This past Friday was an interesting one - we played very well throughout the game, but the thing that was different about this game is that I was not playing.

In the previous week’s game against Clackamas, I injured my calf early in the first quarter. All week, I was not able to practice because of a risk of compartment syndrome which is the result of too much swelling. All week, I had to sit and watch our guys get ready for the game against David Douglas. It is never easy to just sit back and watch, knowing I am not allowed to play.

Throughout the week, we had a great amount of energy in practice and it was so nice to see my teammates having fun. Just like last week, our focus was to make the practices enjoyable and competitive. The closer we can make practice to feeling like an actual game, the better.

As game day came around, I went to physical therapy early in the morning to try and see if I could loosen up my calf before the game. Even after an hour long massage, my calf was still too tight to play. Every game day, all the players go and get their jerseys from Coach Pyne at lunch time. When I went to retrieve my jersey and game pants, I noticed that there were no pants next to my jersey. This meant that Coach Pyne did not want me to suit up tonight. I had to beg him to let me have some game pants so I could suit up for my Senior Night. I still wanted to suit up and support my teammates.

We started off very slow and were only ahead 14-7 after the first half. At halftime, we had a talk as a team to try and fix our energy in the second half. We were playing slow and were not playing like we have in practice. After halftime, we scored 10 points in the 3rd quarter and 21 more in the 4th quarter. In the second half, we outscored David Douglas 31-6.

Even though I was not allowed to play, suiting up actually made me appreciate being a varsity football player. I begged Coach Pyne to let me at least get into the game for a few plays so I could long snap for field goals. I got a total of two plays before I was told I was not allowed to snap anymore to prevent any further injury to my calf.

I can remember the days of being a freshman and being so excited just to suit up for a varsity game. Here I am, almost to the last few weeks of my senior year of high school football and I still appreciate suiting up. Sometimes I tend to forget how special this game of football really is; all the days of practice, competing against your best friends while we are all trying to fight for a common goal. Some of my best memories of this year are the prayers in the locker room before the game, the bus rides to and from the games, or even some of the games where the third and second string guys get to go in the game and get their repetitions. The whole sideline always goes crazy when one of them gets a really long run or scores a touchdown. Those are the special moments and memories that will last a lifetime. Football is just a short portion of our lives, but the memories last a lifetime. This season has been a really special one and our team has really come together as one. Just like Coach Gaffney has said, “Cross the line and commit!” This means we need to stay focused on our common goal and commit to it without holding anything back.

As we enter the first week of the playoffs, I am so excited to see what the season holds for us. This is a special team that can do something great. Go Rams, Go Ducks and God Bless.