago who wasn't sure he could do the job."

What Mr. Mendenhall lacks in experience, he seems to have made up for in leadership and defensive coaching. At a recent practice, Mr. Holmoe proudly pointed out how players ran, not walked, from one drill to the next; indeed, no one walked anywhere all morning. On the field, the Cougars' strength has been their defense -- they ranked 10th nationally in total defense last season -- which Mr. Holmoe attributes to Mr. Mendenhall's attentiveness to that side of the ball.

Forty miles north of BYU's home in Provo, the Utah campus in Salt Lake City is also enjoying the fruits of a long climb from irrelevance. Unlike BYU, the Utes didn't have a tradition of success to entice recruits. When Chris Hill, Utah's athletic director, arrived in 1987, the Utes hadn't been to a bowl game since 1964, hadn't won a conference title outright since 1957 and had an outdated stadium that sat just 32,500.

The school's football program got a boost from the 2002 Winter Olympics. The stadium underwent a \$52 million expansion and renovation starting in 1997. As football games began to generate more revenue, Utah saw the makings of a strategy -- using the revenue and donations it might have allotted to paying a coach to building a football infrastructure. The school opened a new indoor practice facility in 2004 that cost \$6 million and was financed by private donations. The new building became a recruiting drawing card and improved practices by allowing the entire team to spread out over two indoor fields. "For us, the formula has been our facilities," Mr. Hill says.

By the time the buildings were going up, Mr. Hill had already shown a knack for hiring up-and-coming coaches. One of his first hires in 1989 was basketball coach Rick Majerus, who would lead the team to the 1998 NCAA title game. In 2002, he made one of the best hires of the decade -- Bowling Green football coach Urban Meyer. Though Mr. Meyer's salary was only \$500,000 in 2004, his last season before taking a lucrative deal at Florida, his Utes went undefeated and finished the season with a No. 4 ranking.

To win over its current coach, Mr. Whittingham, Utah offered him about \$680,000 -- nearly \$200,000 more than it had been paying Mr. Meyer. But because Mr. Whittingham was a defensive coordinator who'd never been a head coach, his compensation is still well below the national average. While he got off to a rough start with two five-loss seasons, Mr. Whittingham's 2007 team finished 9-4 and won its bowl game. "We want people who want to make their mark here," Mr. Hill says, "and then we'll try to keep them."

Expensive coaches aren't always busts. Last season, the 13 coaches who made \$2 million or more had a higher winning percentage (.686) than those making between \$1 million and \$2 million (.606).

At a time when college football is becoming more lucrative and complex, some analysts say coaches deserve more money. And their contracts aren't likely to cause any university to go bankrupt. Coaches' salaries at many big schools still represent a fraction of the total athletic budget. Ohio State's Jim Tressel made \$2.6 million last season, but the school's athletics budget was \$109.3 million in the 2006-2007 fiscal year. (The university's total budget was \$4 billion.) Mr. Tressel has led the Buckeyes to three national-championship-game appearances and one title.

The Utah schools recognize that salaries are only likely to go up. To stay competitive, BYU is

Deseret News

Kickers aren't nerds anymore

By Brad Rock
Deseret News

Published: September 3, 2008

He was still catching his breath, though it was hard to tell if that was due to exertion or exhilaration. All around Ute kicker Louie Sakoda there was commotion.

A regular party-down moment.

Teammates pelted him with back-slaps following the Utes' win at Michigan last Saturday. Reporters asked the details of his day. Fans who had made the trip to Ann Arbor brayed his name.

"Louie, you're the bomb!" someone called. "YOU ARE THE MAAAAAN!"

Louie the bomb, the man, smiled broadly. A hundred-thousand Michigan fans had come to the Big House to watch the Wolverines beat Utah. Instead, Sakoda booted four field goals and kept Michigan subdued with his punting. In the process, he earned MWC special teams player of the week honors.

"I actually felt more comfortable here than I have in a lot of places," Sakoda was saying. "I think a lot of it was my off-season work and preparation."

That preparation included, among other things, blasting the classic party song, "Louie, Louie" on the loudspeakers during two-a-days.

Aye-yi-yi-yi.

The amazing thing about kickers these days is that people think they're, well, amazing. They're as popular as big sunglasses. When BYU landed Bingham High kicker Justin Sorensen last winter, it was considered a major recruiting coup. The Cougars expect that if they ever need a 60-yard field goal, they can turn it over to Sorensen and stand back. In high school he kicked a 62-yarder. He also made kicks of 59 and 51 yards.

As proof that "foot" is huge in football, consider Monday's UCLA-Tennessee game. The Bruins' Kai Forbath landed a 42-yard field goal on the first possession in overtime. Then Tennessee's Daniel Lincoln missed on a 34-yarder to end the game.

Just like that, new UCLA coach Rick Neuheisel was off to a roaring start, thanks to Forbath's toe.

And you thought kicking was just window dressing.

Truth is, recruiting kickers isn't just for kicks anymore. Used to be they were an afterthought at many schools. They showed up and walked on.

Increasingly, they're prized recruits.

"Over the years, it's been proven that the kicking game is more and more vital," Sakoda said. "Coaches are going out and recruiting kickers more heavily now, and they're glad to come in and do the job."

Against Michigan, Sakoda made field goals of 28, 24, 41 and 53 yards. Without him, the Utes would have lost 23-12, rather than winning 25-23. And that was just his placekicking.

Half his six punts dropped neatly inside the Michigan 20.

As recruiting has changed, so have kickers — or at least their image. They used to be like the kid nobody talks to at school, unless he has Oreos in his lunchbox.

Even coaches didn't know quite what to do with them. Former Utah coach Ron McBride would fidget and mumble when asked if kickers made him nervous.

If covering his eyes during field-goal attempts is any indication, the answer is yes.

But Sakoda has succeeded so well that he is the MWC's two-time Special Teams Player of the Year. In July, he became the first kicker ever invited to the conference's preseason media day.

It was a full-on, stars-only event.

Still, it would be hard to grab more media attention than former Cougar Owen Pochman. During his pro career, he became involved with centerfold Brande Roderick and ended up in the tabloids.

The hottest date in the room isn't always with the quarterback anymore.

Meanwhile, former BYU kicker Jason Chaffetz is running for office in Utah's 3rd Congressional District.

Kickers rule!

At 5-foot-9, 178 pounds, Sakoda isn't a pencil-neck non-athlete. He's muscular and fit, looking more like a cornerback or return man. Sorensen, at 6-2, 220 pounds, is even more impressive.

Could it be the quintessential geeky kickers are disappearing?

"Some of the kickers still fit that description," Sakoda said, "but I've broken that mold."

For those who make a living with their feet, the party is just getting started.

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The Salt Lake Tribune

<http://www.sltrib.com>

Ute is up to the challenge

Ute football: DB has renewed focus

Former receiver Sean Smith now making big plays for the defense

By Lya Wodraska
The Salt Lake Tribune
Salt Lake Tribune

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Winning in the Big House was a day the Utah Utes say they will never forget. But none could have enjoyed it more than cornerback Sean Smith.

College football's biggest stage was the ideal place for Utah's corner to show off his skills and his mouth. In one game he made an interception, had two pass breakups, pestered Michigan's top receiver Greg Mathews with his jabbering, turned Michigan fans into friends and spotted his family out of the 100,000-plus fans in attendance and carried on an across-the-end zone conversation with them.

"That place was perfect for me," Smith said. "With so many fans, and they were talking the whole game too, saying stuff like, 'Who is Utah?' I told them, 'By the end of the game, you are going to want my autograph, just sit there and wait.' I had so many new fans by the second half. I had to take pictures with them."

That is Smith, part skill, part talk and always entertaining.

"He says a lot of things," said receiver Bradon Godfrey, who like the other receivers have been subjected to Smith's smack talk in practice. "But as long as he keeps making plays, he can say whatever he wants, he has earned it."

In 2007, Smith arguably was more style than substance. He was still learning his position having switched from receiver to corner for the final two games of the 2006 season and, he admits, he wasn't always the most focused member of the Ute team.

Even so, he was good enough to start 10 games and lead Utah with four interceptions.

Coming into 2008, he has done a better job of focusing on his plays.

"I understand my role now and I needed to set examples for the younger guys," he said. "I had to cut back on my joking around and lead by example."

So far, he has.

He is tied for sixth in the country in passes defended, and rarely has been burned even though opponents often first test him rather than going at three-year starter and preseason all-MWC pick Brice McCain.

"That surprises me because I'm 6-3, you don't really want to challenge a 6-3 former receiver, but I'm loving it," he said. "There is nothing more fun than going out there and having quarterbacks test you because all it does is give me more plays to make on the ball."

Once inconsistent and a little unaware of his duties, Smith is turning into a dependable defender for a secondary that is considered one of the best in the nation.

"He needed to have some maturity, and that was one of his goals in the offseason," Utah defensive coordinator Gary Andersen said. "He has done a better job of that and of studying his opponent and understanding and taking ownership of defensive schemes. His work ethic has improved and we all know he is a fantastic athlete."

His previous stint as a receiver gives him an instinctual advantage in coverage, Smith said, and he plans to lead the Utes in interceptions "for years to come."

"I'm always pushing myself and I have aspirations of being one of the best players on this campus," he said. "I'm pushing myself as much as I can, but my motto is to have fun no matter what I do."

The Utes are willing to allow Smith to show his character, as long as he does the work too.

"The day that changes with Sean, we all have issues," laughed Andersen. "I don't believe in taking that away from a kid. If that is their mentality and personality and the way they compete and have fun, so be it."

The Salt Lake Tribune

<http://www.sltrib.com>

Sakoda: Living up to the legend of 'King Louie,' an awesome U. kicker

By Lya Wodraska
The Salt Lake Tribune
Salt Lake Tribune

Article Last Updated: 09/17/2008 02:01:37 AM MDT

Louie Sakoda's star status reached a surreal level Saturday when a group of Utah fans caught his attention as he waited to take the field with his teammates after halftime of the Utah State game.

"Hey Louie," they shouted as they pointed to a happy-looking young woman. "This is the girl who bought you!" "I stood there thinking, 'Ok, this is a little awkward,' " he said.

The previous night a student organization had auctioned off a picture of Sakoda for a date to raise money. They wanted the real thing but with Sakoda in Logan with his teammates, they had to settle for a picture of his face, which they stuck on the body of a Barack Obama cutout. His image was not auctioned until the end of the night when attendance had started to dwindle and he couldn't work the crowd like other athletes and prospective dates did, but he still earned the highest bid at \$160.

"We knew he'd bring us a lot of money," said Suneil Bhambri, one of the organizers. "He's awesome."

That he is. Sakoda, a senior from San Jose, Calif., has earned an amount of star power usually bestowed upon quarterbacks, not kickers who frequently fit the stereotype of being weird loners. Things are different at the U.

Brian Johnson, Utah's fifth-year quarterback, spends his days away from the campus buzz participating in golf classes while Sakoda gets the congratulations for Saturdays' great games as he makes his way to business classes. He is the one who earned a Heisman vote on an ESPN poll and had his image plastered all over the Internet with his head on Spider-Man's body when news broke that his golden leg was bitten by a spider. He denies the work of an arachnid caused his leg to swell, but it doesn't matter, his legend as a super hero and sex symbol of the football team kept growing.

Even members of Utah's gymnastics team, athletes who themselves are accustomed to be oogled, acknowledge they have crushes on Sakoda, dreamily referring to him as "King Louie."

Sorry Mr. Quarterback, this campus belongs to the 5-foot-9, unassuming kicker.

"It's awful," Johnson said, feigning disgust. "I'm becoming more and more bitter each day over the direction this program has taken."

Johnson isn't an egomaniac so he doesn't mind sharing celebrity status with Sakoda. He's also smart enough to realize his 16-7 record as Utah's starting quarterback would be a much lower winning percentage without the kicker.

"He deserves everything he gets," Johnson said. "Everyone would be on him if he didn't make those kicks, that is the opposite part of the game, so he makes them and gets everything that goes along with it."

