

OSU FOOTBALL

Smith focused on improving and competing

By STEVE GRESS
Albany Democrat-Herald

Jonathan Smith got his first taste of Pac-12 Media Day on Wednesday morning as he met with assembled media and answered numerous questions.

Oregon State’s first-year head coach — who was a standout quarterback at the turn of the century when the Beavers reached new heights — has quite the task ahead, one that might best be described as daunting.

Smith’s rebuilding job certainly doesn’t start off easily with a trip to perennial national power Ohio State on Sept. 1.

“It’s a great opportunity,” Smith said. “I’ve never been in that stadium. I bet none of these kids have been in the state, let alone the stadium. So it’s one way to start. We’re going to go in there swinging. We’re going to go in there with an opportunity, we only get 12 Saturdays guaranteed, and see where we’re at.

“I think it’s great to be on a national stage, at a national power, to experience that. But really be focused on improvement from that game to the next to the next and the process of it.”

Improvement is one of two key areas, along with competing, that Smith mentioned will help the Beavers find success — whether on the scoreboard or in the growth and development of the program — this season and beyond.

“I don’t want to shy away from anything week in and week out,” Smith said. “At the end of the day, I think it’s about winning football games. I think it’s import-



AP Photo/Jae C. Hong

Oregon State head coach Jonathan Smith speaks at the Pac-12 Conference NCAA college football Media Day.

ant to get the foundation right and being able to build things off of that.

“But I want to see them competing for 60 minutes, and I want to see them improving and working to improve from Game 1 to Game 12.”

After what many of the players have gone through the past few seasons — especially last year’s 1-11 campaign that saw coach Gary Andersen depart after six games — Smith knows it will take some time and effort to change the culture.

“I think it’s important to work at it on a daily basis,” he said. “You don’t just talk about it, and have a team meeting two days later and

talk about it again. I think it’s a day-to-day process. I think you point out when it’s going well, you point it out when it’s not going right and it’s lower than the standard.

“So I think the culture in that process is a day-today thing, and we’re working at it.”

Still, Smith knows that if wins don’t come, that process can become more difficult to preach.

“That’s not easy. It’s not,” he said. “You’ve got to work at it and continue to sell the message and continue to improve. But at the end of the day, the thing is about winning and finding ways to win games, and that’s definitely a huge piece of

building.”

While it’s likely nothing will come easy this season, and most people outside of the program don’t expect much success, Smith said he likes the positive vibe he gets from around Corvallis and the fan base.

“I think there is some excitement. I really do,” Smith said. “I think it’s a fresh start, obviously ... with me coming back. We’ve got a lot of former players coming back, which has been a bunch of fun, and they’re excited.

“I think that’s important for our players to see some of these former guys that have played, done some great things, to come back,

talk about their experience at Oregon State and Corvallis to really let these guys know that it is a great place. You can do some great things here. So I think it’s an exciting time.”

LINDGREN WILL CALL PLAYS

While offensive coordinator at Washington the past four seasons, one of Smith’s roles with the Huskies was to call plays.

That won’t be part of the job description this season as Smith focuses on a plethora of other tasks on game days.

Instead, offensive coordinator/quarterbacks coach Brian Lindgren will take on that responsibility. But

Smith will likely have some input.

“I’m going to be a little bit involved, but I feel like that whole offensive side with Brian, Jim Michalczik (run game coordinator/offensive line/associate head coach), it’s in good hands,” Smith said. “Those guys have done it a long time in this league, and they’ll do it.”

Will Smith miss it? “Hundred percent. I love that part, the strategy, the getting ready to call, all those things that come with it,” he said. “But I felt like taking on this job, it’s really important to let your coaches kind of coach. And then I needed to learn what this head coaching piece is like and try to elevate my game from Year 1 to Year 2 to Year 3 and that aspect.”

RILEY’S NEW ROLE

Mike Riley spent two terms as head coach at Oregon State and was the tight ends coach under Smith until taking a job with the San Antonio franchise in the Alliance of American Football League. But he’ll still have a role on Smith’s staff.

Riley won’t be coaching tight ends — Brian Wozniak was elevated to that position on Tuesday — but will still serve as a bit of a consultant and more.

“He’ll be in an off-field role, so he won’t be coaching the players on the day-to-day. But a lot of that, whether it’s the game-plan aspect in identifying recruits, getting visits to people on campus, knowing this league, knowing high school coaches, all of that he’ll contribute to,” Smith said.

“But I want to see them competing for 60 minutes, and I want to see them improving and working to improve from Game 1 to Game 12.”

— xJonathan Smith, Oregon State head football coach

PAC-12 FOOTBALL

Pac-12 teams cast wide net for D-linemen

By DAN GREENSPAN
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Herm Edwards is back in college football for the first time since 1989, but the Arizona State head coach understands success starts with a dominant defensive front.

