



Players such as walk-on Sol Rexius (30) will have one last chance this spring to prove themselves at Oregon's game Saturday at Autzen Stadium.

Adam Amato
Photographer

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for an hour in 11-on-11 and 7-on-7 drills, otherwise considered a situational scrimmage.

"All of our recovering players are doing real well with their rehab work," California head coach Jeff Tedford said before the workout. "We wanted to be judicious in our use of these players, so that they will continue to be on schedule for complete recovery before August workouts begin."

California's experience is not too far off what the Ducks have been through. Injuries suffered before or during the 2003 season have kept some out while off-season surgery and spring setbacks have forced others to the sidelines.

And it's a long list.

Oregon has been without the full services of defensive linemen Haloti Ngata and Devan Long during the spring. Each has been held out of full contact, Ngata recovering from a torn anterior cruciate ligament and Long with back problems.

Also on the line is Robby Valenzuela, who has been banged up but has participated.

Linebacker Anthony Trucks also has been missing from practice, recovering from off-season shoulder surgery.

Offensively, the wide receiver spot is one of the deepest on the team but also one of the positions hit hardest by injuries. Demetrius Williams has yet to participate in a scrimmage because he is recovering from a concussion. Both Kyle Weatherspoon and Marcus Maxwell — who suffered injuries during the 2003 season — have seen little or no action this spring.

And Keith Allen, recovering from a torn anterior cruciate ligament he suffered in August, will not play in the spring game, Bellotti said Tuesday.

The list doesn't stop there. Enoka Lucas went down the first scrimmage with a high ankle sprain and has been used sparingly to this point, but should participate in the game Saturday.

"As far as (offensive) line and (defensive) line, some guys are moving around," running back Chris Vincent said of the injuries. "The offense, a lot of people are learning a lot of positions on the line."

Finally, Terrence Whitehead and Kenny Washington, the team's top two running backs, have seen limited action because they both have ankle issues.

All of that will give players, such as walk-on running backs Andiel Brown and Sol Rexius, a final chance to show their worth.

"The main goal is to stay healthy," Bellotti said. "The main goal is to get playmakers through spring ball. (We'll) evaluate talent, identify potential starters and/or able backups to help us win football games next year. (We'll) look a little bit at the development of some of the kids over the course of spring."

Injuries or no injuries, Duck players say they'll go into the spring game with the same attitude.

"I know personally I am ready for (spring ball) to get over with," quarterback Johnny DuRocher said. "I know what I have to work on so I'm really looking forward to in the summer going in and working on it. It'll be fun to go out there and get after it for real."

Contact the sports editor at hankhager@dailyemerald.com.

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