

College Football

Taggart ready for debut with Oregon

By ANNE M. PETERSON Associated Press

EUGENE — As Willie Taggart would say, it's go time.

The first-year coach and his Oregon Ducks open the season at home against Southern Utah on Saturday afternoon. And yes, he's a little bit nervous.

"I think the nerves are a little different from a coach than a player. Players, those nerves you can control them a bit. As a coach, you're counting on young men to go out and execute and play well," he said at the first of his weekly news conferences this season.

The Ducks finished 4-8 last season and three days after a 34-24 loss to rival Oregon State in the Civil War, they fired coach Mark Helfrich.

Enter Taggart, whose last two head coaching jobs have also been rebuilding projects. In four seasons, he guided South Florida from a 2-10 record his first year to a 10-2 mark and a spot in the Birmingham Bowl last season.

He's got a lot of talent to work with in Eugene. Sophomore quarterback Justin Herbert played in nine games last season, taking over when graduate transfer Dakota Prukop struggled, and threw for 1,936 yards with 19 touchdowns.

Running back Royce Freeman returned for his senior season with a shot at breaking LaMichael James' career rushing yards record at Oregon. Freeman dealt with injury but still ran for 945 yards and nine scores last season.

The main issue will be on defense. The Ducks had trouble last year with the 4-3 scheme installed by former Michigan coach Brady Hoke in his lone season with the Ducks. Taggart's defensive coordinator is Jim Leavitt.

The FCS-level Thunderbirds, who play in the Big Sky, are embarking on a second season under coach Demario Warren. Southern Utah finished 6-5 and 5-3 in



South Utah Thunderbirds (0-0) Oregon Ducks (0-0)

Saturday, 5:15 p.m. at Autzen Stadium TV: PAC-12 Network

the Big Sky in 2016.

"We are on the right path and this will be a big season for us to try and earn that respect around the league and the country. Our guys are used to being the underdogs and will be thrilled about the challenges that brings," Warren said.

Taggart called the Thunderbirds "a feisty group."

"They play hard and they play with a lot of energy," Taggart said. "You like that as a coach, seeing the effort that they give."

A few other items of note this Saturday:

AGAINST THE PAC-12: The Thunderbirds are not strangers to Pac-12 foes. They opened last season at Utah, falling 24-0. The year before, they visited Washington State and lost 48-10.

THE FIRST ONE: Only two of the last eight Oregon coaches (since 1951) won their debut game: Mike Bellotti beat Utah 27-20 on the road in 1995, and Helfrich routed Nicholls 66-3 in 2013.

POINTS ON THE BOARD: Warren has a target for Saturday, in terms of points. "We've got to go get 30. That's something that we've got to have our sights set on. We've struggled the last three FBS games and that can't happen. If we want a chance to win, we've got to put points on the board. As fast as we play and as much talent as we have we've got to put points on the board," he told the team's website.

THE DOWNSIDE: Expect heat and smoke to be a factor Saturday. The temperature will be hovering near 100 at game time — and it will be hotter on the artificial turf surface at Autzen Stadium. Additionally, the air quality is expected to be poor because of low humidity and the numerous wildfires burning across Oregon. The Ducks moved a practice indoors earlier this week because of the smoky air.

College Football

Beavers look to rebound against Vikings

By ANNE M. PETERSON Associated Press

CORVALLIS — Oregon State coach Gary Andersen is urging the Beavers to get edgier now that the season's underway.

Already 0-1 after a loss to Colorado State in Week Zero, the Beavers look to rebound Saturday when they host the Portland State Vikings.

Andersen says he'll never get over the 58-27 loss to the Rams, and he hopes his players never do either.

"We need to be even a little bit more edgy than we have been in the past. Am I? Hell yeah I am. I'm more edgy, and I'm not going to stop. I'm not going to stop pushing them. I'm not going to stop expecting them to carry themselves at a high level," Andersen said at his weekly news conference. "But I refuse to let them make excuses. We're past all that."

Andersen was clearly frustrated by the loss. Oregon State's strength, the running game, wasn't what it should be — although Andersen said some credit for that should go to the Rams.

Ryan Nall ran for 115 yards and a score. Thomas Tyner, the former Oregon Duck now playing for the Beavers, ran for eight yards on four carries in his debut. New quarterback Jake Luton threw for 304 yards and two scores.

And the defense clearly struggled, allowing 34 points in the second half.



AP Photo/David Zalubowski

Oregon State running back Ryan Nall, front, looks for an opening as Colorado State defensive lineman Jakob Buys comes in for a stop in the first half of a game on Aug. 26, 2017, in Fort Collins, Colo.

The Rams racked up 525 total yards on offense.

"I love coaching this team. I'm excited about them. And that's never going to change, because they're my kids," Andersen said. "We'll keep on swinging to get better, and I expect us to get better. Period."

The Vikings also played in Week Zero, losing at BYU 20-6. Portland State coach Bruce Barnum was encouraged by what he saw.

"I saw some good things, on both sides of the ball," Barnum said in his weekly assessment for the team's website. "The poise of the freshman quarterback was great. Our secondary — our entire defense — there were some guys over there playing that I never thought would play, but they made a great turnaround at Portland State and put together a pretty darn good defensive performance."

Other things to consider in advance of the game:

VIKINGS VS. FBS: The FCS-level Vikings are facing two FBS-level opponents (BYU and Oregon State) for the fourth straight season, and overall the team is 4-35 against top-tier teams. But in Barnum's first season as head coach of the team in 2015, the Vikings knocked off both Washington State and North Texas. Portland State went 9-3 that season and reached the FCS playoffs. Overall, Oregon State is 4-0 against Portland State.