“The one that always holds up in defense is you’ve got to knock the quarterback down,” Edwards said at Pac-12 media day. “You’ve got to storm the castle and hit the guy.”

Defending Pac-12 champion Southern California led the FBS in sacks last season, tied with Clemson at 3.29 sacks per game. Washington, the preseason pick to win the conference this season in the annual media poll, averaged three sacks per game to rank in the top 15 nationally. Not surprisingly, where to find defensive linemen and edge rushers and how

to refine their talents were major topics of conversation at the Pac-12’s annual kick-off event in Hollywood.

First-year Oregon head coach Mario Cristobal’s understanding of the importance of quality and depth in the trenches was reinforced during his time as an assistant at Alabama from 2013-16, watching fearsome defenses powered by the likes of Jonathan Allen and A’Shawn Robinson reach the College Football Playoff three times and claim the national championship at the end of the 2015 season.

But whereas the Crimson Tide have their pick of elite prospects from recruiting hotbeds across the South, the Ducks and other Pac-12 teams do not have nearly as many ready-made defenders to choose from. With that in mind, Cristobal has been extending offers across the country to address those



Oregon head coach Mario Cristobal speaks at the Pac-12 Conference NCAA college football Media Day.

needs in the 2019 and 2020 recruiting classes.

“You’ll go to the moon to get defensive linemen,” Cristobal said. “Wherever they are because they are hard (to find), man. Big bodies that are active, that can knock you back and take over. There’s no answer for a great defensive lineman.”

Utah has proven that axiom to be true during its

brief time in the Pac-12 by placing an emphasis on player development.

Kyle Whittingham relies on his staff to find defenders with length and athleticism, trusting that power and mass can be developed once they arrive on campus. It is an approach that has helped the Utes produce seven first-team all-conference defensive ends and tackles since

the conference expanded in 2011.

“We’ve got to project and evaluate,” Whittingham said. “They may be underweight in high school, but we know in our strength program that a 240-pound guy is going to be 290 or 300 pounds.”

Cristobal said the SEC has the edge in defensive line play, but the Pac-12 has enough talent available to make up for a lack of top-end contributors, citing Utah as a model for where he aspires to take Oregon.

“There are a good number of schools in the Pac-12 that have the kind of depth, the size and the girth and power, and everyone else is trying to get there, us being one of them,” Cristobal said.

The quicker that happens could help address the perception problems plaguing the Pac-12. Oregon had that caliber of linemen in 2014 when it advanced to the CFP

title game, securing the conference’s only playoff win to date in the semifinal at the 2015 Rose Bowl over Florida State with future first-round draft picks Arik Armstrong and DeForest Buckner anchoring the defensive front.

The Oregon defense in 2014 isn’t remembered as a dominant unit that smothered the opposition, but made up for the yards and points it allowed with takeaways and stops on third down and in the red zone. To Edwards, those are the measures to define success defending prolific spread offenses.

“You’re not going to stop people from gaining yards. It’s impossible,” Edwards said. “And I say that when I went to Alabama and I watched some of these great defenses with six or seven NFL players, they don’t stop people.”

Baseball

MLB AMERICAN LEAGUE				
East Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	71	33	.683	—
New York	65	36	.644	4½
Tampa Bay	53	50	.515	17½
Toronto	46	55	.455	23½
Baltimore	29	74	.282	41½
Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Cleveland	55	46	.545	—
Minnesota	48	53	.475	7
Detroit	44	60	.423	12½
Chicago	36	66	.353	19½
Kansas City	31	71	.304	24½
West Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Houston	67	37	.644	—
Seattle	61	41	.598	5
Oakland	61	43	.587	6
Los Angeles	52	52	.500	15
Texas	42	62	.404	25
Thursday's Games				
L.A. Angels 12, Chicago White Sox 8				
N.Y. Yankees 7, Kansas City 2				
Tampa Bay 4, Baltimore 3				
Minnesota 2, Boston 1				
Oakland 7, Texas 6				
Friday's Games				
Kansas City (Keller 3-4) at N.Y. Yankees (Sabathia 6-4), 4:05 p.m.				
Tampa Bay (Archer 3-4) at Baltimore (Cashner 2-9), 4:05 p.m.				
Cleveland (Carrasco 12-5) at Detroit (Fiers 7-6), 4:10 p.m.				
Minnesota (Lynn 7-8) at Boston (Sale 11-4), 4:10 p.m.				
Texas (Gallardo 4-1) at Houston (Keuchel 8-8), 5:10 p.m.				
Toronto (Stroman 3-7) at Chicago White Sox (Lopez 4-8), 5:10 p.m.				

