CABRILLO FOOTBALL NOTES

Thompson shows big-time promise

By JIM SEIMAS
jseimas@santacruzsentinel.com

Seahawks DE has size, is adding skill

APTOS — If Cabrillo College defensive end Reggie Thompson keeps progressing like he has the past three weeks, who knows? Maybe he’ll end up at his dream school, University of Oklahoma.

Thompson — a 6-foot-2, 235-pound freshman out of Franklin High in Stockton — made his first college start Saturday and recorded eight tackles and a fumble recovery in the Seahawks’ 43-7 loss to No. 8 state-ranked Foothill on Saturday night. Only Justin Bryant [14 tackles] and Derrick Morgan [nine] made more stops, as the Seahawks’ defense held Foothill to two offensive touchdowns.

“He did some good things,” Bill Garrison said of Thompson. “He’s becoming a college football player.”

Thompson didn’t play in the Seahawks’ season-opener against American River on Sept. 11 and saw action late in the Cabrillo’s loss to Solano the following week, recording 3½ tackles for a loss, including a sack. He saw more action in last weekend’s win over Reedley.

If Thompson keeps improving, he could become a solid recruit for an NCAA program.

Thompson has dreamed of attending Oklahoma because his dad, Reggie Sr., a mortician in Stockton, is from The Sooner State. Thompson also likes San Jose State because they have the major he’s interested in — forensic science — Sacramento State and Fresno State.

For now, he’s focused on the present.

“I just want to do my job and my responsibilities and I want that [Coast Conference championship] ring,” Thompson said when asked of his goals.

Thompson was turned on to Cabrillo by his high school football coach Carlos Franco, who played with Seahawks defensive line coach Eric Gerlach at Cal State Hayward and later in Germany with the Hildesheim Invaders.

Franco, who took over the Franklin program after it was rocked by a recruiting scandal in 2007, told Gerlach that Thompson was “very raw.”

He may be raw, but he’s productive.

As a high school senior on a 2-8 team, Thompson made a team-leading 73 tackles with three sacks. He was selected co-Defensive Player of the Year in the San Joaquin Athletic Association with Lincoln’s Phillip Ruhl, now a freshman linebacker on UCLA’s team.

Still the transition from high school to college was big for Thompson.

“He was on a team that only had 20 players,” Gerlach said, “Having a position coach and being coached very hard was very new to him. Plus, he’s away from home. No more mom’s cooking or family around. There’s an adjustment period.”

Thompson also played offensive line in high school. He has adapted to playing on one side of the ball and said he prefers defense.

“I love to be physical and show my speed off the line,” he said. “And I love to hit.”

Thompson was pleased with his outing against Foothill, but he said he has plenty of room to grow.

“I made some plays because of the opportunities my coaches gave me,” he said. “They put me in the right position. I still have plenty to work on. I need to work on my technique.”

He’ll get another chance to prove himself when the Seahawks [1-3] face host De Anza in Cupertino on Saturday at 1 p.m.

NOTES
Cabrillo quarterbacks Jerry Alvarez and Gino Delucchi were under considerable pressure for much of the evening against Foothill. They were sacked a combined six times and threw four interceptions.

... Seahawks running back Cody Christopher, a freshman out of Mariposa County, scored his first rushing touchdown of the season in the third quarter. ... Seahawks defensive back Jamaal Brumfield, a sophomore out of Woodinville, Wash., made his first interception of the season, which was the team’s fifth overall.