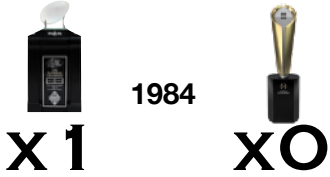




A Stepping Stone to National Contention

BYU BIO

National Championships - 1



Big 12 Championships: 0

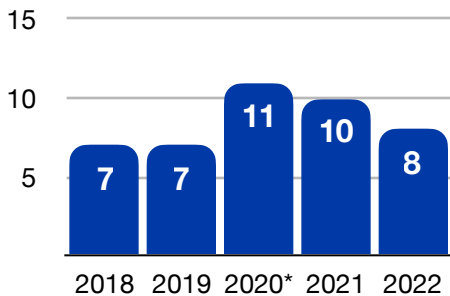
Location: **Provo, UT**

All-Time Record: **611-436-26**

2022 Results: **8-5**
Won New Mexico Bowl

Head Coach: **Kalani Sitake**
8th Year (56-34)

5-YEAR WIN TREND



LaVell Edwards Stadium (63,470)

Kalani Sitake has had his BYU program ranked as high as #12 in the country in each of the last three seasons. He's collected 29 wins in that time and about the only thing he's missed out on in that time is a New Year's Six appearance. That goal becomes substantially more difficult with BYU's move to the Big 12. But, the move to a conference opens up new goals for the program. A conference championship is up for grabs and if the Playoff continues to reward conference champions with automatic bids the Cougars will have that much more to play for. For now, the 2023 season appears to be a transition year as BYU gets accustomed to a Power 5 schedule. The Cougars to from five power five opponents in 2022 (including Notre Dame) to ten in 2023.

Sitake's first order of business is replacing quarterback Jaren Hall who was drafted by the Vikings. He turned to the portal and brought in former USC and Pittsburgh quarterback **Kedon Slovis**. Slovis had varied success with the Panthers with 9 interceptions to just 10 touchdowns. If the change of scenery helps and Slovis is more productive he'll have a chance to be the third straight quarterback drafted from BYU (Zach Wilson and Hall).

In addition to Hall, BYU loses a significant portion of their offensive production from 2022, a unit that scored 31.3 points per game. **Keanu Hill** is the leading returning receiver with 572 yards and 7 touchdowns followed closely behind by **Kody Epps** and his 459 yards and 6 touchdowns. **Chase Roberts** was next with 357 and the collective trio combined with tight end **Isaac Rex** should give Slovis some quality options to target. The running game is the aspect of the offense that was hit especially hard with departures. Christopher Brooks ran for 817 yards on just 130 carries and Hall was an integral part of the ground attack at quarterback. **Miles Davis** is one option to be the starting tailback and UNLV transfer **Aidan Robbins** is another. Robbins topped 1,000 yards with the Rebels in 2022. Former quarterback turned running back **Sol-Jay Maiava-Peters** is another option.

Last year's offensive line was excellent and allowed only 13 sacks the entire season. This year, the Cougars will be dependent on several transfers to fill the void left by key departures. **Paul Maile** spent the last five seasons at bitter rival Utah. **Weylin Lapuaho** makes the short journey to Provo from Utah State and Caleb Etienne started all 13 games for Oklahoma State. With so many fresh faces it could take time for the offensive line to gel but it's possible that, as the season moves along, this unit gets close to or equals the play of last year's line. Former four-star recruit and Oregon transfer **Kingsley Suamatia** was strong at right tackle for the Cougars in 2022 and has an NFL-ready frame.

