

Broncos take a depleted roster to California

By ARNIE STAPLETON
Associated Press

ENGLEWOOD, Colo. — The Denver Broncos are taking a depleted roster to San Francisco, where they'll practice twice with the 49ers in advance of their preseason game Saturday.

"I know we're going to compete, but the main thing is keeping both sides healthy," receiver Demaryius Thomas said. "We've had some people go down."

After watching D-linemen Billy Winn (ACL), Derek Wolfe (ankle) and Jared Crick (back) get carted off the field over a five-day span, the Broncos kept a summer-high eight players out of Tuesday's practice because of injuries.

They included receiver Cody Latimer (sore knee) and rookie linebacker DeMarcus Walker (hip-flexor), both of whom are expected to return to practice in California.

However, Wolfe, Crick and safety T.J. Ward (hamstring) were staying behind.

The Broncos are down to seven interior defensive linemen for three positions, but they're hoping to avoid bringing in



• Saturday, 7 p.m. (NFL Net)
• at Levi's Stadium

more reinforcements before the returns of Wolfe and Crick, who are expected to be ready for the season opener.

"That's the plan and that's why we're going so slow with these guys," Joseph said. "I can push Wolfe out there next week and push Crick out there probably by Friday but it makes no sense. Our goal for those guys is to rehab, get them as healthy as possible and Week 1 be at full strength."

Joseph and 49ers coach Kyle Shanahan have emphasized the need for their players to keep emotions in check this week so nobody else gets hurt.

"First of all, we're going to be in pads only one day and then shells the next day," Joseph said. "That's going to be a big deal. We don't want any fights, we don't want any

nonsense and we want to just go play football."

Cornerback Chris Harris Jr. has mixed feelings about working out with another team.

"I really don't like the joint practices because they're more like a game," Harris said. "The teams start fighting and things like that. I get enough looks going against" teammates Demaryius Thomas and Emmanuel Sanders "in practice, but I think it will be good just to see some other guys."

Cornerback Aqib Talib said joint practices are "almost like a preseason game because you're going to play to the max. Whenever we compete, we go to the max but when it's another color jersey, you go all out. It's almost like you play three preseason games that week. It'll be great work for us."

Joseph will hold out two healthy players from the game in center Matt Paradis and running back Jamaal Charles, both of whom are coming off injuries from last season. However, both will practice against the 49ers.

Charles has increased his workload at practice but the

Broncos have long targeted their game against Green Bay on Aug. 26 for his debut.

"That's been the plan for the entire time, to kind of get Jamaal as strong as he can be before we put him on the field," Joseph said. "He is ready to go, it's me holding Jamaal back. But he wants to go. He wanted to go last week but the plan was Green Bay so we're going to stick with that plan."

The biggest story line in California will be Paxton Lynch's first start — and presumably last chance to make up ground in his quest to beat out incumbent QB Trevor Siemian. Lynch threw two interceptions at Tuesday's practice.

Joseph said at the start of training camp that ideally he'd like to name a starting quarterback after the second preseason game but on Tuesday he wouldn't commit to doing so.

"I don't know. I'm not sure and I'm not there yet," Joseph said. "Paxton is starting Saturday and after the game we'll sit down and watch and figure out our plans from there but I'm not sure. I'm not stressed about that."

MARINERS:

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attempting to tag up and score from third. Dyson's perfect throw home was his 11th outfield assist this season, tops in the majors.

MARINERS MOVES

Albers was brought up from Triple-A Tacoma along with RHP Sam Gaviglio, who went 3-5 with a 4.62 ERA in two earlier stints with the Mariners this year. RHP Casey Lawrence and RHP Thyago Vieira were optioned to Triple-A, and RHP Christian Bergman was designated for assignment.

TRAINER'S ROOM

Mariners: 3B Kyle Seager sat out with what manager Scott Servais said appeared to be a stomach virus. Espinosa started at third. RHP David Phelps, on the 10-day DL with a right elbow impingement, will accompany the Mariners to Tampa Bay this weekend and is expected to throw off a mound there. "If that goes well, you could see him activated pretty quickly," Servais said.

UP NEXT

Orioles: RHP Ubaldo Jimenez (5-7, 6.25 ERA) closes out the three-game series Wednesday afternoon. Jimenez has won only once in six starts since July 16. He has allowed 25 home runs in 116 2/3 innings.

Mariners: LHP Marco Gonzales (0-0, 6.48), acquired in a trade with St. Louis on July 21, makes his third start for Seattle. Gonzales, who missed all of 2016 following elbow surgery, allowed one run and four hits over 4 1/3 innings in his last start.

FALL SPORTS: TigerScots volleyball starts championship defense

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another trip to the Class 2A state semifinals, it marked the 20th consecutive season that Heppner had qualified for the playoffs. On paper, the road to a 21st consecutive playoff appearance seems pretty clear as a now-four team Columbia Basin Conference seems to be Heppner's to lose at this point.

