

College Football

Ducks loss a good learning experience for Burmeister

By STEVE MIMS
The Register-Guard

EUGENE — The first thing Braxton Burmeister learned about being a starting quarterback was to speak up.

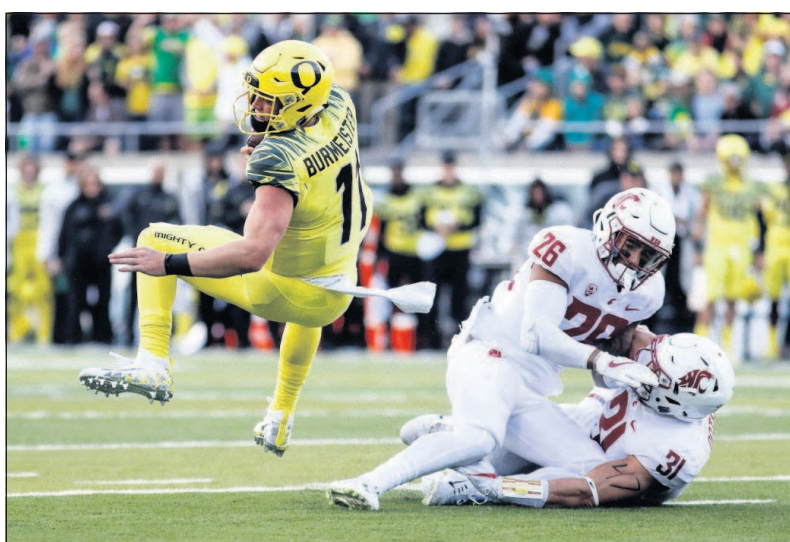
Oregon was called for a false start on each of its first two plays when the linemen struggled to hear the freshman quarterback.

“Sometimes you take those lumps with young guys being in there,” Oregon coach Willie Taggart said after then-No. 11 Washington State spoiled Burmeister’s starting debut with a 33-10 Pac-12 win over Oregon on Saturday night at Autzen Stadium.

Burmeister was looking at a first-and-20 before he had run a play.

“Once it started being an issue, after the second play, we told him he needed to be louder and after that he was loud enough for us to hear him,” Oregon center Jake Hanson said.

What was built up during the week as a quarterback competition between Burmeister and Taylor Alie to replace injured Justin Herbert never materialized because Alie was ruled out Friday because of an undisclosed injury suffered last week in a 45-24 win over California.



Oregon quarterback Braxton Burmeister runs the ball in the first quarter to set up a field goal against Washington State in Saturday’s game in Eugene.

Burmeister, who was on schedule to redshirt until both Herbert and Alie were injured against the Bears, went 15 for 27 for 145 yards and a touchdown against the Cougars. He threw two interceptions in the fourth quarter.

“Braxton did some good things and some bad things,” Taggart said. “He did some things most freshmen do. I think this is a game he can learn a lot from. He got his first game out of the way and

I think he’ll be better as we move forward. He needs a lot more help around him to continue to progress.”

Burmeister completed 6 of 7 passes in the first quarter, including a 30-yard touchdown pass to Jacob Breeiland that put Oregon ahead 10-7. Oregon had 113 yards in that quarter before totaling 164 while going scoreless during the final three quarters. Burmeister threw for 99 yards during that span.

“I thought he handled it pretty well,” Breeiland said. “He was confident, not nervous. There were a couple issues we had when he wasn’t loud enough, but other than that, he did a great job.”

With inexperienced receivers around Burmeister, guard Shane Lemieux said the veterans on the offensive line needed to do more to back up their quarterback.

“I thought he did a great job coming in as a true freshman,” Lemieux said. “We’ve got to put a lot of pressure on the offensive line to step up. With the cadence and everything, we need to help out a little bit.”

With injured senior Charles Nelson missing his third consecutive game and sophomore Dillon Mitchell out with a concussion, the Ducks were without their top two receivers.

Sophomore Brenden Schooler led the Ducks with five catches for 61 yards, including a 39-yarder in the fourth quarter. That was the only completion longer than 14 yards to a wide receiver.

“We’ve got to do a good job as coaches making sure those guys are sharp on their assignments and what they are supposed to do especially with a young quarterback,” Taggart said. “We have to make sure guys know exactly what

they’re doing in order to help them. We had some mistakes like that tonight, especially with our young receivers. They’ll get better.”

All three wide receivers who had a catch for the Ducks are in their first season at the position. Schooler is a converted safety, and Taj Griffin — who had five catches for 29 yards — played running back last year. True freshman Johnny Johnson III had three catches for 17 yards.

“Braxton handled it well for a young guy coming in to play against a ranked team,” Griffin said. “Things will get better, but as a whole he stepped up to the plate.”

Taggart said he told the team in the locker room to keep believing in Burmeister with Herbert likely to miss at least another month with a fractured collarbone.

“He’ll go watch film and learn from it,” Taggart said.

Taggart said it was too soon to determine if Burmeister earned the starting job next week at Stanford or if Alie could challenge him for the job when healthy.

