

UTAH UTES



RB John White

POSITION OUTLOOK FOR 2012

QUARTERBACKS - Utah produced the #1 overall pick in the '05 NFL Draft in Alex Smith. In '08 Brian Johnson led Utah to an undefeated season and a Sugar Bowl win. Terrance Cain led the NJCAA in passing yds in '08 and in '09 beat out true frosh Jordan Wynn (PS#52, IFS). Cain threw for 1,624 (64%, 11-5, #3 rusher) but in the 2H vs Wyo (gm 8) they took the RS off of Wynn and he sparked the victory. Wynn st'd the final 5 and the off avg'd 34.2 ppg (27.1 ppg prior). Wynn was the clear-cut st'r into '10 but sprained his thumb on the opener's 2nd series vs Pitt (still played). Cain st'd the next 2 (455, 77%, 5-0) but Wynn kept his job and threw for a career high 362 vs SDSU but was inj'd vs BYU and Cain played the entire bowl. Wynn threw for 2,334 (62%, 17-10). LY they got a late transfer of Jon Hays from Neb-Omaha. Wynn missed the spg (shoulder) and his throwing motion was a little different. He threw for 727 (56.9%, 6-2) over the 1st four but was OFY vs Wash. Hays was recruited here as an emergency QB and threw for 1,459 (56.1%, 12-8) while starting the L/9 as they began to rely more on the run gm. The 173 ypg pass was their lowest s/84. TY they add in TWO VHT true Fr who were both IFS and Hays (6'0" 205 Sr) will likely move back to the bench. HC Whittingham said they've never been this deep at QB during his tenure and I expect much improved passing numbers.

RUNNING BACKS - In '09 Eddie Wide set a school rec with 6 consec 100 yd gms (1069, 5.3). In '10 Matt Asiata was granted a 6th yr (#1 rusher '08, miss 9 gm '09). Wide led with 717 (4.8) while Asiata had 695 (4.5). LY it appeared Utah was the only FBS tm with 0 ret RB rush yds but Tauni Vakapuna (79, 4.2 in '10) ret'd in the fall. They did bring in VHT's John White (PS#84JC) and true frosh Harvey Langi (PS#24). White was clearly the tm's best off player setting a schl record (Carl Monroe, 1507, '82) with 1,519 (4.8) on a schl rec 316 att (#3 FBS). The #2 rusher was WR Reggie Dunn with just 173 (11.5). Vakapuna had just 104 (3.4) while Langi chipped in 70 (5.4). Also in the mix this year are Lucky Radley (5'8" 185 So, PS#112) and PS#24JC Kelvin York (orig commit USC). While it will be tough for White to top LY's numbers (cch's have admitted they relied on him too much), the team is vastly more experienced and boast one of the P12's best RB corps.

RECEIVERS - In '10 Utah had to replace David Reed (#5DC) who set the schl record for rec and rec yds (1188, 14.7). VHT DeVonte Christopher (PS#27) led with 660 (16.9). LY Christopher missed 2.5 gms (inj) and the offense struggled without him. He still led with 663 (15.8) while conv RB Luke Matthews finished #3 with 263 (15.5). RfR Dres Anderson (PS#147) was #2 (355, 15.4) and

Reggie Dunn (PS#76JC) had 211 (14.1). TY they only lose Dexter Ransom (PS#40JC, 3 rec). Not listed below are Quinton Pedroza (6'2" 217 So, PS#183), Griff McNabb (5'7" 160 Jr) and TE's Jake Murphy (6'4" 255 So, PS#40, 2 st LY), David Rolf (6'4" 250 Sr, 2 st LY) and Westlee Tonga (6'4" 250 Jr) who was headed to DE before inj's hit the unit in spg '12. The TE coach called TY's group of TE the best he's had here. With the upgrades at QB, I look for this overall group to have a large jump in productivity.

OFFENSIVE LINE - In '10 the Utes had to replace a 1st Tm AA LT (#2DC) but had 4 st'rs back and added in PS#18JC John Cullen. The unit paved the way for their best ypc rushing (4.6) s/04 and all'd just 12 sks (3.0%). LY they had to replace a 1st Tm MW LG (#6DC, 4Y st'r) and 1st Tm MW C (3Y st'r). The slightly less exp'd group (63 car sts) saw their numbers drop to 138 ypg rush (3.8) with 33 sks (9.9%). Of course, the step up to the P12 was also a contributing factor. TY they lose 2nd Tm P12 LT Cullen (12 st, 2Y st'r) and 1st Tm P12 RT Tony Bergstrom (12 st, 3Y st'r, #3DC OAK) and unlike past years, do not have any All-Conf players back. However, HC Whittingham felt the OL's lack of size was one of '11's biggest problems, so he brought in two 330+ lb VHT JC's and a 6'5" 322 lb frosh VHT, all who are expected to have immediate impacts. They are still similar with 3 st'rs back (65 car sts) and could improve with the added size in their 2nd year in the P12.