Since he came to Utah as a walk-on in 2005, Sakoda has established himself as one of the top kickers and punters in the country. He earned first-team All-America honors as a junior and is the two-time MWC Special Teams Player of the Year.

As a kicker, he tied his own school record with four field goals in a game against Michigan, tied the school record for kicking points in a game with 16 against Utah State and has 221 career points, which ranks fourth all-time at Utah. The school record is 235 points set by Frank Christensen from 1930 to 1932. He needs just three field goals to pass Chris Yergensen (44 from 1991 to 1993) for most field goals in a career.

As a punter, he ranks ninth nationally and first in the Mountain West in net punting (40.8) and has 41 career punts of 50 yards or longer which ranks second in Utah history. His 42.3 punting average in his career ranks third all-time at Utah.

"As far as dating I don't know what I'm looking for," he said. "If I'm in a relationship it would be hard to give it enough time it deserved."

He's talented, one of the guys and sensitive too, hearts swoon everywhere.

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The defense that won't rest

Ute football: Walk-on leads on

Stabbing gave Ute a new perspective

By Lya Wodraska
The Salt Lake Tribune
Salt Lake Tribune

Article Last Updated:10/08/2008 02:19:55 AM MDT

Lying in a hospital bed in January, Utah senior Greg Newman realized how close his football career might have come to ending. He, along with teammates Paul Kruger and Kruger's younger brother, Dave, were jumped by a group of guys outside of a party.

Newman was stabbed in his side twice with a screwdriver that missed his kidney by centimeters.

The police never found the culprits, but Newman found something: a higher drive to succeed.

"That stabbing opened my eyes to a lot of things," he said. "I wanted to focus on what I can get out of this year. So far, it's working out really good."

"Really good" underestimates his impact. The former walk-on backup has not only developed into a full-time starter at tackle, but has also become the iron horse for the defensive line.

When injuries took out defensive linemen Kenape Eliapo (foot) and Lei Talamaivao (fibula), Newman stepped up and played and played. Often he is only out of the lineup for a play or two. Most of the time the 6-foot-2, 260-pound lineman is wearing down offensive linemen who are bigger than he is.

"You have to put a rope around his neck and drag him out because otherwise he isn't coming out of there," defensive coordinator Gary Andersen said. "He's a tireless worker."

Newman is also one of the best for the Utes. He is fifth on the team with 28 tackles, leads the team with two fumble recoveries and has two pass breakups. Altogether he has been one of the most improved players from 2007 for the defense.

"Before he was just trying to get his spot, playing here and there," Andersen said. "Now he sees himself as one of the core leaders for our defense and for the younger guys."

Newman said he changed his way of thinking after the stabbing incident. He has had broken fingers and other small injuries, but nothing that has come close to threatening his career like the stabbing did. If the stabbing had injured his kidney beyond repair, he may have decided to play with one kidney like teammate Kruger does, or not.

"It put things in perspective," he said. "You don't get to play this game your whole life and I made a decision to buckle down, and it's paying off. I appreciate everything now."

His improved play and work ethic have earned him the respect of his teammates.

"He has the fire and goes in every play like it's a fight," Kruger said. "He puts a lot of effort into every play. The coaches call him a technician because he is so good with his technique and he is just a smart player."

With Newman and defensive ends Kruger and Koa Misi playing so well, the rest of Utah's defenders can play a little loose, knowing those guys are taking care of their assignments, linebacker Mike Wright said.

"With Greg and the other guys, they get to the quarterback so fast it makes it hard for them to do regular drop back passes," Wright said.

The success he and the Utes have had is just what he had hoped for, Newman said.

"I've really been blessed," Newman said. "It's awesome. I'm having so much fun, the time of my life."

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Huge improvement

Newman went from walk-on backup to full-time starter at tackle. Some stats:

Deseret News

Utah Utes football: Wright man for the job

It took a little arm twist to turn Wright into a football star

By Mike Sorensen
Deseret News

Published: October 8, 2008

Until his senior year at Bountiful High School, Mike Wright was content to play basketball and baseball, a couple of sports he excelled at. He thought any future he had in athletics would be as a collegiate baseball catcher.

Bountiful football coach Larry Wall had other ideas. As he used to watch Wright play other sports at his school, he noticed his size and athletic ability and used to drool over the thought of him playing for the Braves' football team.

"We invited him to come out for the team," Wall said.

That's not quite how Wright remembers it.

"During baseball season, coach Wall said, 'I'll see you at summer conditioning,'" Wright recalls. "Then he had some football players show up at my house early one summer morning and made me come to summer conditioning ..."

So with a little twist of his arm, Wright's football career began and, remarkably, four years later he is a starting linebacker for the 13th-ranked Utah football team.

In two years, the 6-foot-2, 230-pound Wright has gone from walk-on to starter at the middle linebacker position, which is known as the quarterback position of the defense.

Wright leads the Utes in tackles with 38 after getting 15 last week against Oregon State, which helped earn him Mountain West Conference defensive player of the week honors. He also leads the team in pass breakups with four and has a fumble recovery and a sack.

"He's done a great job of jumping in head first and working on his weaknesses and converting them into strengths," said defensive coordinator Gary Andersen. "He's worked his tail off and has become a very good player for us."

Wright has been a quick learner ever since he first put on the pads. During his lone year of football at Bountiful, Wright played both wide receiver and defensive end and helped lead the Braves to a state championship.

"We knew we had something special when we got him there," Wall said. "He was a good athlete, and it didn't take him long to catch up to speed. He's a smart kid, very intelligent; a real student of the game. He's tenacious and very explosive. But I'd say his biggest attribute is that he's such a competitor."

After a senior season where he earned all-region but not all-state honors from the Deseret News, Wright figured his football career was over. However, Andersen, on the recommendation of Wall, recruited Wright to play at Southern Utah, where he was the head coach in 2004.

"I wasn't expecting to play college football out of high school, but once I got there I realized my potential and what kind of player I could become," Wright said. "So for me to be here is kind of

a pleasant surprise."

Wright redshirted his one year at Southern Utah, and after returning early from an LDS mission for health reasons, he decided to walk on the U. team in the spring of 2006.

It helped that Andersen was now the defensive coordinator for the Utes and that former SUU coaches Kalani Sitake and Aaron Roderick were both coaching at the U. and knew all about Wright's ability and competitiveness.

In fact, Sitake oversees Wright as the Utes' linebackers coach, and he's thrilled with how well Wright has progressed in his career.

"He watches a lot of film and outworks everyone," said Sitake. "He's the kind of guy who works until he passes out. After that Oregon State game, he was just exhausted. He has a great work ethic and always wants to get better. He's done a great job for us."

Wright played on Ute special teams in 2006 and was a backup linebacker last year, making 22 tackles, including seven at Colorado State. He earned the starting linebacker job in spring ball and, after his terrific start this year, still has another year and a half to go as the anchor of the Utes' defense.

Not bad for a guy who never thought he'd play college football, let alone, high school football.

► Mike Wright file

6-2, 230 pounds junior linebacker

- Played just one year of high school football at Bountiful High
- Walked on to Utah football team in spring of 2006
- Leads Utes in tackles with 38 and in pass breakups with four
- Was named MWC defensive player of the week after getting 15 tackles in win over Oregon State

► Utes on the air

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Deseret News

The royal world of 'King' Louie

By Brad Rock

Deseret News

Published: October 11, 2008

LARAMIE, Wyo. — If you're the Wyoming Cowboys, one thing you don't want is a tight game with Utah.

That's because the Utes have King Louie.

Wyoming needs a big lead today at War Memorial Stadium in order to win. Otherwise, trouble. Louie Sakoda, the Utes' All-American kicker, isn't likely to miss a late-game kick. He's a near-perfect remedy for what ails a team. In dermatological terms, he's a wart remover, erasing those unsightly blemishes. In the medical sense, he's a bottle of aspirin, fixing a variety of problems.

Today the Utes and Cowboys meet for the 81st time, and despite the predicted triple-whammy of rain, snow and a hostile crowd, Utah can take comfort in knowing Sakoda is in tow. He has already won two games this season with his kicking — first at Michigan, where he made four field goals, and again last week when he nailed the game-winner against Oregon State.

The success has made him a household name on campus. Strangers stop him in the bookstore to offer high-fives. Media outlets wait for him every day after practice — an abnormality for kickers. Fans carry signs to the stadium that say things like, "King Louie Reigns!"

An unassuming 5-foot-9 senior, he's become a bona fide campus celebrity.

"Yeah, it's kinda weird," he said. "It's a little creepy. But it's been fun."

Seems everyone wants a piece of Louie.

"Every day, it's fun to wake up," he said.

So naturally, the question begs: Has his newfound celebrity helped him socially?

"It's hard to tell if girls are being nice because of what I do on the field or whatever," said Sakoda. "But it doesn't hurt my chances with the girls, if that answers your question."

Sakoda is arguably Utah's most popular player. Quarterback Brian Johnson is the team's best-known figure, but his streaky play has been a source of both exhilaration and exasperation. Defensive end Paul Kruger is an overpowering presence, but doesn't score points. The running backs divide the minutes and conquer.

Sakoda seems to attract the attention every game. He's a great story, having made 13-of-15 field goals this year. His only misses were on kicks of 48 and 54 yards, in high winds at Air Force.

But that doesn't mean he's your classic oddball kicker. He doesn't talk to the football or forget his helmet. He's a normal, well-adjusted guy. When pressed, he admits he was popular in high school.

"I've never really been an outcast," he said. "There's no real reason I should be put under the stigma that kickers have of being weird, because I'm not."

But he is a phenomenal punter and placekicker, having made 83 percent of his career field goals. His 10 MWC player-of-the-week awards ties the league record.

He recently broke a 76-year-old school record for most points scored in a career, and a 39-year-old mark for career punting yards. He has had 18 punts downed inside the 5-yard line.

Not good enough for King Louie's expectations.

"I've already fallen short of my goals," said Sakoda. "I missed those two field goals at Air Force, and it's always on my mind. I know I should have made those kicks, so every day I try to be the same person. Especially as a kicker, you have to have humility, more than anyone else on the field."

Good point ... but why?

"Because you need to know what your role is. Your job is to kick leather. It's kind of a cheesy job."

Cheesy but important. Kind of like being president.

On the surface, Sakoda is easygoing and open, willing to laugh at himself. But behind the eyes there is flint. A mentor helped him develop "trigger" phrases that relax him as he takes the field, a type of self-hypnosis. He practices kicks so often in his mind, the real thing is easy.

Still, what if it comes down to a kick again this week?

"It shouldn't," he said matter-of-factly. "But, yeah, whatever happens, we're all there to do a job. I'm prepared for anything."

It's such a splendid thing to watch a king holding court.

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Deseret News

Utah Utes football: Smith's touchdown sparks memories

By Jody Genessy

Deseret News

Published: October 12, 2008

LARAMIE, Wyo. — Coming into Saturday's game, Utah junior cornerback Sean Smith hadn't scored a touchdown since his high school playing days in southern California.

The running back-turned receiver-turned defensive back wanted it, missed it, talked about it, too.

"I haven't scored in a long time," he reminded reporters.

Which made this afternoon all the sweeter for Smith.

Though it was officially homecoming for Wyoming, Smith enjoyed a little reunion of his own during the Utes' dominating defensive performance. The 6-3 speedster had two interceptions and reunited with his long-lost friend — the end zone — in Utah's 40-7 walloping of Wyoming at War Memorial Stadium.

Though he didn't crack open his yearbook or swap prom stories, this game brought out some nostalgic feelings for Smith.

"It felt good to score. It's been a long time. I'm way past due," Smith said. "It brings back a whole lot of memories."

And sparked the Utes, too.

Coach Kyle Whittingham called Smith's first highly anticipated return to paydirt — a 25-yard interception return that put Utah up 7-0 four minutes into the game — a "huge" tone-setting play. Defensive end Paul Kruger jumped and got a piece of the pass headed for the tight end, and Smith was in one of those right-place-right-time situations.

