



BOISE STATE FANUAL

Valuable advice on becoming
a better Boise State football fan

courtesy of OBNUG.com

PREFACE

Dear Bronco fans,

I have a lot of respect for Boise State's media and writers, but I friggin' hate the guys from OBNUG.

They are unfunny, their writing skills are elementary at best, and they represent everything that is wrong with this new era of blogging. I mean seriously. Who do these guys think they are? Rick Reilly? They most certainly are not. Reilly is a god compared to them.

In fact, just the other day, I was reading a Reilly column, and he was like, "Tiger Woods' win had all the suspense of a good floss" and I was like, "Yes! Flossing is boring! I can relate to that." What a good time. I wish more of our sports commentary was made available every two weeks in 500-word segments printed on glossy magazine paper. That's the way real news travels - on the wings of a maladjusted mail carrier. They are the true pillars of journalism, if you ask me.

These OBNUG guys just don't get it. No one wants to read their stupid opinions on Kellen Moore or whether or not I'm a good sideline reporter. I am a good sideline reporter. And I have the Idaho Press Club self-laminated name badge to prove it.

They think they're so smart with their game breakdowns and their "analysis." Well, I've got news for them. I can do analysis, too. Granted, I can't do it in a broadcast booth anymore because KTVB claims that doing so is detrimental to advertising dollars, but I can still dish the dirt with the best of them. OBNUG has not cornered the market on creativity. They have cornered the market on stupid story ideas, sophomoric humor, wordplay, and writing prefaces under assumed identities. They most certainly have not cornered the market on independent thought. That distinction would go to Jim Cramer because that dude gets it.

I guess what I'm trying to say is that I have no idea why the guys at OBNUG wanted me to write a preface for the biography they're writing about me, entitled *David Augusto: From Willow to News Anchor*. Wait ... what's that? They're not writing a biography about me? This is for an e-book on Boise State football?

Oh that's it. I am so out of here.



Never give up,
David Augusto



Now is a great time to be a Boise State football fan. And for many, that's reason enough to bumrush the Bronco bandwagon yelling "Shotgun!" and clutching license plate bingo.

Watching the Great BSU Awakening is equal parts thrilling and worrisome for long-standing Boise State fans. On the one hand, Boise State's fanbase is growing bigger everyday with a Hannah Montana-like fervor. On the other hand, these newbies aren't real fans, and if we're going to be making Disney-themed kiddie sitcom comparisons, I'd much prefer we use Lizzie McGuire or Even Stevens.

There is a huge, gaping, Idaho-Statesman-journalistic-integrity gap between the tried and true Boise State fans and the fans who think that pink jerseys are at all okay. The seasoned BSU fans can name every player on the roster, recite great games from years past, break down statistics and trends, and do whatever it takes to make sure they see every single game one way or another. This new breed of Bronco fan knows who Ian Johnson is and ... well, that's about it.

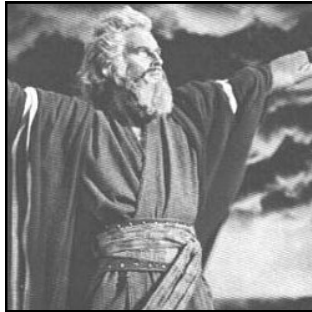
Fortunately, there's hope for this nubile sect of Bronco Nation. Over the next few pages, we've compiled enough of a BSU primer to turn the staunchest fair-weather fan into the most hardcore Bronco booster. There's plenty of good information for the diehards, too. It's an all-encompassing lesson on how to be a better Boise State football fan.

Let the learning begin.

Part A: No you may not start the wave

The gameday experience is one of the most popular ways that Boise State fence sitters come streaming into the pearly gates of Bronco Nation. In a word, going to a Boise State game is an epiphany. In two words, it is insanely distracting.