DEFENSIVE LINE - This has been Utah's primary recruiting emphasis annually and they have sent many DL's to the NFL. In '10 they had to replace a #2DC but had 3 st'rs back and improved to allowing 112 ypg rush (3.2). LY they had to replace a 1st Tm MW DE, 2nd Tm MW DT and 2 bkps (6 sts). They had 5 back w/st exp. You would figure that with losing your top 2 DL's and moving up to a BCS conf, the numbers would regress but they stayed the same (114 ypg, 3.2, 30 sk). Star Lotulelei (3 st '10) earned P12 DLPOY as the 325 lb NT had 44 tkls and 9 tfl. TY they lose 1st Tm P12 DE Derrick Shelby (13 st, 55 tkl, 10 tfl), DE Tevita Finau (4 st, 37 tkl, 3 sk) and DT James Aiono (2 st, 2 tkl). They have 3 back who had 7+ sts including their top guy and this is one of the P12's top DL's.

LINEBACKERS - In '10 Utah had to replace its #1 tk'l'r (#5DC) and 2 other st'rs (#2, #11 tk'l'rs). This unit was my biggest ? on the team with the 3 proj st'rs comb for 24 tkls in '09. They still all'd just 20.3 ppg. LY they had to replace 1 st'r (#7 tk'l'r) but did return the #1 and #2 tk'l'rs plus added S Brian Blechen (13 st '10, PS#92). Blechen moved back to SS after 4 sts at SLB so the unit basically had 2 ret sts. Despite being more exp'd, the Utes allowed 20.2 ppg. TY they lose RLB Matt Martinez (13 st, #2 tk'l'r, 8 tfl), 2nd Tm P12 MLB Chaz Walker (12 st, #1 w/118, 3.5 tfl), JJ Williams (19 tkl) and Nai Fotu (5 tkl, 2 sk). It will be interesting to see if this unit, while less exp'd, will continue to hover around that 20 ppg mark.

DEFENSIVE BACKS - The Utes' young secondary finished #4 in my PDR in '07. They had 9 of their top 10 back in '08 and finished #22. In '09 they had to replace #2 and #6DC's but ret'd a pair of sub-4.4 CB's. The Utes finished #10. In '10 they had to replace a 1st Tm MW FS (#5DC), a CB (#7DC) and their SS. This time the Utes performed as expected (1 ret st'r) finishing #86. LY they had to replace a 2nd Tm MW CB (#5DC), their other CB (#3 tk'l'r) and their FS (#5 tk'l'r) plus they moved SS Blechen to LB. The unit has 3 career sts although Blechen returned after 4 gms (9 st SS). FS Keith McGill was lost after 5 but the Utes performed above expectations leading the P12 in int with 19 (6th FBS). TY they lose CB Conroy Black (12 st, 39 tkl, 4 int, 1 IR td) and Greg Bird (1 st, 24 tkl). Not listed below are CB's Chandler Johnson (6'0" 177 So), Wykie Freeman (5'11" 175 Jr) and S Tyron Morris-Edwards (6'1" 200 So). It will probably be another atypical year as this is a more exp'd group (8 w/st exp) but it will be tough to match LY's #7 finish.

SPECIAL TEAMS - Whittingham generally produces a fine ST unit (#16 in '06, #23 in '07 and #20 in '08). In '09 they had to replace their outstanding K/P Louie Sakoda. Joe Phillips hit 20-22 FG's (L48), P Sean Sellwood avg 42.9 (net 37.0) and they finished #38. In '10 Shaky Smithson topped Steve Smith's schl rec for PR yds (#1 FBS, 19.1 PR, 24.1 KR). Phillips made a schl rec 18 consec FG's (over 2 yrs) and hit 13-17 (L48) but Sellwood had 3 punts blk'd (41.0, 33.8 tm net) and that's the reason that Utah finished "only" #5. LY they lost Smithson and Phillips. K Coleman Petersen did miss 2 of his first 4 FG but then hit 10 in a row and was 17-21 before 3 costly misses vs Colo (3 pt loss). Sellwood improved his avg to 45.0 (super tm net 39.7). Utah finished #24 and with everyone back, have a great shot of Whittingham's 6th Top 25 finish in 7 yrs.

