

Dayton Uses Bye Weeks

Written by Cody Secker
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Not getting a lot of games at the beginning of the season can be either good or bad: bad in that it can throw off rhythm and make it difficult to catch up to everyone else and good because it can give you more time to prepare for whatever is ahead; the Dayton Flyers choose the latter.

Having started their new MAC season with back-to-back bye weeks, it might have been easy to take a little extra time to relax and wait until the next day to practice. However, the Flyers knew the tough schedule in front of them and the transition to Division I.

“We know we had and still have a lot to prove so we have been coming out hard with a lot of focus each week,” Dayton senior wing Joe Scariot said. We knew it wasn’t going to be easy, but we have accepted that we are the underdog and use it as our fuel to play hard against these teams.”

The underdog role because Dayton, until this year, had been in the DII bracket and had no idea what to expect from the DI level, except it being a challenge every game. For that reason; Scariot, his teammates and coaches took it upon themselves to make sure they prepared themselves as much as possible and use the bye weeks effectively.

“We practiced hard, sharpening our fundamentals and working on our fitness during that time,” Scariot mentioned. “Although we may be a smaller, less experienced side, we worked on a lot of the basics in order to maximize our game.”

So far, it has worked. Besides a postponed match against Central Michigan (details of a rematch are still being worked out), the Flyers started with a wins on the road against Miami (OH) and at home against the Ohio Bobcats.

According to Scariot, the team has been working tirelessly on their fitness level to ensure they play hard for a full 80 minutes and taking advantage to what is given to them in their games.

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We have done a great job at capitalizing on the penalties of our adversaries,” he said. “Our coaches have taught us well to play to the whistle. The collective group dedicated to playing hard and getting better has nurtured an environment with a great work ethic.

“That being said, we have had plenty of mistakes and penalties of our own. Our coaches are persistent in improving our performance in the breakdown as well as our defense and rucking with support,” Scariot said.

Next, is Bowling Green on the road and that matchup speaks for itself. Dayton will need to do all the fundamentals right and get a lot of help from their leaders and big-time performers. Scariot mentioned himself, Ben Yost (senior, fullback), Connor Spier (sophomore, second row) and Joe Bracken (sophomore, scrum half) as some of the main guys that need to play great this weekend.

Bowling Green is a tough squad and even more formidable at home. However, if it comes down to playing until the whistle and with fundamentals, the Flyers are a strong contender to dethrone the juggernaut Falcons.