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## No more Manase!

Posted by Yndian - 2008/05/12 11:25

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<http://www.byucougars.com/Filing.jsp?ID=10790>

### Tonga Ruled Ineligible

by Jeff Reynolds, BYU Athletic Communications

PROVO, Utah (May 12, 2008) -- BYU head football coach Bronco Mendenhall today announced senior running back Manase Tonga has been ruled academically ineligible to compete during the 2008 season. Tonga has been suspended from the University and may re-apply for admission in October for Winter Semester, 2009. Tonga will redshirt the 2008 season.

"Not having Manase with us this coming season is disappointing and hurts our program; however, our program is designed so that the next player in line will step in and contribute at a high level," Mendenhall said. "I'm confident Manase will take the necessary steps to restore his eligibility and be able to return to the team next season."

The 6-foot, 238-pound native of San Mateo, Calif., saw action in 12 of the Cougars' 13 games last season and was credited with 88 carries for 305 yards and eight touchdowns.

Too bad. I have to think they saw this coming. With the buddy system and tutors and stuff, I don't see how this could have come as a surprise; they at least had to know it might be a possibility.

So who will take his place as fullback? From my understanding, Fui and Wayne Latu are more running backs; but I see this as a perfect opportunity for Fui to return to his pre-injury, run-people-over ways. Hopefully he'll step up. Are there any other realistic options? How's Fui's blocking?

Although we'll miss Manase this year, it'll be nice having him back for Max and Collie's senior season.

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## Re:No more Manase!

Posted by detmer4prez - 2008/05/12 11:34

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Dang. I am most worried about what this will do to blocking.

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## Re:No more Manase!

Posted by ProV1 - 2008/05/12 11:35

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Yndian wrote:

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So who will take his place as fullback? From my understanding, Fui and Wayne Latu are more running backs; but I see this as a perfect opportunity for Fui to return to his pre-injury, run-people-over ways. Hopefully he'll step up. Are there any other realistic options? How's Fui's blocking?

Although we'll miss Manase this year, it'll be nice having him back for Max and Collie's senior season.

1. If they use the I formation more maybe they'll let So'oto block, or even in goal line situations. With split backs, is a true fullback really necessary?
2. If he comes back.

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## Re:No more Manase!

Posted by Yndian - 2008/05/12 11:45

Rhiannon Potkey confirmed my suspicions:

My colleague Jay Drew and I made calls Friday and throughout the weekend checking on Tonga's status with a few sources inside BYU, and running backs coach Lance Reynolds confirmed Tonga was on shaky ground and unlikely to play in the fall - although Reynolds could not comment on the reasons why.

A few former teammates confirmed Tonga was having problems keeping his grades up, and said they were not able to get Tonga to call them back lately.

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## Re:No more Manase!

Posted by sjcougfan - 2008/05/12 11:51

Bummer, his run and pass blocking will be sorely missed. We'll definitely miss his receiving out of the backfield too.

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## Re:No more Manase!

Posted by Knucklehead - 2008/05/12 11:51

Wow, tough loss. Hopefully he buckles down on the academics and we have him back for 2009-10.

That 2009-10 team will have Seniors: Hall (QB), Tonga (FB), Pitta (TE), George (TE), and Collie (WR). Junior: Harvey Unga (RB). Sophomores: Chambers (WR), Jacobson (WR), Hafoka (WR), Diluigi (RB). Freshman: Timo (RB), Austin Holt (TE). If we keep the O-line developing (Matt Reynolds, RJ Willing, Levi Mack, Jason Speredon) that offensive unit will be special.

The defense should be senior laden with lots of experience too...Seniors: Jan Jorgenson (DL), Brett Denney (DL), Ian Dulan (DL), Tevita Hola (DL), Bernard Afutiti (DL), Shawn Doman (LB), Vic So'oto (LB), Matt Ah You (LB), Matt Bauman (LB), Brandon Howard (CB), Scott Johnson (DB). Juniors: Brandon Bradley (DB), G Pittman (DB), Grant Nelson (LB). Sophomores: Jadon Wagner (LB), Masi Tuitama (LB), Shiloah Te'o (S). Freshman: Craig Bills (S).

