

# Intensity, dedication give Farwell edge to fulfill personal promise

By Ashley Conklin  
Emerald Sports Reporter

By keeping a promise to himself, Joe Farwell has played his way into a starting role for Oregon's football team.

"In high school I was one of those guys who waited around and said I'd do it all my senior year," said the redshirt freshman from Los Gatos, Calif.

"When I got here I promised myself that I was just going to do it, or at least try," Farwell said. "I wasn't going to let what happened in high school happen here."

That kind of dedication, as well as natural talent, has Farwell starting at weak inside linebacker for the 2-1 Ducks.

Inside linebacker coach, Bill Tarrow, praises Farwell's work ethic. "He's very intense and studies the game very well," Tarrow said.

"He's very dedicated and very committed. You're never going to get better unless you're committed to something," Tarrow said. "One of his biggest assets is his commitment."

Despite scholarship offers from California, San Diego State and Washington State, Farwell had no trouble choosing Oregon.

"California was kind of leading me on since I wasn't their number one guy," Farwell said. "They really only wanted me if their number one guy went somewhere else. Oregon told me I'd be their number one guy from the start."

Farwell spent his first season as a Duck simulating opposing defenses going against the first team offense in practice. He said redshirt year was invaluable.

"Redshirting last year helped a lot," Farwell said. "Every day we went against the number one offense and I had to work on my reads and get my reads down. It was a good opportunity because I got a chance to see what the bigger, stronger offensive linemen in the Pac-10 were like."

Tarrow and the other coaches noticed Farwell's play at practice last fall and liked what they saw.

"We watch the scout-work and evaluate it," Tarrow said. "He was all over the field then."

"He was very dedicated during the off-season and would come in sometimes two or three nights a week and watch films," he added. "He's a good student of the game. I had my suspects before spring drills that he could help us."

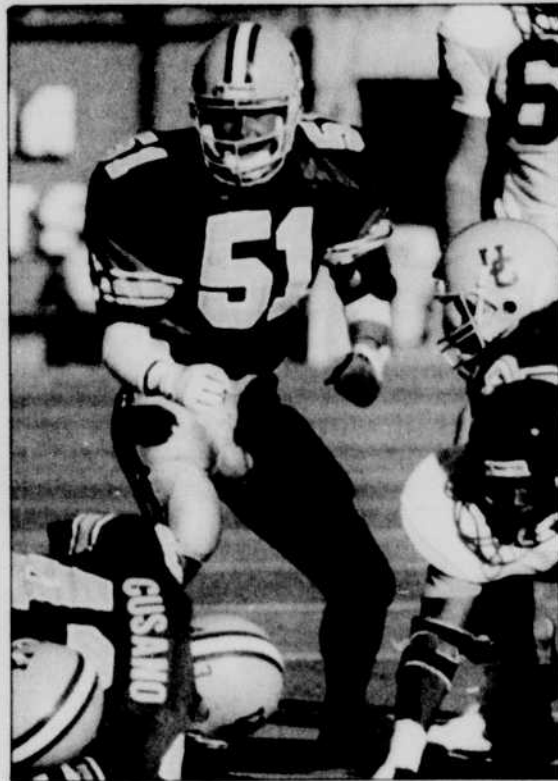
Since assuming the starting role in spring practice, Farwell has proved himself in three games for Oregon this season.

Farwell is tied for fourth on the team with 23 tackles, despite registering 107 plays on defense, the lowest among all starters. In the season-opening win over California, Farwell had 11 tackles.

Tarrow saw inexperience as a possible problem for Farwell. Yet Farwell's play, and the help of another inside linebacker, senior Mark Kearns, have eased the growing pains of learning the complexities of the 3-4 defense.

"Mark Kearns still calls us the pups because some of us are so young," Farwell said. "You just have to learn it, remember it and throw it in your personal stock pile."

"Playing alongside Mark helps a ton," he added. "He's a big play guy and if I blow a play



File Photo

**No. 51 Joe Farwell has gone from redshirt to starter in one year. Both Farwell and his coaches see a bright future for the freshman.**

he'll always come through. He always lets me know what coverage we're in and what I have to do. If I'm nervous, he'll help out."

Farwell's size is a concern for both him and Tarrow. At 6-foot-2, 210 pounds Farwell is probably one of the smallest linebackers in the Pac-10.

"I need to get bigger and a little stronger," Farwell said. "It would be nice to be bigger and gain 20 pounds. I know the coaches would like me to be bigger, but I think that will come with time and lifting (weights)."

"Joe needs to put on another 15 pounds," added Tarrow, who says Farwell actually weighs 205 pounds. "He'd be in pretty good shape if he could get up to 216 or 217 because right now he gets beat up pretty good in there."

"He doesn't take guys on, but kind of slips around them with his quickness," Tarrow said. "He's very quick, like a snake darting around."

Farwell and the rest of the defense will be put to the test Saturday when Arizona, the top rushing team in the conference last year, comes to Autzen Stadium with its wishbone offense, spearheaded by quarterback Ronald Veal.

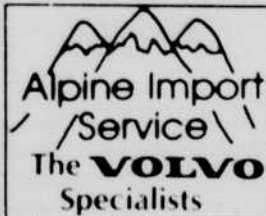
Veal and the Wildcats have already used the wishbone to defeat Oklahoma and Washington this year.

"Everyone has to play their roles and there can't be any breakdowns," Farwell said. "We have to stop the dive, then the quarterback and the pitch."

Farwell has fulfilled his high school promise to himself. If he can maintain the promise he has shown in his young career over the next three years, he could be one of the best linebackers to ever play for the Ducks.

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