It probably depends on where you are in the fan pantheon for how you react to the gameday experience. People who go to games to socialize find the event a smashing success. I know this because they are sitting in front of me all the time. True fans of the team go through a far different gameday ritual typically involving unfounded worry, eating something grilled, arriving in the stadium an hour early, cheering every single good play, avoiding eye contact with Buster Bronco, and staying until the last few seconds tick off the clock and the final score is BSU 61, Fresno State 10.



See the difference?

Boise State can use the gameday experience to win over fans, but it is not winning over the right ones. It's kind of like the fire-and-brimstone sermons from decades ago. Sure the threat of eternity in hell won people over to Christianity, but these are the same people who will talk through a sermon every Sunday and not even be able to name the 12 apostles (for the record, they are Peter, James, John, and a few other dudes).

These new Bronco Nation immigrants can spend a week or two yukking it up in fairweather-ville (which is conveniently located right behind the giant Magic 93.1 blow up logo in the BSU parking lot), but there will come a time in their lives as Boise State fans when they will have to make the switch from uneducated hanger-on to full-blooded Bronco maniac. This is not at all unlike the conversion from David Augusto high school sports reporter to David Augusto volunteer Kellen Moore back masseuse.

The transition might seem like a giant step, especially if one's newfound fan comfort zone includes only cheering the first three touchdowns and leaving before halftime. But when you take a closer look, the gameday existence of the true fanatics is not at all an unreasonable goal. Socially unattractive, maybe, but not unreasonable.

“When you start loving the Broncos too much, you are halfway to loving them enough.”

not a result of the Broncos' talent or track record, for if we were basing our feelings solely on those factors, Bronco fans would be booking tickets to the Fiesta Bowl every season. The unfounded worry is more a result of one's sincere love obsession with the team. Worry is simply a natural extension of being completely into cheering for the Broncos.

When you love a team as much as Bronco fans love theirs, you can't help but look out for their best interests and play all the angles that could occur. If you didn't, then what would you do at work all week? Worry is not doubt. If anything, worry is loving the Broncos too much, and when you

10 FAN COMMANDMENTS

- I. Thou shalt not participate in the "Boise! ... State!" cheer in normal social situations.
- II. Thou shalt own the 2007 Fiesta Bowl on DVD.
- III. Remember Marty Tadman and keep him holy.
- IV. Honor Boise State's policy on closed practices.
- V. Thou shalt not purchase pink jerseys.
- VI. Thou shalt have a good understanding of Jared Zabransky before discussing his career in public.
- VII. Thou shalt punch Trev Alberts in the face whenever thou seeth him.
- VIII. Thou shalt watch the game and not talk to thy neighbor about *the Hills*.
- IX. Thou shalt not use the Statesman as thine only source for Bronco news.
- X. Thou shalt not waffle, nor shalt thee jump on bandwagons.

start loving the Broncos too much, you are halfway to loving them enough.

2. Eating something grilled.

True Bronco fans don't let their unfounded worry get in the way of good tailgate food. They use eating to suppress the anxiety and Carl's Jr. to escape this cruel world.

Just because you have a near-spiritual connection to a football team doesn't mean that you have to miss out on the pregame festivities. Quite the contrary, the pregame festivities are what help get you excited for the game, help calm your nerves, and let you connect with fellow Bronco fans in a greasy, kraut-smelling environment. Eat, drink, and be merry, for in a few minutes it will be an hour and a half before kickoff and you'll need to be inside the stadium finding typos in the gameday program and overthinking the kickers practicing.

3. Arriving in the stadium an hour early.

This one's pretty self-explanatory. Real Boise State fans don't loiter in the parking lot when there is any chance at all of them seeing their team on the field, even if the team is only doing calisthenics and going half-speed through cone drills. YEEEEAAAAAAHHH!! CONE DRILLS!!!!

AN IDIOT'S GUIDE TO ... BOISE STATE MEDIA COVERAGE



Want to know every detail about your favorite college football team? Too bad. This is Idaho.

