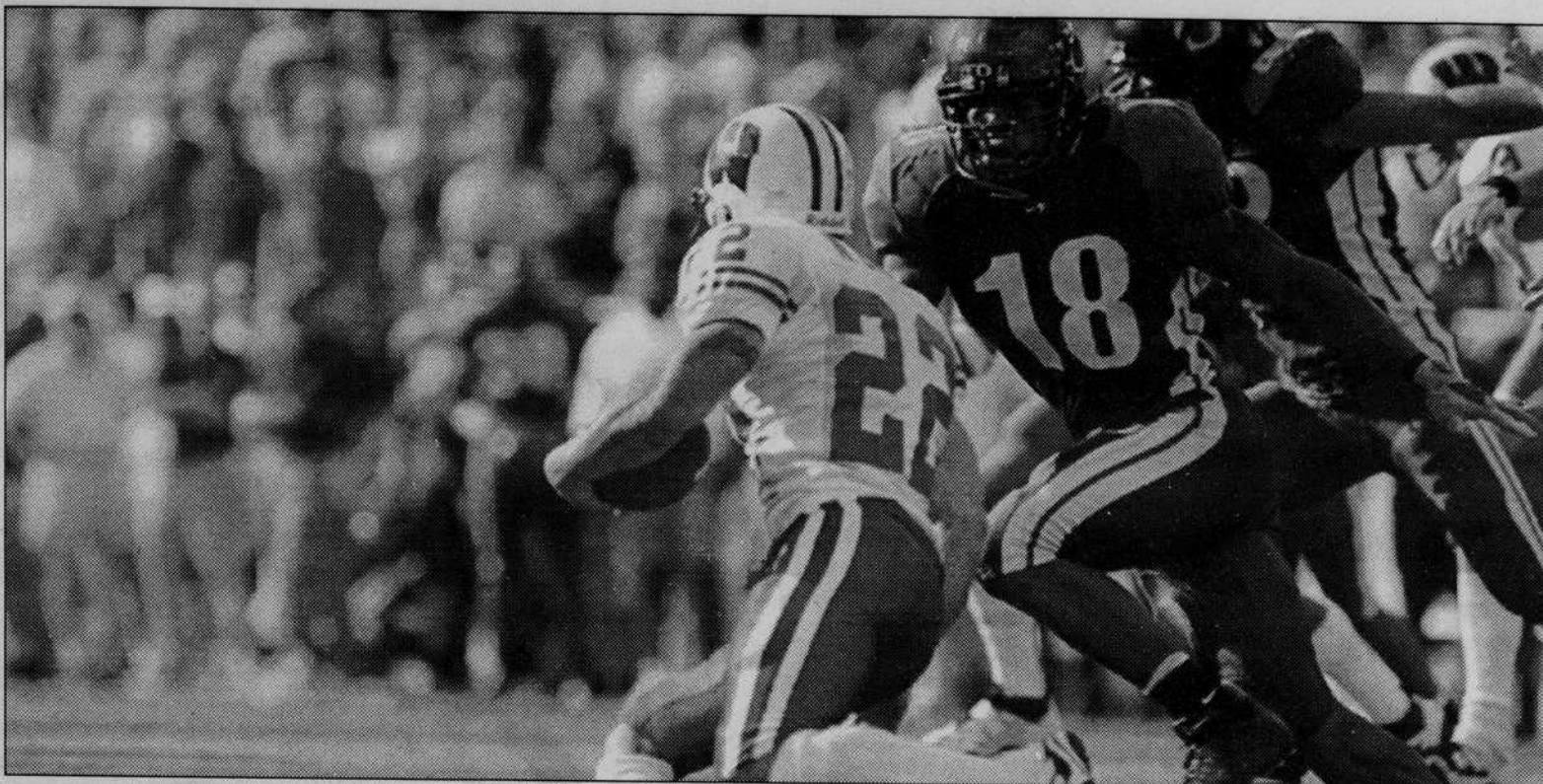




Adam Amato Emerald

After leading the special teams for the last three seasons, former walk-on Wesly Mallard (18), a senior linebacker, is second in the Pac-10 with 39 tackles this season.

MORE THAN JUST A NAME

Wesly Mallard has proven that he should be recognized for his play on the field

By Adam Jude
Oregon Daily Emerald

It's all Don Essig's fault. You see, Wesly Mallard was more than just a name before he became a Duck. He is a person. He has feelings. He's an English major. An only child. A football player — and a good one at that. But that's not why you know or like him.

For obvious reasons, Mallard is everyone's favorite Duck. In case it

wasn't so obvious to you, a mallard is a "wild duck of the northern hemisphere that ... is distinguished in the male by a greenish black head and neck, white collar, chestnut breast, grayish brown back, purple speculum and grayish white underparts."

Mallard, the *person*, is more than that and none of that.

Chestnut breast? Don't think so. Greenish black head and neck? Only with the helmet on, but that doesn't count. Purple speculum? Are you kidding?

Instead of examining the *person* by his name, try to remember him by his faster-than-a-fox speed: He boasts a 4.34 second 40-yard dash, best of any linebacker in school history. 4.34!

How about his strength? Try 352 pounds of clean lift. Again, no predator in school history can match that.

Still not convinced? How about 39 — the *person's* total tackles this season, second-best in the Pacific-10 Conference.

But since the senior outside linebacker is not complaining, perhaps Autzen Stadium will continue to erupt when Mr. Essig,

the stadium announcer, bellows every time "our favorite Duck" makes another tackle.

"I think it's just natural. It's good that people are recognizing me," Mallard said. "Before it was just my name, but hopefully my play on the field is enough for people to remember me now."

One notable play that the *person* is no doubt remembered for is his vicious hit on Arizona's Michael Jolivet at Autzen last season, when on punt coverage, the *person* knocked Jolivet's helmet several feet into the air. In fact, the *person's* special teams play during his first three years at Oregon is his claim to fame.

The former walk-on led the special teams unit with 22 tackles as a freshman, and after missing most of his sophomore campaign with a

Turn to Mallard, page 7B

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