

sports

This year, Oregon football has been kind of 'special'

By Steve Turcotte
Of the Emerald

This season, National Collegiate Athletic Association football statistics consistently list Oregon high in several categories.

The categories have nothing to do with offense or defense, though. Oregon ranks with the nation's leaders in special teams.

While the Ducks have been inconsistent on both offense and defense this season, one area of their overall game scheme which has remained solid is the play of the special teams. NCAA statistics have the Ducks ranked in the top 50 in no less than eight departments, and all but one stems from the special teams.

•Punt returns — Lew Barnes is 14th nationally with a 14.2-yard average. As a team, Oregon is 20th in punt returns. Barnes is also 39th in the country in all-purpose yardage, which includes receiving, punt returns and rushes.

•Punting — Kevin Hicks ranks 43rd nationally with a 41.2-yard average while the Ducks are 26th in the nation in net punting at 39.6.

•Placekicking — Paul Schwabe, who has connected on 9 of 14 field goals, is 29th with a 1.29 field goals per game average.

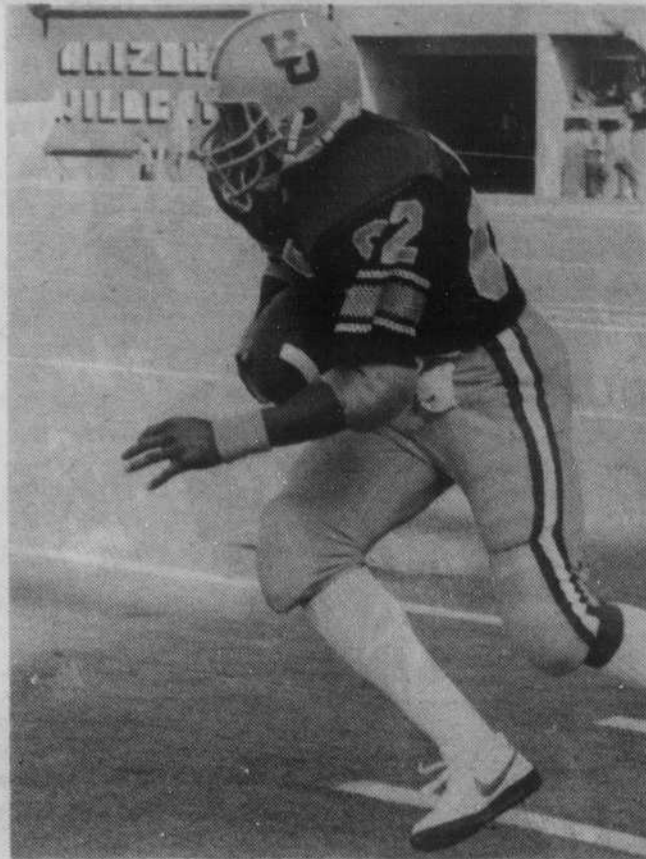
•Kickoff returns — Oregon's highest ranking. The Ducks are fifth in the nation with a 25.5 team average. Doug Judge would be among the leaders with a 32.7 average, except he went down for the season against Arizona with a knee injury.

The Ducks also appear once among college football's elite defensively, ranking 40th in rushing defense.

Sure, Oregon's major emphasis in practice is offense and defense. But before, and sometimes after practice, the attention turns to the special teams.

"We have put a lot of emphasis on the special teams," says John Ramsdell, the Ducks' special teams' coach. "We will spend 20-25 minutes a day working on special teams."

To make a special teams unit at Oregon, or anywhere else for that matter, one must be a special type of player. Ramsdell and Washington State University coach Jim Walden agree not just anyone can play on special teams.



Emerald Photo

Special teams players like punt returner Lew Barnes (above) play a big role in determining a game's outcome.

"Our players on the special teams have a great attitude," says Ramsdell. "The players and the coaches look at special teams as an important position."

"The big thing we stress is effort," continues Ramsdell. "The effort must be extremely good — it has to be full-go."

Walden, another coach who pays meticulous attention to special teams, looks for players who will give 100 percent.

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ODE, Nike offer 'Trivia Time'

Think you know your Oregon sports? Take a shot at answering these five questions about Oregon teams and athletes of the past in the Emerald's weekly sports trivia quiz.

The winner, who will receive a \$10 gift certificate, will be the first person to pick the most correct answers by 3 p.m. Friday.

Answers should be turned in to the Emerald office, EMU Suite 300. In the event of ties, winners will be determined by who handed in answers first. See quiz rules below, have fun, and good luck.

1. Who has Oregon football's longest career kickoff return? a) Mel Renfro b) Woodley Lewis c) Steve Brown d) Dwight Robertson.
2. Who is Oregon's leading rusher this season?

3. Oregon volleyball standout Sue Harbour hails from: a) Pullman, Wash. b) Pacific Palisades, Calif. c) Stockton, Calif. d) Gresham.

4. Who won the men's cross country Pac-10 title in 1982? a) UCLA b) Washington c) Oregon d) Arizona.

5. The Oregon women's cross country 10,000 meter record-holder (33:12.1) is: a) Kathy Hayes b) Lisa Martin c) Lexie Miller-Beck.

Quiz rules: Gift certificates provided by NIKE EUGENE, W. 10th and Olive. Answers should be handed in on a piece of paper with name, year and major — all current students and faculty can enter, but participants may enter just once; answers and name of winner will be published in Monday's Emerald. Winners must come to front desk, EMU Suite 300, and show proper identification to collect certificates; certificate valid at NIKE EUGENE, 10th and Olive, only; certificates expire 60 days after quiz date; Emerald employees may not enter contest.



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