

CHICAGO BEARS POOL REPORT

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BY IRA MILLER

The Chicago Bears practiced for 75 minutes Friday, their final significant work before Sunday's Super Bowl. Coach Lovie Smith said he was pleased with the practice, which was conducted in light pads and shorts.

Keeping to their routine, the Bears engaged in a 15-minute walkthrough before the practice; many teams eschew the walkthrough on Friday and only hold a light drill.

"Everything you've seen this week was exactly what we do every (week)," Smith said. Even the meals.

A restaurant manager from Chicago was flown to Miami on Thursday night to direct a Friday lunch featuring burritos that was served to the players after practice at the University of Miami.

"That's the guy we have at Halas Hall," Smith said, referring to the Bears' headquarters in Lake Forest, Ill.

Told that sounded a bit like a superstition, Smith said, "I'm not (superstitious), it's routine."

Among other things, the Bears worked Friday on punting and punt coverage and red zone and goal line offense and defense. It was the hottest day of the week, with the temperature in Coral Gables reaching 85 degrees.

Chicago, which did not work out in full pads at all this week, is a healthy team, although Rod Wilson, who is middle linebacker Brian Urlacher's backup, tweaked a hamstring and missed part of the Friday drills.

Smith said he expected that Wilson, who plays primarily on special teams, would be available for the game.

"I would assume we'll have him," Smith said. "It's not like he pulled anything, just a little tightness."

The Bears seemed pleased by their stay at the university. Smith said, "Everything's been super."

A handful of family members watched practice Friday from a distance, but otherwise it was like every other day, just the players, coaches, security brigade and assorted folks from the NFL. At one point, a security guard chased away two people from a second-floor balcony of a university athletic building at one end of the field, but they appeared to be nothing more than students or employees who had wandered outside.

"It's been wonderful," said Michael McCaskey, the team's chairman of the board. "When we first arrived, there was chaos because there's so much to do and take care of and you're in a new setting, but our staff has done just a terrific job adjusting to that and beating back the chaos. We feel like we're pretty well organized at this point in the week."

The players will remain in their same hotel over the weekend, but there will be one change. Smith said curfew would be moved up on Saturday night, but declined to discuss what the time would be. The team will have a final walkthrough Saturday at Dolphin Stadium.