"He tipped it and luckily for me it came right to me," Smith said.

Smith then quickly made his 25-yard speedy stroll to memory lane.

Smith's second interception didn't result in another touchdown, but he had the ball in the end zone. That's why he might have been hearing "no, no, no" instead of "go, go, go" when he picked off a touchdown toss attempt by Wyoming's Karsten Sween — using a tricky one-handed athletic move — in the Utes' end zone and then tried and hoped to bring it back the length of the field for yet another score.

He craved another return trip.

Whittingham credited Smith, who was converted to a receiver in 2006 and then a DB after that, for making "a couple of nice plays" with his INTs. But he added one of those admonishing "buts" in regards to Smith's second takeaway. Midway through the third quarter, he snagged the errant fourth-down pass with one hand inside of the end zone. Wow, great catch, but ...

"If we're really heads-up, we drop it because it's fourth down or you take a knee after you've caught it, so we made two errors out of those," Whittingham said with a slight grin. "Still, heck of an athletic play on his part."

Smith ended up returning the ball to the 31, but his eyes widened and he got tunnel vision for a goal line 100 yards away. He didn't want to let years go between his first visit to the end zone in college and his second. The 21-year-old got used to crossing the goal line as a teenager at Blair High School in Pasadena, where he scored 18 rushing TDs and was recruited by the U. to be a running back.

Another tipped pass turned into an interception — one of the Utes' six takeaways (three INTs, two fumble recoveries and one blocked punt) — for Utah in the second quarter. Defensive end Derrick Shelby batted a pass up, and defensive lineman Greg Newman, whose helmet had just been knocked off his head, scooped it out of the air.

That heads-up, helmet-off play set up the struggling Utah offense's first sustained drive of the game — a 15-play, 63-yard march that ate up 6:09 and put the Utes up 27-0 at the half.

Smith said the defensive players — throw the special-teams guys in there, too — took it upon themselves to pick up the slack on this windy day.

"The offense was struggling, so the defense had to cause turnovers and put points on the board," Smith said, "so I was glad to do my job."

Especially the part where he visited the end zone again.

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Deseret News

Utah Utes football: Smith relishes spotlight

By Dirk Facer
Deseret News

Published: October 15, 2008

Utah cornerback Sean Smith enjoys being in the spotlight. The personable 21-year-old junior from Pasadena, Calif., appreciates the attention.

After picking off two passes in last week's 40-7 win at Wyoming, Smith got plenty. He was surrounded by reporters after the game. The media wanted to know all about his 25-yard interception return for a touchdown. They also asked about his spectacular one-handed grab in the end zone.

"It feels good. I've been craving for it all year," Smith said.

"It feels good to finally go out there and make some plays, put myself in that position."

ESPN liked it.

So much so, in fact, that the network included Smith's heroics in its top 10 plays Saturday night.

One interested party missed it, however. He happened to be in the restroom when the segment aired.

Smith didn't learn of his national attention until text messages flooded his cell phone shortly thereafter.

"That's what he gets," joked cornerbacks coach Aaron Alford.

"Hold your water, as we say, hold your water."

Brice McCain, who is Utah's other starting corner, wishes his former roommate had seen the highlight. He was one of the first to ask Smith about it after it aired.

Defensive coordinator Gary Andersen, who also knows Smith quite well, isn't as concerned about it. There are replays, after all.

"Oh, I doubt he's missed it," he said with a laugh. "I'm sure somewhere Sean Smith has actually seen that."

The second two-interception game of Smith's career vaulted him into a tie for the Mountain West Conference lead in interceptions. He has three this season, along with 76 interception return yards.

"It feels nice. The rumor is defensive players can't catch and that DBs are bad receivers," Smith said. "So I had to set it straight. I am not in that statistic. I can catch."

The more picks he gets, Smith added, the hungrier he is for more.

The former running back and receiver now has seven career interceptions and 11 pass breakups. Much of Smith's success has to do with his athletic 6-foot-3, 215-pound frame.

"The thing that helps him most is he's just so long. He might be one of the tallest corners in the NCAA right now," Alford said. "He's got great feet. He has good body control. He does a good

job of reaching out. He has such a long arm, he can get his hands on a receiver right away and he has an ability to control them from there. So he does a good job of trying to work his technique."

McCain noted that Smith has been a cornerback for three years now and has a solid grasp of the position.

Utah coach Kyle Whittingham agrees.

"He's completely made that transition," Whittingham said. "He's completely comfortable as a corner."

Smith currently leads the Utes in passes defended (three interceptions, four breakups) and has 22 tackles.

"Sean, I think, is continuing to develop as a player. He's extremely talented — which I think we all know," Andersen said. "I think his practice habits are getting better and he's learning how to prepare for games better every week. The more he does that, the better player he'll be."

Smith was named Utah's defensive player of the game for his performance at Wyoming.

Andersen said Smith is a "shut-down corner" and as such doesn't get a lot of opportunities. Smith, he explained, does take advantage of his opportunities, however.

And in an impressive way.

"He had a tremendous game. He's just a great athlete. The thing is people have not really thrown his way much the last five or six weeks," Whittingham said. "He's a pretty imposing figure out there on the corner. He's got great size and great speed, so people have just been reluctant to throw his way."

EXTRA POINTS: The Utes returned to the practice field Tuesday after not doing so Monday. Whittingham said things went well and that the team is back in a normal routine ... Whittingham said that **Eddie Wide** is now in the mix at running back. The sophomore, he added, is a different type of back than **Matt Asiata** and **Darrell Mack**, offering a change-up of sorts and speed on the perimeter ... **Aiona Key's** blocked punt return for a touchdown last Saturday at Wyoming was the first for the Utes since **Derrick Odum** did so against Oregon State in 1992.

► Utes on the air

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Utah football: Louks passes on calling himself a running QB

By Steve Luhm
The Salt Lake Tribune
Salt Lake Tribune

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Forget that Corbin Louks was Utah's third-leading rusher last season, or that he ran for a team-high 50 yards in last week's wind-blown 40-7 victory at Wyoming.

Forget that Louks is built like a low-to-the-ground running back, owns running back-type speed and, in 1-seasons with the Utes, has carried the ball 50 times and passed it only 12.

Louks is a No. 2 quarterback who can run, not a No. 2 quarterback who must run.

Just ask him.

"I definitely feel I can beat people with my arm," Louks said. "I'm obviously a little bit stereotyped right now as a run-guy only. But I'm a quarterback and I got recruited as a quarterback. Right now, I'm just helping out the team the way we need to be helped."

Brian Johnson agrees.

In fact, Utah's starting quarterback calls Louks "a passer first" who has sacrificed that part of his game -- at least so far -- because it's what coach Kyle Whittingham and offensive coordinator Andy Ludwig have asked him to do.

"That's a problem in sports sometimes -- guys get stereotyped," Johnson said. "Back when I was younger, people said I was a quarterback who could only run. [But] you've got to go out and play your game and not worry about the outside forces. ...

"Corbin is confident in the passing game. He does some nice things. He knows where he is going with the ball. He has a strong arm. He's accurate. He's intelligent. He wants to learn. He's done a nice job with what we've needed from him."

As a high school senior, Louks was the San Francisco Chronicle's regional player of the year. He threw from 2,489 yards and 24 touchdowns, convincing evidence that he is more than a tailback in quarterback's clothing.

"Absolutely," Whittingham said. "Watch his high school tape. He's a very good thrower and, to keep teams honest, he will throw. But his role right now is the quarterback run game [because] Brian Johnson, at the present time, is going to be the guy throwing it for us. But Corbin is capable of that, too."

Coming out of high school, Louks' choice of colleges came down to Utah, Utah State, Nevada, Idaho and New Hampshire.

"I thought this program, they were doing some great things," he said, explaining why he picked the Utes. "It was on the rise, you know? They won all those bowl games. They went to the Fiesta Bowl. So it was a great, great opportunity for me. A great fit."

Louks brought exceptional speed to Utah. He has been timed in 4.42 seconds in the 40-yard dash. But he weighed only 170 pounds last season -- 25 less than today -- so he was supposed to redshirt.

Instead, Johnson suffered a shoulder injury in the opener and missed the next two games. Louks' redshirt year was ditched because the Utes needed him as insurance.

"Everything happens for a reason," Louks said. "Would it have been nice to redshirt and have an extra year? Yeah. Was it great to get some experience and play as a freshman? Hell yeah. It was great to get in, make something happen, help the team and get wins."

Said Whittingham: "There's always a decision to make -- when to redshirt a guy, who to redshirt and who not to redshirt. The bottom line is, if you've got a guy in the program who can help you win right now, you play him. And we felt Corbin could help us win last year, so that's what we did it."

This season, Louks' role is similar to the one he inherited as a freshman.

"Every week," he said, "I've got a package of plays and I come in and just try to make something happen. A lot of times it's with my feet, but we've got plays with my arm, too. I'm a quarterback. I can make both happen."

Significantly, Louks' ability to produce enables him to absorb some of the pounding opponents would otherwise inflict on Johnson, who has missed all or part of the last three seasons because of injuries.

Johnson won't be around next season, however, when Louks looks like the clubhouse leader in the battle to become Utah's No. 1 quarterback.

"That's next year," he said. "We still got this year going on. We've got a great thing going right now and we have one thing set on our mind: to win the Mountain West. That's what our goal is, and that's what we're going to try and do."

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Unbeaten Utah sitting pretty in first release of BCS

By Kelly Whiteside, USA TODAY

For Utah, ranked No. 11 in the first Bowl Championship Series standings released on Sunday, it's looking like 2004 all over again. That season the Utes, from the Mountain West Conference, became the first team from a league without an automatic berth to play in a BCS bowl.

BCS BREAKDOWN: A look at the first six teams

This year's Utes (8-0) have two difficult tests remaining vs. TCU, No. 14 in the BCS after upsetting BYU last Thursday, and No. 21 BYU. If the Utes finish the season undefeated, as the 2004 team did, they would be a lock for a BCS game, says Mountain West commissioner Craig Thompson.

"If they were to win those two (and win out), it makes it probable that they could finish in the high single digits, maybe in the 4-6 range," Thompson said Sunday.

One of the 114 Harris Poll voters has put the Utes No. 1 both weeks. "I'm fairly certain my mom doesn't have a vote," coach Kyle Whittingham said Sunday about his Utah-fanatic mother, Nancy.

The Utes had their best offensive performance of the season Saturday in a 49-16 win over Colorado State as five different players scored TDs and the spread run offense clicked. Fifth-year senior quarterback Brian Johnson, Alex Smith's back-up in 2004, passed for two touchdowns and tied Smith's school record of 21 wins as Utah's starting QB. "That was a good outing by our offense and we put up '04-like numbers, I guess you could say," said Whittingham, who was defensive coordinator on that team.

Whittingham said his team has been good about staying focused throughout the season on the next opponent — New Mexico on Nov. 1 — instead of its poll rankings.

"We're pleased about being 8-0, but we have a tough November. We have been able to get to this point with a one-game-at-a-time mentality and we have to continue to operate like that," Whittingham said, whose team has a bye week. "It's a mature group of players that we have with a very good work ethic, and that's something we talked about since the spring, not looking past anybody."

Even if Utah stumbles, No. 14 TCU, at 7-1 with its only loss coming at Oklahoma, may also have a shot at a BCS bid if the Horned Frogs win their remaining games, perhaps reaching the "eight to 10 range" in the final BCS standings, Thompson said.

Also in the mix for a BCS bowl is No. 12 Boise State which could enter its final game of the season against Western Athletic Conference rival Fresno State undefeated. A perfect season could also send the Broncos back to the BCS, where they memorably upset Oklahoma two seasons ago. If so, could this be the year where two non-BCS teams crash the party?

