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Scrimmage No. 2 looms for injury-riddled Ducks

Oregon is looking for crisp play and less mistakes today at the team's second scrimmage

Spring football

Hank Hager Sports Reporter

Scene 1: Kellen Clemens and Jason Fife both lead the Oregon football team on scoring drives, Chris Vincent runs for 41 yards and one score, and Quinn Dorsey beats the offensive line for two sacks in the Ducks' first scrimmage, held last Saturday.

Yet, the Ducks aren't happy. The offense is sluggish, the defense doesn't quite have the stopping power it needs, and head coach Mike Bellotti comes away unsatisfied with Oregon's play. It is just the end of the first week of practice, but he wants the team to be further along than it is.

Scene 2: Still to be written. Check back later today. Scrimmage two is set to begin.

It is the conclusion of Week 2 of Oregon's spring practice schedule, and what a way to end it — with an approximately 60-play scrimmage. The Ducks, despite suffering from numerous injuries, are ready to get back on the field.

And they especially want to improve on last week's poor play at Autzen Stadium.

"We're improving every day," Junior Siavii said.

It's only the middle of April, and the season won't start for at least another four months. A dropped pass or missed tackle may not mean much come Oregon's first game against Mississippi State, but then again, how each player plays during the scrimmage could have some bearing on his standing in the future.

"They're very important," Eddie Whitaker said of the scrimmages. "It really helps. It gets you ready for game time. It really helps you get ready for the spring game, which is big."

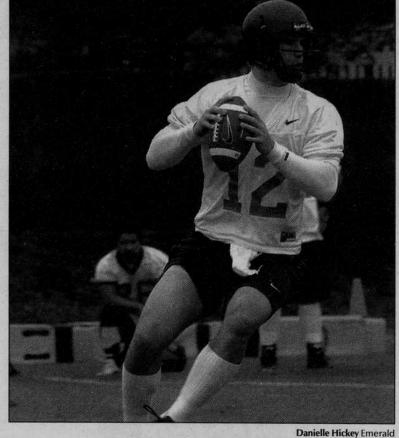
In Whitaker's case, how he plays in the scrimmage will be important. He is battling Tim Day for the starting tight end spot, and although a decision will probably not be made until fall practices start, every little bit counts.

Whitaker and Day both will be scrimmaging among a group of Ducks that is battered and bruised. Kellen

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Jason Fife and the Ducks look to have a better outing in their second scrimmage.

Taylor has a strained ligament in his foot and Kevin Donoho has a broken collarbone. Add that to Keith Allen and Demetrius Williams, who are both slightly injured but are expected to play, and the Oregon wide receiving corps becomes thin.

The Ducks are also thin at defensive line, where Igor Olshansky and Devan Long are both out of spring practices. Bellotti also said Robby Valenzuela is beat up a bit from the first two weeks of practice.

Still, he expects a hard-hitting scrimmage from the Ducks.

"I don't think you can get any better if you don't practice the way you're going to play," Bellotti said. "From a scrimmage standpoint, the only way I know to get better to teach blocking and tackling is to block and tackle. So whatever opportunities we have we're going to go at full speed."

Because of the fact the Ducks are thin at the receiver and defensive line spots, Bellotti said he expects Oregon to run the ball more during the scrim-

On the men's side, freshman

Travis Anderson will look to im-

prove his time of 47.09 seconds in the first heat of the 400 meters. Ore-

gon has a trio of competitors in the

800 in freshmen Tomas Finol and Ryan Flaherty, along with junior

Irack

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meters at Pomona.

Adam Bailey.

Vincent led the team on the ground last week, but the running backs as a group have come along well. "We're always looking to improve,"

mage than the Ducks did last week.

Ryan Shaw said. "I don't feel like the offense had that good of a scrimmage last time. I feel like we're slowly but surely fine-tuning and improving every day."

Most attributed the play last week to the fact it was the first week of practices, and cohesiveness was still tough to achieve.

"They're never where I'd like them to be," Bellotti said. "I think that we're doing some good things, but just not consistently enough at this point to make me happy. Having been coaching for 30 years, it's hard to make me happy. When the teams battle, and they really have to fight and scrap to get a yard, then I'm pretty happy, because I know we're battling and competing hard."

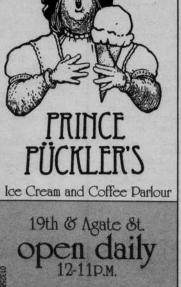
Contact the sports reporter at hankhager@dailyemerald.com.

total of 27 women athletes to Los Angeles and 14 from the men's squad in throws, sprints, distance and middle distance groups. It is a busy weekend for the squads alto-

"I'm hoping to hit a Pac-10 and regional qualifying mark. It's going to be nice to finally have some warm weather and not be cold and wet."







Back on the mountain, Brown will compete in the women's long jump, after hitting a new season best of 19 feet four and one quarter inches at last week's Pepsi Team Invitational. Moyle will represent the Duck squad in the high jump.

Moyle jumped 12-5 1/2 in February and ranks fourth among Oregon's national-caliber pole vaulting squad.

In the men's competition, senior James March was scheduled to compete in the shot put, although he will not be competing until today. March has already earned a regional qualifying mark by throwing 55-7; he will be looking to improve his best so he can peak at regionals.

The track and field squads sent a

Jill Hoxmeier junior thrower

gether with shuttling athletes between the Pomona Pitzer Invitational and the Mt. SAC Relays.

Junior All-American Jason Hartmann was Oregon's only competitor Thursday in the 10,000 meter race. But with the race beginning at 10:30 p.m., his result information was not available at press time.

Contact the sports reporter at jessethomas@dailyemerald.com.

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