COLLINS OUT: Oregon State receiver Seth Collins was ruled out for the second straight week because of a finger injury. Collins missed the final two games of last season with an undisclosed illness that hospitalized him for nearly two weeks. Collins grabbed attention as a dynamic



Portland St. Vikings (0-1) Oregon State Beavers (0-1)

Saturday, 11 a.m. at Reser Stadium TV: PAC-12 Network

playmaker as a freshman when he played at quarterback. He has moved to slot receiver this season.

OLD MAN RIVER: Darnell Adams caught the lone touchdown pass for the Vikings last weekend against the Cougars. This week, the 6-foot-2 receiver was named one of Portland State's captains for Saturday's game. Because of various injuries, Adams has been with the Vikings for six seasons, prompting Barnum to nickname him "Old Man River."

STOPPING THE BEAVS: With a freshman quarterback and an offense still establishing itself, look for the Vikings' defense to focus on stopping Oregon State. Portland State's D looked competent against BYU, holding the Cougars to 13 first downs and 365 yards. The team also has a pair of talented starting cornerbacks in Chris Seisay, who used to play at Oregon, and Division II transfer Donovan Olumba.

HOME OPENER: It's Breakfast with the Beavs. The message to fans for the early game (11 a.m. local time) is: Wear orange. The early start will likely benefit both teams because temperatures are expected to near 100 on Saturday.

NFL

Seahawks get Richardson from Jets for Kearse

Associated Press

SEATTLE — The Seattle Seahawks have made a big splash for their top-notch defense just before the start of the regular season.

The Seahawks acquired defensive tackle Sheldon Richardson from the New York Jets on Friday in exchange for wide receiver Jermaine Kearse and a second-round draft pick, bolstering a defense that was already considered among the best in the NFL. Seattle will also send

a 2018 second-round pick to the Jets and the clubs will swap seventh-round picks in 2018 as part of the deal.

Landing Richardson solidifies the interior of Seattle's defensive line and quiets some of the concerns raised by the uncertainty surrounding rookie second-round draft pick Malik

McDowell, who was injured in a July ATV accident. Richardson has spent his entire career with the Jets after being picked in the first-round pick in 2013 and was a Pro Bowl selection after the 2014 season, when he recorded a career-high eight sacks.

Richardson is entering the final year of his rookie

deal and had played well during the preseason.

Kearse was a polarizing figure among fans but one of the most consistent wide receivers during Pete Carroll's tenure in Seattle. Kearse's best season was 2015 when he had 49 receptions and five touchdowns in the regular season.

Kearse signed a \$13.5 million, three-year deal with the Seahawks before the 2016 season but became expendable because of Seattle's depth at wide receiver.

MLB

Mike Leake gives Mariners 7 innings in debut, beats A's 3-2

SEATTLE (AP) — Mike Leake overcame a shaky beginning to throw seven innings in his Seattle debut, and the Mariners snapped a five-game losing streak with a 3-2 victory over the Oakland Athletics on Friday night.

Acquired from St. Louis earlier in the week to help Seattle's beleaguered rotation, Leake gave the Mariners the kind of performance they desperately needed to remain on the fringes of the AL wild card race. Leake (1-0), who was 7-12 with St. Louis, allowed two runs in the first inning, but held the A's scoreless the rest of the way. It was just the fourth time since the All-Star break a Mariners starting pitcher has gotten through seven innings and the first since James Paxton did it on July 24.

Leake matched his season-high with seven strikeouts and scattered eight hits. He struck out Marcus Semien to end the seventh with the tying run on third base.

Leake's performance was exactly what Seattle needed playing its first home game since Aug. 16. The right-hander stumbled through the first inning giving up three straight hits to open the game, including an RBI double to Jed Lowrie. But he retired 13 of the final 16 batters he faced.

Marc Rzepczynski and Nick Vincent pitched the eighth and Edwin Diaz pitched the ninth for his 31st save.

Seattle got all of its runs in the third inning against Oakland starter Sean Manaea. Mike Zunino led off the inning with an opposite-field



AP Photo/Ted S. Warren

Seattle Mariners starting pitcher Mike Leake throws to the Oakland Athletics during the first inning of a baseball game, Friday in Seattle.

home run, his 20th of the season. Jean Segura followed with a single, stole second and scored on Mitch Haniger's single. A hit batter and walk loaded the bases and Haniger scored on Kyle Seager's sacrifice fly.

Otherwise, Manaea (9-9) was the equal of Leake. Manaea's outing was his longest since throwing seven innings on July 27 against Toronto. It was his third straight start allowing three earned runs or less.

CALLED UP Athletics: Oakland added top prospect INF Franklin Barreto and LHP Sam Moll from Triple-A Nashville. Barreto will be making his second appearance in the majors, while Moll made his major league debut entering in the eighth inning.

Mariners: Seattle added four pitchers for its bullpen — RHPs Shea Simmons, Andrew Moore, Dan Altavilla

and Ryan Garton — while also adding C Mike Marjama.

TRAINER'S ROOM Athletics: RHP Paul Blackburn is likely done for the season. Blackburn took a line drive off his right hand last week against Baltimore and has a deep bone bruise. ... C Josh Phegley and OF Jake Smolinski were activated from the disabled list on Friday. Phegley had been sidelined by an oblique strain while Smolinski has not played in the majors in 2017 due to shoulder surgery.

Mariners: Seattle will have an array of pitchers throwing bullpen sessions through the weekend. Felix Hernandez was first on Friday, followed by Paxton and Tony Zych on Saturday. The Mariners goal is to try and get Paxton and Hernandez back into the rotation by the middle of the month, but that means no setbacks in their throwing programs.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard table containing Local slate, Friday's Games, National League East/Central/West Divisions, MLB American League East/Central/West Divisions, and MLB Northwest League North Division.