A team from a non-BCS league needs to finish ranked either in the top 12 of the final BCS standings or in the top 16 ahead of a league champion from the six conferences which have an automatic berth. (The highest ranked team from the Atlantic Coast Conference is No. 18

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Georgia Tech, from the Big East, it's No. 16 South Florida.) No more than one team from the five non-BCS leagues can earn an automatic bid based on the above criteria. If two or more teams satisfy those provisions, the lower ranked team could be selected as an at-large team.


This is the first time three programs from outside the six BCS leagues have appeared in the top 15 of the first standings, according to independent BCS analyst Jerry Palm. TCU is the highest rated one-loss non-BCS team in an initial rankings.

Other tidbits from the first standings: The computers don't like LSU, ranked No. 19 by the average of computer rankings. Nor are the machines fond of undefeated Penn State, with an average computer rank of No. 7. Its In comparison, Ohio State has one loss and a No. 5 computer average. Southern California isn't beloved either, with a No. 10 computer average.

Contributing: Jack Carey

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Deseret News

Say what you will, Utes' Johnson is a winner

By Brad Rock
Deseret News

Published: October 19, 2008

Brian Johnson entered the records books in typical fashion Saturday at Rice-Eccles Stadium. It wasn't picture perfect, but honestly, isn't that like griping about Obama's mole?

You don't knock what's working.

No doubt about it, the man — both men — are on a roll.

The Utes moved their win streak to nine games by demolishing Colorado State, 49-16. All they need now is to keep doing what they've done, which is figure out ways to overcome obstacles.

Don't you wish *they* were in charge of the economic recovery?

Heading the charge is quarterback Johnson, who tied Alex Smith for the most starting wins in school history. It took Johnson a little longer (28 games to 22) and he's had more detours, thanks to injury. But there he is, a fixture in the books.

"I was aware of that," he said. "That was a personal goal I set for myself. But we've got a ton of football left." The appeal of Johnson is that he's not afraid to deal with stuff, good or bad. The criticism, the hype, the pressure — he loves it. He once said he doesn't worry about media and fan criticism, because all that vanishes if he throws the winning touchdown the next week.

He's a long-view, big-picture kind of guy.

Win enough games, media and fans will eat your shorts and call them ice cream.

That's what happened this year. Through much of the Oregon State game, he was below average. The Ute offense had stalled. But in the final two minutes, he marched them downfield, throwing a 25-yard touchdown pass to tie the score, then got them in position for a game-winning field goal.

Johnson could have run for mayor and won.

Saturday there wasn't much to criticize. He completed 18-of-26 passes for 185 yards and one touchdown. OK, there was that second-quarter interception, when he got hit as he threw. Otherwise, he was great. Isn't that the way he's always been? (It should be noted he sat out considerable time while backup Cobin Louks ran the offense.)

Truth is, Johnson is tough to single out. Knocking him is like knocking the guy who fixes your sink. He may make a slight mess, and even momentarily plug things up, but when he's finished, everything is working fine.

Johnson has fumbled in several games and thrown six interceptions. He has been criticized for holding the ball too long, forcing passes and missing open receivers. The offense can inexplicably stall for long periods. Last week in Wyoming, for instance, the Utes totaled just 242 yards.

Yet Johnson is completing 66 percent of his passes. His touchdown-to-interception ratio is still better than 2-to-1 and he is second in the conference in passing efficiency.

"We've heard it over and over, how inconsistent we were, even though we were averaging 37 points a game," said Johnson. "So we wanted to come out and make a statement, stay focused and get ready to play."

The story on Johnson is that, regardless of the hiccups, there's all that winning. He is 16-1 as a starter since returning from a season-opening shoulder injury last year. He also missed the 2006 season with a damaged knee.

For his part, Johnson doesn't seem particularly worried. You know, the winning-trumps-everything approach.

"At the end of the day — and I've had this conversation with plenty of people — you look at this team five years down the road, 10 years down the road, the only thing that people remember is wins," he said. "So right now you can re-figure this all you want, but this team keeps winning football games, and that's all we can control. "

All they need to, in fact.

E-mail: rock@desnews.com

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Deseret News

Utah Utes football: Kickoff king of Utah

Vroman, a former walk-on, leads the nation in touchbacks

By Dirk Facer
Deseret News

Published: October 23, 2008

Most folks know that Utah has one of the best kickers in the nation. What many people may not realize, however, is that the 12th-ranked Utes actually have two of the top kickers in the country.

Besides All-American Louie Sakoda, who handles the kicks and punts, there's kickoff specialist Ben Vroman. The junior is the national leader in touchbacks with 39. His closest competition has just 26.

"Obviously that's cool. But that's just a stat," Vroman said.

"It doesn't affect me. I just go out there and try to do my thing."

And that thing he does, he does extremely well.

Vroman is averaging 69.1 yards per kickoff. His 202 career kicks include 94 touchbacks. something he takes great pride in.

"I have a lot of fun with it. It's a real easy job," Vroman said. "I just play around with Louie, set the ball up and kick it as far as I can."

It's a specialized specialty.

"He does a great job. He has good hang time and he kicks them deep," said special teams coordinator Jay Hill. "So we've been phenomenal in kickoff this year."

Though the NCAA does not keep kickoff coverage stats, Utah leads the Mountain West Conference with an average of 49.2 net yards.

"He's the best at what he does in the country right now," Hill continued. "So we look forward to great things continuing."

Aside from turnovers, Utah defensive coordinator Gary Andersen said field position might be the most important stat you deal with in football. Vroman's high number of touchbacks are something the Utes like to capitalize on.

"To have a team have to line up and go 80 yards on us ... You know, I like our chances," Andersen said.

It's played a pivotal role in Utah's success.

"The weapons we have on special teams with Louie and with Vroman kicking them out of the end zone is fantastic," Andersen said. "Our kickoff coverage team has done a fantastic job getting guys down there and pinning them. Credit goes to (Vroman) for getting the ball in the air and giving those kids a chance to be able to cover. It's a huge weapon."

Hill noted that things have worked out well since a change in philosophy on kickoffs.

"A couple of years ago we had a scheme where we told them you had to kick the ball between the sideline and the numbers. You had to place it perfectly," he explained. "We had all this looping and twisting and we were just OK as a coverage unit. So then the next year we just said we'll put the ball in the middle of the field and you kick it just as hard as you can. We were good that year on kickoff. This year we've just been phenomenal."

Vroman, who is in his third season handling kickoffs for Utah, has followed directions. He was instructed to kick it to the end zone as high and as far as possible.

"If I don't get a touchback I feel like I let myself down and my teammates down," Vroman said. "They do a good job covering for me when I don't hit it in the end zone. They go down there and make tackles."

Vroman, however, has been very consistent. So much so, in fact, that he was awarded a scholarship after two years as a walk-on out of Skyline High School.

During his tenure at Utah, Vroman has forged a friendship with Sakoda.

"Louie's prepared me real well. Obviously you learn a lot practicing with an All-American every day," Vroman said. "He teaches me the right mind-set."

The kickers get along well. They've even developed a special handshake, one that was supposed to be enhanced whenever Sakoda makes a field goal (as well as a good punt) or Vroman gets a touchback.

"Our goal was to add something new to the handshake every game," Sakoda said. "We haven't really done that, but we have quite the extensive handshake."

Some of their teammates like it, he added, while others mock it.

Results leading up to the celebration, though, are appreciated by all. Quarterback Brian Johnson said the contributions by the kickers have been huge.

Though he'll have to earn it, Vroman is the front runner to become Utah's primary placekicker next season after Sakoda graduates.

"You won't see a big discrepancy from this year to next year," said Sakoda, who works at various kicking camps in the offseason and hasn't seen anyone who comes close to doing the things Vroman does. He's seen his teammate make field goals from 67 yards out during warm-ups.

"He's got all the leg strength in the world and unlimited talent," Sakoda said.

Vroman's experience with kickoffs in front of large crowds, he continued, should be beneficial when he adds placekicking to his duties.

Vroman is already trying to perfect the skill.

"I do try to hit it through the uprights. That's my goal every time I got out to kick off," he said. "I've done it a couple of times here and there."

While setting up for kickoffs, Vroman tries to sing songs in his head as a way to stay calm. Mostly reggae and a couple of raps, he said.

It's a big part of Vroman's mental approach. His physical success, though, isn't as easy to channel. It comes naturally.

"It started out with soccer. I was always able to kick the soccer ball like the whole field and then it just kind of transferred over to football," Vroman said. "I don't have a strong leg. I can barely squat like 200 pounds. But when it comes to kicking, I can set up and hit it."

YAHOO! SPORTS

Utah's Kruger survives, thrives

By [Jason King](#), Yahoo! Sports
11 hours, 47 minutes ago



Paul Kruger with family members at a Utah hospital. At left is Dave

Kruger who was also injured in the attack.

(Image courtesy of Jennifer Kruger)

Utah coverage: [UteZone.com](#)

SALT LAKE CITY -- Shortly after the brawl -- after the gang members sped away with their knives and screwdrivers and brass knuckles -- Paul Kruger sprawled out in the rear of a black Durango and looked up at his sister.

"Jessica," he said, "I'm having trouble breathing."

Kruger's face was pale. Blood seeped from his abdomen, through his shirt and onto his hands. When Kruger touched one of the stab wounds on his stomach, he could feel his intestines.

"Don't go to sleep, Paul," Jessica said as they waited for the ambulance. "Don't go to sleep."

Nine months later, in a Marriott hotel room in Salt Lake City, Kruger was emotionless as he talked about that January night. The Utah defensive end was almost numb to the story, having rehashed it countless for the people who asked to see the scars that zig-zag across his torso.

The 15-20 Latino gang members who jumped Kruger as he was leaving a party also drove a screwdriver through the back of his teammate, Greg Newman, and used brass knuckles to break the nose and shatter the cheekbone of his younger brother, Dave.

It was Kruger, though, who awoke the following morning in a Utah hospital with life-threatening injuries.

After more than 100 Utes players and coaches had filed in and out of his room, Kruger summoned the doctor who had repaired his nicked artery, the one who lifted Kruger's organs from his body and examined them before putting them back in their place.

"Doc," Kruger said, "will I ever play football again?"

If only she'd looked at a license plate or paid closer attention to faces and cars. Maybe then, Jessica Kruger said, the men who attacked her brothers and their friends would be behind bars instead of roaming the streets.

Salt Lake City police are still investigating leads surrounding the Jan. 19 attack. The Kruger family said they've been told that the assailants might be members of a Las Vegas gang that transports crystal methamphetamine to Utah. But no one is sure.



Nearly 50 staples were required to close the incisions made during Paul Kruger's surgery.

(Image courtesy of Jennifer Kruger)

"It's easy to have what-ifs after a situation like that," said Jessica, 21. "At the time, all I cared about was helping my brothers."

With about 20 prospects in for official visits, the Jan. 19 weekend was a big one for the Utah football program. After dining with the coaching staff and their families at Rodizio Grill, several of the recruits and players gathered at a house away from campus to watch the Felix Trinidad vs. Roy Jones Jr. boxing match.

Paul, who had just finished his redshirt freshman season, went with Jessica and Dave, then a 17-year-old high school senior.

Before the pay-per-view ever began, Paul and his group decided to head for the Park City Film Festival across town. As they walked toward the street, Paul noticed a car driving slowly past the house with the window rolled down.

"These guys just started yelling at us and cursing, saying all kinds of things," Paul said. "People trash-talk all the time and just kind of move on. But something about this was different. Something just didn't feel right."

Things escalated when Newman hurled a snowball at the car. When the men got out and approached the players, Paul attempted to play peacemaker.

"(Paul) ran up and got between everyone and said, 'We don't want a fight. We don't want any trouble,'" Dave said. "It seemed like everything was going to die down, but then one of the guys spit in our friend's face."

Fighting ensued, and before Paul and his group knew it, two more cars filled with hooligans had pulled up and unloaded. It was 15-on-five – "at least," Paul said – and, for a time, the football players held their own.



Paul Kruger with his sister Jessica.

(Images courtesy of Jennifer Kruger)

David pummeled one man while two others clung to his back. Paul lifted an assailant off the ground with one hand and slammed him against a fence while fending off two more attackers with the other.

