

Michigan freshman QB exudes confidence

Chad Henne acts like a professional on the field despite the high pressure of leading a squad

BY LARRY LAGE
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ANN ARBOR, Mich. — Chad Henne acts nothing like a freshman.

On the field, he's as calm as a seasoned senior.

Off it, he handles with ease the spotlight that comes with playing

quarterback for Michigan.

"Of course there's a lot of pressure upon you," Henne said. "But I'm calm and laid back."

"You just can't stand out there and be nervous and say, 'I don't know if I can do this.' I'm confident I can get the job done."

Henne has looked more comfortable and has been more effective each week since becoming the first freshman to start an opener at Michigan since Rick Leach in 1975.

When he drops back to pass, he stands tall, doesn't get happy feet and delivers crisp passes.

Despite relying on Henne and fellow freshman running back Michael Hart, the 12th-ranked Wolverines (7-1, 5-0 Big Ten) have a shot at repeating as conference champions and

earning a spot in the Bowl Championship Series.

But first, they have to take care of Michigan State (4-3, 3-1) on Saturday at Michigan Stadium.

Spartans safety Eric Smith said the Wolverines look like they did last year on offense with John Navarre, a senior at quarterback.

"I'd say they're as good as last year," Smith said.

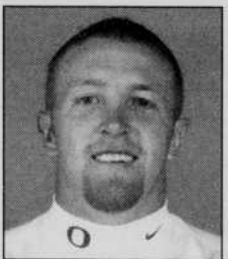
Michigan expected Matt Gutierrez

to replace Navarre, but the redshirt sophomore injured his shoulder soon after earning the job, and Henne has taken advantage of the opportunity.

Henne has completed 61 percent of his passes for 1,728 yards and 13 touchdowns — at least one in each game — and 10 interceptions. On third down, he's completed nearly 70 percent of his passes, and in the fourth quarter, he's thrown three touchdowns and only one interception.

DUCK CAPTAINS

Four Ducks, two on offense and two on defense, were chosen as this game's team captains. Each will be looked upon to lead Oregon to its fourth consecutive conference win of the season.

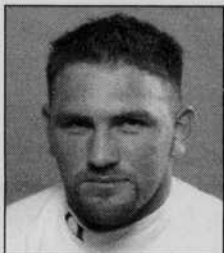


Kellen Clemens
#11 Quarterback/ Jr.
Hometown: Burns, Ore.

Clemens became Oregon's youngest starting quarterback since Danny O'Neil in 1992. In 2003, Clemens passed for more yards (2,400) and touchdown passes (16) than any other sophomore in Oregon history. He rushed for three touchdowns and threw for three more with a career-high 473 yards on 36 of 55 passing against Washington State on Oct. 9. That performance ranks second all-time on Oregon's total offense list. Last season, he set the school record for pass completion proficiency by going 15 of 17 against Stanford for an 88.2 completion percentage.

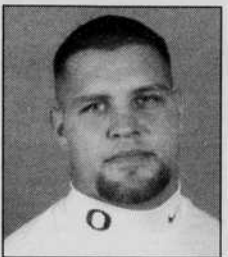
Devan Long
#92 Defensive End/ Jr.
Hometown: Anacortes, Wash.

Leading the team in solo tackles with 12, Long is an intimidating presence in the eyes of opposing quarterbacks. He is a proven pass rusher, a potentially dominant run stopper and has already recorded six and a half sacks this season for a total loss of 50 yards. Long started in all 13 games during his sophomore season and received honorable mention All-Pac-10 honors. He posted a team-high 11.5 sacks — with at least one in seven of Oregon's 13 games last year. Long is currently seventh all-time in sacks at Oregon. In his senior year at Anacortes High School in Washington, Long was named defensive player of the year by collecting 66 tackles and three sacks.



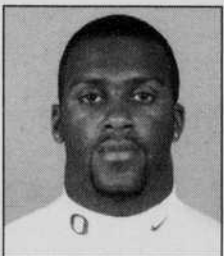
Jerry Matson
#52 Linebacker/ Sr.
Hometown: Edmonds, Wash.

Matson has made his way up through the ranks of walk-on and special teamer to become the Duck's top returning tackler for the 2004 season. This season, he has recorded 28 solo tackles and 44 tackles overall. A versatile linebacker capable of filling in at any of the three linebacking positions, Matson recorded 81 tackles last year as a junior, including 14.5 for a loss and one sack. In his senior year at Kamiak High School in Mukilteo, Wash., Matson had 135 tackles, including 16 for a loss and three sacks.



Ryan Shaw
#27 Tailback/ Sr.
Hometown: Carlsbad, Calif.

Shaw is an important part of Oregon's running back rotation and has a reputation for being able to persevere. The 5-foot-11 senior has collected 54 yards on the ground from 11 carries in limited playing time. His best run this season was for 26 yards against Arizona. Shaw has also returned three kicks for a total of 32 yards. As a junior, he was listed as Oregon's fourth-best rusher. In 2001, Shaw suffered an ankle injury and redshirted prior to the start of his sophomore year. He is recognized as one of the team's strongest backs, capable of bench pressing 380 pounds and squatting 500 pounds.



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