

University of Oregon Football Media Conference

Friday, October 23, 2020

Eugene, Oregon, USA

Coach Player Test1

Postgame Press Conference



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The Oregon football team was in full pads Thursday, and will be again Saturday when the Ducks hold their second major scrimmage of preseason camp. That will come two weeks before Oregon opens the 2020 season, making these prime evaluation days for the players and staff.

Perhaps nowhere are there more decisions to be finalized than on the offensive line. Oregon is looking to replace the top six players in the rotation from last season, and has eight or nine candidates to play the five positions along the line.

Given the need to replace five seniors as well as Outland Trophy winner Penei Sewell, the returning linemen know there may be questions about the unit. But the Ducks believe they have answers.

"We feel like, since the old heads left, a lot of people think of us as the weakest link," sophomore Steven Jones said. "And none of us are about that."

Jones might be the best bet to serve as Sewell's heir apparent at left tackle for the Ducks. But options abound. Senior George Moore has taken reps at left tackle with the No. 1 offense at times, as has junior college transfer T.J. Bass.

Moore has played guard as well in this camp, for the first time in his UO career. Malaesala Aumavae-Laulu also can play guard or tackle, and Dawson Jaramillo has played both tackle and center. Ryan Walk and Jonathan Denis are equally comfortable at center or guard, and Alex Forsyth is so versatile, teammates call him "Tool Box."

Offensive line assistant Alex Mirabal said this week he has cross-trained his group to play on both the left and right

side of the line, to maximize versatility. An offensive line always needs to be prepared to reshuffle in the event of an injury, but the COVID pandemic — and the potential for absences due to safety protocols — places an extra premium on flexibility this year.

"Our chemistry is starting to come together, slowly but surely," Jones said.