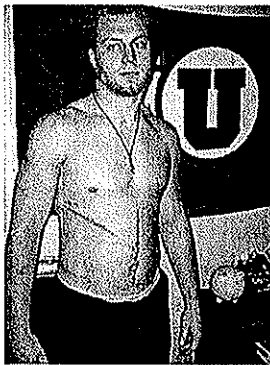
Standing nearby, Jessica did her best to break up the fight. When she noticed Dave was bleeding, she grabbed him and pulled him away from the melee. He'd been hit with brass knuckles, and the skin on his cheek was folded outward.

Then there was Paul, who felt a burning sensation in his side.

"I heard someone scream, 'They've got knives,'" Paul said. "But I didn't realize I'd been stabbed. I got to the car and reached under my shirt. I could feel my intestines. Then I pulled my hand out. It was pure blood."

As the assailants fled, Paul and his friends headed for the hospital, but they eventually stopped the car and called 911 when Paul's breathing became strained and he complained of dizziness. Jessica and her friend, Meredith Mangum – a nursing student – put pressure on his two stab wounds until the ambulance arrived.

"It was definitely traumatic," Paul said. "I didn't know what was going on or how bad it was. My friend, Ryder (Olsen), leaned over the seat to look at my stomach. His eyes got really wide. I could tell he was scared, and that scared me, because he's a med school student. He knows more about that kind of stuff than the average person."



Paul Kruger displays his scars.

(Image courtesy of Jennifer Kruger)

Making things even scarier for Paul was that he has just one kidney and no spleen, the result of an accident that occurred nearly 10 years earlier. When Paul was 13, a Jeep Wrangler in which he was riding rolled over and landed him. He was in critical condition with internal bleeding for three weeks.

"He has guardian angels that he's wearing out," Paul's mother, Jennifer, said last spring.

This time, in a four-hour operation, doctors removed Paul's bowel, intestines and stomach to check for damage. They also discovered a chipped rib, a nicked artery and a lung that collapsed after filling with blood.

In all, it took nearly 50 staples to close the incisions that were made during surgery. Kruger lost 20 pounds while recovering – as well as a considerable amount of strength. Even though doctors told him he'd eventually be able to

return to the football field, there were questions regarding how quickly he'd become an effective player again.

"The people that truly know him didn't doubt him," Jennifer Kruger said. "He didn't get depressed. He didn't get angry. He just got into this mindset of 'Over the next 10 weeks, I have to get better.' That's how Paul is.

"In situations like that he almost goes blind with intensity."

In just his second season on the field, Kruger is one of the main reasons No. 12 Utah is 8-0 and a legitimate threat to play in a BCS bowl game.

Even at 260 pounds, Kruger is the most athletic player on a unit that ranks ninth in the country in both pass defense and total defense. Individually, he's No. 9 on the national chart for tackles for loss with 13.5. All-conference honors seem like a lock. Some pundits are even tossing around his name for All-American.

"Paul Kruger is one of those special, special players."

— Oregon State coach Mike Riley.

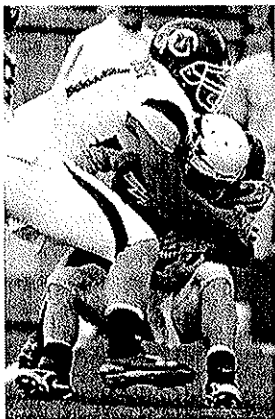
Not bad for a guy who cheated death less than one year ago.

"Paul Kruger," Oregon State coach Mike Riley said, "is one of those special, special players."

Folks around Utah's program say they've seen this coming for years.

During a practice in the fall of 2004, when Kruger was a redshirt freshman, he batted down a pass from future first-round NFL draft pick Alex Smith. Utes assistants scolded Kruger for getting so close to Smith on the play and told him to back off.

Apparently Kruger didn't hear them, because on the very next snap, he swatted away another pass and celebrated by screaming a few barbs and taunts at Smith. The assistants screamed at Kruger but, away from the action, then-coach Urban Meyer was doubled over in laughter.



Utah defensive end Paul Kruger sacks Air Force QB Shea Smith in Colorado Springs, Colo.

(Andrew Carpenter-US PRESSWIRE)

"He's the leader out there," said Dave, now a freshman lineman at Utah and one of six Kruger children. "He's a fiery intense guy. He sets the tone in the huddle and people follow."

Kruger left Utah after the fall of 2004 to embark on a Latter Day Saints church mission in Kansas and Missouri. For two years, he'd awake each day and roam various areas, attempting to spread the word. Sometimes he'd find himself volunteering to mow the lawn of a less-fortunate family, other times he'd counsel or read scriptures to someone looking for guidance.

To this day, Kruger still keeps in touch with the young children he and a friend met in a single-parent home in Manhattan, Kan. where the father was struggling to make ends meet.

"They were in need of some good influences," Kruger said. "It seemed like something was missing, and we helped fill that gap. We helped change the way they acted. They looked up to us like we were their heroes."

Kruger paused.

"It's ironic," he said. "Your mission is to do things for others but, when you're done with it, you've probably changed more than anyone. That experience made a huge difference in my life."

Kruger returned to Utah two days before Christmas in 2006. For two years he hadn't lifted weights or run to stay in shape. Still, he was intent on earning a starting job in 2007.

One afternoon he won a competition that called for players to race around the weight room pushing a 45-pound plate that laid flat against the ground. No one knew it then but, once it was over, he went into the weight room and threw up.

"He's a tough kid," said Paul's father, Paul Sr., who played at Oregon State. "And when I say tough, I'm talking about *mentally* tough."

That trait came in handy after Kruger was attacked in January. Just as he fought back from the Jeep injury and from the two years he spent away from football, Kruger got after it once he was cleared to resume workouts following the stabbing.

Because of a fear that his abdomen would herniate, Kruger was held out of hitting drills during spring ball and barred from heavy lifting in the weight room. Doctors told him it would take seven to eight months to fully recuperate and, as late as August, he was still feeling occasional tightness in his stomach.

But now, with just four games remaining in the season, those issues are long gone. A special pad covers Kruger's midsection, and he also wears a pad to protect his only kidney.

"It's just amazing to watch him out there after all he's been through," Jessica said. "He's my hero. He's everyone's hero."

Deseret News

Analyst: Utes top pick to bust BCS

By Thayer Evans

New York Times News Service

Published: October 27, 2008

With five teams from outside the major conferences ranked in the Bowl Championship Series standings, it has been a big year for the little guy in college football. Never before have so many outside teams had a chance to crash the BCS party this late in the season. But for those teams harboring those dreams, it is unlikely that more than one will qualify.

In the second BCS standings, released Sunday, there was No. 10 Utah (8-0, 4-0 Mountain West), No. 11 Boise State (7-0, 3-0 Western Athletic Conference), No. 13 Texas Christian (8-1, 5-0 Mountain West), No. 16 Ball State (8-0, 4-0 Mid-American Conference) and No. 18 Tulsa (7-0, 4-0 in Conference USA entering Sunday night's game against Central Florida).

Since the BCS began in 1998, an outside team has qualified three times. It last happened in January, when Hawaii was routed by Georgia in the Sugar Bowl.

Jerry Palm, an independent BCS analyst, said he expected one of the non-BCS teams to qualify. He has had Utah in his projections all season and has the Utes in the Fiesta Bowl.

"The Fiesta essentially gets the first choice of the at-larges, so in order for them to take Utah, the other teams would have to be significantly less attractive," Palm said in a telephone interview. "For the Fiesta, there's a chance that's possible. If Utah doesn't go there, they'd end up in the Orange Bowl in Miami. The Orange Bowl gets the last choice, and that's the most likely place for a nonmajor this season."

For a team from a non-BCS conference to be an automatic qualifier, it must be ranked in the top 12 of the final standings or in the top 16 if its ranking is higher than a BCS conference champion.

No more than one non-BCS conference team can earn an automatic bid in a year. If two or more teams meet the criteria, the highest-ranked team earns the spot. The remaining team or teams would be part of a pool for at-large bids.

To be eligible for an at-large selection, a team must have at least nine regular-season wins and be among the top 14 teams in the final BCS standings. Regardless, no more than two teams from a single conference can qualify.

There are more restrictions, but ultimately, it boils down to three teams — Utah, Boise State and Texas Christian — that have the best chance to be playing after New Year' Day, Palm said.

UTAH

The Utes are in the driver's seat, Palm said. They still have two challenges at home, with Texas Christian on Nov. 6 and No. 20 Brigham Young in their regular-season finale Nov. 22. Coach Kyle Whittingham was the defensive coordinator when Utah won the 2005 Fiesta Bowl.

"We felt we had a chance to be in this situation," Whittingham said in a telephone interview. "This is no surprise to us that we're in the situation we're in, but we've got a lot of football left."

BOISE STATE

The Broncos need a team to beat Utah that will not also move ahead of them in the BCS standings, Palm said. Their next three opponents do not have winning records. They close their season at home against Fresno State (5-2, 2-1 WAC).

The Broncos senior tailback Ian Johnson said this season's team had the same type of mind-set as the one that stunned Oklahoma in the 2007 Fiesta Bowl.

"We're still undefeated right now," he said in a telephone interview. "We could do big things."

TEXAS CHRISTIAN

The Horned Frogs must win the remainder of their games, including the game at Utah, and ideally need Boise State to lose, Palm said. With its only loss to then-No. 1 Oklahoma (now ranked No. 4), TCU could still finish ahead of an undefeated Boise State team, he said.

TCU was in the BCS hunt in 2000 and 2003.

"It's going to be a wild one in the next three weeks," Texas Christian coach Gary Patterson said after his team beat Wyoming on Saturday.

TULSA AND BALL STATE

Each team needs Utah, Boise State and Texas Christian to lose, Palm said. They need to make the top 12 or 16 in the BCS standings and hope one of the major conference champions does not. Neither team has ever sniffed the BCS

Tulsa's toughest remaining game could be at Arkansas on Nov. 1. The Golden Hurricane also plays at Houston on Nov. 15.

"There's no doubt in my mind that if we got 13-0, then we'll be in a BCS bowl," Tulsa coach Todd Graham said.

Ball State doesn't play another Saturday game this season. It plays only Tuesday and Wednesday games, closing the season at Central Michigan on Nov. 19 and hosting Western Michigan on Nov. 25. Both opponents are 6-2 this season and a combined 9-1 in league play.

"If you want to win, you want to win a championship," Ball State coach Brady Hoke told reporters after his team's victory Saturday against Eastern Michigan.

Palm said he did foresee the possibility of two teams from outside the major conferences making the BCS this season. It would be plausible if the entire at-large pool were from four conferences and two of those conferences were non-BCS, he said.

"I don't see how that happens any other way," Palm said. "It'd be a unique situation for that to happen."

The Salt Lake Tribune

http://www.sltrib.com

Utah's menacing bookends

Ute football: Squeeze players

Defensive ends Kruger, Misi hunt down QBs

By Lya Wodraska

The Salt Lake Tribune

Salt Lake Tribune

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It's third-and-long as TCU quarterback Andy Dalton takes the snap and drops back. Before his eyes can look downfield, his vision is filled with Utah's Koa Misi bearing down on him on one side and Paul Kruger coming at him from the other. He has just enough time to see the Utes aren't blitzing, he has no outlet and he's going to be hit before he can make a play.

Greetings, Mr. Dalton . . . say hello to Rice-Eccles Stadium's turf.

If all goes as planned for the Utes, that scenario will go from imaginary to reality Thursday several times when No. 10 Utah (9-0, 5-0) plays No. 11 TCU (9-1, 6-0).

Misi and Kruger, Utah's defensive ends, have been putting that kind of squeeze on quarterbacks all season, as they've distinguished themselves as two of the best linemen in the Mountain West Conference.

Misi is third on the team with 48 tackles and Kruger is fourth with 47 tackles. Kruger's 14.5 tackles for a loss are the seventh-best total nationally, while Misi has seven so far.