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## Re:No more Manase!

Posted by Knucklehead - 2008/05/12 11:53

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What the hell? I didn't put all those icons in the post.

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## Re:No more Manase!

Posted by MajorCougar - 2008/05/12 11:55

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Knucklehead wrote:

What the hell? I didn't put all those icons in the post.

It was pretty "bad"... ;) It just depends on where you place the parentheses...

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## Re:No more Manase!

Posted by BoiseBYU - 2008/05/12 11:58

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What the hell? I didn't put all those icons in the post.

Way to go knucklehead...:)

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## Re:No more Manase!

Posted by sjcougfan - 2008/05/12 12:00

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It looks like knucklehead is pretty excited about that 2009-2010 team.:laugh:

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## Re:No more Manase!

Posted by Conosticator - 2008/05/12 12:10

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That's what I was thinking, too. B)

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## Re:No more Manase!

Posted by CAFB\_04-12 - 2008/05/12 12:24

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Knucklehead wrote:

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Whoa. Sunglasses smiley overload.

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## Re:No more Manase!

Posted by Mars - 2008/05/12 12:26

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This is not good. In fact, it is very bad. Those dang Tonga brothers!! :angry:

Still, it does open the door up more for Fui, DiLuigi, Latu, and others, and it means that we don't lose Fui and Tonga the same year (if he comes back).

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## Re:No more Manase!

Posted by ibleedcougarblue - 2008/05/12 13:53

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I have no sympathy for this kid. He screwed up last year and caused some serious heartache for the first game and now he becomes ineligible over academics. Give me a freaking break. With all the tutors and help I received when I played, there is no way you should have this problem. Just a case of being lazy and not focusing on the goal of getting to the BCS! Somebody will step up and we will be way better off with out him. By showing a lack of desire to work on your academics which comes first, it could also cross onto the field and I don't want anybody who is not there to put us into the position of busting the BCS! With that said, Go Cougs!

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## Re:No more Manase!

Posted by treck - 2008/05/12 14:11

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This should also give Unga a few more goal line TDs.

Be Cool, Stay in School! I hope Manase gets his stuff figured out.

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## Re:No more Manase!

Posted by gordito - 2008/05/12 14:31

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ibleedcougarblue wrote:

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Who knows what's going on with him. Maybe he doesn't care or isn't focused or is lazy. Having trouble in school is often an indicator of other more serious issues and I don't just assume laziness. I don't think we'll be better off without him though. What solid blocking backs can fill in for him? Who else can step up and pick up the blitz so we're not relying on a backup QB halfway through the season.

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## Re:No more Manase!

Posted by NorthernCougar - 2008/05/12 14:46

ibleedcougarblue wrote:

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I don't agree. We have this idea that anyone is replacable and it isn't the case. We just plug someone in and they are better then the idiot who screwed up, but we sure are glad he is on the field when they aren't having problems.

He is very talented and his talent, experience and leadership on the field will be sorely missed. I think we MIGHT be better off without him but right now I think this is a huge blow to our offense. This is exactly why I won't buy into the BCS hype until I see it play out. One missing player for BYU can be the difference between a winning and losing season. We aren't USC, LSU, Florida, etc. where we just plug someone else into whatever spot we have an issue with and everything is fine.

The RB is a position that we can probably absorb easier then others, but it will still hurt.

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## Re:No more Manase!

Posted by Hengst - 2008/05/12 14:49

this is really unfortunate, he's a BIG part of the offense, pun intended ;-). He'll definitely be missed.

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## Re:No more Manase!

Posted by MajorCougar - 2008/05/12 15:11

At least we're finding out about this now, rather than 1 week before the 1st game. It'll give a chance for some of the lesser-played individuals to know they need to step up.

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## Re:No more Manase!