Instead of the constant coverage you crave, you will get broad, blanket reports and every-so-often updates when the media gets around to doing it, and you'll like it. You'll love it. And if you don't, you'll start your own blog because that sort of thing pays well.

But not all Boise State news is woefully inadequate. Some of it is borderline acceptable. Just not the majority of these places:

Idaho Statesman: The *Statesman* is the default hometown paper of BSU football, but only because the Boise Weekly refuses to take my interview requests seriously. The *Statesman* does just enough to justify its existence, and not a bit more. Brian Murphy and Chadd Cripe handle the news and irregular blogging. Mike Prater, Vandal apologist, does something that no one's really sure of. And there's a Kellen Moore webpage in case anyone ever accuses the paper of not trying.

KTVB channel 7: Boise's biggest news station provides the TV broadcast of Bronco games, and thank goodness six of them are on ESPN this year. Too bad broadcast coverage is not their strong suit. Apart from the comedy of errors in the booth, KTVB also has a website that aims for the stars, misses, and compromises by hanging out at Mir, playing *canasta* and drinking Tang with sketchy Russian cosmonauts.

Idaho Press-Tribune: The *IPT* has something going for it that no other nearby newspaper does: Dave Southorn. Unfortunately Dave's presence is overwhelmed by Web 1.0 design work and Phil Dailey's hang-ups on reminding everyone he picked LaTech as a sleeper in 2008.

1350 KTIK: The Caves and Prater afternoon show is three hours of your life you will never get back.

580 KIDO: Bronco Nation's new station has the radio play-by-play of Bronco football and basketball. Handy if you live in a bomb shelter or don't own a TV, I guess.

Dustin Lapray: The *Magic Valley Times-News* reporter burst onto the scene with vividly descriptive fall practice reports much to the delight of people with big vocabularies. Also of note, he wears bandanas.

Bronco Country: The preeminent online forum for Boise State sports, Bronco Country is a no-holds-barred shouting match of rumor, speculation, commentary, and poor grammar. It's a lot like a high school newspaper, come to think of it.

Blogsphere: Pretty much the Garden of Eden for Boise State news, except everyone's wearing clothes.

4. Cheering every single good play.

There are two parts to this one. First, you have to be able to tell what a good play is. This would probably exclude the Boise State football fans who are not even football fans. Sorry. I imagine there's a wedding expo going on somewhere.

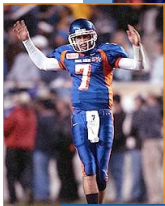
Second, you have to be paying attention to the game. This is rather important in the grand scheme of Bronco fandom. Games are not meant to be redneck versions of "The View." They are experiences that are meant to be absorbed and overthought down to the tiniest of details. We

BSU QUARTERBACKS AT-A-GLANCE



Tony Hilde, 1993-1996

Greatest virtue: That one thing he did really well that I can't remember because it's been too long
Where you can find him now: alumni mixers w/ free food



Bart Hendricks, 1998-2000

Greatest virtue: Charisma
Where you can find him now: celebrity blogging

B.J. Rhode, 2003

Greatest virtue: being Toni Kukoc to Dinwiddie's Jordan
Where you can find him now: Boise Burn



Ryan Dinwiddie, 2001-2003

Greatest virtue: Being a complete quarterback
Where you can find him now: a CFL bench



Jared Zabransky, 2004-2006

Greatest virtue: Self-assurance
Where you can find him now: P.F. Chang's

Taylor Tharp, 2007

Greatest virtue: Playing up to bad competition
Where you can find him now: Colorado's pro day



Bush Hamdan, Five minutes vs. Fresno in 2008

Greatest virtue: Being a good teammate
Where you can find him now: Ian Johnson's futon

Kellen Moore, 2008-2011

Greatest virtue: Human perfection
Where you can find him now: Studying gamefilm from the future

Truth is, you'll never really know what you missed when you leave early, and that is more than an ardent Bronco fan can take.

Part 2: Kellen Moore is lefthanded and other things you should probably know

Fact: You will never be able to know all there is to know about the Broncos. Also fact: This shouldn't keep you from trying.

