



Tuesday, June 17, 2008

By David "Sumoflam" Kravetz

<http://www.sumoflam.biz>

Lexington, Kentucky

AirBooneExpress@photofabrications.com



Visit Aaron's website and journal @ www.aaronboone.com

Visit the AFL Website @ www.arenafootball.com

Visit the Blaze Website @ www.utahblaze.com

Join Blaze Nation @ www.blazenation.com

Archives of the AirBoone Express are available on Aaron's website and 2008 archives are also available in the Blaze Nation Forum

In this edition:

- Photo shot of Aaron's career season best 20th TD
- Blaze still in waiting game for a playoff berth
- Boone drops to #3 in the league in receptions and #9 in yards after bye week
- AirBoone #20 in AFL all-time season receptions



AirBoone flies up the end zone wall after catching his 20th TD

AirBoone scores his career best 20th TD

In the game against the Los Angeles Avengers on June 9th, Aaron Boone caught his career best 20th TD for the season. This TD was a booming 45 yard catch as Aaron was wide open, He was moving so quickly in the catch that he continued forward and had to jump up the wall in the end zone (see photo above). The catch matched his career longest TD reception from earlier in the season against Orlando.



Will Boone and the Blaze be celebrating a playoff spot?

Utah Blaze still in the playoff hunt

Going into last Friday, the Utah Blaze only needed a Grand Rapids or Colorado loss to assure a spot in the 2008 AFL playoffs. But, the Rampage, like the Blaze, had a bye last week and Colorado came out swinging last night against the Arizona Rattlers and defeated them 62-55 keeping their own hopes for a playoff spot alive. The Blaze will have three chances this weekend and by the time they play Arizona at 10 PM EST they may already know what they have to do. They can hope that hapless Kansas City defeats the Crush (6/21 @ 8 PM) or count on New Orleans to get the VooDoo dolls out and defeat Grand Rapids (6/21 @ 7 PM). They could enter their game already in the playoffs and possibly have hope that a win at Arizona on Saturday could maybe even net them a home field opportunity for the first game of the playoffs. It should be an interesting weekend.



Boone tries to avoid a tackle against LA Avenger Lawson last week

AirBoone drops to 3rd in receptions and 9th in yardage

After the bye weekend for the Blaze, Aaron Boone dropped to 3rd in the league in receptions with 128, only 4 behind league leader Derek Lee from Columbus. He still has an opportunity to catch them if he has a big night on Saturday. AirBoone also dropped to 9th in total yards. He only needs 72 more yards receiving to get to 1500 on the season. Teammate Huey Whittaker most likely will break the 1500 mark on the season. Huey has had a fabulous career season this year, setting all of his career marks with 122 receptions, 1485 yards and 39 TDs (31 receiving). The other member of the "Big Three" receivers, J.J. McKelvey, has also broken all of his career marks and has 110 catches for 1386 yards and 36 touchdowns. This threesome has been the most prolific group of receivers in AFL history.



Boone 20th on AFL All-Time Season Reception list

AirBoone dropped two notches in the all-time list due to last week's bye, but he will be able to battle back up the ranks this weekend. Currently Aaron only needs 7 catches to make it into the all-time top 10. Former Blaze star Siaha Burley broke the all-time single season record last year with 166 catches. Though very unlikely to get in the top 5, Boone, Derek Lee (Columbus) and Chris Jackson (Philadelphia; currently also #4 on the list from 2007) all could easily break into the top ten this weekend.

The Blaze travel to Arizona on June 21 for their final regular season game against the playoff qualified Rattlers. The game will be broadcast live at 10 PM EST on The FAN 1320 AM (or at www.thefansports.com).

OFF THE NET...with Aaron Boone

In case you missed it last week, Aaron was interviewed by David Levy for an arenafootball.com article prior to their Monday night ESPN game. Called "Off the Net", each week David Levy covers a player who will be in that week's Monday night game. Here is the article from Jun 9, 2008:

OFF THE NET...with AARON BOONE

ArenaFootball.com spoke with Utah WR Aaron Boone about, among other things, the Blaze's unlikely battle for the playoffs and his pro baseball namesake.

By Andrew Levy – Aaron Boone is in his third season in the AFL, his second with Utah. Boone spent time with Philadelphia and Kansas City before joining the Blaze. He was named to the AFL All-Rookie team in 2006. This season, Boone ranks second in the league in receptions with 123. He ranks ninth in receiving yards with 1,346 and is one of three Utah receivers in the top eleven

in that category (the others are Huey Whittaker and J.J. McKelvey). Boone has scored 19 touchdowns and his team is currently in position to make the playoffs, having gone 4-1 since opening the season with nine straight losses.

