

OREGON STATE FOOTBALL

# Defense dominates Beavers' first scrimmage

BY LES GEHRETT

Albany Democrat-Herald

Through the first two weeks of fall camp, the Oregon State defense seemed to be a step ahead of the offense. That impression was confirmed on Saturday, Aug. 13 when the Beaver defense kept the offense out of the end zone throughout an approximately 90-minute scrimmage at Reser Stadium.

The defensive effort included a goal-line stand. Quarterback Tristan Gebbia had connected with tight end J.T. Byrne on a 30-yard pass to put the offense just outside the goal line. But the defense stopped runs on first and second downs and forced an incompletion on third down. A fourth-down rushing attempt by Isaiah Newell was stopped for no gain.

"They got us down to the 2-yard line and it was just that bend, don't break mentality. They're not in until they're in. Just keep fighting. That's what you saw there," said redshirt

junior linebacker John McCartan.

Coach Jonathan Smith and his staff set up the scrimmage to give a lot of players the opportunity to take part. The first round of the scrimmage began with the offense at its own 25-yard line. Quarterback Chance Nolan went out with the first unit and put together a short drive highlighted by a catch and run by Tyjon Lindsey for 21 yards. The drive ended with a 49-yard-field goal attempt, which both Everett Hayes and Atticus Sappington missed.

That was Hayes' last miss of the day. He later connected on field goals from 41, 50, 35 and 24 yards.

Gebbia led the second drive of the day, which ended with the defense stuffing a rushing attempt on a fourth-and-1. Later in the scrimmage the offense once again faced a fourth-and-1. The coaches called on Deshaun Fenwick and the redshirt junior gained the first down.



Head coach Jonathan Smith observes Oregon State Beavers football practice in Corvallis, Oregon on Tuesday, Aug. 9, 2022.

Fenwick had a few carries and Trey Lowe saw a little bit of action, but it was a fairly light day for the team's most experienced backs. Instead, the coaches gave opportunities to freshman Damien Martinez, redshirt junior Kanoa Shannon and Newell, a redshirt freshman. Jake Reichle, a true freshman from Lake Oswego, also saw some action.

"We're rotating those backs," Smith said. "Just give them some chances. We've still got a good amount of camp left to see how they go. They will be in that mix and Deshaun. Damien had some good carries and Newell's coming on." Nolan, Gebbia and Ben Gulbranson took turns leading the offense and true freshmen Travis Throckmorton

and Dom Montiel also had opportunities during the scrimmage. During the second round of the scrimmage the offense started at its own 40-yard line and for the final phase the offense got the ball at the opposing 25.

Throckmorton threw the first interception of the day when he was forced out of the pocket and tried to make a throw down the sideline. Sophomore defensive back Skyler Thomas made a leaping catch and came down in bounds to create the turnover.

Redshirt freshman defensive back Jack Kane later had an interception on a throw from Gulbranson.

But turnovers weren't the offense's primary issue. Several drives were stymied by penalties as the offense repeatedly put itself in third-and-long situations.

Smith said those struggles were not unexpected in a first scrimmage and after going back and reviewing the tape, the team will focus on clean-

ing up problems which were revealed in the scrimmage.

The team will have Sunday off and then return to practice on Monday. The second scrimmage of training camp will be held on Saturday. The team will open the season at home against Boise State on Sept. 3.

Notes: Redshirt junior receiver Jesiah Irish had three catches for good yardage. His best play may have been on a fourth-and-10 when he caught a pass from Gebbia and broke a tackle for a 17-yard gain. ... Starting tight end Luke Musgrave saw limited duty in the scrimmage. Byrne and redshirt freshman Carter Neuman took advantage of their opportunities and had multiple receptions. ... Throckmorton bounced back from his interception to lead a solid drive which resulted in a 35-yard field goal. The freshman's best throw on the drive came on a 28-yard completion to redshirt freshman Jeremiah Noga.