As a Bronco fan, you are expected to know more about the Boise State football team than the average fan of another team would know about the Broncos. For instance, a USC Trojan fan knows that Boise State beat Oklahoma in the Fiesta Bowl, and they know that Ian Johnson was the team's best player for the past few years (we won't get muddled with the details at this point).

cheer every single good play because every single good play deserves cheering. Anybody can do Simon Says on touchdowns and turnovers and robot clap and robot high five as if they actually knew what they were cheering. It takes a true fan to appreciate a five-yard gain on first down, a forced incomplection, or an angled punt. But don't feel bad if you're not there yet. Neither is Robb Akey.

5. Avoiding eye contact with Buster Bronco.

Rumor has it, he's like the statue from Indiana Jones. You look into his eyes, and you're toast, man.

6. Staying until the end.

Boise State games do not end at halftime. They end when the WAC schedule is announced. (Rimshot!) Seriously though, non-committed Bronco fans have a habit of taking off when the game is in doubt or when the weather gets too cold or when their gameday plans interfere with their movie plans. It's like an L.A. crowd except with more camouflage and people are leaving for much less cool reasons.

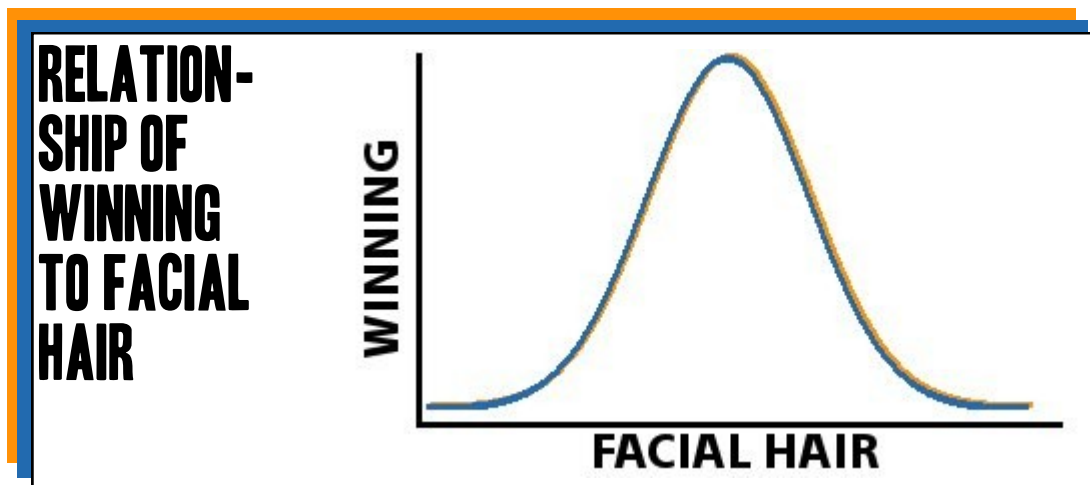
Bronco fans should want to see every last second of the game. This is the same reason why they show up an hour before kick-off. They don't want to miss anything. If you take off early, you could miss Drew Hawkins in garbage time throwing late to covered receivers or Mike Atkinson returning a punt.

Sadly, this is as much as many Bronco fans know about their team.

Not cool. Being a Bronco fan should necessitate an encyclopedic knowledge of everything that has to do with the Broncos. You should want to know Kellen Moore's birthday, George Iloka's shoe size, and how Titus Young likes his macroeconomics papers written. No one ever said being a fan was easy. It's actually quite hard, but you can at least take solace in the fact that you don't have to be memorizing stats on Tom Brandstater.

One of the most important things you can learn is the Boise State roster. I cannot tell you how many times I've been watching a game and someone has turned to me and asked, "Who's that No. 23 safety guy? He's decent." Actually, I can tell you how many times because I keep a notebook of all the offenses just in case I ever get up the courage to tell a bunch of people off all at once. Watch your back, old man who didn't recognize Ian Johnson.

