

Barton Football Academy Bits and Pieces

Greg Barton

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We had a great first day in Eugene, Oregon at the University of Oregon in the beautiful Indoor Moshofsky Center. The turnout for the Chalk Talk was excellent and Taylor Barton did a great job in introducing the players to defensive coverage's. The Quarterback-Skill Camp was outstanding, as was the Offense-Defense Line Camp.

The Offense-Defense Line Camp was loaded with excellent players of all ages. Ray Baker has coached in college football for 12 years and has been a very successful high school coach for over 20 years. Coach Baker runs the Line Camp and he called me after the camp on Sunday (March 30) and said, "Charles Siddaway is the best high school lineman I have ever seen." Wow, that is something coming from a guy like Coach Baker. Charles is a big and strong tackle who plays on both sides of the ball for Marist High School in Eugene. Coach Baker said, "He is the fastest high school lineman I have ever seen for a kid over 300 pounds." Charles will be a senior this fall and he is on the radar of colleges all over the country.

In my position I can't really come out and say I think this team or that team will win the state championship this year. But what stands out to me each year is the programs with the most kids committed to training in the off-season are usually among the best teams in the state each year. Two years ago when Jesuit had that great undefeated team, they had a large number of seniors who led by example in the weight room, in going to camps and in dedicating themselves to their program. Take some time at the camp and look around. You will sometimes see a high school that has a large number of kids in the camp and they are extremely hard-working players. This is usually a pretty good indicator that they will be pretty tough in the fall.

I am really excited for this Sunday's camp in Eugene (April 6). Something very unusual happened in both Oregon and Washington this past football season. Sheldon High School won the Oregon State Football

Championship and Skyline High School won the Washington State Football Championship. Both were led by sophomore quarterbacks. Jordan Johnson did a terrific job with Sheldon and Jake Heaps was fantastic for Skyline. Both of these guys will be at the camp on Sunday and it will be fun to see them compete together. Both are great young men and both have a tremendous work ethic as quarterbacks. It's hard to predict things in life, but this I will predict; Jordan and Jake will be two of the hardest workers in the camp on Sunday. This is the only way these guys know; they both work extremely hard in both practice and games. They go 100% all the time. This is why they have enjoyed success early in their high school careers.

A suggestion to all you younger players, take the time to watch high school and college players like Jordan and Jake. Watch how well they handle themselves in public, how polite and nice they are. Watch how they treat younger kids and in how they are always smiling. Then watch them in camp. Both are great listeners and they take everything in. When they communicate, watch how they look people in the eye and how well they speak. Then watch them train and workout. They are both very serious when it is their turn to do a drill. They go 100% and they are always accountable. If they make a mistake, it's always "my fault" as they never point the finger or make excuses. Seldom will you ever see Jordan or Jake make the same mistake twice. They are always patting others on the back and saying the right things. They both lead by example.

Off the field, Jordan and Jake are very much alike. The both have excellent morals and values to their lives and both make good decisions in life. Both kids come from great families and both have been raised in the right way.

Comments or emails that have been sent to the Barton Football Academy

“Coach Barton. Obviously your son Taylor was a remarkable quarterback. I watched him in Autzen Stadium when he was a senior playing against Marshfield High School in the state semi-finals. Then I watched his game against McNary High School for the Oregon State Championship that has to be the greatest high school football game ever played in Oregon. Did you coach Taylor growing up? What was Taylor like as a young quarterback?”

Yes I coached Taylor when he was growing up in football, soccer, basketball and baseball. He was always a good athlete, but his strengths early were his knowledge of the game and his ability to play and compete with older kids. He was also a point guard in basketball and that game really helped Taylor become a better quarterback in football.

Regarding football, he grew up playing touch football (and I'm sure playing tackle football when my back was turned). He first year of contact football was when he was in the 4th grade. We live in Beaverton and at that time Beaverton did not offer contact football for anyone under 6th grade. Lake Oswego Youth Football called and said I could come over there to coach and they would allow me to bring the Beaverton kids over with me. So I grabbed around 12 of the Beaverton kids and that kicked off their real football careers. Then Taylor moved back to Beaverton with his buddies and they played 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th grade football. After we did the Lake Oswego program, Beaverton immediately added 5th grade so we would come back. I coached Taylor in the Beaverton Youth program and he and his teammates did a great job. Then he went to Beaverton HS where he played Freshman Football. Entering his sophomore season, the Beaverton head coach asked me to coach the Junior Varsity Team and I said I would love too. We had a great year and Taylor and about 6 others were only allowed to play for two quarters with the JV team, as they had to play varsity football also. They did a great job in both programs and then as a junior and senior Taylor started for Faustin Riley at the varsity level.

Taylor and his group were extremely hard workers and very tough kids, both mentally and physically. I believe we did a good job in developing Taylor as a young quarterback. By the time he was in 8th grade he was a pretty special quarterback.

