

# Football notes: Wildcats have rough first day of practice in pads

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Prior to Wednesday's spring practice, head coach Rich Rodriguez seemed excited about the fact that Arizona was about to have its first practice with pads.

His excitement seemed to die down quick.. By the time practice ended about three hours later, Rodriguez banned all of the players from speaking with the media due to their lackluster showing.

"We didn't practice well enough to have any players sit there and give their opinion of how practice went," Rodriguez said. "It wasn't good. It was a start, first day in pads, we'll see if we get better in the next two days."

Before practice, Rodriguez talked specifically about how the coaching staff would be better suited to evaluate its players with pads on, as it serves as a test of physicality.

"(We can learn) a lot more. Most coaches will tell you that.

How physical they are and hopefully they carry some of the fundamentals we did in shorts over to pads. The guys, more than anything in pads, you find out the guys that really love football and some that just kind of like it."

The Wildcats have another practice on Friday afternoon, followed by a scrimmage, open to the public, on Saturday in Glendale, Ariz. But fans hoping to watch a scrimmage on Saturday might be disappointed, as Rodriguez said he will just practice the team again that day if their performance doesn't improve on Friday.

"I'll find out on Friday (if they got the message). If we don't get it we'll practice again on Saturday. I know we're scrimmaging but we can change that scrimmage. I have the right to change that up a little bit," Rodriguez said. "I'd like to scrimmage and let the fans watch and have fun, but if we don't do better Friday than Saturday's scrimmage won't be as entertaining as I'd like it to be."

## **Players charged with assault still not practicing**

Offensive lineman Fabbians Ebbele and defensive back Jourdon Grandon, who were both charged with assault and trespassing for their roles in a brawl at a local house party a few weeks ago, were held out of practice again on Wednesday.

“Still as is. If anything changes with those guys and they start to practice we’ll let you know,” Rodriguez said.

Eric Bender-Ramsay, Jared Tevis and Justin Washington, the three other players involved, were only charged with criminal trespassing for the same incident and have continued to practice.

### **Rodriguez to participate in celebrity tennis tournament**

The seventh annual Gootter Grand Slam weekend will take place this Saturday and Sunday, and Rodriguez is one of the celebrities who has volunteered to participate in the tennis tournament.

“It’s for a nice cause, it should be a lot of fun and I’ll get out there and swing around a little bit,” Rodriguez said.

The two-day event has raised more than \$1.5 million to endow the Steven M. Gootter Research Chair for the Prevention and Treatment of Sudden Cardiac Death at the University of Arizona Sarver Heart Center.

As for tennis, Rodriguez said it’s been quite a while since he’s played.

“I probably should be nervous about that because I don’t really have much of a tennis game and I haven’t picked up a tennis racket in years,” Rodriguez said. “I’ll probably hit a few balls out of the park. It’ll be fun, I’m anxious to see what it’s all about.”

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