Learning the names of 53 kids shouldn't be that hard. After all, people memorize every single contestant on American Idol, so it's obviously possible to stash away scores of other names, too. You can't look and act like a real Boise State fan if you don't know who you're rooting for. Granted, this doesn't keep Utah State fans from rooting for Utah State, but the point stands nonetheless.



Once you've mastered the roster, try learning some Boise State history that goes above and beyond the Fiesta Bowl. Or bone up on random Tom Scott malapropisms to impress your friends. They say life is a constant learning experience. Well, since Boise State football is your new life, you better get started on the learning part.

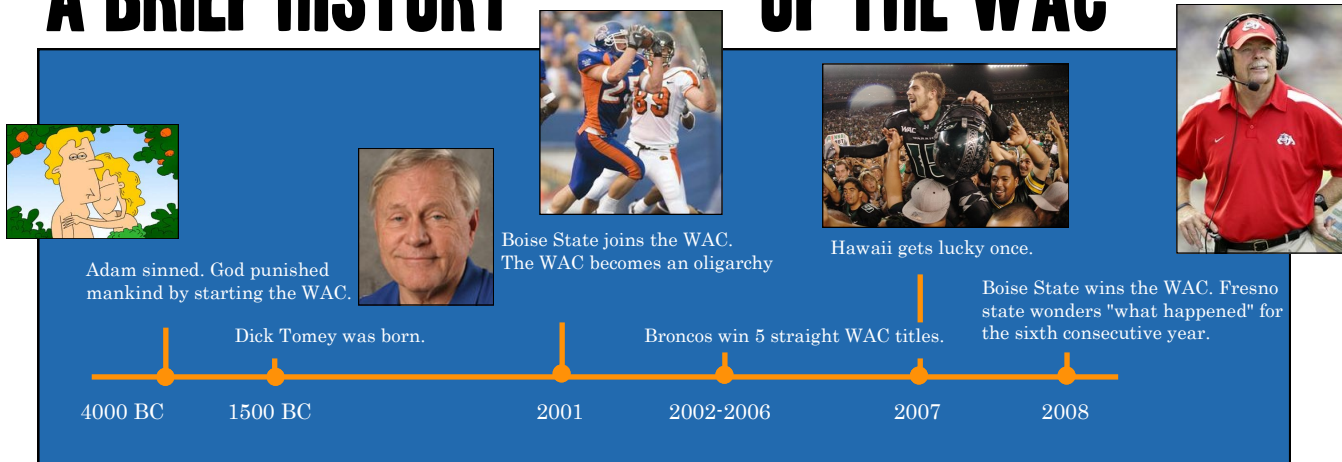
Act III: Be a fan from the inside out, kind of like a Gusher

Nobody likes a shameless self-promoter, which does not at all explain how Jared Zabransky got a commercial gig for Jackson's food stores. In Bronco Nation, however, these people are really loathed because being a Bronco fan is not about how much face paint you can cake on your mug, it is about keeping locks of Kellen Moore's hair in a vial around your neck. Obviously. Get with the times.

If you've been to Bronco games before, you know the type of fan that puts himself before the team. His allegiance to the Broncos is one of patent self-satisfaction, not unlike the book *Sense and Sensibility* assuming *Sense and Sensibility* is about a guy who drives a giant blue and orange motorhome and likes to tell people how he once gave Brock Forsey a car loan. I don't know. I've never read it.

Bronco fans should not be rooting for the team in order to fit in or be seen. Just because it works in the Jonas Brothers fan club doesn't mean it'll work on the blue turf. True Bronco fans could care less whether or not their entire office building knows about their secret Marty Tadman shrine in the bottom drawer of their desk. We are fans because we love the Broncos, not because we love our-

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE WAC



selves. This probably explains our tenuous relationship with Zabransky.

