Central Washington University got back on the 15s field Saturday, beating Oregon State 39-7 at OSU's field in Corvallis, Ore.

"The whole ride back the guys were talking about how much fun they had," said CWU Coach Tony Pacheco, who accompanied the team in the absence of Head Coach Bob Ford.

The reason for their enthusiasm was in part due to the fact the Wildcats had been playing 7s all fall and missed playing 15s. Ironically, Pacheco is the team's head 7s coach, but ended up shepherding them through their first 15s foray of the New Year.

"I think they were really itching to play 15s," said Pacheco, who acknowledged the players sometimes fell into 7s habits – especially those related to running out of your own 22, and showing a bit too much impatience. "We have to work on our exit game, that's for sure."

But, added Pacheco, the team began to play some good rugby. They had some skill breakdowns, but certainly put a good OSU team away.

Aladdin Schirmer had a good game, and new South African prop Clint Lemkus, formerly of Springbok nursery Stellenbosch, showed well in his first game. Shelby Williams went off early after being poked in the eye, but freshman Doug McKinley stepped in at flyhalf and was outstanding.

Another early injury replacement, Ben Rokocoko, was called on when center BijanGhambari was hurt, and was a constant threat to break the line.

CWU got tries from Ryan Snider, Schirmer, Sean Wanigasekera, Zach Siemens, Tanner Barnes, and Rokocoko, while Max Narewski added nine points on kicks.

CWU looks ahead to a challenging independent schedule this year. Having no conference in

which to play their DI-A rugby, they instead will play a series of matches with the hope of being invited into a play-in scenario and a path to the DI-A playoffs.

This game wasn't officially part of that schedule, but next week at Santa Clara and Feb 2 at Sacramento State will be. The Wildcats also have Northern Colorado, Wyoming, the Colorado Buffaloes, St. Mary's and Cal Poly on their DI-A slate.

If they do well in those games, they expect to have a play-in game with the Pacific Conference runners up in April.

Pacheco said the players remain motivated in each game, as they understand that every game is important.

"You don't know how it all pans out, so every game matters," he said. "I think the guys are ready."