“We’ll evaluate the film and see where we go from there,” Taggart said. “Braxton is going to be better and we are going to go with the guy we have.”

MLB PLAYOFFS: Dodgers advance to NLCS

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would like to do as a starter, and I was able to do that,” Verlander said. “Top to bottom, man, these guys grinded against two of the toughest competitors in this game in Sale and (closer Craig) Kimbrel.”

The Astros will open the ALCS on Friday, either at Cleveland or at home against the New York Yankees. The Indians held a 2-1 edge over the Yankees going into Game 4 of the AL Division Series on Monday night.

The Red Sox forced a Game 4 after losing the first two games in Houston, and then took a 3-2 lead in the fifth on Benintendi’s homer. Bregman tied it before Reddick’s single off closer Craig Kimbrel made it 4-3.

Carlos Beltran added to his postseason legacy with an RBI double in the ninth — an insurance run that became the game-winner when Rafael Devers hit an inside-the-park homer off closer Ken Giles over leaping center fielder George Springer and off the Green Monster toward center.

The 20-year-old Red Sox rookie easily circled the bases before the throw to make it 5-4.

Giles retired the next three batters for the six-out save.

The Astros last reached the league championship series in 2005 as a National League team, and were swept in the World Series by the White Sox. This year’s team, wearing “Houston Strong” patches to support the city that was flooded in Hurricane Harvey, is hoping to finish the job.

“The city of Houston is still rebuilding,” Hinch said.



Los Angeles Dodgers’ Cody Bellinger connects for a solo home run during the fifth inning of game 3 of baseball’s National League Division Series against the Arizona Diamondbacks, Monday in Phoenix.

“It’s easy for us to look in the rearview mirror and think that the hurricane is over (but) the rebuild is not going to stop for a long time. ... We want to win for them, we want to win for us, we want to win because we showed up in spring training to try to win a World Series.”

YANKEES 7, INDIANS 3 — Luis Severino bounced back from his playoff debacle, slumping Aaron Judge delivered a big hit and the New York Yankees took advantage of shoddy defense by Cleveland to beat the Indians 7-3 Monday night and push their AL Division Series to a decisive Game 5.

Gary Sanchez homered and Judge laced an early two-run double for his only hit of the series to go with 12 strikeouts in 15 at-bats.

Cleveland starter Trevor Bauer struggled on three days’ rest and was chased in the second inning. But it was on the wet Yankee Stadium field where the Indians

really flopped, committing a season-high four errors that marked a franchise record for a postseason game and led to six unearned runs. The defending AL champions made only 76 errors all season, the lowest total in the league.

After preventing a three-game sweep with a 1-0 win Sunday night, the wild-card Yankees will start CC Sabathia in Game 5 at Cleveland on Wednesday. Indians ace Corey Kluber gets the ball in a rematch from Game 2, when he was hit hard by New York.

CUBS 3, WASHINGTON 1 — Anthony Rizzo hit a tiebreaking single with two outs in the eighth inning and the Chicago Cubs overcame Max Scherzer’s brilliant performance to beat the Washington Nationals 2-1 on Monday for a 2-1 lead in their NL Division Series.

Scherzer was dominant in his return from a right hamstring injury, carrying

a no-hitter into the seventh. But just like in Game 1, when Chicago was held hitless into the sixth by Stephen Strasburg, the World Series champion Cubs showed off their resilience on the way to a stirring victory.

Albert Almora Jr. had a pinch-hit RBI single in the seventh for Chicago, and Jose Quintana tossed 5 2/3 innings of one-run ball in his postseason debut.

Game 4 is Tuesday.

DODGERS 3, DIAMONDBACKS 1 —

Cody Bellinger homered, drove in two runs and flipped over a dugout railing to steal an out for a dominant Yu Darvish, helping the Los Angeles Dodgers beat the Arizona Diamondbacks 3-1 Monday night to finish a three-game sweep in their NL Division Series.

Darvish, acquired from Texas in a trade deadline deal, struck out seven over five innings to outpitch Arizona’s Zack Greinke and earn the big Japanese right-hander his first postseason victory in three tries.

Four Los Angeles relievers combined to preserve a three-hitter. Kenley Jansen worked around a single by David Peralta for a three-out save, striking out Paul Goldschmidt to end it. Only four batters reached base all night for the Diamondbacks, including Daniel Descalso’s homer.

Bellinger hit his homer in the fifth, then made a daring catch to end the bottom of the inning. The rookie first baseman fell into the Dodgers dugout as he snagged Jeff Mathis’ popup, nearly dropping into the lap of manager Dave Roberts.



Stephen Carr (7), of USC, tackles Oregon State running back Thomas Tyner Saturday at Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum during OSU’s 38-10 loss.

ANDERSEN: Program was sliding backwards in 2017 after progressing in 2016

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the program to move forward and concentrate on the rest of this season,” Andersen said in a statement. “Coaching is not about the mighty dollar. It is about teaching and putting young men in a position to succeed on and off the field. Success comes when all parties involved are moving in the same direction.”

