

# Michigan ready for Autzen

With a defense that hasn't been tested and a record-breaking quarterback, Michigan is fully ready

Jesse Thomas  
Sports Reporter

Even though Central Michigan lost by 38 points to in-state rival Michigan in both team's season openers, the Chippewas still have plenty to brag about.

Central Michigan is the only team in Michigan's first three games that has managed a touchdown against the strongest defense in the Big Ten.

No. 3 Michigan, the team that ranks top five nationally in pass efficiency, passing defense, total defense and scoring defense, has outscored its first three opponents by an average of 41 points, while allowing just 10 points in three games.

After shutting out previously ranked No. 15 Notre Dame, the Wolverines take to the road for the first time this season to play No. 22 Oregon at Autzen Stadium Saturday.

Although, despite Michigan's success thus far, head coach Lloyd Carr is taking nothing lightly, especially the Ducks.

"Anytime you're successful in stopping the run, you put teams in the



Defensive back Marlin Jackson and the Wolverine defense have allowed 10 total points in the first three games. Courtesy Michigan Athletics

position where they're one-dimensional," Carr said in a press conference Monday. "... So I think our success in doing a good job against the

run the last two weeks has put them in the position where they've had to

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with two guys and I think they bring two different things to the table. They complement each other. They allow us to change the ways we attack a defense and hopefully that creates problems for our opponents."

The rotation, Clemens said, really has come as no surprise, and he is happy with the situation as long as the team continues winning.

But "as a quarterback, you want to take every single snap," he said when asked if he preferred to be on the field the entire game. "The nice thing is that we have two quarterbacks right now that, by themselves, could win. But we've got two of them and we're playing both of them. It's a lot better than having two quarterbacks that couldn't win."

Both Clemens and Fife have embraced the issue of each playing in every game with open arms — to this point — but it should be getting to the point where they could be sepa-

rating themselves.

The Ducks have always been able to employ two capable quarterbacks. Jason Maas and Akili Smith did it. Further proving the point, A.J. Feeley was drafted after his senior season, a year in which he barely saw the field.

Joey Harrington led the team that season, and one year later he was one of the top picks in the NFL draft.

Now, come to think of it, Clemens could easily mirror Harrington's ascension into the Oregon record books. He hasn't yet shown the flair for the dramatic that Harrington showed, but he still is young. If he stays on the right track, there's no reason to think he won't be able to come into Harrington's realm.

Getting Clemens full-game experience would benefit him, seeing how he has yet to do so in the year and a half he has played in Eugene.

Starting against Michigan, and barring an offensive slowdown on the part of the Ducks, would undoubtedly

ly give Clemens that boost for the regular season.

Oregon senior safety Keith Lewis said the Michigan game could produce a slingshot effect for the rest of the season should the Ducks play well — even possibly upsetting the Wolverines — and the biggest benefactor of that surge would be Clemens.

If Clemens comes out of the gate strong against one of the nation's best, why not leave him in. At this point, the Ducks will sink or swim depending on how the team's quarterback plays, and whether or not that QB has two heads, it would be valuable game experience for Clemens.

But why not let him stray far from land?

Regardless, the experience he gets against the Wolverines will help teach him how to swim.

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