

BEAVERS

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how we can utilize him.”
Togiai, who went the entire practice on Monday and says he expects to be ready to go come the Sept. 1 opener at Ohio State, likes what he has seen from the young guys.
“We’ve got some athletic guys, we’ve got some big guys in Teagan and Jack,” he said. “They’re working hard every day and I’m just excited to see what they do this year.”
While he has been limited early in fall camp and missed all of the spring recovering, Togiai has used that time to get more acquainted with the freshmen.
“I’ve been sidelined since December so it gave me a lot of time to just sit down and talk with them, not necessarily show them by example but try to sit down and teach them what I could,” he said. “It’s been fun. I’ve gotten to know them a lot and it’s a fun group of guys to be around.”
Quarterback Conor Blount, who is battling for the starting position, credits Togiai for helping with the growth of the younger players.
“Noah’s a huge piece of that crew,” he said. “And even when he hasn’t been participating he’s been an active teacher and teaching those guys. There’s a lot of talent in that room and I see a lot of those young guys, Isaiah, Bryce, some of those guys

that have a lot of skill and can build off of learning from a guy like Noah.”
Getting those players up to speed as soon as possible will be helpful in the success of the offense. Lindgren said the Beavers would like to use one or two tight ends at times.
“It obviously gives you a little power element in the run game, then slide those guys out in the pass game,” Lindgren said. “With Noah and a guy like Isaiah Smalls, sometimes they can help you vertically and people don’t always track those guys in the pass game. They give you a little bit bigger target to throw to, particularly in the red zone.”
Smalls has looked good the first week and a half of camp and has been a good target for the quarterbacks and could fill the void left by Wily-Matagi’s departure. He and Togiai could provide a good 1-2 punch.
Regardless of who steps in, finding depth at that position will be crucial.

“I think it’s really important to have a guy who not only can block but then split out and that’s kind of what Noah’s been,” Blount said. “So to have a guy who can do both and knows just exactly what they need to do to be successful out on Saturday’s, that’s huge for them to learn. I think those guys are doing a good job of soaking up all that and taking it and putting it out in the field.”

DUCKS

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out the first two games before catching 11 passes for 68 yards and running 18 times for 95 yards on the season.
“Taj is healthy, so he is in a real good place now,” Cristobal said. “He has worked his tail off, and he’s going to be a significant part of our offense.”
It appears Griffin’s role will once again include time at running back and receiver, a workload he welcomes.
Griffin said the Ducks are finding plays at running back that fit his skill set and with physicality a popular phrase at Oregon these days, he has worked on his blocking skills to stay in the backfield on more downs.
“The competition is open, and I am taking a lot of reps because we are short on numbers,” Griffin said. “The more I practice, the more I can be used in different ways.”
Those ways still include time at slot receiver.

“I made sure I didn’t lose my game at that position because stuff happens and people go down, so you never know when they might need me to run a certain play,” Griffin said. “The majority of my time is at running back, but I still make sure I know the route tree and what exactly is going on. I am trying to perfect everything to get as big of a role as possible.”
Griffin returned three kickoffs late last season, marking his debut as a returner for the Ducks. He was the kick returner with UO’s first unit during a scrimmage Sunday and has also fielded punts in practice.
“You will see me there, too,” Griffin said.
Griffin just wants to be seen more during his final season with the Ducks.
“This camp has pushed me,” he said. “I have been put in every situation and scenario they can throw at me. I have made some highlights and will continue to try and maximize as many big plays as I can get.”

EASTERN

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seventh.
The EOU men received 69 points in the poll along with College of Idaho. Southern Oregon is the preseason favorite with 77 points and seven first-place votes. C of I received the other two first-place votes. Oregon Tech (53) and Northwest Christian (43) rounded out the top five.
The Eastern men finished third in the CCC champion-

ships last fall and went on to a seventh-place finish at nationals.
The EOU women garnered 35 points in their poll. OIT picked up 77 points and six first-place votes to be named the CCC favorites. C of I had 75 points and three first-place votes.
The rest of the top five included SOU (63), Corban (52) and a tie for fifth between Northwest and NCU (38).
The Mountaineer women finished sixth at the CCC

championships last fall.
The EOU women open their season Sept. 7 at the CSI Classic in Twin Falls, Idaho, while the men run first at the EOU Invitational Sept. 21 in La Grande. The women also compete in that meet.

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