COACHES - Kyle Whittingham replaced Urban Meyer in '05 after a perfect 12-0 season and 4 yrs later topped that with his own 13-0 record. Whittingham spent 11 seasons here as an asst (10 as DC) before becoming HC. When 66 yd old OC Norm Chow left, former Ute QB Brian Johnson accepted the position 2 wks before his 25th birthday. The 4th year DC is Kalani Fifita Sitake who's been on staff here s/05 and his unit led the P12 in scoring DL.

ALSO ON ROSTER:

QB Cody Stevenson 6'6" 202 Fr	RB Bryson McKenzie 5'11" 229 Fr	DB Chase Maires 5'9" 187 So
QB Mitch Dahlen 6'4" 195 Fr	FB Richie Vakapuna 5'5" 205 rF	DB Devin Mickles 5'9" 175 So
QB Adam Schultz 6'1" 194 Fr	WR Max Moala Sr 5'11" 246 Sr	DB Michael Kirby 5'11" 195 Fr
RB Eric Davidson 5'7" 197 Fr	WR Jake Cusick 6'0" 188 Fr	DB Tyler White 5'10" 180 Fr
RB Geoff Norwood 5'10" 175 Jr	WR Andrew Santiago 5'8" 183 Fr	DB Parker Cracraft 5'11" 195 So
RB Robbie Lusk 6'0" 212 So	TE Tanjarey Towns 5'9" 156 Jr	DB Ronan Rogers 6'3" 217 Fr
	TE Cameron Taylor 6'4" 249 Fr	DB Tyler Cannon 6'2" 204 Jr
	LB Nick Brown 6'3" 218 Jr	DB Jeff Battle 6'1" 202 Fr

PHIL'S FORECAST

In '04 I mentioned that 4 of my then 7 sets of power ratings called for the Utes to have an unbeaten season and they achieved that AND became the first BCS buster. They outscored foes 45.2-19.5 (+132 ypg) as their closest gm was a 14 pt win. Utah's #4 finish was their highest ever and Urban Meyer left for Florida. It took Kyle Whittingham 4 yrs to get back to that level. In '08 BYU was the consensus pick to win the MW (my mag was the only one to pick Utah to win the MW outright). I picked the Utes as my top non-BCS team and BYU fans bombarded PhilSteele.com questioning my overall football IQ. After Utah went unbeaten (beat Bama in Sugar Bowl) they received 16 AP #1 votes finishing #2 and were the only undefeated FBS tm. After a solid 10-3 season in '09 (#18) the Utes rolled to an 8-0 start (#6) in '10 and had a showdown with #4 TCU. With a 2nd BCS bowl within reach, they were thrashed at home. They then lost 28-31 in a letdown spot vs an ND team off a bye. At 10-2 playing without QB Wynn they lost to Boise. LY they made the long awaited jump to the Pac-12. I pointed out some key indicators as to why their 3 yr streak of DD wins would end despite the fact they did not have to play either Oregon or Stanford out of the North. The Utes benefitted from 4 net close wins in '10 and were taking a large step up in competition. They also had just 12 ret sts. They only had a 292-258 yd edge vs Mont St then at USC they lined up for the game winning FG but it was blk'd and ret'd for a TD. They were +5 in TO's and won 54-10 vs BYU despite being outgained at half. At home vs UW and ASU they were a comb'd -9 in TO's and lost by 17 and 21. At Pitt they were +3 in TO's on a windy day and won by 12 (251-120 yd edge). Cal dominated them 34-10 which dropped them to 0-4 in the P12. They beat OSU at home by 19, AZ on the road by 13, UCLA at home in the snow 31-6 and were fortunate to get past WSU in OT (WSU settled for a 17 yd FG to force OT). Utah then missed 3 FG's and lost to Colo at home. Had they won that gm, they would have been in the P12 Title gm. They had extra time to prep for GT's option in the bowl and while they were outgained 449-337, they won 30-27 in OT to finish 8-5. Utah was +20 in TO's in their wins and -10 in their losses. They have 16 ret sts and again avoid UO and SU. They were +10 in TO's LY, had beneficial off (12.4) and def (17.4) ypp's, play 5 P12 AG's and were -77.9 ypg in P12 play LY (2nd worst). However TY's Utah squad is even stronger and make it to their 10th str bowl game.