Posted by yutka - 2008/05/12 15:25

Sad News. Manase is a nice guy. Hope he gets his grades back on track quick... not just for Football, but for himself. It would be great to get him back on the field... but my real hope (and from the sound of it, the majority here) is that he gets his academics back on track for himself and his future.

I for one am glad that #1-- this happened EARLY, so it has much less impact on Sept. #2-- it isn't Illegal or embarrassing for BYU or the Alums. I had plenty of Friends and Family who had to do a semester or two at UVSC to fix a few BYU

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academic programs... Manase's situation is not unique and I am glad we aren't an SEC school where it would just get overlooked until we had some NCAA violations on our hands...

#3-- that Manase seems to be handling it well...

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## Re:No more Manase!

Posted by gordito - 2008/05/12 16:02

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yutka wrote:

#3-- that Manase seems to be handling it well...

Just curious--in what way is he handling it well? What have you heard? Potkey reported that teammates say he's not returning their calls, a small tidbit to be sure but it doesn't sound good.

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## Re:No more Manase!

Posted by ibleedcougarblue - 2008/05/12 16:06

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NORTHERN COUGAR,

Bronco's system is made so that when somebody goes down there is another person that is well suited to step in and step up to the plate. I guess we just have to agree to disagree on this one. Who knows, I could be wrong, but I really am frustrated that he couldn't stay eligible. They have a lot of help with tutors and that so they should stay on top of things. Maybe its the coaching staffs problem for not getting him the help he needed before it was too late. I don't know. Frustrating to say the least to see it happen to the same dude in consecutive seasons. Go Cougs!

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## Re:No more Manase!

Posted by ibleedcougarblue - 2008/05/12 16:37

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El gordito,

Quien sabe? I don't that's for sure but I am confident in Bronco's system and they way he prepares people for filling in. I am not saying its not going to affect us, but when two years in a row you have a kid becoming ineligible or suspended its frustrating. Especially since Manase knows he is a difference maker. I feel like he is letting down his team and the fans in general. Have some faith in Bronco's system. He hasn't had two 11 win seasons in a row for no reason. He will make sure somebody is prepared and ready to fill in. That's it. Sounds like everybody is freaking out here, hell, when I read that he was ineligible I was too, but I trust Bronco and the coaches to prepare accordingly. Go Cougs!

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## Re:No more Manase!

Posted by oompabluepaw05 - 2008/05/12 16:58

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First of all let me just say that I am as upset about this as anybody. That being said I am trying to stay up beat about things. Do you all remember what happened last year when Manase sat out the Arizona game? We had Unga unexpectedly come in and start what turned out to be the best freshmen running back season ever at BYU. Would that have happened had Manase been playing the Arizona game? maybe, maybe not. Now I dont expect the same thing to happen this year but maybe this will allow Latu and Diluigi the same opportunity to come in and show some unexpected talent! I just hope Fui, Harvie, and Wayne learn how to block before the season starts or Hall might be facing more fumbles and, knock on wood, injuries.:blush:

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## Re:No more Manase!

Posted by iShowsToGo.com - 2008/05/12 18:55

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It is too bad that he is out next season. Fui is my guess at who will be blocking the most. I don't know what happened to Manase. He is a good kid, just seems to be having some bad luck. He will pull it out. Hopefully return for his senior season in 2009. Go Cougars!

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**Re:No more Manase!**

Posted by declocoug - 2008/05/12 19:08

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Dang, that is a heavy blow to the offense. I'm also confident that this just gives someone a chance to prove himself though. Good luck getting things together and finishing school.

Does anyone know how the other Tonga is doing? is he back on the team? mission?

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**Re:No more Manase!**

Posted by Conosticator - 2008/05/12 19:30

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iShowsToGo.com wrote:

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He may be a good kid, but being declared academically ineligible isn't a question of good or bad luck. I hope he is able to turn things around and get back on track.

