

# Hunt's hero-- Deacon Jones

By STEVE COLLIER  
Of the Emerald

His teammates call him Big Hunt. His coaches call him a talented young football player. People who meet him on the street just call him sir. But Ron Hunt, the 6-7, 287 pound freshman offensive tackle from Watts in Los Angeles, insists he's just a nice guy who earned a starting berth with the Oregon football team.

"I don't think the personnel was right against Oklahoma. We had some guys on the offensive line that didn't know what they were doing. When we made that line change, that helped things out."

"That line change" included moving veteran tackle LeFrancis Arnold to

guard, making room for Hunt in the starting unit. And he has stayed there through both the UCLA and Washington games, quite an accomplishment for a 17 year-old. But Hunt says he still has some things to learn.

"I've got to learn to get back faster on pass protection. On the run, I've got to get used to the count; they use a funny count here, a lot different from high school."

Back at South Gate High School, things weren't that easy either. Hunt fractured his knee in his junior year, and it kept him out of a year of basketball. "I wanted to play basketball, and football, you know, that's what the coaches wanted me to do."

Hunt played both offense and defense

in high school, which explains how an offensive lineman can end up with David "Deacon" Jones, former all-everything defensive end for the Los Angeles Rams, as a hero. "When I first came here, I wanted to play defense, but they (his coaches) wanted me to play offense. Right now, I like offense better."

And so Hunt exploded on the Oregon football scene, and the place is still reverberating. Not since the arrival of Bobby Moore has a freshman, particularly an offensive lineman, caused such excitement. Newspapers print stories about him, people discuss him, and his coaches very nearly drool over him. This could affect a man's performance on the field, but Ron says, "It won't hurt me. Getting all that publicity, that makes me try harder, be better. I like it."

Maybe the notoriety he is receiving now can make for the lack of attention he got from Southern California schools as a high schooler. Oregon, more specifically head coach Dick Enright, was the only one to actively recruit Hunt. Which just goes to show, USC

may be undefeated and No. 1 in the country, but they aren't perfect.

Hunt has made it in major college football, which is no mean feat in itself, but he has yet higher goals. "I want to play pro football. I didn't come to this school to get no doctor's degree, I just came here to play football, and someday play pro football."

Hunt knows though that he still has this season to weather, and that could be tough. Losing is always rough, and Hunt thinks it has affected the Ducks. "The team is down. There are times when I wonder if we can come back. The coach is trying to get everybody up for it (the next game). We probably will get up for it."

A season like this one is shaping up to be could give a young man second thoughts about his choice of colleges. But Hunt says, "I got no regrets. Since I made varsity, I don't have any regrets." And what if he hadn't made varsity? Hunt says that might have set him to thinking.

Fortunately for the Oregon Ducks, Ron Hunt made varsity. And it looks like he might be there to stay.

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