

White earns fifth-straight win in annual spring game

Spring practice concludes on festive afternoon in Murfreesboro

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. -

The White team pulled away after a close first half and maintained its undefeated record under head coach Rick Stockstill, earning a 56-42 victory Saturday in front of 3,110 in the annual Blue-White Spring Game at Floyd Stadium in Murfreesboro, Tenn. The White team has won all five of the games played since Stockstill took the reins of the program.

"We are very inconsistent," Stockstill noted. "We have a long way to go on both sides of the ball. We have got some guys that are hurt, and to me, I do not think we really know about our team until we get everybody back healthy.

"These guys always work. I have never been disappointed in how they work. They know what we expect, and they go out and do it."



Four Blue quarterbacks finished the day 36-of-60 for 406 yards with two touchdowns and four interceptions. Logan Kilgore led the quartet by tallying 21-of-34 for 322 yards and both scores. Jamal Ramsey was the only other signal-caller to see extensive action, connecting on 11-of-18 for 60 yards. Returning starter Dwight Dasher played only the first series and was 2-of-4 for 11 yards.

"My comfort level at this point is probably as good as it could be since I have only been here three

months, and two of them were in the weight room," Kilgore stated. "I would not say we are completely there where we need to be, but we had a pretty good spring.

"It is a lot more disciplined play here, a lot better coaching, than it was in junior college. It is a fun atmosphere out here because everyone wants to get back to New Orleans and have a good season like we had last year."

Arthur Williams led the receivers with six catches for 70 yards and a score, while Garrett Andrews added five receptions for a game-high 109 yards. Fifteen different Blue Raider receivers hauled in at least one catch with eight having more than one to their credit.

William Pratcher paced the running back corp with 48 yards on just three carries, including a game-long 47-yard scamper. Ten different players ran the ball, combining 35 attempts.

Defensively for the White team, Jarrett Crittenton posted 10 tackles, six for loss with three sacks. The defense finished with 82 stops, 21 for a loss of 109 yards and 12 sacks for a loss of 90 yards. Marquise Dixon chipped in nine tackles, eight solo, while Arness Ikner registered eight stops with seven solo efforts.

Omar McLendon tallied three sacks, while Daniel Waller and Antonio Hill were each credited with a pair.

"We got a lot of coverage sacks today, and I think Coach (Randall) McCray will be happy with that," Jeremy Kellem said. "I thought the secondary did a good job today. The defensive ends and tackles were getting off of the ball real well. There were a lot of interceptions today, a lot of turnovers. If you can create turnovers, that is going to increase your chances of winning whole lot."

Blue crossed midfield on its first possession, but a series of defensive stops pushed the ball back to the Blue 37, resulting in just a seven-yard drive.

The Blue team struck pay dirt on its second possession under backup quarterback Kilgore. Kilgore launched a strike to Andrews down the left flank, 30 yards from the line of scrimmage, and Andrews burned past a pair of defenders to finish off the 80-yard touchdown toss at 6:04 of the first quarter.

The White defense then held the Blues off the board again for the next four possessions. Neither Kilgore nor Ramsey was able to lead the Blue offense down the field. After Benjamin Cunningham took the ball down to the 36-yard line, the White defense stiffened and held Blue off the board when Alan Gendreau missed a 46-yard field goal wide right.

Three plays later, Pratcher broke through a hole on the left side and raced untouched for 47 yards before being pushed out-of-bounds by Dixon at the White 17-yardline to cap the first quarter. Spencer Wise, who was in at quarterback, was picked off on the second quarter's first play by Bryan Armstrong for a touchback.

Kilgore zipped a 20-yard pass on the next drive to Zachary Franklin near the hash marks. Franklin was upended by Ikner after catching the ball but was able to maintain possession. Gendreau then came on for another 46-yard attempt after three-straight stops by the White defense. This time he split the uprights, making the three-pointer with 5:10 to play in the second quarter.

Marcus Thurmond went high for a Ramsey pass as the first half clock wound down; however,

Sammy Seamster nailed him in the side to jar the ball loose and force another Blue punt by Nathaniel Toulson.