Utah coach Kyle Whittingham believed both had the potential to become all-conference-caliber athletes, and it looks like that hunch is coming true. Kruger, a 6-foot-5, 265-pound sophomore, has been named to some midseason All-America teams, while Misi, a 6-3, 263-pound junior, is improving tremendously at left end after spending the 2007 season primarily at tackle.

"When you have a set of bookends like that, you can apply a lot of pressure, and that is a big advantage for a defense," Whittingham said.

The two make each other better because there is a friendly competition, Kruger said. They've been known to make bets as to who will get to the quarterback faster or who will have more tackles for loss.

"It's more or less trying to be the best we can be," Kruger said. "It's really fun, knowing he is a great ball player making plays on his side."

While most opposing quarterbacks probably don't have time to distinguish between the two, those who aren't worried about being crunched by them can enjoy their distinct abilities from a distance.

Kruger is the more imposing end who no longer has the tall but light frame he sported at Timpanogos High in Orem, where he was a star quarterback. A redshirt season and two years on an LDS Church mission, followed by a lot of hard work, have made him one of the strongest defensive ends the Utes have had.

He is well-known among team members for his ability to take opponents down with one arm, just as he did against Colorado State in a piece of film that was enjoyed by all.

"He grabbed a guy with one hand and threw him down on the ground, and his head hit first and you could just feel the pain," linebacker Mike Wright remembered. "Paul has had so many big plays for us, sometimes it looks like a career highlight reel, but that is OK with me as long as we keep getting the wins."

Misi is extremely quick and agile, boasting a 34-inch vertical jump that is fourth-best on the team, and a 10.04 broad jump that is tied for second-best. Those abilities help him turn football games into many "now you see me, now you don't" moments, as he evades opposing linemen.

Together, the two are talented enough that Utah often doesn't bother to blitz in third-and-long situations, knowing those two can bring enough pressure themselves.

"Having them helps the secondary out a lot," safety Robert Johnson said. "Instead of quarterbacks kicking back there and trying to pick us apart, they don't have any time at all. His time is cut short because Koa and Paul will

get to him."

So who will get to Dalton first Thursday?

"It's going to be close," Kruger said. "But I'll say I have to vote for myself on that one."

lwodraska@sltrib.com

NOTEBOOK: Utah coach Kyle Whittingham stressed Monday the Utes must cut down on penalties and turnovers against TCU.

Koa Misi highlights

- * Third on team with 48 tackles
- * Third on team with seven tackles for loss
- * Two forced fumbles
- * Tied for team lead with eight tackles vs. New Mexico
- * 2.5 sacks

Paul Kruger highlights

- * Fourth on team with 47 tackles
- * Leads team with five pass breakups
- * Leads team with 14.5 tackles for a loss
- * Two forced fumbles
- * 6.5 sacks

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November 6, 2008

Utah Quarterback Goes for a Perfect Circle

By **PETE THAMEL**

Brian Johnson came to the [University of Utah](#) from Houston as a 17-year-old in 2004. He spent the summer before his freshman year sleeping on a couch in the dingy off-campus apartment of Alex Smith, then the Utes' starting quarterback.

Johnson received simple but specific instructions from Dan Mullen, then the Utes' quarterback coach: "Follow Alex and do everything that he does."

Five years later, Johnson is still trying to follow Mullen's advice. Johnson has led No. 10 Utah to a 9-0 record, and if the Utes beat No. 11 [Texas Christian University](#) on Thursday they would be on the cusp of a berth in a Bowl Championship Series bowl game.

Johnson said this year's Utah team is similar to the 2004 Utes, who ran through the Mountain West and crushed Pittsburgh in the Fiesta Bowl in what became a model for schools outside the six major conference on how to crash through college football's glass B.C.S. ceiling.

"It's a great opportunity for my career to come full circle," Johnson said.

Though his career has been pockmarked by injuries, Johnson's senior season has been hallmarked by his efficiency and leadership. He has 14 touchdowns and completed a career-best 66.7-percent of his passes.

Much has changed from 2004. Coach Urban Meyer and Mullen left to coach at Florida and Smith exited to become the No. 1 pick in the 2005 [N.F.L.](#) draft. But some things are the same. Kyle Whittingham, the defensive coordinator of the 2004 team, is the head coach, some of the schemes are similar and the Utes are led by a poised and intellectual quarterback.

"He's our team leader and is having a big year for us, much like Alex Smith was our team leader in 2004," Whittingham said.

Johnson's recruiting has similarly humble roots to Smith, who was so lightly regarded as a football prospect that his mother begged him to attend an [Ivy League](#) school.

When Mullen, now Florida's offensive coordinator, went to Houston to recruit Johnson at [Robert E. Lee](#) High School, he came back and told Urban Meyer that they had found their quarterback of the future.

"Great," Meyer said. "Show me the film."

There was one slight problem. Johnson didn't have any film. In the previous three seasons, he had been the back-up to Drew Tate, who went on to a successful career at Iowa. When Johnson's senior year rolled around, he had hardly seen any meaningful plays.

But Mullen liked enough of what he saw of Johnson in a spring practice that he promised to come back in September to see a game. Mullen watched Johnson coolly orchestrate the offense, make good decisions and efficient throws. A scholarship offer soon followed.

“He wasn’t that highly recruited,” Meyer said. “Dan Mullen did a good job finding him. He’s not that big or that fast. He’s just a heady player that’s a winner.”

By the time schools like Illinois, Mississippi State and Louisiana Tech started recruiting him, Johnson was already a Ute. Mullen laughed when recalling the story: “He was committed to us before anyone knew who he was.”

So a week after he graduated from high school and three months after his 17th birthday, Johnson arrived in Salt Lake City for his apprenticeship under Smith. He calls that time one of the highlights of his college career, as Smith guided him through off-season workouts and helped teach him the nuances of studying film.

“I was just trying to do everything that he did,” Johnson said. “Come in and be like a sponge.”

When Johnson made his official visit to Utah, he was just 16, and Smith joked that he felt like a babysitter. Despite the age gap, the two became fast friends and still talk every week.

But Johnson said there were some bumps once he arrived that first summer. Once, he borrowed Smith’s car, a beat up old Suzuki, and the alarm started blaring as he arrived at work.

“Everyone thought I was robbing the car,” Johnson recalled with a laugh. “It was loud and obnoxious and went off for a really long time. I finally got Alex on the phone and he told me reach under the steering wheel and jiggle some wires. It was complex, it was crazy.”

Johnson has also endured some tough moments on the field. He won the starting job as a sophomore in 2005 and ended up as the second-team All Mountain West quarterback that year, but a knee injury that November against New Mexico knocked him out for the rest of the season and forced him to redshirt in 2006.

“We could have played him, but he was vulnerable to another injury” said the Utah offensive coordinator Andy Ludwig. “A big part was talking about how good this group would be his senior year. He handled it with class and got bigger and stronger.”

When Johnson returned in 2007, he separated his shoulder in the opener and missed the next two games. He came back to be named the most valuable offensive player in a Poinsettia Bowl victory against Navy.

This season, the Utes are aiming higher. They beat Michigan in Ann Arbor to open the season and Johnson led them to an epic comeback against Oregon State.

Ludwig, who calls Johnson the smartest quarterback he has coached, recalled talking to Johnson via headset in the waning minutes of the Oregon State game, with the Utes trailing by 11 points. Johnson became annoyed when he saw fans headed for the exit. “Where are they going?” Johnson asked Ludwig. “They’re going to miss us come back and win.”

Sure enough, Johnson hit Bradon Godfrey on a 25-yard touchdown pass and ran in the two-point

conversion to tie the game. The Utah defense held Oregon State to a three-and-out and Johnson got Utah in position to set up Louie Sakoda's 37-yard field goal as time expired.

"I think that's been a strong point of my individual game for a long time," Johnson said, "being poised in tough situations."

He'll be in another tough situation on Thursday, as T.C.U.'s defense ranks second nationally, behind only U.S.C., yielding an average of 214.5 yards a game. After T.C.U., Utah has games remaining at [San Diego State](#) and at home against No. 17 [B.Y.U.](#) to complete the season. Three victories separate Johnson and the Utes from ending his career end in perfect symmetry.

"Just to see him out there and leading the team is great," Smith said. "Hopefully they can finish it out. I'm happy that he's been able to finish off his college career right."

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November 6, 2008

Apprentice Hopes to Return Utah to B.C.S. Glory

By PETE THAMEL

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The Salt Lake Tribune

http://www.sltrib.com

Kragthorpe: Johnson, Utes show knack for fourth-quarter drives

By Kurt Kragthorpe
Tribune Columnist
Salt Lake Tribune

Article Last Updated:11/11/2008 12:00:22 PM MST

Here in the media, where we're constantly emphasizing the positive side of things, the subject of the day is examining how the University of Utah offense is always able to deliver at the end of games.

That's as opposed to asking what's taking them so long.

In their two signature victories during a season that appears likely to end in a Bowl Championship Series game, the Utes have delivered clutch drives to tie and then overtake Oregon State and beat Texas Christian. In each of those Thursday night games at Rice-Eccles Stadium, the Utes had not scored in the second half before taking possession with less than three minutes to play.

They had barely moved the ball at all after halftime, in fact. Yet quarterback Brian Johnson took the Utes 60 yards in 46 seconds to tie OSU, then they got the ball back and drove 35 yards to position themselves for Louie Sakoda's last-second field goal in a 31-28 win. Against TCU, they needed two minutes to drive 80 yards, aided by a pass-interference penalty, and score a touchdown in a 13-10 victory.

The statistics are stunning: In the combined last five minutes of those two games, the Utes posted 160 yards and 18 points. So in 4 percent of the action, they accounted for 26 percent of their offensive production and 41 percent of their points.

No wonder coach Kyle Whittingham and offensive coordinator Andy Ludwig are considering using a no-huddle approach more in the middle of games. They had some success with that against Michigan, but shelved it after struggling on the first series of the second half against Oregon State.

The defensive tendency to play basic coverages and allow short completions late in games to keep the clock running is part of the reason offenses seem to have more success with a two-minute scheme. Actually, that makes Utah's results more impressive, with completions of 24 and 25 yards against OSU and a 22-yarder against TCU.

The Utes also went 80 yards to beat Air Force in September. That drive started with five minutes left and was more methodical, using mostly the running of Darrell Mack.

So how and why have the Utes done so well in the end? Four reasons:

* Opportunity

Moved by recent performances, someone asked Whittingham if Johnson could be judged the greatest quarterback in school history. Uh, there was that guy, you know, the No. 1 pick in the 2005 NFL draft.

But Johnson is the best ever at the end of games, no question.

His teams have thrived with games on the line partly because, well, what other choice did they have?

They could make things easier on themselves the way Alex Smith's Utes usually did. In his first career start in September 2003, on a Thursday night against California, Smith led a 63-yard drive for the winning touchdown. He completed two short passes while running back Brandon Warfield did most of the work, eventually taking Smith's option pitch for a 14-yard TD.

After that, Smith lost only once while never winning a game in the last two minutes, although he did lead the Utes to three overtime touchdowns in a victory at Air Force in '03. In every game of '04, Utah led comfortably in the fourth quarter.

* Johnson's presence

While coming through under pressure involves all 11 offensive players, everything starts with Johnson. And it all goes back to Lee High School in Baytown, Texas, where Johnson and his cousin, Brigham Young receiver Michael Reed, starred in a passing offense.

"He's so calm - great demeanor, great poise," said Lee coach Dick Olin.

Johnson operated Olin's "Raider" package, a sequence of five memorized, no-huddle plays the team would run in the middle of games to change the tempo. Olin also introduced 7-on-7 summer passing leagues in Texas, enabling Johnson to develop his talents.

"It's just something that I feel very comfortable doing," Johnson said.

*** Confidence**

By now, the Utes know they can perform when it counts.

"Everyone around [Johnson] believes in what they're doing, believes in him getting it done," Whittingham said.

That's hardly surprising to Olin, who said, "He has confidence in his abilities, and kids rally around him, there's no doubt."

