

Notebook: Bears defense makes 180° turn from '08

Bastrop ends spring practice with a lot of positive signs

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For a defensive unit that averaged 275.2 rushing yards against in 2008, the Bastrop Bears defense has made a 180 degree turn if Friday's performance at the annual spring game was any indication.

The Bears defense had seven tackles for a loss, including two sacks, and gave up just 113 yards rushing with just two of the offense's seven touchdowns coming on the ground.

"Coach (Todd) Patmon is an aggressive coach," said head coach Gerald Perry. "He asks a lot out of his kids and wants them to play hard. He had them fired up and ready to go."

The defense held the offense to three-and-out seven times in the first half and forced three turnovers, which is a positive sign for both units.

The Bears defense forced just 19 total turnovers in 2008 while the offense turned the ball over 17 times.

Good Gosnell

With the graduation of Matt Homesley, Bastrop needed a back up for Josiah Monroe.

It didn't take long for senior Nick Gosnell to take care of that concern.

Gosnell completed 9-of-19 attempts for 173 yards and had two touchdowns and an interception.

In the second team offense's first series and second play of the game, Gosnell completed a 63-yard pass to Trae Bunton for the first touchdown of the game.

His second completion was a 39-yard pass to Buddy Nunn and later would throw a 14-yard touchdown to Mason Foytik.

That was before Monroe had thrown a pass for more than five yards.

"(The second quarter-back) was a question we had going into the spring," Perry said. "Nick came out and played."

As for Monroe?

Well, he was his usual self, completing 9-of-16 attempts for 157 yards



Contributed photo by Larry Overall
Running back Marcus Reed, right, eludes a defender Friday during action at the 2009 Maroon-White Game at Erhard Field.

and had three touchdowns with no interceptions. He had a total of 233 yards of total offense in six series.

Monroe-Shipley II

Fans should be really excited about the Auston Shipley-Monroe combination.

Shipley had no dropped passes and had six receptions for 118 yards, which averages out to almost 20 yards per catch.

"He finds windows to catch the football," Perry said. "Auston is one of

those receivers that if you can get the ball to him, he will find a way to catch it, which was evident (Friday)."

Five of Shipley's six receptions were more than 10 yards. Four of them went for more than 15 yards while two were 30 yards or more.

The senior wide out was snubbed from the All-District 25-5A first team despite having the second highest number of yards and receptions.

If Friday was any indi-

cation, District 25-5A coaches won't be able to ignore him this year.

Non-attack from the running back

Bastrop has some talent at the running back position, but due in part to a nagging injury to Mark Jackson and Bastrop's defense, that talent was not visible Friday night, but did show some signs of life when Mustafa Akbar ran in a 70-yard touchdown late in the scrimmage.

Jackson had just three carries for eight yards due to nursing a sore ankle, while Akbar had 70 yards on the ground on four carries, which was the second highest to Monroe's 76 yards.

Bunton and Marcus Reed had 12 yards each.

Coming out healthy

One concern for most coaches that hold spring drills are injuries.

The Bears ended spring practice without a serious injury.

"That's always the most important thing when you do spring drills," Perry said. "We had a good spring and are really optimistic going into the fall."

Bastrop will begin practice in the fall on August 10.