At halftime, Stockstill handed out the spring practice awards.

"There was some good and some bad," Stockstill continued. "A lot of guys had good Springs, and we gave out those awards at halftime, but nobody had a great spring. There were a lot of inconsistencies, a lot of mistakes. We have got a ways to go."

The third drive of the third quarter witnessed Kilgore completing a series of passes, including a 33-yard touchdown toss to Williams with approximately three-and-a-half minutes to play in the period. Williams was hit as he hauled in the reception, but he bounced off the would-be tackler and sprinted to the endzone for the final 11 yards.

Two plays into the fourth period, Craig Allen intercepted Kilgore at the 31-yard line and never looked back for the touchdown with just over 11 minutes to play. Juno Prudhomm also recorded a pick-off on a Kilgore attempt, a couple of possessions later, but he was stopped short of the goal line at the 8-yard line.

Blue faced a fourth-and-five situation on its next drive, but Wise completed a pass to CJ Jackson for eight yards to keep the possession alive. Wise was then intercepted by Denzell Guerra on the subsequent play as the White defense held strong.

Blue, however, did not go away quietly. Kilgore located Shane Blissard wide-open across the middle for a 60-yard strike, taking the Blues to the six-yard line. The signal-caller then called his own play, running it in off the right end to finish off the drive with 47 seconds to play. His two-point conversion pass was grabbed by a White defender, locking up the final score.

2010 Spring Practice Awards:

Most Improved QB: Logan Kilgore

Most Improved RB: Benjamin Cunningham

Most Improved WR: Sancho McDonald

Most Improved OL: Brandon McLeroy

Most Improved DL: Omar McLendon

Most Improved LB: Stephen Roberts

Most Improved S: Denzell Guerra

Most Improved CB: Marquise Dixon

Most Improved Specialist: Alan Gendreau

Most Improved Strength Training - QB: Jamal Ramsey

Most Improved Strength Training - RB: William Pratcher

Most Improved Strength Training - WR: Garrett Andrews

Most Improved Strength Training - OL: Brandon McLeroy

Most Improved Strength Training - DL: Omar McLendon

Most Improved Strength Training - LB: Craig Allen

Most Improved Strength Training - S: Derrick Crumpton

Most Improved Strength Training - CB: Marquise Dixon

Most Improved Strength Training - Specialist: Nathan Toulson

Jeanne Massaquoi Freshman Academic Award: Tavares Jefferson

Donald Craig Sophomore Academic Award: Preston Bailey

Dr. James E. Walker Junior Academic Award: Mark Fisher

Dr. Sidney McPhee Senior Academic Award: Phillip Tanner

Terry Whiteside Award: Jeremy Kellem

(Excellence in academics, football, strength training, community service and campus activities)

Additional Player Quotes:

Jeremy Kellem

On Redshirt Freshmen

They are young, but they all do one thing, and that is hustle to the ball. When you do not have to teach effort, then you can spend time on fundamentals, and they will get better in a hurry. I am just impressed with the whole team, and thank goodness we did not have any injuries today.

On having to replace Alex Suber and Marcus Udell in the secondary for next season

I am very comfortable with the guys that will be replacing them. Marquise Dixon (redshirt freshman) and Arness Ikner, the JuCo who came in, both of them had a great spring. Suber was like a linebacker at corner because he would come up and hit, then go back and cover. He is going to be hard to replace. He was on my side of the defense since my freshman year, so it is going to be different without him out there, but we have Ike and Marquise and Malcolm Beyah, and I am comfortable with them out there.

On his award

I thank the Lord for that. The Terry Whiteside Award is a great award. I am humbled by it. I think it is one of the biggest honors they give out. You are not just an athlete, you are a student-athlete, and it also involves community activities, giving back to the community who supports us.

Logan Kilgore

On playing this year

Dwight (Dasher) had a great year last year, and he is going to be a senior, so I am preparing for whatever comes up. I have a redshirt available, but I am preparing every day in case something happens and I have to go out there and be the guy. Hopefully, Dwight will stay healthy and do what he did last year, lead us to a great season.

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