One side note that is pretty amazing to me now is the story of how many quarterbacks we developed each year in our programs. In Taylor's 7th grade year, our team had some pretty fair quarterbacks. Our starter was Taylor and he played at the University of Colorado and the University of Washington. Normally that would be enough for any youth coach. Well our backup quarterback was an 8th grader, Preston Parsons who started for us as a tight end. Preston later started at quarterback for two years at Jesuit High School and then received a football scholarship to play for Northern Arizona University where he did a nice job as a quarterback. After college, Preston signed as a free agent in the NFL with the Arizona Cardinals and he is now

with the Denver Broncos. Our third quarterback was Casey Kelly. Casey later moved from Beaverton to Westview HS where he started at quarterback for his junior and seniors years. Casey received a football scholarship to the University of New Mexico where he started at quarterback as a junior and senior. Last, but not least our 4th quarterback was Ryan Wilson. Ryan as a senior led Beaverton HS to a state championship as a quarterback and then went to San Diego State University where he was the starting catcher for 2 years in baseball. Not a bad Quarterback group!!

Getting back to Taylor, he was a great kid and a hard worker. He was a coach on the field and he never backed away from any competition. His strength was his accuracy. He seldom missed passes in practices or games. He was a leader; his teammates followed his lead. He loved challenges; he loved playing against players with big names or reputations. He always seemed to rise to the competition.

Taylor understood at a young age the importance of being surrounded by great talent. He always went out of his way to motivate his classmates to join his teams. He was very protective of his teammates and loyal to each and every one of them.

His senior year at Beaverton HS, they went to the state championship in football (losing), basketball (winning) and baseball (winning). This group was put together from the time they were in 3rd and 4th grade. Some dropped out and some joined, but the majority was together for a whole lot of years.

I have great memories of coaching Taylor and his teammates when he was in youth sports.

I really like your coaching staff. Coach Budke has been a great mentor for our son. How do you select your coaches?

This is a great question. We have had lots of good coaches, both older and younger. Taylor Barton is really pushing for more high school coaches in each local area where we are holding camps. I believe Taylor is on the right track regarding the high school coaches.

I think the answer is networking. We get lots of leads from coaches telling us about a certain coach. We meet coaches at combines, workouts, camps and clinics. It's getting out there, meeting people, talking football.

The coaches in our program are important. We want good teachers, excellent people and high energy coaches. We like coaches who are good with the kids and at the same time are willing to stand and talk to a mom or dad for 20 minutes about their son. It is important that our coaches feel comfortable with the parents.

Chris Budke is a very good coach. Thank you for the compliment about him. Chris does care about the kids. He is a talented coach with quarterbacks, skill position players and kickers and punters. He is the Offensive Coordinator and Quarterback Coach at West Linn High School. In addition he coaches the kickers and punters. Anyone looking for a kicking and punting coach, Chris Budke is your man.

Taylor Barton has put together a great coaching staff in Washington. He has coaches with lots of experience who really enjoy working with kids and parents.

What are your thoughts on Steve Gervais as a high school coach and is he making a good move leaving Skyline High School to go to the University of Washington with Coach Willingham on the hot seat?

Steve Gervais is without question one of the greatest high school football coaches in the history of Northwest high school football. I watched a few of his games at Skyline HS the past two years and I was really impressed. To me, in most cases, “greatest” should be tied into longevity. Coach Gervais has won at every school he has coached at, he has been innovative with his offense and his players work hard for him. The man is simply a winner; he has won his entire career. His record in high school was 244-87 in 31 years as a head coach. He won state championships in 1985, 1990, 1992, 2002, 2005 and 2007.

Coach Gervais has been great to the Barton Football Academy. He has worked with Taylor Barton and he let us come to Skyline HS to hold a camp last summer. That really helped Taylor get established in the Sammamish area and we owe Coach Gervais a lot for his kindness and support.

I wish Coach Gervais the best at the University of Washington. He will do a great job for the dawgs. Yes, he is making a good move. Part of winning is having great coaches, and by hiring Coach Gervais, they just picked up a great coach.

Another plus for Coach Gervais joining the University of Washington program is that his son, Riley, will be walking on to the program. Riley Gervais was a big reason why Skyline HS won the Washington State Championship. He is an inside linebacker and I think he will develop into a heck of a player for the Huskies. I think Coach Gervais will enjoy the experience of spending the next 5 years with Riley.

In our last weekend of our Indoor Winter Camps at Portland Community College, we had a lot of special players join us from Canada. Quarterbacks and Skill Players from Calgary, Canada participated with us on Saturday and Sunday doing two camps each day. Then they stayed in Portland and we held workouts at Cleveland High School on Monday and Tuesday. Ray Baker, the head coach at Cleveland High School was terrific in letting us use his field. The players from Canada showed a lot of skill and they really worked hard. We had about 12 players come down and the commitment the parents made was huge. The drive from Calgary, Canada is 17 hours each way. Thank you to Al Nickel who helped make this happen. Al has been bringing his son, Tyler, down to Portland for spring and summer training for two years. I think the kids and parents had a good time. I enjoyed them a lot. The kids were just great. I hope we see them again.

Keep working hard, do well in school.

Greg Barton