OREGON FOOTBALL

# Offense wins early, defense late in Ducks' scrimmage

BY JAMES CREPEA

oregonlive.com

EUGENE — The Oregon Ducks' offense had the early advantage and the defense took over late during the team's first scrimmage of fall camp.

That's the assessment of first-year coach Dan Lanning from his team's eighth pre-season practice, the second in full pads and UO's first scrimmage Saturday at Autzen Stadium.

"Good first scrimmage," Lanning said. "I thought the competition was high. Offense really moved the ball early on, had some early success. Our defense had two big stops in two-minute that was impressive on their side. ... It's good to see the yin and yang, but plenty to clean up on both sides."

The quarterbacks had similar performances, with each leading scoring drives and two throwing interceptions, according to Lanning. At least one of those coming during the opening series of a two-minute drill in a must-throw situation on a fourth down, which safety Bennett Williams intercepted.

"If you have one turnover, that's one too many," Lanning

## No clear leader in Oregon QB competition

BY JAMES CREPEA

oregonlive.com

EUGENE — Oregon Ducks' quarterbacks had similar performances during the team's first scrimmage of fall camp, and through a week of preseason practice, there isn't a clear leader in coach Dan Lanning's assessment.

Bo Nix, Ty Thompson and Jay Butterfield all continue to vie for the starting job, though Nix is widely viewed as the favorite since he has three years of starting experience at Auburn and outperformed his younger teammates during the spring game.

Following the closed scrimmage on Saturday, Aug. 13 at Autzen Stadium, Lanning said each quarterback led scoring drives, two threw interceptions and he didn't know if any had separated himself from the group after eight practices in fall camp.

"I think everybody's had shining moments

and I don't think there's one that separated themselves out from the other," Lanning said. "I think there's certainly room for improvement for each one of those guys and they've all had really good moments and they've had all had really poor moments. Again, I'll say this, I feel really confident we have quarterbacks we can win with which is a big positive. ...

"I like to know that you have multiple quarterbacks that you feel really good about and that's where I'm at right now, is I feel really good about that?"

Nix has worked with first-team offensive players during the early periods of practice so far in camp, while Thompson has worked with first- and second-team players and Butterfield has worked behind them. But that rotation could change after the initial periods that have been opening for viewing, none of which have included so much as 7-on-7 passing drills.

said. "On the same note our goal on defense is to be plus-three every game."

There were also some explosive plays, though Lanning didn't detail who was on the receiving end, and each of the five scholarship running backs had opportunities.

He said it wasn't only the second- and third-team defenses, which have far less experienced secondaries, that

gave up big plays.

"I thought our offense did a good job with our tempo and created some issues," Lanning said. "We've got to get better at that on the defensive side of the ball. ... I think the offense had the upper hand in moments. There were some explosive plays, but certainly not just against the two group or the one group, it was really collectively across the board. We

got to get better there. What

I was excited to see is I didn't see as many mental busts and errors. The majority of our errors came because of the chaos that we created for ourselves, not necessarily because of the players making mistakes."

Lanning said the scrimmage was "relatively clean" in terms of penalties. Also, special teams did go live to get the first true assessments of new punters Adam Barry and Ross James, and new kickers Andrew Boyle and Alex Bales.

"I thought, overall, our punters did a good job of punting," Lanning said. "We didn't get as many field goals in this scrimmage as I wanted to. We probably could've done a better job of working those in earlier in practice, but when we did

they hit some big kicks there at the end."

Lanning wouldn't address whether injured offensive linemen T.J. Bass, Malaesala Aumavae-Laulu, Faaope Laloulu or Kawika Rogers participated on Saturday.

Asked specifically who played on the left side of the offensive line, Lanning said, the Ducks had "a couple of guys shuffling over there." Bass and Steven Jones ordinarily play on the left side, but freshmen Dave Luli and Josh Conerly Jr. have been seeing reps during the early periods of practice.

Oregon will resume practice next week with a second scrimmage next Saturday that will serve as one of the last major opportunities for players to make moves on the depth chart.

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