How can newbies gain the same self-effacing loyalty that the diehards have already achieved? First off, lose the KIDO car magnet. Then follow these rules.

- Never carry on a conversation about the Broncos with people who couldn't care less what you think about the Broncos. There's no need to impress these people with knowledge about the Broncos. They obviously don't have souls, so what's the point?
- Be willing to watch a game by yourself. They say that character is what you're like when no one's looking. These same people also said that Fresno State would win the WAC last year, so I don't know what to tell you. The point being that if you can watch a game by yourself, then you're obviously not invested in the Broncos for selfish reasons. You're a good man, a good man with no one to high five.
- Take personal pride in your team by standing up for them in every situation. Got a co-worker who's from Moscow? Then you should probably find a different job because Wendy's is unbecoming of you. But if you can't escape the Vandal hate, then at least be ballsy enough to put the guy in his place. It's one thing to be a Bronco fan when everyone around you is a Bronco fan. It's another thing entirely to do so when you're surrounded by Vandal stench and Jr. bacon cheeseburgers.
- Keep secrets from your Bronco friends. Your every BSU-related action doesn't have to be broadcast to the entire Bronco Nation. Play some things close to the vest as if you're embarrassed by them. Case in point: I wear a full Boise State outfit underneath my work clothes on game days. And no one knows it. Except for everyone who's reading this. Hopefully not including my boss.

There are several more factors that play a role in building your Bronco character before boasting about your Bronco loyalty. In addition to the above list, there's also rewatching the Fiesta Bowl, finding the visage of Bronco football players in your bag of potato chips, crying, reading OBNUG, and sending fan/hate mail to Brian Murphy. Master these and you'll be allowed to open your mouth again among Bronco fans without the threat of being shouted down by the "Whose House" guy.

Chapter 4: Owning a car flag does not make you a better person

And it does not make you cool, no matter what Walgreen's told you.

Some Bronco fans seem to think that the mere collection of Bronco paraphernalia warrants them a seat at the right hand of Coach Pete. If this were the case, Bronco Nation would be a mob of bankrupt hoarders with a lifetime supply of BSU-themed chocolate bars. Come to think of it, I know a couple of guys and gals like this.

The uptick in Bronco Nation attendance has certainly made the trend profitable. You can blame Boise State's success on the advent of the car flag, pink Bronco jerseys, the Blue Turf Towel guy, and many other items of curio. But when it gets right down to it, does any of this excess really make you a better fan?

Of course not. It makes you look a less successful version of Matthew McConaughey.

The worst part is when these collector fans flaunt their merchandise in front of you as if it somehow makes them a better person, and yet, when it is time to kickoff, they are still trying to figure out

PEOPLE YOU ARE REQUIRED TO HATE

which one is Marty Tadman and why Houston Nutt looks so skinny on the sidelines. These people replace Boise State knowledge with Boise State knick knacks. And they have a posse of like-minded purchasers to tell them that it's all okay so long as your dog has a blue and orange knit sweater.

			
<p><u>Robb Akey</u> Vandal head coach</p>	<p><u>Colin Kaepernick</u> Nevada quarterback</p>	<p><u>Whoever's responsible for the BCS</u></p>	<p><u>Graham Watson</u> ESPN blogger</p>
<p>Why: I mean, look at him. And he coaches the Vandals.</p>	<p>Why: He's incredibly talented for someone still going through puberty.</p>	<p>Why: If you don't hate them, then the terrorists will win.</p>	<p>Why: You could do her job better than she can.</p>

It's not, though. Acceptance into Bronco Nation does not depend on how

much you own. BroncoShop cash is not the gatekeeper into BSU fandom. The true fans in Bronco Nation could care less whether or not your grill cover is blue-and-orange gaudy. We just want you to know how to root for the team that we all love rooting for.

And therein lies the crux of the issue: A complete Boise State football fan loves the Broncos more than they love the experience of loving the Broncos. Take away a true Bronco fan's NCAA-licensed possessions, and you still have a fervent Bronco fan. All that extra stuff is more a result of a debilitating compulsion to purchase unnecessary trinkets than it is a desire to fit in.

