



April 7th, 2007: California Football Scrimmage Notes

PARTICIPATION:

- Desean Jackson did not play
- Robert Jordan wearing a yellow shell, did not play too much in scrimmages
- Jeremy Ross participated in wide receiver drills, but not in the scrimmage (except lining up as a punt returner on a non-contact rep)
- Running backs: neither Tracy Slocum or Bryan Schutte participated in the scrimmage. The fullbacks (Will Ta'ufo'ou, Brian Holley, and R.J. Garrett) appeared to sub in as 3rd string tailbacks
- Kevin Riley did not play
- Offensive linemen Kevin Bemoll and Mike Gibson did not play, though Gibson had on his jersey. #70 Mark Boskovich started at RG in place of Kevin Bemoll who had started the previous scrimmage.
- As we know, some other players such as DE Keith Browner and Norris Malele are not playing for now.
- I did not see defensive backs Bernard Hicks or Charles Amadi play in the scrimmage and can't remember whether I saw them in drills
- Gary Doxy had a red shell on and did not participate in scrimmages
- Zack Follett was back

Apparent current depth chart (only for players that scrimmaged - e.g. no Desean, Riley, Slocum, others), slashes indicate where I could not tell who was ahead of whom, or that they played together:

OFFENSE – SCRIMMAGE DEPTH CHART

QB - 1. Nate Longshore, 2. Kyle Reed, 3. Bryan Van Meter

RB - 1. Justin Forsett, 2. James Montgomery, 3. (assorted fullbacks)

FB - 1. Will Ta'ufo'ou, 2. Brian Holley/R.J. Garrett

WR - 1. Lavelle Hawkins (yellow shell)/Robert Jordan/Sam Desa, Others(2./3.): LaReylle Cunningham/Daniel Lofton/Nyan Boateng/Sean Young/Akex Stroud/Cameron Toler (didn't see Drew Glover)

TE - 1. Craig Stevens, 2. Cameron Morrah, 3. Skylar Curran/Garry Graffort/Julian Arthur

LT - 1. Chet Teofilo, 2. Justin Prueitt

LG - 1. Bryan De La Puente, 2. Mark Gray/Chris Guarnero

C - 1. Alex Mack, 2. Mark Gray/Chris Guarnero

RG - 1. Mark Boskovich, 2. Richard Fisher



RT - 1. Mike Tepper, 2. Alex Mack/Matt Laird

Regarding OL: There was sporadic reversing of positions among the O-linemen (other than just the well known 'Mack at RT' switch). Tepper in fact played LT on one series, and Pruiett and Laird played at the opposite tackle on at least a couple series. Also, on second string, Gray and Guarnero sometimes appeared to be switching off who was center and who was LG between series.

DEFENSE – SCRIMMAGE DEPTH CHART

DE - 1. Cody Jones/Tyson Alualu, 2. Rulon Davis/John Allen, 3. Tad Smith/Jon Karacozoff

DT - 1. Matt Malele/Mika Kane, 2. Derrick Hill/Mike Costanzo, 3. (none - I only noticed 4 people playing DT during scrimmages)

LB - 1/2. Worrell Williams/Greg Van Hoesen/Anthony Felder/Justin Moye/Zack Follett/Eddie Young (all 6 rotated a lot between 1st/2nd string), 3. Matt Russi/Shea McIntyre/Kyle Kirst(?)/Mike Mohamed, possibly others

Safety - 1. Thomas Decoud/Robert Peele, 2/3. Marcus Ezeff/Brandon Hampton/Brett Johnson/Kenny Frank

CB - 1. Syd'Quan Thompson/Jesse Brooks, 2. Darian Hagan/Brandon Jones, 3. ? Don't remember if anyone else played corner

OBSERVATIONS

- Kevin Riley didn't play, but to my mind, clearly Kyle Reed is our second best quarterback behind Nate Longshore. Once he picks a receiver, Reed flicks effortless bullets. He is still inconsistent and sometimes misses reads and holds on to the ball too long, but is certainly looking a notch and a half better than last year. Reed still can't quite match Longshore's touch on deep balls, but that speaks more to Nate's strength in that area. I thought one play encapsulated Reed's day well, after Rulon Davis' second sack (see below), Reed rolled right and threw a dart back against his body (to Cameron Toler?) for an 11 yard gain. Not sure if it was the right throw, but it was pretty impressive.