What was going through your head when your team started so poorly and was 0-9?

You could say we started out so bad...Well you know, the weird thing about it, I've been on a few losing teams over the years and the good thing about us, is we never just kind of threw in the towel and became individuals. We all stayed together and we looked for the positives in each game, rather than dwelling on the negatives. And I think losing teams, what they do is they dwell on the negative, they start pointing fingers. We never got to that point. We always stayed positive, we looked at what we were doing well, and we knew we were going to get some breaks eventually. And I mean, honestly, in all those games I don't know if we got any breaks. We knew the tide was going to turn, so I think that was the biggest thing. We stayed together and we dwelled on the positives instead of the negatives, and just waited for the tide to turn.

Have you ever been a part of a losing streak of that magnitude?

No, I've never been a part, fortunately. It was a long, miserable nine weeks, you know? We feel like the ball's rolling now. The biggest thing was just getting that monkey off our back, getting that first win. Every week though, we honestly thought we were going to win, and I think that's the difference between a team that's going to turn it around and a team that's not. We went out like we were going to win every week, regardless of the opponent. And finally we did, and finally we got it going.

During that stretch, did you ever think you'd be in position to make the playoffs at this point in the season?

You know, our chances got smaller and smaller. I remember every week, 'Alright, it's Week 3 this week, we just got to get that win, get going so we can make the playoffs.' Then we got to the point with five losses and then seven losses. And then nine losses; I remember coach saying, 'You know, somehow, statistically there's still a way if we could get things going and win some games, we could make the playoffs.' And we all kind of looked at each other, 'At 0-9?' And that's kind of what's unfolding right now, if we could finish the deal. A comeback doesn't mean anything unless we finish it.

Having gone through the season that your team has, how big is it to be playing on Monday night on national television? [Utah hosts the Los Angeles Avengers Monday night at 10:00 pm ET on ESPN2.]

We're very excited for it. We're focused more than ever. We know that this is the most important game of the season, and how better to play that game than on a national televised game, on a Monday night, with everyone watching? It's a perfect stage for what we need to do. We know L.A. is going to come out and try to spoil that, but for us as a team, it's the perfect setup. Now we need to go out and execute. So, you know, we're being more focused than ever. We know it's a must-win game. It's the most important game of the season for us.

With the team playing out West and having such a poor start, perhaps not many fans have been able to see Joe Germaine play. How good has Joe Germaine been this season?

Joe Germaine has been the one constant. Everyone always questioned, especially after Siaha Burley left, how was the offense going to perform? I was one of the few returners offensively and everyone questioned how it's going to be. I kind of put it in perspective as the Patriots – you know, they can funnel in different receivers, but they got their Tom Brady, they

got their coach Bill Belichick, and they're going to win, they're going to put up numbers. And I feel the same with Joe Germaine and Coach [Danny] White. They've been together Joe Germaine's entire career. They know each other, they know what each other does well, and Joe goes out there and performs. He's been consistent week in and week out, despite losses, despite off field things. He's our captain, he's a guy we kind of rally around, and we know he'll be that constant guy. He's never up high and he's never down low – he's a constant and I think that's what you need in a quarterback.

Three Utah wide receivers rank in the top six in receiving yards this season, including you. Does your team have the best group of receivers in the AFL?

You know, I read from a few weeks ago, about another receiving core that states they were the best, etc. I'm not going to go out on a limb and run my mouth, but we've been kind of nicknamed out here in Utah, 'The Big Three.' We're the West Coast version of 'The Big Three' I guess. You know, I've never been on a receiving core where I'm the smallest receiver. I'm normally the biggest. You know, I'm 6'3", 210 and I'm the smallest receiver of the three. I think that's one of the bright spots. We've been able to go out there, and teams have a hard time matching up against us because we're three big targets. Maybe one game they'll try to shut down one guy, but the other two will step up. Consistently throughout the season, one of us three has been able to step up every week and make things happen. I think that's what's added to our success as a unit, as a receiver core, we know we got each other's back. If their gameplan is to shut down one guy, the other two are going to step up and make plans. It's just the way it's been all season.

Can you talk about the website, aaronboone.com?