Barnes said the fact that Andersen waived his contract was testament to his character.

“That’s just who Gary is. That’s a statement of who the man is and his integrity and the honor with which he conducts his business,” Barnes said. “At the end of the day, he felt that was an important piece to this, and obviously it creates a clear path.”

Barnes said that there were no issues with health or anything that would warrant firing Andersen for cause.

Andersen was in his third season with the Beavers and the team appeared to be sliding backward this season after showing some progress in winning four games last year, including a victory against rival Oregon that snapped an eight-game losing streak in the Civil War series for the Beavers.

Players reacted on social media, among them freshman receiver Isaiah Hodgins, who tweeted: “This one hurts.”

During his tenure Andersen struggled to find a starting quarterback in the face of numerous injuries.

Darell 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 Marcus McMoryion into the starting role for the Beavers’ final six games.

The Beavers brought in

community college transfer Jake Luton this season and he started before he sustained a thoracic spine fracture in a loss to Washington State.

Andersen finished 7-23 at Oregon State.

“No better leader of young men... gave me the opportunity nobody else in the country would! Forever grateful for him!” Blount posted to Twitter.

Andersen came to Oregon State under unusual circumstances after he abruptly resigned as Wisconsin coach in December 2014 after two seasons in Madison. He went 19-7 with the Badgers, but parted ways with the program after becoming frustrated with some of Wisconsin’s academic admissions policies and standards.

The Utah native previously spent four seasons at Utah State, working with Barnes as AD, and led the Aggies to an 11-2 season in 2012. He was also a longtime assistant at the University of Utah.

The players were told late Monday morning.

“Like any change, and I won’t diminish this, it’s an emotional time for our student-athletes, it just is. Particularly the surprise that it was. They all gave him a big bear hug,” Barnes said. “What’s so important for us now, not only as a football staff but as an athletic program, is to put our arms around those student-athletes and get them redirected. We have a pretty short window before we’ve got to get them back on the field. We want to make sure their minds are right, and will do whatever we need to do to make sure they’re in good position.”

Barnes said the school would immediately begin the search for a new head coach.

PROTESTS: Giants owner John Mara wants his players to stand, but still respects players’ rights

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DeMaurice Smith said Jones contradicted assurances last week from Commissioner Roger Goodell and New York Giants President John Mara that players could express themselves without reprisals.

“I look forward to the day when everyone in management can unite and truly embrace and articulate what the flag stands for, liberty and justice for all, instead of some of them just talking about standing,” Smith said. “We look forward to continuing our talks with them on this very issue.”

Many of the NFL’s 32 teams have held meetings in various forms to discuss the issue since Trump said more than two weeks ago during a rally in Alabama that owners should fire players who kneel for the anthem.

In some cases, teams have struggled with their responses.

After Trump’s criticism,

the Pittsburgh Steelers agreed to stay off the field before the anthem. But Army veteran Alejandro Villanueva, an offensive lineman, stood at the edge of a tunnel with his teammates in darkness behind him during the anthem two weeks ago.

Villanueva said he was not making a political statement or defying his teammates, calling it a misunderstanding that was “very embarrassing on my end.”

Miami coach Adam Gase recently created a team policy requiring players either to stand or wait in the tunnel. Three chose to stay off the field Sunday at home against Tennessee — Michael Thomas, Kenny Stills and Julius Thomas. All three have knelt in the past.

Asked why he was responding to questions on the topic after previously declining to comment, Gase said, “Because I thought it was time for us to address it.”

After several meetings over two days before a

Monday night game in Arizona two weeks ago, the Cowboys and Jones knelt arm-in-arm before the anthem. All of them stood during the anthem, with arms still locked. Otherwise, the Cowboys have stood on the sideline.

The Denver Broncos decided two weeks ago that they would stop kneeling after coach Vance Joseph met with his leadership group. The Broncos stood before their most recent game against Oakland, with receiver Brandon Marshall raising a fist. Denver was off Sunday.

“We just feel like as a team, it’s bringing more negative attention ... than it is positive,” safety Justin Simmons said. “So, we made our point the one time we did it. The awareness of the social injustices are out there.”

During their bye last week, Atlanta players and coaches had a discussion mediated by a representative from the Ross Initiative in

Sports for Equality. Falcons owner Arthur Blank invited the outside perspective, and the team has decided to stand during the anthem.

“There’s no policy that was written or spoken about,” coach Dan Quinn said. “It’s more one that was really in the heart of brotherhood, that what we do, we’ll do it together.”

Jones isn’t the only owner who feels strongly about players standing for the anthem, but there have been no indications of teams requiring their players to stand. Mara has told Giants players he wants them to stand but supports their right to do otherwise.

“As a team we’ve had our talks about it and we’re good to go,” said Redskins running back Chris Thompson, among several Washington players to deny reports that they are required to stand. “Our ownership, we’ve all talked about it. I think on our end, we’re good.”