- Longshore had at least one deep sideline bomb in drills that settled perfectly over the outside shoulder just inside the sidelines, and several of his usual strong deep middle post/seam throws. On the other hand, Nate still has trouble with his outs, which are often off-line. Another fan (James Cha) has told me he believes it's due to Nate's relying too much on torso rotation rather than turning and throwing. Despite that, Nate is clearly #1. He made a particularly beautiful read on a zone flood in the red zone, sharply picking Lavelle Hawkins out for an easy TD when the defensive back went with the other receiver. Longshore also hit Hawkins on a quick goal-line slant at the end of the scrimmage just after throwing the same slant to Lavelle a bit late the previous play and having it knocked away by Syd'Quan Thompson for an incompletion.

- Pass rush, pass rush, pass rush ... perhaps a little better than 2 weeks ago. Still didn't notice much from our starting DEs (or perhaps our starting OTs just are great), but Rulon Davis had a very good day. First he chased down Reed on a rollout right for a short coverage sack, then he looped inside from left end to deliver a monster sack on Reed for a big loss. Jon Karacozoff had a nice sack too.
- Sam Desa had a couple nice catches, including a beautiful TD on 4th down from Nate - shades of Desean on a couple nifty cuts to the inside to reach paydirt. This came 2 plays after a 20 yarder on 3rd and 24 to Hawkins on a seam route in the zone from Longshore. Other receivers: Boateng shows a good knack for getting open as well and made a couple catches, though on at least one occasion, Van Meter threw too late to capitalize.
- I've been waiting to see something from TE Cameron Morrah and he did finally have a nice catch and run for a big play from Nate that was brought back by holding
- LB Zack Follett is Baaaack. Actually, one of his most noticeable plays was a crushing crackback block on Center Alex Mack during a Syd'Quan Thompson interception runback on Nate, where Thompson was on the offensive right side and cut back across the field during his return. Worrell Williams did not stand out as much as he did two weeks ago, but still looked fairly strong, along with Anthony Felder. I think we look good at linebacker overall.
- In addition to Syd'Quan, Decoud had a nice pick and Darian Hagan a beautiful leaping one on a single coverage bomb, working against Daniel Lofton. Didn't see as much of Brandon Hampton (or Bernard Hicks at all) in the scrimmage as I expected, and was a little surprised to see Jesse Brooks as first string CB.
- Still concerned about our protection for our punting (i.e. punts being blocked) and coverage for both punts and kickoffs. It looked pretty shaky today. Hawkins took the first kickoff back to the house, but he basically ran straight through a gaping hole in the middle of the field without making much of a move. Good speed, but looked like bad coverage too. On the punts themselves, there was a funny moment as, with starter Andrew Larson out, backup punter #35 Ryan Theimer dropped the snap and as it skittered away, he ran after it and just kicked it soccer style along the ground in frustration, rolling out of bounds for a 25 yard punt or so. A lot better than the alternative, I guess!
- No long gains on running plays. I like both Forsett and Montgomery, but we definitely lost a great, great player in Lynch (duh). I don't see defenses being as afraid of these two as they were of Marshawn, at least to start with. Nate will definitely have fewer chances to capitalize on safeties cheating in now. Both the tailbacks did have some decent 5-ish yard gains up the middle and a short TD run each. Forsett is still very quick to hit the hole, Montgomery less so, but does have a nice little off tackle move and cut upfield. There was no true third string tailback in either scrimmage so far, so it's been interesting to see lots of sets with 2 fullbacks in the backfield, with at least Tau'ufou and Holley both making several runs from the tailback position (can't remember if Garrett ever did).
- Tom Schneider still looks like the best kicker (over Jordan Kay, Nick Demopoulos, Joe Robles). At the end of the scrimmage, the team did the usual 'surround and heckle' routine as the 4 kickers tried 27, 37, and 47 yard kicks from alternate hash marks. The



final kick was from the middle of the field by Schneider from about 40, and just like last scrimmage, there appeared to be a wager on the kick where all the players would have to do sprints in case of a miss. 2 weeks ago, Kay missed the final kick (bad snap?) and everyone did sprints. Schneider hit, hence no sprints this time.