

Spartan Footballers Hosting Annual Bixby Classic Scrimmage

By Ron Holt

Faced once again with a Zero Week opener, Bixby's Spartan footballers will be focused on a productive week of practice leading up to the annual Bixby Fall Classic scrimmage Friday (Aug. 22) at Lee Snider Stadium.

Like all state schools, Bixby began preseason practices without pads last Monday before holding the first pad workout last Friday.

Bixby hosts a junior varsity scrimmage on Thursday with the young Spartans joined by Stillwater, Edmond Santa Fe, Broken Arrow and Jenks. The JV scrimmage starts at 5:30 p.m. On Friday, BHS hosts Stillwater, Edmond Santa Fe and Broken Arrow in the varsity Fall Classic, starting at 6 p.m. In the first half game, Stillwater scrimmages against Broken Arrow, while Bixby scrimmages Edmond Santa Fe in the second half game.

"Edmond Santa Fe isn't in our district so that's how we pair them up. Santa Fe is always an athletic team ... there are good teams involved," Spartan head coach Loren Montgomery said after last Saturday's morning intrasquad scrimmage.

Bixby is on an accelerated practice pace this preseason as the Spartans prepare for the state's season opener in the annual Battle of the Burbs against Owasso's Rams on Thursday, Aug. 28, at the University of Tulsa's Skelly Field at H. A. Chapman Stadium. Kickoff is set for 7:30 p.m. This is the renewal of a spirited series. Bixby and Owasso played twice last year with the Rams winning at home in the Battle of the Burbs and the Spartans winning in overtime in the Class 6A-1 state championship game in Edmond.

"We've been installing our game plan for Owasso because it happens so quick with the Zero Week. We're preparing for what we think Owasso might do but they have two new coordinators this year," Montgomery said.

"We'll continue to do some conditioning, but our guys are in pretty shape ... if they've been up here in the summer, they're in good shape," he added.

"We've just had two practices in pads so we're still trying to filter through things. We're trying to figure out who are top five or six linemen are ... from a physicality standpoint I think we're going to be physical. It's just settling in on our most physical, consistent players.

"Our veterans have been doing well. The tempo in practice is good and the communication is good. Things have been going good in practice. The kids are working hard, and the attitude is good. The chemistry among the players has been good."

This preseason has dramatically changed from 2024 when the Spartans opened the season with only four returning starters. The challenges were magnified at the start of last season.

"I've been thinking back on last year. Last year was so crazy because we didn't have a home, we weren't in our new facility yet," coach Montgomery said of the impeccable new addition to the Home of the Spartans. "Last year we had no idea who our playmakers were early on.

"We had no consistency because we had so many new players. We were young and inexperienced last year. We had so many new starters in several positions ... last year was a mess at the start. This year we've got more veterans and we've got a home. It seems things have settled down."

NOTEBOOK – In the Daily Oklahoman's Class 6A-1 District 1 Coaches Poll, Bixby was ranked first followed by Jenks, Deer Creek-Edmond, Mustang, Norman, Moore, Edmond North and Enid. In District 2, Owasso was ranked first followed by Broken Arrow, Tulsa Union, Norman North, Edmond Memorial, Edmond Santa Fe, Westmoore and Yukon. ... Bixby's 15th-

year offensive coordinator Tyler Schneider was named Oklahoma's recipient of the 2025 High School Broyles Award, which honors a top assistant football coach in each state. It was the second year in a row that the award resided in Bixby as Spartan defensive coordinator Rodney Flowers was the 2024 recipient. Schneider and other state winners will be honored Feb. 13, 2026, at Oaklawn Resort in Hot Springs, Arkansas. ... Bixby head coach Loren Montgomery was named a 2025 inductee into the Northeastern State Athletics Hall of Fame. He started in the offensive line for NSU's football team from 1996-1999. ... While Bixby has the largest roster ever, Spartan coaches are focused on getting the prospects playing time. Bixby fields three eighth grade and three ninth grade teams along with two junior varsity teams. "Both JV teams went undefeated last year. The core of our program is getting all the players reps so our guys will at least know what to do, which is the first step," Montgomery noted. ... Austin Embrey, who spent 11 seasons as Bixby's wide receivers coach, enters the 2025 season as Deer Creek's offensive coordinator. In addition, Micah Haggerty, who coached ninth grade receivers and defensive backs at Bixby, will be Deer Creek's wide receivers' coach.

NEW COACHES – There are six new assistants on Bixby's coaching staff this season, including one returning assistant coach.

Chris Cole returns to the Spartan program for the sixth season after spending last season as Bristow's head football coach. He coaches varsity outside linebackers after previously serving as the safeties coach.

Coaching varsity defensive backs this season is Dakota Evans, who came to Bixby after working as the defensive coordinator at Pryor. Evans earned a bachelor's degree at Northeastern State University.

Lawton native Jack Meservy enters his first season as varsity wide receivers' coach. He spent last season as the wide receivers' coach and recruiting coordinator at Southwestern State. He also spent five seasons at Northeastern State, where he became the offensive coordinator prior to leaving for Southwestern.

Meservy, who played collegiately at Middlebury College, helped lead Lawton High to the Class 6A-II state finals against Bixby in 2014.

Union graduate Shawn DeBose will be the ninth-grade wide receiver/defensive back coach this season. For three seasons he was safeties coach at Bartlesville. Coach DeBose played collegiately at Oklahoma Baptist.

Connor Seaba, who played at Oologah High and Southwestern (Kansas) College, is in his first season as a freshman assistant coach. For four seasons, he was varsity defensive backs coach and strength and conditioning coach at Coweta.

Berryhill graduate and current Tulsa University student Trenton Deramus is a student assistant working with outside linebackers while Tom Scarbrough, who has 25 years coaching and teaching experience in Missouri and Florida, is a first-year volunteer assistant strength and conditioning coach.

MAXPREPS – Recently MaxPreps picked Bixby to win the Class 6A-I state championship as the website selected champions in each classification in every state.

MaxPreps, which ranked the Spartans No. 60 in its Top 100 preseason rankings earlier this summer, picked Stillwater to win Class 6A-II and Del City to win Class 5A.

The Spartans were also ranked in the top 25 in one poll when MaxPreps released its Top 25 preseason composite media poll.