

Offense: Team focuses on becoming more familiar with Crowton's new style

Continued from page 3

the field to put as much pressure on the defense as it can. It will usually feature one running back with two wide receivers, a tight end and an H-back, a hybrid position combining the skills of a fullback, tight end and wide receiver.

Bellotti describes it as, "the melding of the Oregon, BYU, Texas Tech,

Utah, Northwestern, Bowling Green and I can go on and on because we have borrowed a lot of elements from a lot of things, and it will become the Oregon offense."

Quarterback

Leading the offense again this season will be Kellen Clemens. The Burns native and all-conference

quarterback returns after throwing for 2,548 yards and 22 touchdowns last season for the Ducks. If he gets those kinds of numbers this season, Clemens will climb to at least No. 3 all-time at Oregon in passing yards, and with 3,195 more he could pass Bill Musgrave as Oregon's all-time passing leader.

"Kellen's numbers the last two years have been awesome," Bellotti said. "His raw numbers would put him in an elite group at any school."

But none of that is on his mind, as the excitement of the new offense has him preoccupied.

"It has been a long time since I was this excited for football," Clemens said. "It's a combination of the new weapons, the new offense and it being my senior year."

Bellotti said that Clemens has been working hard to get a handle on the new offense and get to know Crowton's coaching style.

"He has done a great job of spending time, not only learning the new offense, but getting comfortable with Gary Crowton and his offense," Bellotti said.

Clemens said he and Crowton have taken some time this summer to get to know each other.

"He is an up-tempo guy, and he definitely has a different character than we are used to, but I love playing with him," Clemens said of Crowton. "We even played golf a couple of times to get away from football."

Also getting a grip on the new offense is sophomore Dennis Dixon. Dixon (who ran a 4.51-second 40-meter sprint over the winter, the fastest time for an Oregon quarterback ever) saw limited playing time last season and will likely see about the same this year.

Competing with Dixon for the backup position is sophomore Brady Leaf. The Great Falls, Mont., native was the placeholder for the Ducks last year, but his arm shined during the spring game. He led all quarterbacks, completing 17 of 25 passes for 213 yards and a touchdown.

Running back

One position the Ducks should have no problem filling this season is running back. With Terrence Whitehead, who ran for 1,144 yards last season, Terrell Jackson, Andiel Brown and blue-chip recruit Jonathan Stewart all in the mix, the

Ducks will have plenty of options in the backfield.

With all attention on Stewart, Whitehead said he doesn't worry about his job.

"I love the competition," said Whitehead, who, according to Bellotti, will be the starter when the Ducks take the field against Houston. "Every year I've had to compete for the running back spot, so I'm used to it."

Bellotti said Whitehead will "be the rock that which we build on."

"Terrence Whitehead is a bona fide, Pac-10, 1,000-yard ground gainer."

Bellotti is also excited about having Stewart in the mix.

"Jonathan Stewart will be one of the most heralded recruits to come here," he said. "He is 5-10, 225 pounds and one of the things I have said is that he ran a 10.8 100-meters electronically in the spring ... I would hope him or one of the other young men jump out and provide the best one-two punch in the history of the school."

One of the other young men that Bellotti is talking about is Jackson. The redshirt freshman impressed many during fall practice and appears ready to fight for the backup role behind Whitehead.

Wide receiver

Another position full of depth for the Ducks this season will be wide receiver. With the new offense, there will be times when three or four wideouts are on the field at one time, and Oregon appears to have enough depth to fill every one of those positions with quality players.

Looking to bounce back from an injury-riddled 2004 season, senior Demetrius Williams will lead the receiving corps into the 2005 season. Even with the injuries to his toe and hamstring, he managed to lead the team in receptions with 47 in 2004.

Behind Williams there are several young receivers ready for their chance to shine, led by junior college transfer James Finley. The Los Angeles native brings his talent and intensity to the field and is ready to make an impact.

"One thing I tell Kellen ... if all fails, James Finley is open," Finley said. "I'm not cocky; I get along with everyone on the team. I just want to win."

"I think it is possible for me to get 80 grabs ... If you throw me the ball

80 times, 78 of them are going to be caught and the other two you are going to overthrow because I'm going to be open."

Sophomore Cameron Colvin returns to the Ducks after a freshman season in which he caught 14 passes for 141 yards for two touchdowns. The 6-foot-2 Colvin worked hard during the offseason and looks to live up to the hype he received as one of the best recruits coming out of high school two years ago.

Another impressive wide receiver for the Ducks could be Jaison Williams. The 6-foot-5, 237 pound redshirt freshman uses his strength and speed (he ran a 4.71 during the offseason, fourth-fastest for wide receivers) to get open and provides Clemens a huge target down the field.

Others looking to contribute this season at wideout for the Ducks are sophomores Brian Paysinger and Garren Strong and juniors Kyle Weatherspoon and Tony Salazar.

Tight end/H-back

With a new offense comes a new position, H-back, for the Ducks. Filling that role this season will be Tim Day. Though he has struggled with injuries, Day possesses the talent to be one of the top pass catchers, tight end or H-back, in the conference. He said his injuries are a thing of the past.

"I'm feeling re-energized. Feeling like I'm young again," Day said. "I think a lot of people overlook me, but I'm used to that by now."

Despite his injuries, Day caught 35 passes for 457 yards and eight touchdowns last season. He will once again be a red zone target for Clemens.

Because of the new offense, Dante Rosario, last season's full back, has been moved to tight end. The Dayton native had 25 receptions out of the backfield last season, including six touchdowns.

A wild card for the Ducks this season at tight end will be redshirt freshman Ryan Keeling. Limited last season by a knee injury, the Springfield native made impressive strides during the last scrimmage, catching three passes for 43 yards and a touchdown. The 6-foot-5, 243-pound tight end will give the Ducks depth at the position along with junior Dan Kause.

Offensive line

The biggest question mark for the Duck offense will be the offensive line. It lost three offensive linemen to graduation and will be plugging young players without a lot of experience into those positions.

Junior center Enokso Lucas and senior guard Ian Reynoso will be the only returnees to a line that gave up a conference-high 41 sacks last season.

Looking to fill some of the holes this season will be junior college transfer Paluni Ma Sun at left guard. The 6-foot-5, 365-pound Ma Sun is touted as one of the best junior college transfers in the nation, and his size and strength should help give Clemens more time in the pocket.

Ma Sun's teammate at Fresno City College, Pat So'oalo, also will be pushing for time on the line. Six-foot-5, 340-pound So'oalo will be competing for the right guard position.

At tackle, sophomore Geoff Schwartz and a bevy of freshman will be competing for the outside spots. Schwartz (6-foot-7, 351 pounds) will be at right tackle and made strides his freshman year to become a starter this season. Freshman Max Unger started fall at the head of the class at left tackle, but fellow freshmen Jacob Hucko, Jeff Kendall, Aaron Klovos and Mark Lewis will be in the mix.

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