The hot August sun is synonymous with the start of football, and as the heat bore down over the weekend, the Montana State University-Northern Lights got their football season underway as they began fall camp last week.

The Lights started practice Friday and continued with two practices Saturday and another one Sunday. The team is mostly running through fundamental drills and installing schemes but did take part in some 11-on-11 and 7-on-7 drills.

“We are throwing a lot of stuff at these kids and they are doing pretty well so far,” Northern head coach Mark Samson said. “We have a lot of young guys that we are going to be counting on to play this year, so we need those guys to step up, particularly with the mental side of things.”

While the Lights are going to be a young football team, they do have some key returning players on offense such as quarterback Travis Dean, running back Zack McKinley, as well as wide receivers Trevor Baum and Jake Messerly.

“Travis has done a good job for us so far,” Samson said. “He’s been throwing the ball pretty well. Soon, we are going to start throwing more at him but he’s done a good job. “

Baum, who is making the transition from defensive back to wide receiver for the 2014 season has also had a good camp up to this point and his switch from offense to defense seems to be going smoothly.

“Trevor has looked good,” Samson said. “We were kind of thin at wide receiver, so we moved him over from cornerback and he has done a good job picking things up.”

Samson was also pleased with the look of his defense thus far, which has a number of veterans returning at each level such as safety Hunter Chandler, defensive end Tyler Craig and middle linebacker Kaimi Kanehailua.

“Our defense has looked pretty good so far,” Samson said. “Kaimi has been doing a good job for us in the middle. We also have in some new things coverage wise that we are working on and I think those have been going well, but it’s hard to tell until we get into some live scrimmaging.”

Northern will continue fall camp this week and end with its first scrimmage, which will be Saturday at 10 a.m. The Lights open their season Aug. 30 against Montana Tech at 6 p.m. in Butte.