It helps that in addition to Johnson, nearly every Ute who has touched the ball on those winning drives - including receivers Freddie Brown, Bradon Godfrey and Brent Casteel - is a senior.

"Those reps have accrued with that group, because we run the same nucleus of plays in that drill, and that hasn't changed for four years," Ludwig said.

*** Justice**

After everything their offense did the past two years against BYU, maybe the Utes simply deserved some happy endings.

Remember, Utah drove for go-ahead touchdowns against BYU behind Brett Ratliff in '06 and Johnson in '07, only to have the Cougars answer with miraculous plays that made the previous scores merely footnootes. This year, after taking three leads in the last minute, the Utes have left opponents less time (if any) to respond.

That part is not necessarily intentional, but like everything else the Utes are doing, it's working.

* KURT KRAGTHORPE can be reached at kkragthorpe@sltrib.com. To write a letter about this or any sports topic, send an e-mail to sportseditor@sltrib.com. So in 4 percent of the action, they accounted for 26 percent of their offensive production and 41 percent of their points.

Saving their best for last

UTAH VS. OREGON STATE:

Total plays: 69. Total yards: 337

Tying and winning drives - Total plays: 9. Total yards: 95

UTAH VS. TCU

Total plays: 66. Total yards: 275.

Winning drive - Total plays: 9. Total yards: 65 (plus 15-yard penalty).

TWO GAMES COMBINED:

135 total plays, 612 total yards, 44 points.

"Last-three-minutes" sequences: 18 plays, 160 yards, 8.9 yards per play, 18 points

First 57 minutes: 117 plays, 452 yards, 3.9 yards per play, 26 points.

Percentage of yards coming in last three minutes: 26.1 percent.

Percentage of points coming in last three minutes: 44.1 percent

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November 11, 2008

Tom Dienhart

Rivals.com College Football Senior Writer

SALT LAKE CITY – The elevator doors open, and the Utah coaches walk out. Game time is near. Got to go to work.



From bottom to top: Utah defensive graduate assistant Ilasia Tuiaki, offensive coordinator Andy Ludwig, offensive graduate assistant Zach Connors, offensive volunteer Brad Arbon and (standing) offensive volunteer John Hunter.

Most of the Utes' coaches will work this night's game against TCU on the sideline. But this group of assistants walking down the hallway will be positioned in a coaching box on the sixth floor of Rice-Eccles Stadium. One of them is offensive coordinator Andy Ludwig.

Ludwig can see it all from here. He's like a medical student watching a surgery – only in this case, Ludwig is the doctor offering direction from his perch high above the action. He speaks to no one as he enters the booth; it's all about focus.

Some are calling this the biggest regular-season game in Utah history. The Utes are 9-0 and ranked No. 8 in the BCS. Win out, and Utah will claim its second BCS bowl berth in five years. Tonight's obstacle: 7-1 TCU, ranked No. 11 in the BCS. Ludwig knows he'll be challenged. He had only four days to scheme and plan for this Thursday night game against a Horned Frogs defense that ranks No. 2 in the nation overall and No. 1 against the run.

Ludwig settles into his seat in the middle of the first row. He slips on his head set, takes a sip from a tiny Dasani water bottle and adjusts a small desk light that shines on the table in front of him. This is a new addition.

"I appreciate this," Ludwig says to no one in particular. "This is nice."

The rest of the booth is dimly lighted, creating a settling – almost cooling – feel to what will become a sometimes emotion-charged booth during the course of the game. It's a sterile, solitary setting, and Rivals.com sat in the coaching booth with Ludwig and the Utah coaches. Here is what it was like.

* * *

Ludwig is professorial in his look and approach. A tall, thin, self-professed private person, the bespectacled coach doesn't need many tools to do his job. This stuff is hard-wired in his brain from years of coordinating offense at places such as Fresno State and Oregon, where he groomed quarterbacks David Carr and Keller Clemens.

In front of Ludwig, 44, are several sheets of paper and some colored pens. Ludwig reaches into his book bag and pulls out a binder that includes a script of around 20 plays he would like to run early in the game. He isn't a slave to the script and won't force himself to call each one in order – or even call all of them. The script is merely a guide, reminding him of what he wants to try to get accomplished early in the game.

Seated to Ludwig's left is offensive graduate assistant Zac Connors. To Ludwig's right is defensive graduate assistant Ilaisa Tuiaki. Also sitting along the front row are defensive administrative assistant Steve Mathis. Cornerbacks coach Aaron Alford stands. He needs room to prow. In the back row is *de facto* assistant John Pease, a former long-time NFL assistant who serves as a sounding board and consultant during the game.

Among other things, Pease tosses out ideas and reminds the coaches of game situations like down-and-distance, timeouts remaining. But as valuable as any of that is Pease's calming, veteran influence. Stay calm, he says, stay focused.

As the coaches settle in, Pease shares things he has noticed about TCU during warm-ups, offering one last scouting assessment of the Horned Frogs.

"They were working everything on a quick count in warm-ups," Pease says. "No. 13 never threw a pass or played quarterback. No. 85 did nothing. He must be out. This looks like the same team as last year. I think they'll run the same stuff."

The coaches stand for the national anthem. It's game-time.

"KOR (kickoff return) is out," Tuiaki says. "Offense is up."

"Here we go," Ludwig says. "Have a great game."

Before Utah quarterback Brian Johnson trots on the field for the first series, Ludwig already is at work.

"OK, wristband 2. Gold, gold, gold," Ludwig says into his headset.

"Wristband 2" refers to what wristband the coaches should work off of. And "gold" is the personnel grouping. Ludwig studies his script and calls the play.

"Gun 4 Huck, Jet 6 Viper," Ludwig says.

It's a run by running back Eddie Wide for 6 yards. The chess match between Utah's dynamic offense and TCU's standout defense has begun.

* * *

Ludwig quickly studies his play sheet after each call, thinking out loud and often shouting instructions. He wants to be sure he is understood through the headset.

"Gator, gator, gator!" Ludwig says, signaling a personnel grouping. "Gun 6 waggle, right bubble. Let's go, let's go, let's go!"

Play-calling is only one function Ludwig performs. He also plays the role of counselor to Johnson. After each possession, Ludwig talks with his quarterback. On this night, with the offense struggling in the first half, Ludwig stays positive during each chat.

"You're looking good out there, Brian," Ludwig says. "That was a nice drive. Keep hammering and chipping away. Keep that laser focus. We'll be OK. You are throwing the ball well, Brian. Let's go."

While Ludwig discusses with Johnson what plays he may call on Utah's next possession, the Utes' defensive coaches are doing their best to sit on TCU's offense.



Utah running back Eddie Wide picked up 6 yards on the Utes' first offensive snap against TCU.

"We are missing tackles," Alford says. "Come on! Be smart out there. What's he doing? He has to hit that guy and take him out!"

Before kickoff, Alford taped a flip card to one wall of the booth. Above that he hung a piece of paper that details "TCU personnel signals." The Utes' coaches have identified what hand signals TCU uses – four fingers up, an OK sign, a peace sign, a fist, one finger aloft, a "hang loose" sign – to communicate what personnel it is sending into the game. Peering through binoculars, the defensive coaches scan the TCU sideline for the signals and shout them out.

"Hang loose! Hang loose!" Tuiaki shouts while peering through binoculars.

Alford shouts the information into his headset, communicating the information to the Utah sideline.

After poring over film in advance of the game, Utah coaches have decided what personnel they want on the field depending on what personnel TCU opts to use. It's all about matching up – or, more important, not getting caught in a mismatch.

With the defensive coaches at work, Ludwig chirps into his headset. After talking to Johnson, Ludwig shares his thoughts and ideas with the offensive assistants on the sideline. He also talks to coach Kyle Whittingham.

Ludwig reviewed Utah's game plan with players and coaches the night before during team meetings. Ludwig devised a plan to hit the fast-but-undersized TCU defense with power runs off the zone-read option. He also planned to attack the perimeter with some option and fly sweeps.

Ludwig schemed to change the pace by using the Utes' version of the ever-popular "wildcat formation." Utah calls its direct snap to a running back the "Asiata formation," named for Matt Asiata, who runs it. Yet another option to change the pace and generate a ground game is inserting backup quarterback Corbin Louks, a speed demon.

But Ludwig isn't too deep into his script before realizing none of his running plays are going to have much success against TCU, which is allowing only 39 yards rushing per game.

After yielding 10 points on TCU's first two drives, Utah's defense stiffens. But Ludwig's offense isn't clicking, generating only two field goals by Louie Sakoda. The halftime score: TCU 10, Utah 6. The unbeaten season and BCS dreams are 30 minutes from ending.



Running back Matt Asiata and the Utah running game didn't have great success against the Horned Frogs' defense.

The coaches grab their jackets, notebooks and bags and bolt from the booth toward the elevators in order to meet with the rest of the team in the locker room. Ludwig is going to have to come up with a new plan.

* * *

After the coaches return to the booth following halftime, there's a problem: The headsets aren't functioning.

"What's up?" Ludwig asks, swiveling in his seat and looking at a technical support guy in the back of the booth. "You got it?"

The issue quickly is resolved. But Ludwig isn't having as much luck solving the TCU defense, which held the Utes to 34 rushing yards and 119 yards overall in the first half. Ludwig sits in silence, studying his play sheet.

"The second half is our half, boys," Alford says.

But Utah's offense continues to founder. Ludwig keeps whispering positive things in Johnson's ear after the Utes' first second-half drive yields no points. Ludwig has to keep Johnson positive and upbeat. He can't lose him.

"Way to get us out of a hole," Ludwig says. "You are fine. You are in good shape. How about on the next drive we try ... "

Utah's defense continues to force stops, but Ludwig's offense continues to fire blanks.

"Got to go, got to go," Ludwig says. "OK, let's run Tornado 7-9 Option.

"Gun 5, Tex 56 Florida. Call it and go!

"Gun 6, Gap 5 Cobra!

"Gun 6 Freeze, Scan 4 Storm."

Little is working. Utah has to punt again. The third quarter melts away, and more than half the fourth quarter has vanished. The coaching box grows quiet. It's still 10-6, TCU.

"We have to three-and-out this, fellows," Alford says after another failed Utah drive.

Utah's defense continues to turn away TCU, with a few assists from the Horned Frogs along the way. TCU misses a second field goal in a row. But the clock and Utah's hopes are draining. Just 2:48 remains, and the Utes have the ball on their 20. This likely will be their final chance.

"Come on, let's finish this thing and go home and have a pizza and a beer," Pease says from the back row. "What do you say?"

No one answers. Ludwig starts calling plays and Johnson starts hitting passes – for 5 yards, 7 yards, 22 yards.

"Oh, come on!" Alford screams. "Where is the P.I. (pass interference)?"

The official throws his flag.

"Thank you! Finally!" Alford says.

With the ball at TCU's 31, Johnson and Utah move in for the kill. The insulated booth isn't able to mute the roaring crowd that senses a touchdown.

Ludwig stares down at his play sheet and calls the next play.

Johnson hits a 5-yard completion, then throws incomplete to set up a fourth-and 5 from TCU's 26. With the game and season on the line, Johnson strikes with an 11-yard completion. A 6-yard pass follows.

Less than 60 seconds remain and the ball is on TCU's 9. Ludwig calls for a quick slant, and Johnson fires a rope to Freddie Brown. Touchdown. The coaches erupt, and fists pound the counter.

"Yes!" Alford yells.

In an adjacent booth, the voices of the KALL 700 radio play-by-play team leak through into the coaches' box. "I don't believe what I just saw," a voice says.

Ludwig doesn't move. Forty-eight seconds remain. The game isn't over. Ludwig is thinking of what's next. He adjusts his mouthpiece and talks to an assistant below.

"You set up 'Victory' and I will get ready for overtime," he says.

Ludwig scraps his overtime plans after Utah picks off a TCU pass with seconds remaining. Utah gets in the "Victory" formation, a kneel-down set used to kill the clock. Game over.

