



Oregon kicker Tommy Thompson and Washington running back Napoleon Kaufman were teammates in high school, but their college teams will be on opposite sides of the ball Saturday.

# Lompoc High pair shine for Oregon, Washington

By Steve Mims  
Emerald Sports Reporter

Lompoc High School has only 1,500 students, but two of its former football standouts are making a lot of noise in the Pacific-10 Conference this season.

Oregon kicker Tommy Thompson, a two-time Pac-10 special teams player of the week this year, and Washington running back Napoleon Kaufman, last week's offensive player of the week in the conference, graduated from Lompoc High in 1990 and 1991, respectively. They will be reunited this Saturday at Autzen Stadium when the Ducks take on the No. 1-ranked Huskies.

In 1990, Thompson and Kaufman teamed up to lead Lompoc to the conference title game before losing 34-31, but Thompson said when they meet on the field now, the past is forgotten.

"Last year was the first chance for me to play against him," Thompson said. "On the opening kickoff, he went to block me and knocked me down."

Because of injuries to running backs Beno Bryant and Jay Barry, Kaufman has moved up from third to first on the Husky depth chart, and he is making the most of the opportunity.

The 5-foot-9, 170-pound sophomore exploded onto the scene for the Huskies this year, rushing for 159 yards on only

six carries in Washington's first game against Arizona State. Last week Kaufman started his first collegiate game and responded by rushing for 208 yards and two touchdowns against California.

"I just do what the coaches tell me to do," Kaufman said.

At the rate Kaufman is running, even if Bryant and Barry come back they will probably see their playing time seriously decrease, but Kaufman said he looks forward to the other backs returning.

"Their loss has hurt," Kaufman said. "I like to learn from them, but I can't when they are on the sidelines. I think when they are out there it makes me better."

Kaufman was one of the most highly

recruited high school players in the country after his senior year, but he chose Washington over such schools as USC, Arizona and Nebraska.

"I had a great recruiting trip at Washington," Kaufman said. "Everything went well and fit into place."

Kaufman's high school statistics are, to say the least, amazing. During his senior season Kaufman rushed for 1,960 yards on 207 carries despite missing three games because of injury. He scored 28 rushing touchdowns to go along with three on punt returns, two on receptions and one on a kickoff.

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