It was someone else that started it. It needs to be updated and if you make mention of it, then I'll get it updated here in the next day. But, that was actually made way back when I was in college. Because I moved around so much, it was an easy way for people to kind of follow my career. I grew up out in Utah, then I went to college in Kentucky and a lot of my games weren't on TV out here, so it was a way for people to kind of follow. It would have journal entries that I would write and whatever articles were written in newspapers, and pictures. And then from there, I went to the Cowboys and the Bears, the Panthers and Europe, and then Arena – Philadelphia, Kansas City and now Utah. I mean, it's a lot of places to go, but I make friends in each place I go, and it was just an easy access for friends and family to be able to kind of be able to follow my career. It just makes it kind of easier.

Do people ever confuse you with the baseball player Aaron Boone?

Yeah, I've definitely got it. I played college at Kentucky and it was right when he was played just 60 miles away in Cincinnati. So, yeah, I definitely got that a lot. I always joked, 'Yeah, I'm definitely not him. You see the car I drive compared to what he has?' They always ask me if I'm part of the Boone family from baseball. I'm like, 'I wish I had that kind of money, but no, I'm not.'

So are you happy he's retired now? Maybe that will end some of the confusion.

I think he's probably done, yeah.

On your site, it says you were in the movie *We Are Marshall*. What was that experience like?

Yeah, I had a chance to go down there. That was actually when I was with Kansas City. I went down there with Chris Sanders, quarterback, and we went down there and I had a blast. It was fun. I always wondered just how that kind of stuff works, how movies and all that functions. It was really cool just to experience it more than anything.

Was it strictly just a playing role? No speaking parts?

Yeah, I was actually, if you watch the credits, I'm considered a stunt man. There was only about eight of us that are actual stunt men because I did a couple high-risk stunts. At the time, I wasn't under contract with any team because I was a free agent. [Laughing] So I kind of put myself at risk. But, it was cool. I'm glad I did it.

Los Angeles WR Kevin Ingram was in *Invincible* and he had a speaking line. So is it safe to say that you're not on the Kevin Ingram acting level yet because you have yet to have a line in a movie?

No, I'm still not.

Still waiting on that one line huh?

[Laughing] You're right, I'm waiting on it. I tried to, in all group scenes, I tried to yell or something where you'd hear my voice, but it didn't work.

Maybe it's better you didn't have a line. Ingram said he never hears the end of it. People are always giving him a hard time and repeating his one line.

Speaking of movies...which actor would play you in a movie about your life?

A movie about my life, huh? I like, let's see, Brad Pitt...That's a really good question. Yeah, I'd throw Brad Pitt in there. Tell him to hit the weights for a couple months. [Laughing]

I understand you're from a large, football playing family?

I think it's kind of cool...My brother is actually on league exempt, he plays for the Raiders. And I have another brother who is also in the NFL, which is kind of unique. He's with the Saints. I'm hoping there's a chance we could one day all be back together, which would be really cool. They're both linemen, 6'6", 300 pound linemen.

There are five boys, five girls [in my family]. Like I said, both my other brothers played professional and my sister played college basketball and volleyball. I'm the runt. My sisters are all six feet or taller, my brothers are all 6'5" and taller, 300 pounds. So I don't know how I became a receiver, but I'm trying to make the most of it.

OFF THE NET is a weekly column where ArenaFootball.com sits down with a featured player or coach in the upcoming ESPN2 Game of the Week. The interview style column covers a variety of topics - both on and off the field - to give the fans a closer look at some of the league's top players.

Boone-o-Meter Stats for 2008 thru June 9:

After 15 games

Passes caught: 128 (currently #3 in AFL) (Career Season High)

-Arizona at Utah 7

-Utah at Cleveland 10

- Utah at Orlando 12
- Columbus at Utah 10
- Georgia at Utah 14* (AFL Career High)
- Utah at Philadelphia 6
- Utah at Los Angeles 8
- San Jose at Utah 8
- Utah at New Orleans 5
- Kansas City at Utah 5
- Colorado at Utah 6
- Utah at San Jose 13
- Chicago at Utah 10
- Utah at Grand Rapids 9
- Los Angeles at Utah 5

Total Yards: 1424 (currently #9 in AFL) (Career Season High)

- Arizona at Utah 50
- Utah at Cleveland 127
- Utah at Orlando 117
- Columbus at Utah 77
- Georgia at Utah 170* (AFL Career High)
- Utah at Philadelphia 75
- Utah at Los Angeles 78
- San Jose at Utah 55
- Utah at New Orleans 79
- Kansas City at Utah 110
- Colorado at Utah 79
- Utah at San Jose 143
- Chicago at Utah 88
- Utah at Grand Rapids 97
- Los Angeles at Utah 78