The Mustangs will have to replace some supreme talent, however, as all-state lineman Kevin Murray and all-state athlete Logan Grieb have graduated, as well as key pieces such as Kolby Currin and Tim Jaca. But with running back Coby Dougherty, quarterback Kevin Smith, and lineman Wyatt Steagall and 2016 breakout performer Beau Wolters back the Mustangs should still be a fun team to watch.

Plus — as I've come to learn in my two years in Eastern Oregon — you can never count against a team that is coached by Greg Grant and Les Payne, two

of the best at preparing and coaching their team the right way.

WESTON-MCEWEN VOLLEYBALL:

As much as Heppner has been a model of consistency on the football field, Weston-McEwen has been the same on the volleyball court over the last decade. The TigerScots have qualified for the state playoffs in 13 straight seasons and have reached at least the quarterfinals in 12 of those 13. With state championships from 2004 and 2010 in their trophy case already, the No. 5 seed TigerScots made a stunning run to their third state championship in 2016, with three upsets of No. 4 Bonanza, No. 1 seed Culver and No. 3 Imbler to bring the trophy home.

Much like the Mustangs above, the TigerScots do have some holes to fill as they look to repeat in 2017. State championship game MVP and outside hitter Sara von Borstel, outside hitter Sarah Finifrock, setter Ali Schroeder



Contributed photo courtesy of Jenni Tyler

Weston-McEwen's Maddi Muilenburg (7) and Hailey Weaver prepare to play Imbler in the 2A volleyball state championship match on Saturday, Nov. 5 at Ridgeview High School in Redmond. Muilenburg and Weaver will be two players to take on bigger roles this season for the TigerScots as they defend their state title.

and defensive specialist Bailey Hillmick have all graduated, as did key reserve Tiah Benedict. The good news is the TigerScots still have libero Chelsea

Quaempts, both middle blockers in Alyssa Finifrock and Maddi Muilenburg, and reserves Bryce Thul and Hailey Weaver back, all of whom were key cogs last

season.

And coach Shawn White, now in his 15th season, is one of the best in the state, leading the TigerScots to a 317-83 mark over the last 11 seasons.

SMALL-SCHOOL FOOTBALL:

As usual, it should be a fun year in the small-school ranks, as the 3A Eastern Oregon League, 2A Columbia Basin Conference and 1A schools such as Arlington and Echo should produce plenty of competitive games. In the 3A, Umatilla was on the brink of a playoff spot last season and returns some key pieces, while Irrigon should be better with another year of experience and Riverside should take a step as well with Dave Boor back as head coach.

In 2A, all eyes will be on Stanfield as the defending CBC champion and state runner-up must replace massive holes on both sides of the ball, but still have some exciting athletes returning to the field. Weston-McEwen

was on the cusp of the postseason last year as well and I expect the TigerScots to make it this year with the likes of Brett Speed and Jacob Speed returning.

Echo and Arlington were both playoff teams in 1A a season ago, and while Arlington must fill some holes, Echo looks primed to make another run at the postseason with only two starters to replace. And of course, all eyes will be on Pilot Rock as the Rockets drop to a 2A independent and will be playing 8-man football this season due to a sharp decline in participating athletes. Will the Rockets be more competitive with a bit of a more balanced playing field this season?

Anyway, enough rambling for now. Let the games begin.

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LUTON: Beat out 2016 starter Darrell Garretson and Marcus McMaryion

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camp when Beavers coach Gary Andersen gave him the starting job.

"I've been putting in the work since I was 6 years old, I started playing flag football, up until now, you know? You think back and really everything that I've ever done in my life leads up to now — playing Pac-12 football, where I wanted to

be," he said.

Luton, who wears a bracelet that says "Never Ever Give Up," transferred to Oregon State from Ventura Community College, where last season he threw for 3,551 yards and 40 touchdowns, both school records.

He competed with Marcus McMaryion and Darell Garretson for the starting job. Soon after Luton was

given the nod, McMaryion announced his intention to transfer to Fresno State.

Garretson started at the beginning of last season but he was knocked out by a broken ankle. Backup, Conor Blount injured his knee, essentially thrusting McMaryion into the starting role for the Beavers' final six games. McMaryion threw for 1,286 yards and 10 touchdowns, but also threw

five interceptions.

The Beavers finished 4-8 last season, a two-game improvement from the previous year.

Garretson, a senior, will back up Luton this season, with Blount the No. 3 option.

Andersen said he was impressed by Luton's resolve during the spring ordeal with his mystery ailment.

"Jake's had some ups and downs since he's been

here and he just couldn't get healthy in the spring. That was very tough. There were days when (it was) 'You can go as long as you can go Jake but when you've got to get out, you've got to get out.' And that kid never did get out," Andersen said. "He went through everything every single day and really showed some toughness there. But he was not in that great of shape at that point."

The Beavers were coming off a season where receiver Seth Collins was also hit with a serious illness that put him in the hospital for the final two weeks. The school did not release the nature of Collins' illness because of privacy concerns.

Collins, a junior who played quarterback as a freshman in Andersen's first season, will play at slot receiver this year.

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