“Boise State games do not end at halftime. They end when the WAC schedule is announced. (Rimshot!)”

If you were to do the same to a fairweather Bronco supporter, though, that person would have no idea what to do with himself. "No mardi gras beads?" this person might ask. "Then how am I supposed to get my party on?"

Being a fan of Boise State athletics is a privilege, not a right. You are not born into it, like Suri Cruise was born into Scientology. You cannot pay your way into it, like Brian Murphy pays his way into the China Blue nightclub. You have to earn your way into it, like, um, Andrew Woodruff into a pair of skinny jeans?

The real Boise State fans all have a story of how they came to the team. I owe my Boise State fandom to Tony Hilde. It was his heroics during the Broncos' 1-AA heyday that first got me hooked on the program, and the blame for every bad face-painting decision since then lies squarely on his shoulders (except for the half-and-half orange-and-blue that I smeared into a disgusting brown; that one's on me).

Being a Bronco fan is like rooting for all that is good and holy in the world — like rooting for justice and mercy to rain down from heaven and give the world a hug. Rooting for BSU just feels right.

Of course, philanthropy is not why tens of thousands of people do it. Bronco Nation exists because of the WAC championships, the Brock Forseys, and the fact that there is nothing else to do in Idaho except live vicariously through a football team. The touchy-feelies are secondary. Whatever one's motivation for following the Blue and Orange, the fact remains that BSU football is a vibrant, growing community that grows exponentially larger every day in ways both good and bad.

Winning has created a monster ... and a Stueckle Sky Club.

Anytime you add membership to your numbers, the solidarity and uniformity of tradition and ritual will be diluted. I tried to make this same argument when my brother was born. The expansion of the Bronco fan base is great for the bottom line and for marketability, but it doesn't do a whole lot to improve the collective respectability of the overall group.

Don't get me wrong. I love Boise State fans in all shapes and sizes (all shapes and sizes sponsored by the Bronco Stadium churro). The more Bronco fans nationwide, the better it is for the team.

But there is no mistaking the clear difference between the non-committed BSU fan and the sold-out BSU fanatic. And Bronco Nation could always use more fanatics.

HOW TO TALK ABOUT THE FIESTA BOWL WITHOUT SOUNDING LIKE A MORON

Stop me if you've heard this one: "Oh man, the Fiesta Bowl! That Jared Zabransky guy is clutch! Beer me a Snapple!"

Tragically and frequently, Boise State fans confuse the details of the Broncos' Fiesta Bowl upset with the details of some fantasmical dream that never really happened but made them feel all warm and tingly when they woke up.

Let me set the record straight: Jared Zabransky is not clutch. He nearly lost the game for the Broncos, and the heroics at the end of regulation and overtime were less his doing and more the doing of higher powers and Coach Pete (redundant). Yes, Zabransky played well for long portions of the game. But in crunch time, it was his mistakes that almost cost the Broncos the chance for the greatest win in the history of college football.

Zabransky's perpetuated untruths are the biggest obstacle to a learned discussion about the F-Bowl. The others? Saying "bro" too much, not remembering that Adrian Peterson played for Oklahoma at the time, awkward high-fives, getting misty-eyed, breakout out the wallet photos, and being belligerent about it.

Avoid these pratfalls, and you'll be well on your way to not sounding like a moron, that is, unless you already are a moron, in which case this won't help you.



So go ahead and cheer that three-yard gain on second and five.

Feel free to notice and appreciate the substitution packages and personnel changes on both sides of the ball.

Stop and stare at John Gott's beard and wonder aloud if you've ever seen anything so beautiful.

And at the end of the day, find peace and satisfaction in knowing that you are rooting for the best football team in the world, surrounded by the best fans in the world, and having the best time of your life. And ignore David Augusto in your closet. He heard you have license plate bingo.

THE END