Longest reception: Mar. 15, 2008 45 yd reception in 3Q vs. Orlando*

-This is his longest AFL career reception

June 9, 2008 45 yd reception in 3Q vs. Los Angeles

Touchdowns: 20 (Career Season best)

- Arizona at Utah, Germaine 8 yd pass to Boone (2Q)
- Utah at Cleveland, Germaine 14 yd pass to Boone (1Q)
- Utah at Cleveland, Germaine 26 yd pass to Boone (2Q)
- Utah at Orlando, Germaine 45 yd pass to Boone (3Q)
- Utah at Orlando, Germaine 5 yd pass to Boone (4Q)
- Columbus at Utah, Germaine 7 yd pass to Boone (2Q)

- Georgia at Utah, Germaine 9 yd pass to Boone (1Q)
- Georgia at Utah, Germaine 11 yd pass to Boone (4Q)
- Utah at Philadelphia, Germaine 20 yd pass to Boone (2Q)
- Utah at Los Angeles, Germaine 10 yd pass to Boone (2Q)
- Utah at Los Angeles, Germaine 8 yd pass to Boone (4Q)
- San Jose at Utah, Germaine 8 yd pass to Boone (2Q)
- Utah at New Orleans, Germaine 37 yd pass to Boone (3Q)
- Utah at New Orleans, Germaine 26 yd pass to Boone (4Q)
- Kansas City at Utah, Germaine 29 yd pass to Boone (2Q)
- Colorado at Utah, Germaine 9 yd pass to Boone (4Q)
- Utah at San Jose, Germaine 26 yd pass to Boone (2Q)
- Chicago at Utah, Germaine 9 yd pass to Boone (1Q)
- Chicago at Utah, Germaine 15 yd pass to Boone (2Q)
- Los Angeles at Utah, Germaine 45 yd pass to Boone (3Q)

First downs: 47

- Arizona at Utah 1
- Utah at Cleveland 2
- Utah at Orlando 5
- Columbus at Utah 2
- Georgia at Utah 10* (AFL Career High)
- Utah at Philadelphia 2
- Utah at Los Angeles 3
- San Jose at Utah 2
- Utah at New Orleans 1
- Kansas City at Utah 3
- Colorado at Utah 2
- Utah at San Jose 6
- Chicago at Utah 3
- Utah at Grand Rapids 5

Tackles: 3

AirBoone's AFL Career Stats thru June 9, 2008

Passes caught: 226
 Total Yards: 2594
 Longest Reception: 45 yards
 Receiving Touchdowns: 47
 Rushes: 1
 Rushing Yds.: 4
 Kick returns: 5
 Kick Return Yds: 61

Kick Return TDs: 1 (9 yds in 2007)
Tackles: 10

Following is the 2008 Utah Blaze Schedule

Date	Visitor	Home	Time	TV	Radio
3/1	Arizona Rattlers - 63	Utah Blaze - 62			Blaze 0-1
3/9	Utah Blaze - 63	Cleveland Gladiators - 66			Blaze 0-2
3/14	Utah Blaze - 61	Orlando Predators - 69			Blaze 0-3
3/21	Columbus Destroyers - 52	Utah Blaze - 49			Blaze 0-4
3/29	Georgia Force -70	Utah Blaze - 49			Blaze 0-5
4/5	Utah Blaze - 56	Philadelphia Soul - 64			Blaze 0-6
4/12	Utah Blaze -62	Los Angeles Avengers - 79			Blaze 0-7
4/18	San Jose SaberCats - 61	Utah Blaze - 40			Blaze 0-8
4/25	Utah Blaze - 56	New Orleans VooDoo -70			Blaze 0-9
5/3	Kansas City Brigade - 50	Utah Blaze - 67			Blaze 1-9
5/10	Colorado Crush - 36	Utah Blaze - 71			Blaze 2-9
5/17	Utah Blaze - 64	San Jose SaberCats - 74			Blaze 2-10
5/24	Chicago Rush - 48	Utah Blaze -51			Blaze 3-10
6/1	Utah Blaze - 63	Grand Rapids Rampage -56			Blaze 4-10
6/9	Los Angeles Avengers - 56	Utah Blaze - 65			Blaze 5-10
		WEEK 16 BYE			
6/21	Utah Blaze	Arizona Rattlers	8:00	TBA	1320 KFAN

**All times Mountain Standard Time