

Now Oakland can't find end zone

Broncos blank the Raiders, 17-0

From Associated Press reports

After going 15 years without getting shut out, the Oakland Raiders are finding it impossible to cross the goal line.

The defending Super Bowl champions were blanked for the second game in a row Sunday as the Denver Broncos held them to 168 yards in total offense to capture a 17-0 decision.

The Raiders had only one serious touchdown threat, and Denver safety Steve Foley killed it with a fumble recovery in the second quarter.

NFL roundup

Denver, the top-rated defensive team in the National Football League, sacked Jim Plunkett three times and intercepted him once. The Raiders went to young quarterback Marc Wilson in the fourth period and he was promptly intercepted.

The Broncos took a 7-0 lead in the second quarter on Dave Preston's four-yard touchdown run. The Raiders struck back

by driving 50 yards to the Denver 12, where Foley recovered a fumble by Kenny King after a short pass completion.

The victory gave Denver a 4-1 record. The Raiders, who were shut out 16-0 by Detroit last week, dropped to 2-3.

Meanwhile, the Dallas Cowboys fell from the unbeaten ranks as Neil O'Donoghue kicked a 37-yard field goal with 23 seconds left, giving the St. Louis Cardinals a 20-17 upset.

The only undefeated teams left in the NFL are the Philadelphia Eagles, who play host to the Atlanta Falcons Monday night, and the Miami Dolphins, who tied the New York Jets 28-28.

In other games, Buffalo tripped Baltimore 23-17, Minnesota edged Chicago 24-21, Green Bay whipped the New York Giants 27-14, New England defeated Kansas City 33-17, Houston clipped Cincinnati 17-10, Pittsburgh beat New Orleans 20-6, Los Angeles clubbed Cleveland 27-16, Tampa Bay bombed Detroit 28-10, San Diego tackled Seattle 24-10 and San Francisco thrashed Washington 30-17.

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Transfers

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While both Brown and Greig see the added time to mature both on and off the field as a major advantage of playing junior college ball, Greig cited several disadvantages.

The 6-7 starting forward mentioned having to learn a new system, and a shortage of time in the limelight as the disadvantages. "I really can't believe this is my last year," Greig says. "It's all gone so fast."

"It's an advantage for a freshman if he can come in and do well because he has three years ahead of him. That's a luxury that transfers don't have."

Both football coach Rich Brooks and basketball coach Jim Haney shy away from the junior colleges when it comes to recruiting.

"I would usually want a freshman," says Brooks. "It usually takes a year of transition, and that gives a freshman three years."

Haney echoed Brooks' sentiments, saying he hasn't recruited the JC's much because he likes to have a player in his program for four years. "I'm not sure I'd ever sign a kid for two years, because it usually takes a year to get acclimated to a new school," he says.

Haney indicated that the adjustment process for a basketball player transferring in is tougher than it is for a freshman, because for the JC player, it's his third coach in no more than four seasons.

Brooks says it's equally difficult for him to break in a freshman and a transfer player.

"Sometimes a JC-transfer can adjust better because he is more mature, not necessarily because he's played more football," Brooks says. "Freshmen are not as used to the college program. I think with freshmen you have to try to be more conscientious about helping them make the transition to being away from home."

Quick transition

The transition was a quick one for Brown, who burst on the scene last year as one of the Pac-10's top ball carriers. In his first appearance in a Duck uniform, Brown rushed for 149 yards against Stanford. He went on to rush for 775 yards on 171 carries, despite missing almost two full games with cracked ribs.

"It was a pretty smooth transition to Oregon," says Brown. "There were no real problems, and there haven't been any. I enjoy it here."

One of the toughest parts of being a JC-transfer is becoming accepted by your teammates, some of whom you might be taking a job from, or, as in Brown's case, a number.

"When I first got here, someone else had the number 48, which I had worn in junior college," explains Brown. "They (the coaches) asked him to give it up so I could have it."

"Some of the guys were saying 'what's with this guy coming in and taking other people's numbers.' That caused some problems with a few guys — but it didn't last long."

Dissension is a problem that all coaches must face when they bring in someone new according to Brooks. "It's always a problem anytime a player comes in, but the players have to realize that we're going to put the best team we can on the field."

"Anytime someone with any kind of skill comes in, it's seen as a threat to somebody," says Greig. "But it really wasn't a problem for me. It's just part of the competitive nature of the whole thing."

Interesting journeys

Both Brown and Greig had interesting journeys through the JC's and to Oregon. Brown left the east coast and his family for Pasadena, where he was recruited by five Pac-10 teams — USC, UCLA, Arizona State, Washington, and of course Oregon.

Brown ended up with the Ducks, "because it was something different."

"It wasn't a USC or UCLA, but a program on the rise. Oregon wasn't up yet, but it was on the way and I wanted to be a part of it."

Truck almost ended up at Iowa, another up-and-coming team, but Eric Widmark, who coached Brown at Pasadena before becoming an assistant at Oregon, convinced him that Eugene was the place he should be.

Greig's travels also contain an interesting twist. He attended junior college on the advice of University of Washington basketball coach Marv Harshman. But following his first season, it was the Ducks who came calling, hoping to fill a hole.

Greig answered the call. "It was a lucky thing for both of us (him and the Ducks)," he says. "I wasn't sure if things would work out, and they weren't sure about me. But it's really worked out for the best."

The number of players at Oregon with travel logs that read like Brown's or Greig's will probably remain low, but chances are they will not become an extinct species.

As Brooks says, "If we found that we were lacking at a particular position, we would look for immediate help in order to be competitive in this league."

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