

◀ GRID PROFILE ▶



Photo by Sean Poston

Oregon graduate assistants (from left) Ron Gould, Dave Whittle, Randy Maday, Matt Kofler and Bob Gregory are all getting a taste of coaching college football at the Division I level through the NCAA graduate assistant program.

Grad assistants lead hectic lives

By Jason McAllister
Emerald Contributor

If 80-hour work weeks for \$360 a month don't appeal to you, avoid becoming a graduate assistant for the Oregon football team.

"We don't go home at night and sleep. We go home and take a nap," graduate assistant Ron Gould said.

Gould, along with Randy Maday, Dave Whittle, Bob Gregory and Matt Kofler, are getting their first taste of coaching at the Division I level thanks to the NCAA graduate assistant program.

Graduate assistants perform a number of duties, including analyzing game film, working with players during practice and charting opponents' plays from the press booth on game day.

The GAs receive a full-ride scholarship for their efforts and a \$360 monthly living-expenses stipend, but no salary on top of that.

They are also required to take a minimum of five graduate credits each term, and their time commitments to football leave little time for

studying. Even in the off-season, GAs keep busy with winter recruiting, spring practice and summer camps.

"It's an apprenticeship, like any other job would have," Whittle said.

They all hope to use their internship to land a job in coaching after their two-year stints are up, but Coach Rich Brooks said competition for Division I jobs is stiff.

"There's so many GAs now, plus guys coming down from the NFL and top high school coaches, so it's a very competitive field," Brooks said.

Duck fans may remember Gould, a defensive back who started nine games during the 1987 season and clinched Oregon's win over Washington with a late interception.

Gould tried out as a free agent for the NFL's Los Angeles Rams, but was cut after suffering a hamstring pull. He returned to Oregon and got his degree in human services, then moved to Portland to work at a home for at-risk children.

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