The defense allowed nearly double the points per game (29.5) than they did in the 11-win 2020 campaign (15.3). Big 12 offenses are no joke and the Cougars have a big hill to climb in order to start lowering that statistic. Linebacker **Ben Bywater** is the focal point of the defense. After a 102 tackle season in 2021 he added 98 more in 2022 and is a major disrupter. Like Bywater, **Max Tooley** grabbed three interceptions from the linebacker position. Tooley and Bywater will be joined by **AJ Vongphachanh**, a veteran with 223 career tackles with Utah State. This group of linebackers as well as the defensive line will have to improve on what was essentially a non-existent pass rush (only 15 sacks). **Tyler Batty** is one of the leading returners up front and had 2 sacks and 7 tackles for loss. **John Nelson** led the team with three sacks. A pair of Boise State transfers **Jackson Cravens** and **Isaiah Bagnah** should make an impact. The secondary will be a work in progress too.













The Bottom Line: The Cougars take a significant jump up in the competition department and it could be a season or two before the roster is ready to truly compete at the top of the Big 12. Sitake has understandably made a strong push in the transfer portal and landed the conference's second best class (via 24/7 Sports) behind only Oklahoma. If that class comes together and adds meaningful contributions, BYU could be better than expected. For now, the challenge facing the Cougars is to reach their sixth straight bowl game.

Projection: 6-6 (11th in Big 12)

2022 Statistics

Points Scored	Rush Yards	Pass Yards	Turnover Margin
31.3	176.6	249.7	+2
44th in FBS	49th in FBS	49th in FBS	T-54th in FBS
Points Allowed	Rush YDS Allowed	Pass YDS Allowed	
29.5	173.8	234.3	
97th in FBS	98th in FBS	82nd in FBS	

2023 BYU Schedule

Week	Date	Team
1	Sat, Sept 2	 vs. Sam Houston
2	Sat, Sept 9	 vs. Southern Utah
3	Sat, Sept 16	 @ Arkansas
4	Sat, Sept 23	 @ Kansas
5	Fri, Sept 29	 vs. Cincinnati
6	Bye Week	
7	Sat, Oct 14	 @ TCU
8	Sat, Oct 21	 vs. Texas Tech
9	Sat, Oct 28	 @ Texas
10	Sat, Nov 4	 @ West Virginia
11	Sat, Nov 11	 vs. Iowa State
12	Sat, Nov 18	 vs. Oklahoma
13	Sat, Nov 25	 @ Oklahoma St.

Conference Games in Bold

KEY GAMES

Sat, Sept 16: @ Arkansas - BYU allowed a season-high 52 points against Arkansas last season as KJ Jefferson and the Razorbacks torched the Cougars for 644 total yards. Will the defense make enough of an improvement to give themselves a chance on the road?

Sat, Oct 14: @ TCU - Drawing college football's runners-up on the road is a tough challenge but the Cougars do at least get an extra week to prepare for the Horned Frogs.

Sat, Oct 28: @ Texas - There's plenty of opportunities for statement wins on the schedule, but a road victory against Texas would arguably be the most significant (assuming the Longhorns are, you know, good).

KEY PLAYERS

Aidan Robbins - RB



After waiting patiently for his turn at UNLV, Robbins made the most of his opportunity as a starter in 2022. He rushed for 1,011 yards and 9 touchdowns and topped 100 yards in three separate games including a 227 yard outburst against North Texas in week three that cemented Robbins as the starter. He caught 23 passes as well and if he is able to replicate his performance from 2022 or even get close, he'll be an extremely powerful weapon for the Cougar offense.

Ben Bywater - LB

If the last two seasons are any indication, Bywater is ready for the next level but chose to come back to BYU for another season which should have Cougars fans quite excited. He's totaled 200 tackles over the last two years and had three INTs last season alone including a pick six in the New Mexico Bowl victory.



2022 RESULTS (8-5)

@ South Florida (W 50-21)

Baylor (W 26-20)

@ Oregon (L 20-41)

Wyoming (W 38-24)

Utah State (W 38-26)

Notre Dame (L 20-28)

Arkansas (L 35-52)

@ Liberty (L 14-41)

East Carolina (L 24-27)

@ Boise State (W 31-28)

Utah Tech (W 52-26)

@ Stanford (W 35-26)

SMU (W 24-23)

COUGARS™

RECRUITING

2023 Class Ranking

66th

(Via 24/7 Sports)