

Whittle

LIFE AS A TAILBACK

RICKY WHITTLE — The 5-foot-9-inch, 195-pound senior tailback hails from Fresno, Calif., and has three varsity letters.



PERSONAL — Whittle, an English major, was born on December 21, 1971, in Fresno to Leonard and Genice Whittle. He attended Edison

High School and was coached by Larry Willis before coming to Oregon in 1991 and redshirting his first year.

RECORDS

All-time single game

5th Longest Run (60 yards vs. California) 11-7-92

5th Longest Kickoff Return (92 yards vs. Stanford) 11-12-94

Season

2nd in kickoff returns (9-301, 33.4 avg.) 1994

This season

Most all-purpose yards (312 yards vs. California) 10-14-95

Most yards rushing (161 yards vs. California) 10-14-95

Longest touchdown run (24 yards vs. Illinois) 9-9-95

WHITTLE AVERAGES...

- ... 113.7 rushing yards per game
- ... 217.5 all-purpose yards per game
- ... 4.1 receptions per game
- ... 49.6 receiving yards per game
- ... 10 points per game

TRIVIA QUESTION

What other sport did Whittle play in high school?

ACHIEVEMENTS

Whittle has accounted for 1305 all-purpose yards this season

Was a first team All-Pac-10 selection last season

Was the last Oregon player to score on both a 50-yard pass play (51 yards, 11/12/94) and 50-yard run (67 yards, 11/5/94).

Has 25 catches for 298 yards and one TD this season

CAREER STATISTICS

Rushing	G	ATT	NET	AVG	YPG	TD	Long
1992(Fr.)	12	133	634	4.8	5.8	1	80
1993(So.)	11	67	284	4.2	28.4	1	44
1994(Jr.)	9	130	606	4.7	67.3	8	67
1995(Sr.)	6	113	682	4.8	113.7	9	29
Career	38	443	2206	4.7	53.8	19	

TRIVIA ANSWER

Whittle was a center forward on his high school soccer team.



MARK McTYRE/Emerald

After a strong game against California last week, senior tailback Ricky Whittle has proved that he is among the nation's best running backs.

Whittle develops into potent weapon

By Trevor Kearney

Sports Editor

Right from the beginning of the season, senior tailback Ricky Whittle knew just what he had to do and how to do it. But what no one could have known was just how often he was going to end up doing it.

Whittle, who last year split time with former Oregon tailback Dino Philyaw, has emerged as the Duck's primary offensive weapon in the first six games of the 1995 season. But that comes as no surprise to the native of Fresno, Calif.

"A lot of people hadn't seen what I can do [coming into this season]," Whittle said of his talents. But what Whittle had previously done was no small feat, as he had already amassed 1,524 total rushing yards, 401 receiving yards and scored 12 touchdowns in his first three collegiate seasons. He had also recorded the Ducks' fifth longest run ever, an 80-yard touchdown dash against California in 1992.

"But I still believed I could do more," he said.

And this year he has done just that. The Ducks' Sept. 2 game against Utah seemed to set the tone for the year, as Whittle carried a team-high 30 times for 160 yards and one touchdown, and picked up an additional touchdown and 26 yards on the receiving end of the football.

He has kept up that pace, racking up 682 total rushing yards and 10 total touchdowns on the year. Whittle is third in the

nation in all-purpose yards and ranks second in the Pacific-10 Conference and 25th nationally in rushing with a 113 yards-per-game average. He also has the team's longest rushing score of the year (24 yards against Illinois) and has three games of 100-plus yards this season and eight in his career.

One of those performances was last weekend against California, when Whittle put on one of the most awesome performances of his career. He ran for 161 yards on 27

carries and racked up an incredible 312 all-purpose yards on the day in the Ducks' 53-30 rout of the Golden Bears.

"Those 312 all-purpose yards took me back," Whittle said, adding that he doesn't think about how many yards he has during the game. "I was like, 'Where did that come from?' And then I watched the game and I said 'Oh, that's where.'"

