

Spartans Ready for Preseason Scrimmage Friday

By Ron Holt

An opportunity to gauge the team's progress after two weeks of preseason practices, Bixby's Spartans host the annual Fall Classic scrimmage Friday at Lee Snider Stadium.

Bixby's junior varsity prospects compete in the JV Fall Classic on Thursday, starting at 5 p.m. The challenging varsity Fall Classic is scheduled to start at 6 p.m. on Friday. This will be the final tune-up before the Spartans' season opener on Friday, Aug. 28, at Owasso.

Defending Class 6A-1 state champion Bixby will be tested in the Fall Classic as the Spartans will be joined by Sand Springs, Edmond Deer Creek and Shiloh Christian from Springdale, Arkansas. Sand Springs, coached by Bobby Klinck, is the defending Class 6A-II state champion while Shiloh Christian, led by former Stillwater head coach Tucker Barnard, is the defending Class 6A state champion in Arkansas. Coach Wade Standley's Deer Creek squad posted a 3-8 record last season, losing in the first round of the state playoffs.

"The Fall Classic should be good for us," 17th-year Bixby head coach Loren Montgomery said. "We will get to see how we perform in a game-like situation."

Bixby's roster is being reshaped this preseason after large graduation losses off last year's 13-0 team. There is proven talent returning and talented prospects continue battling for starting spots this preseason while the cohesive coaching staff continues teaching and evaluating talent.

This process will likely continue during pregame preparations next week.

"We have noticed the team making improvement," Coach Montgomery added. "Naturally, at this point the defense is a little further along than the offense, but we are pleased with the progress and the way the players are starting to learn the schemes."

Like every other team in the state, Bixby is dealing with numerous days of sizzling temperatures. The Spartans' preseason practices are starting at 6 a.m. and will continue when school starts on Wednesday (Aug. 19) until the temperatures lower.

"Currently, until the weather conditions change, we will continue practicing before school at 6 a.m. and using sixth hour for meetings and walk through," Montgomery noted. "We will look at each week ahead of time and set practice times each Sunday."

NEW COACHES – Joining the Spartan football coaching staff this season are David Alexander, Randy Palmer, Matt Wallen, Ben Coates and Justin Vega.

Alexander, a former standout football player at the University of Tulsa and later in the National Football League with Philadelphia's Eagles and New York's Jets, is a veteran coach.

He led Broken Arrow to its only state football championship in 2018 and was a longtime assistant coach at Jenks, where he coached alongside Bixby's head coach Loren Montgomery. Alexander will coach Bixby's ninth grade footballers.

Palmer serves the freshman program as quarterbacks coach and defensive backs coach; Wallen also coaches the ninth graders as offensive coordinator and wide receivers coach, while Coates and Vega are assistant strength and conditioning coaches for the Spartans.

NOTES – Seventy-nine Bixby football players and coaches have been designated as "Steak Eaters" after recording perfect attendance at SPA (speed, power and agility) workouts during the summer. ... In a recent weekend edition, the Daily Oklahoman listed its Class 6A-1 preseason rankings. Defending champion Bixby was the No. 1 selection, followed by Jenks, Owasso, Broken Arrow, Mustang, Norman North, Edmond Memorial, Tulsa Union, Yukon, Edmond Deer Creek, Moore, Edmond North, Westmoore, Edmond Santa Fe and Southmoore. ... Success in the strength training program was on display as five Spartan footballers lifted at least 300 pounds

during the recent Night of Champions. Linebacker Cain Brackney, lineman Jaden Guipttons and offensive lineman Gavin Wilson each recorded 315-pound clean lifts. Lineman Jaxon Dorsey and linebacker Justin Gilmore each lifted 300 pounds. ... During the summer, MaxPreps featured an article detailing the “High School Coaching 100 List for 2025-26.” It was a way of noting coaches, in all sports, who distinguished themselves through exceptional success, sustained excellence and noteworthy achievements during the past school year, the article noted. Bixby head coach Loren Montgomery was among the 100 as he led the Spartans to a 13-0 season, eighth straight state championship and 11th state title in the past 12 seasons. Since arriving at Bixby in 2010, Montgomery has compiled a head coaching record of 154-41. Seiling’s eight-man football coach Gary Manuel was the only other Oklahoman noted. ... MaxPreps also named the best football team in each state going into the 2026 season with Bixby being the Oklahoma selection. And Bixby received votes in MaxPreps’ Media Preseason Top 25 football teams nationally.