"Let's get out of here," Alford says.

Ludwig breaks into a smile. It's over. Handshakes and hugs abound. Ludwig's decision to largely abandon the run and go with the passing attack in the second half worked. In the first half, Utah ran 34 plays – 18 runs and 16 passes. In the second half, the Utes had 32 plays – 25 passes and only seven runs. The net result was only 275 yards of offense, but that was



enough to squeeze out a 13-10 victory to keep Utah unbeaten and on course for a BCS bowl.

The Utah offense found a way to make a play when it was most needed, as Brian Johnson's late touchdown pass gave the Utes a 13-10 win.

Ludwig and the other coaches gather their belongings and head toward the elevator. It's time to celebrate with the team in the locker room.

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The Salt Lake Tribune

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Ute football: Leading the Utes with 46 receptions for 568 yards . . . Freddie's a catch

Brown has become a go-to player

By Lya Wodraska
The Salt Lake Tribune
Salt Lake Tribune

Article Last Updated: 11/12/2008 02:10:39 AM MST

Three years ago, Utah assistant coach Aaron Roderick stood on the sidelines during a Citrus Junior College game and watched a lanky athletic receiver show off the kind of skills that Roderick wanted at Utah.

"He had a really good body for a wide receiver, really good height and a low center of gravity," Roderick remembered of his first impressions.

As for the guy who Roderick actually went to California to recruit, well, he never made it to Utah, but the receiver who caught Roderick's eye did.

Three years later, others are finally noticing Freddie Brown's skills, with the senior having his best season. Brown was one of the heroes in Utah's win over TCU when quarterback Brian Johnson found him at two key moments. Johnson connected with Brown on an 11-yard pass on fourth-and-5, and again for the game-winning 9-yard touchdown pass with 48 seconds remaining.

Brown leads the team with 46 catches for 568 yards and five touchdowns. His production in the last three games, 19 catches for 252 yards, led the Utes in those games and eclipses his past season totals.

Those are the kinds of performances the Utes had hoped to get out of Brown earlier in his career. It took a little longer for him to develop, or maybe it was just a lack of chances. Whatever the reason, the Utes are glad he has emerged from relative obscurity to become a go-to player.

"He has come into his own as far as confidence and making big plays at big times," Johnson said.

Brown, who played in 12 games last season and finished with 20 catches for 219 yards, has always had that receiver body that recruiters look for. He is tall, strong enough to not get out-muscled by defenders and quick enough that he can beat defenders downfield. But even at 6-foot-4 and 215-pounds and with a 32.5-inch vertical leap, Brown often got lost in the shuffle of receivers in seasons past and found himself playing behind Derrek Richards, Brian Hernandez and others.

With players such as David Reed and Aiona Key coming in, Brown knew spotty production wouldn't be good enough in 2008 for him to earn a starting role, something the coaches made him remember.

"He always had a lot of talent and was flashy in moments in the past, but we challenged him to play every snap hard," Roderick said.

Brown first responded by being one of the most improved players in the spring and has continued to be one of Johnson's favorite targets.

"I knew I wanted to make the most out of my opportunities and I tried to emphasize that," Brown said.

That kind of statement is about as close as Brown gets to gloating about himself. The soft-spoken, laid-back player isn't showy on the field like teammate Brent Casteel and doesn't make the highlights for taking hits like Bradon Godfrey often does across the middle, but he is being more aggressive and doing a better job of hanging on to the passes thrown his way.

"His overall toughness has improved," Roderick said. "He is demanding playing time through the way he practices and prepares. That is the reason we are putting him more in the game, because we are trusting him."

That trust was shown in the win over TCU when Johnson threw to Brown on the fourth-and-5 play. The play was designed to go to Godfrey over the middle, but when Johnson saw TCU's defense was tight on Godfrey and playing loose on Brown, he fired the ball at Brown.

If Brown hadn't caught the pass, Utah's BCS hopes would be over. Now they're very much alive and growing, along with Brown's reputation.

"In the past, he didn't assert himself like we'd hoped he would and is now," Utah coach Kyle Whittingham said. "He is stepping to the forefront."

lwodraska@sltrib.com

Utah at S. Diego St.
Saturday, 6 p.m., mtn.

Brown file

Hght/Wght: 6-foot-4, 215 pounds

Year: Sr.; **Hometown:** La Verne, Calif.

RISING STATS

2005: 2 rec., 43 yds, 0 TD

2006: 17 rec., 196 yds, 0 TD

2007: 20 rec., 219 yds, 0 TD

LAST THREE GAMES

vs. CSU: 4 rec., 78 yds, 1 TD

vs. New Mexico: 7 rec., 69 yds, 0 TD

vs. TCU: 9 rec., 105 yds., 1 TD

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Kicker hailed as 'King' at No. 7 Utah

By Vicki Michaelis, USA TODAY

Coaches and mothers are gushing. Co-eds are swooning.

Louie Sakoda is having that kind of a season for No. 7 Utah (11-0), which could become this year's Bowl Championship Series gate-crasher with a home win Saturday over its archrival, No. 14 BYU (10-1).

"King Louie," as he's known around campus, isn't a quarterback out of central casting. He's not a chest-thumping receiver or a high-stepping running back. He's a former walk-on punter, a bit of a brainiac, somewhat obsessive about honing his skills.

But, "he's a very, very popular guy," Utah coach Kyle Whittingham says of the co-team captain with the 3.73 grade point average.

"We'll be down at the mall," says Utah junior offensive lineman Zane Beadles, one of Sakoda's roommates, "and moms will stop him and just be like, 'Oh, my kids love you, you're so great.'"

Sakoda was the Utes' starting punter as a true freshman and since has started at kicker as well. A senior, he's been named the Mountain West Conference special teams player of the year the last two seasons.

This season, he kicked a game-winning field goal as time ran out against Oregon State. He kicked four field goals in the Utes' opening win over Michigan, including a career-long 53-yarder. And, with less than two minutes remaining in the Utes' three-point win over New Mexico, he dropped a punt at the Lobos' 1-yard line.

"He's been instrumental in our success," Whittingham says.

A crucial kick is almost certain to be needed again Saturday. Utah's last three games against BYU have been decided by seven points or less. The Utes lost the last two in the final seconds and won in overtime in 2005.

Saturday's game could reverberate farther than any previous matchup, with both teams coming in with the highest rankings the rivalry has seen and Utah looking to become the first non-BCS team to go to a big-money bowl for a second time. The Utes were the first BCS buster in 2004.

"This is the first time in my career that we've actually been favored against them," Sakoda, a senior, says of BYU. "I think that gives us a certain swagger."

The Utes have carried a season-long swagger knowing Sakoda is on their sideline. He made a school-record 19 field goals last season. He needs just one more this season to set the bar higher.

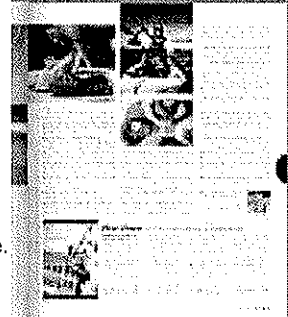
"We always know if we get down in the red zone," Beadles says, "we're going to come away with points."

This season, Sakoda is 15-for-15 on field goals of 47 or fewer yards. He's connected on more career field goal attempts (54 of 63, 85.7%) than anyone in Utah history.

"Nothing phases him," Whittingham says. "He is at his best when the pressure is at its highest."

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In the offseason, Sakoda's mom passed along a motivational golf book titled *Every Shot Must Have A Purpose*. He read it and applied some of the concepts to his kicking.

"One of the big things was creating a high-pressure situation in your head, and trying to make it as close to possible to what it might be like at the game," Sakoda says.

He prepared for the Michigan game, played at The Big House, by "just trying to imagine what 110,000 fans would sound like. In my head, I built this up to be the most nerve-wracking, loudest thing I've ever heard. When I actually lined up for my first field goal, it seemed relatively quiet compared to what I had been building up."

He doesn't reveal what he's created in his head in advance of BYU. But it likely won't be quiet in Utah's Rice-Eccles Stadium on Saturday when Sakoda is lining up for kicks. Ever since *The Salt Lake Tribune* reported earlier this season that the Utah gymnastics team affectionately calls Sakoda "King Louie," the name has caught on.

"I think it's cool," Sakoda says. "As long as I can keep my focus on the game, people can call me whatever they want."

Utah coaches discovered the San Jose, Calif., native at a kicking camp. Sakoda was planning to walk on at UCLA, but Utah needed a starting punter. He earned a scholarship almost immediately.

"He's a very good athlete," Whittingham says. "He was an excellent baseball player in high school. If he was not so valuable as a punter and a placekicker, he could be a backup defensive back or wide receiver."

That athleticism, along with a gregarious yet unassuming nature, has helped the marketing major mesh with the team and the community in a way few kickers do. Earlier this season, a university student organization sold a picture of Sakoda — unable to secure "King Louie" himself for a date auction — for \$160.

"Obviously, what I've done on the field kind of helped out with how certain people perceive me," Sakoda says. "I think that was kind of like the doorway that gave me the opportunity to show people I'm a normal guy, I'm cool, not some alienated player."

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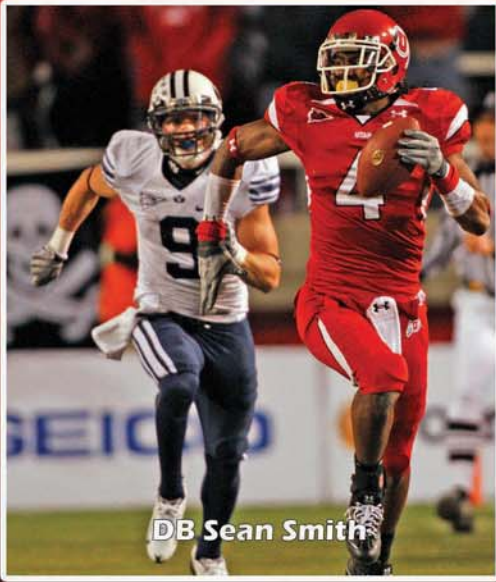
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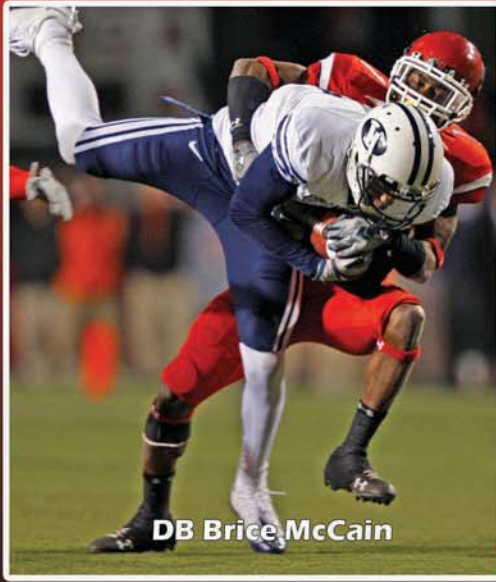
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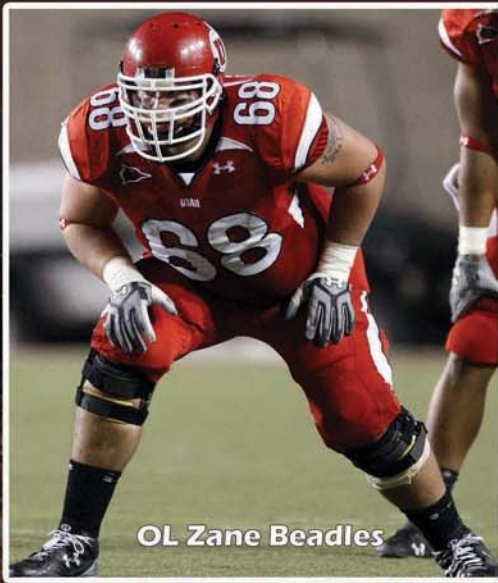
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MWC Coach of the Year
Kyle Whittingham