That kind of performance has earned Whittle the role of go-to guy when the Ducks need it. This season, Whittle has carried the ball 143 times, unchallenged by any other Oregon player. Whittle is not unaccustomed to running the ball play after play after play, but that role hasn't drained him in the slightest.

"I'm not tired," Whittle said of his extensive role. "This is something I have envisioned for myself — to be healthy enough to come through for my team — for a long time."

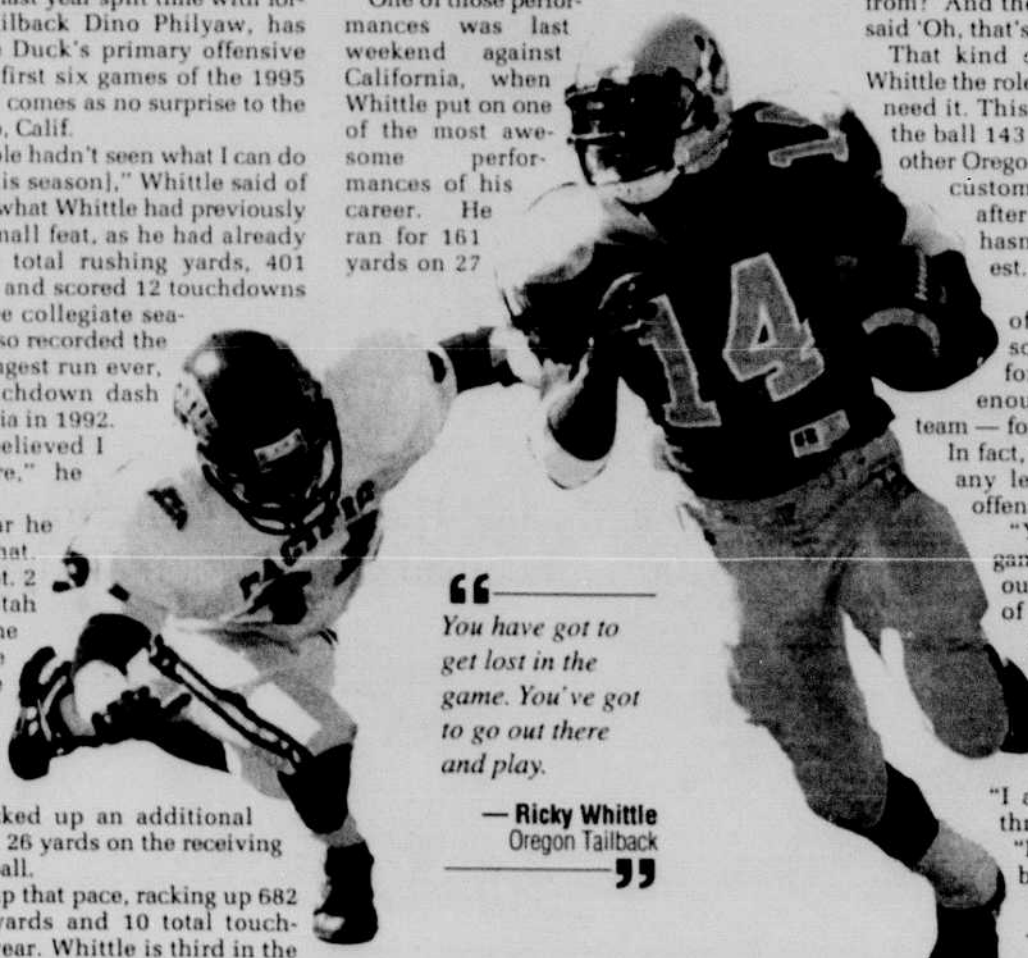
In fact, Whittle wouldn't want to be any less of a part of the Oregon offense.

"You have got to get lost in the game," he said. "You've got to go out there and play. I feel in a lot of ways our coaches do look to me for that."

Whether it be running the ball, catching the ball or throwing a key block Whittle just wants to be in on crunch-time.

"I also want to be the one to throw that key block," he said. "In a lot of ways, I just want to be in on the key situations."

Whittle redshirted in 1991.



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Oregon Tailback

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