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**Re:No more Manase!**

Posted by NorthernCougar - 2008/05/12 22:32

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ibleedcougarblue wrote:

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Hear me out and I think we don't have to agree to disagree. I am with you 100% about Bronco's system, but if I understand what you are saying, talent, experience, and leadership don't matter. That is what is false here. Yes, someone can step in and hopefully we are asking "Manase who" after a game or two. But can you say the same thing if Hall or Collie go down? If that is the case then it doesn't matter who plays because they will all be equally successful. Anyone could start and we wouldn't care who played. I am being a little facetious here but the idea is the same. Manase is a huge talent that will be hard to replace. Hopefully someone does but I think this one will hurt...a lot.

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**Re:No more Manase!**

Posted by CAFB\_04-12 - 2008/05/13 12:40

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I tend to agree that Manase was a integral part of Unga's success last year. Nothing like having a freight train lead blocking for you. How good is Fui at lead blocking anyway? It seems like I heard he's slimmed down since last year.

Too bad about the academics. I almost failed out of BYU too. Of course, I was a freshman in pre-engineering. Maybe Manase needs to change his major like I did.

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## Re:No more Manase!

Posted by domanater - 2008/05/13 13:33

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Honestly, this may be good news. Providing that Fui is healthy and willing to block this year, it means we'll have back to back seasons with a sledgehammer type of back behind Harvey. Throw in Diluigi, Latu, and even Timo in the future and Tonga may well provide more dividends in two years rather than next. I don't know what kind of presence Tonga is as a leader, but there is time for others to fill those shoes.

I hold no ill will towards the kid and there's no doubt that he needs to get his grades in order to play again. He could get paid to play fullback in the nfl and nobody is going to pay him after sitting out a year, so he'll be back.

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## Re:No more Manase!

Posted by domanater - 2008/05/13 13:36

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There is very little lead blocking in the spread offense, aside from short yardage formations. This is probably just the chance that Fui needs to learn to be a NFL fullback; it's the only position he'd get paid to play, might as well learn it.

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## Re:No more Manase!

Posted by x\_rugger - 2008/05/13 14:41

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byu uses alot of lead blocking (fb and te), and losing both of the primary fb blockers from last years team (the other to graduation: td-joe) is a blow. i read that fui was cross training at fb already, so he will be able to get on the field more. there are also two other fb (bills, and taylor) who now have a chance as well. the problem is that manase was not only perfectly suited for the roll (read big and strong), he was flawless in pass blocking. the inability to pass block is what has kept a number of very talented rb/fb off the field, the most recent being hudson who is now playing in somewhere else.

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## Re:No more Manase!

Posted by rambo - 2008/05/13 15:30

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Maybe they could get Vic So'oto to switch back to offense and fill in. He did a little bit of lead blocking last year.

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## Re:No more Manase!

Posted by CrimsonCoug - 2008/05/13 16:02

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Fui was downright bad at blocking in 2006 and was OK at best in 2007 (but whenever he was on the field he almost always got the ball--which 1. demonstrates the lack of coaching confidence in his blocking and 2. demonstrates a portion of why he didn't have great numbers last year, high ankle sprain aside. It's tough to run when the OC is telegraphing the play to the defense).

Manase gone will hurt a lot. Losing Joe Semanoff (who was a FANTASTIC blocker) was already bad, losing both starting full backs will certainly hurt. I have no idea what's going on with him, but it sounds like he's got some personal stuff to work out. Something like this can put a lot of strain on a new marriage (married in LA late last August just before the stop

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sign ticket incident--not a good way to start off).  
I predict this costs us at least one spot in the preseason polls, at least initially.

I've never talked with Tonga, but I've watched him during and after games. I like his demeanor and his easy smile. I hope he can pull things together. I'm biased, but in the end I think his education will be a lot more important than his statline.

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## Re:No more Manase!

Posted by TimO - 2008/05/15 13:07

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I cant be bothered to check if it's already mentioned, but if not-

Mas (as the team calls him) is coming back in 2009 for sure. I talked with a member of the medical staff for the team yesterday for an hour about the shape of the team and things, he said Mas does NOT have to re-apply but is working on raising grades and will be throughout the next year, but doesn't have too high a mountain to climb, so i was glad to hear it.

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