OFFENSE			JERSEY # IN RED	2012 PROJECTED STARTING LINEUP			JERSEY # IN RED	DEFENSE		
QB 3 JORDAN WYNN JR.			6-2 208 PS#52, 5 st, 1329 (58%, 8-4) true, 10 st (inj), 2334 (62%, 17-10) '10, 4 st (inj), 727 (57%, 6-2) LY. 7 Travis Wilson	DE NA Sione Tupouata So.			6-4 255 PS#19JC, 96 Nat Fakahafu (6'3" 240 So) PS#123, 13 gm, 4 tkl true.	DT 32 STAR LOTULELEI SR.		
RB 15 JOHN WHITE SR.			5-8 186 PS#84JC, 13st, 1519 (4.8), 2nd Tm P12 LY. 33 Sean Fitzgerald (6'3" 200 Jr) PS#248 1 st, 13 gm rF, 6 gm ST LY.	DT 44 DAVE KRUGER JR.			6-4 325 PS#21JC, 3 st, 21 tkl, 10, 13 st, 44 tkl, 9 tkl, 1st P12, Morris	LB 49 TREVOR REILLY JR.		
PS#24JC IFS, 21 Harvey Langi (6'1" 228 So) PS#24, 11 gm, 70 (5.4) true, 36 Jarrell Oliver (5'8" 210 rF) PS#61.			6-2 206 PS#111, 14 st, 397 (14.7) 2Y 7 st, 263 (15.5) LY. 8 Anthony Denham (6'4" 222 Jr) PS#27JC, RS LY. FB Johnny Mahe (6'0" 245 Jr) PS#260JC, Kao Alo (5'9" 258 So), Karl Williams (6'0" 235 Jr) 1 st LY.	DE 99 JOE KRUGER JR.			6-7 275 PS#89, 4 tkl true, 7 st, 13 gm, 35 tkl, 3 sk, 2 qb LY. 93 Niasa Leota PS#80JC.	CB 26 RYAN LACY SR.		
WR 2 KENNETH SCOTT SO.			6-3 202 PS#59, 2 st, 141 (17.6) rF. 14 Reggie Dunn (5'10" 170 Sr) PS#76JC, 2 st, 70 (17.5) '10, 8 st, 211 (14.1), 26 KR (23.6) LY. 33 Sean Fitzgerald (6'3" 200 Jr) PS#248 1 st, 13 gm rF, 6 gm ST LY.	IFB Hunter Dimick PS#121.			IFB Moana Ofahengaupe PS#64, 65 Nick Hatch (6'3" 243 So), David Weisler (6'0" 273 Fr).	SLB 49 TREVOR REILLY JR.		
WR 10 DeVONTE CHRISTOPHER SR.			6-1 200 PS#27, 38 (19.0) rF, 8 st, 12 gm, 660 (16.9), 2nd Tm MW '10, 9 st, 663 (15.8) LY. 6 Dres Anderson (6'1" 175 So) PS#147, 4 st, 355 (15.4) rF. 85 Charles Henderson (5'9" 187 rF) PS#224.	MLB 7 VJ Fehoko So.			6-5 240 PS#101JC, 19 tkl, 5.5 tfl, 10 st, 6 st (SLB, 2 DE), 47 tkl, 9 tfl LY. 40 Jacoby Hale (6'0" 225 So) PS#152, 7 gm, 7 tkl rF, Reshawn Hooker PS#88, 55 Jason Whittingham (6'2" 235 rF) PS#327.	MLB 7 VJ Fehoko So.		
TE 81 KENDRICK MOEAI SR.			6-5 246 PS#192, 5 st, 77 (19.2) rF, 11 st, 225 (20.5) '10, 8 st, 84 (5.6) LY.	RLB 41 Jared Norris rF.			6-1 195 PS#121JC, 3 st, 29 tkl, 9 pd LY. 1 Keith McGill (6'3" 205 Sr) PS#18JC, 1 st, 5 gm (inj) LY. 28 Reggie Topps (5'11" 186 Sr) 1 st, 49 tkl 3Y ? (susp) '12, 25 Mike Honeycutt (5'10" 182 Jr), 14 tkl 2Y.	SS 4 BRIAN BLECHEN JR.		
CS 54 TEVITA STEVENS SR.			6-3 302 PS#248, 10 st rF, 13 st, 3rd Tm MW '10, 13 st LY. 64 Vincent Jones (6'3" 300 Jr) PS#101, 4 gm rF, 1 st, 6 gm LY. Hiva Lutui PS#67, Arrives in fall. LS 62 Patrick Greene (6'2" 227 Sr), 39 gm 3Y.	SS 4 BRIAN BLECHEN JR.			6-2 215 PS#92, 13 st, 67 tkl, 9 pd, HM MW true, 13 st, 78 tkl, 2 sk, 3 int, HM P12 LY.	FS 18 ERIC ROWE SO.		