Oakland (Manaea 9-6) at Colorado (Freeland 8-6), 5:40 p.m.				
Seattle (LeBlanc 6-1) at L.A. Angels (Heaney 6-6), 7:07 p.m.				
NATIONAL LEAGUE East Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Philadelphia	58	44	.569	—
Atlanta	54	45	.545	2½
Washington	51	51	.500	7
New York	43	57	.430	14
Miami	44	60	.423	15
Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Chicago	60	42	.588	—
Milwaukee	59	46	.562	2½
Pittsburgh	53	51	.510	8
St. Louis	51	51	.500	9
Cincinnati	45	58	.437	15½
West Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Los Angeles	57	46	.553	—
Arizona	56	48	.538	1½
Colorado	54	47	.535	2
San Francisco	52	52	.500	5½
San Diego	42	63	.400	16
Thursday's Games				
Chicago Cubs 7, Arizona 6				
N.Y. Mets 12, Pittsburgh 6				
Washington 10, Miami 3				
Philadelphia 9, Cincinnati 4				
L.A. Dodgers 8, Atlanta 2				
Milwaukee 7, San Francisco 5				
Friday's Games				
N.Y. Mets (Vargas 2-6) at Pittsburgh (Nova 6-6), 4:05 p.m.				
Philadelphia (Pivetta 6-8) at Cincinnati (DeSclafani 4-3), 4:10 p.m.				
Washington (Scherzer 13-5) at Miami (Lopez 2-1), 4:10 p.m.				
L.A. Dodgers (Kershaw 3-5) at Atlanta (Foltynewicz 7-6), 4:35 p.m.				
Chicago Cubs (Montgomery 3-3) at St.				

Louis (Weaver 5-9), 5:15 p.m.				
Oakland (Manaea 9-6) at Colorado (Freeland 8-6), 5:40 p.m.				
Arizona (Greinke 11-5) at San Diego (Pardomo 1-5), 7:10 p.m.				
Milwaukee (Anderson 6-7) at San Francisco (Bumgarner 3-3), 7:15 p.m.				
MLB NORTHWEST LEAGUE Second Half North Division				
	W	L	Pct.	GB
Spokane (Rangers)	3	0	1.000	—
Everett (Mariners)	2	1	.667	1
Vancouver (Blue Jays)	1	2	.333	2
Tri-City (Padres)	0	3	.000	3
South Division				
	W	L	Pct.	GB
Eugene (Cubs)	2	1	.667	—
Hillsboro (D-Backs)	2	1	.667	—
Boise (Rockies)	1	2	.333	1
Salem-Keizer (Giants)	1	2	.333	1
Thursday's Games				
Everett 3, Vancouver 2				
Spokane 5, Tri-City 3				
Eugene 3, Salem-Keizer 2				
Hillsboro 5, Boise 2				
Friday's Games				
Tri-City at Boise, 6:15 p.m.				
Hillsboro at Spokane, 6:30 p.m.				
Everett at Salem-Keizer, 6:35 p.m.				
Eugene at Vancouver, 7:05 p.m.				

Soccer

MLS EASTERN CONFERENCE						
	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Atlanta United FC	13	4	5	44	46	25
New York City FC	13	4	4	43	42	24
New York	13	5	2	41	40	19
Columbus	9	7	6	33	27	27
Montreal	9	12	1	28	28	37

New England	7	7	7	28	33	32
Philadelphia	8	10	3	27	29	34
Chicago	6	11	5	23	34	43
Orlando City	7	13	1	22	29	47
Toronto FC	5	11	4	19	32	39
D.C. United	3	9	5	14	27	34
WESTERN CONFERENCE						
	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
FC Dallas	11	3	6	39	32	23
Los Angeles FC	10	5	6	36	44	35
Sporting K.C.	9	5	6	33	37	27
L.A. Galaxy	9	7	5	32	39	33
Portland	8	7	3	31	28	24
Real Salt Lake	9	9	3	30	31	39
Minnesota United	9	11	1	28	33	40
Houston	7	7	6	27	38	30
Vancouver	7	9	5	26	30	42
Seattle	6	9	5	23	19	23
Colorado	4	11	5	17	24	34
San Jose	2	12	6	12	29	40
NOTE: Three points for victory, one point for tie.						
Thursday's Games						
New York City FC 2, Orlando City 0						
L.A. Galaxy 2, Los Angeles FC 2						
Saturday's Games						
Atlanta United FC at Montreal, 4 p.m.						
Chicago at Toronto FC, 4 p.m.						
Columbus at New York, 4 p.m.						
Colorado at D.C. United, 5 p.m.						
FC Dallas at Sporting Kansas City, 5:30 p.m.						
Houston at Portland, 6 p.m.						
Minnesota United at Vancouver, 7 p.m.						
Real Salt Lake at San Jose, 7:30 p.m.						
Sunday's Games						
New York City FC at Seattle, 2 p.m.						
Orlando City at LA Galaxy, 6:30 p.m.						

Golf

PGA TOUR RBC Canadian Open	
Thursday	

At Glen Abbey Golf Club