RG 74 SAM BRENNER SR.			6-4 305 PS#241, 13 gm true, 1 st LT, 12 gm '10, 13 st LY. 68 Latu Heimuili (6'2" 315 Jr) PS#74DL, 12 gm, 7 tkl rF, 2 st, 7 gm (inj) LY. Siasia Aiono (6'2" 305 rF) PS#111, 73 Calvin Cusick (6'2" 290 rF).	CB 26 RYAN LACY SR.			6-1 200 PS#175, 13 st, 69 tkl, 1 sk, 10 pd, 3rd Tm Fr AA true, 33 Terrell Reese (6'0" 205 So) PS#161, 7 gm, 3 tkl rF, Alphonso Marsh PS#97, 24 Joseph Bryant (6'3" 198 rF) PS#286.	P 86 SEAN SELLWOOD SR.		
LG 72 MILES MASON SR.			6-3 312 PS#68JC, 11 st (10LG, 1LT), 12 gm (DNP bowl) here LY. 76 Jeremiah Tofaeono (6'2" 317 Jr) PS#184, 13 gm bkp OG rF, 1 st LG, 13 gm LY. Lio Lafaele (6'3" 335 rF) PS#231.	P 86 SEAN SELLWOOD SR.			6-3 205 rF, Alphonso Marsh PS#97, 24 Joseph Bryant (6'3" 198 rF) PS#286.	P 86 SEAN SELLWOOD SR.		
RT NA Carlos Lozano Jr.			6-6 385 PS#54JC, Arrives in fall. 78 Daniel Nielson (6'6" 317 Fr) PS#202.	P 86 SEAN SELLWOOD SR.			6-3 205 rF, Alphonso Marsh PS#97, 24 Joseph Bryant (6'3" 198 rF) PS#286.	P 86 SEAN SELLWOOD SR.		
LB NA Carlos Lozano Jr.			6-6 385 PS#54JC, Arrives in fall. 78 Daniel Nielson (6'6" 317 Fr) PS#202.	P 86 SEAN SELLWOOD SR.			6-3 205 rF, Alphonso Marsh PS#97, 24 Joseph Bryant (6'3" 198 rF) PS#286.	P 86 SEAN SELLWOOD SR.		
LT NA Marc Pouvave Jr.			6-4 336 PS#81JC, Arrives in fall. Jeremiah Poutasi (6'5" 322 Fr) PS#41.	P 86 SEAN SELLWOOD SR.			6-3 205 rF, Alphonso Marsh PS#97, 24 Joseph Bryant (6'3" 198 rF) PS#286.	P 86 SEAN SELLWOOD SR.		
79 Percy Taumoeaou (6'4" 315 Jr) PS#287, 16 gm bkp 2Y. Zach Lindsay PS#115, 17 Kala Friel (6'4" 305 rF).			6-2 190 Mission '09, 13 gm, 18-25 FG, L/48, 37-38 PAT, HMP12 true, 34 Nick Marsh (5'11" 200 Jr) PS#66, 65 KO, 17 TB, 3 punts (35.0) rF, 67 KO, 11 TB, 20 punts (40.5) LY. Cody Rogers (6'0" 173 Fr).	P 86 SEAN SELLWOOD SR.			6-3 205 rF, Alphonso Marsh PS#97, 24 Joseph Bryant (6'3" 198 rF) PS#286.	P 86 SEAN SELLWOOD SR.		

UTAH UTES

Salt Lake City, Utah
Weather (801) 575-7669

Phil's Homefield Edge-4.5 2012 Schedule Difficulty-#63

Date **Opponent**

UTAH	Opp	W	L	T
Aug. 30	N Colorado (Thur)	A		
Sep. 7	at Utah St (Fri)	A		
Sep. 15	BYU (HC)	A		
Sep. 22	at Arizona St	G		
Sep. 29				
Oct. 4	USC (Thur)	A		
Oct. 13	at UCLA	G		
Oct. 20	at Oregon St	A		
Oct. 27	California	A		
Nov. 3	Washington St	A		
Nov. 10	at Washington	A		
Nov. 17	Arizona	A		
Nov. 23	at Colorado (Fri)	G		
Nov. 30				

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