

# Schmid

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lot of times, especially in football, it's really easy to get down and really easy to get high. The highs and lows of a season still get to you, but faith helps put it into perspective."

For example, there was no Duck more disappointed than Schmid on Oct. 20 when Oregon had been beaten by Stanford, 49-42, for its only loss yet this season. What made the defeat even more painful was that the Ducks had taken a 14-point lead into the fourth quarter and lost on their own turf during Homecoming weekend.

Most likely dashed that afternoon was Oregon's legitimate national championship dreams. So while the loss stung, and still does for Schmid, his maturity and viewpoint on life led him to see the bright side of the situation.

"When you have a goal for over a year and it's just suddenly gone, that's a shocking blow," Schmid said about reaching the Rose Bowl. "But then you take a step back and realize that you can learn a great deal from it, if you look at it the right way.

"So rather than just dwell on how horrible that loss felt, my faith helps turn it into a positive," he said.

## Becoming a Duck

Schmid has clearly been a positive influence on the Ducks. The Lake Oswego High graduate entered the Oregon program as a redshirt freshman in 1997. During his first playing year in 1998, while participating in seven games, he made a strong enough impression on Zoumboukos that the coach knew he had someone special on his hands.

"When he began playing, it became very clear that he was going to play a significant role," Zoumboukos said. "And as time has gone on, his role to our group has been absolutely immense. He's been a leader since a young age and has been every bit as valuable to this program as Joey Harrington has."

Indeed, in the fall of 1999, when Harrington burst onto the scene with comeback victories, Schmid was starting most of the games on the offensive line. The next year, Schmid started at center and left guard, a position he's solidified this season.

His partner through it all has been senior Jim Adams, who described his buddy as an "air traffic controller" on the playing field.

"He knows all the calls and has a better grasp of this offense than even Joey at times," Adams said. "Because when Joey messes up, Ryan's the one that turns backwards and corrects him."

Speaking of Harrington, it surprised Schmid a great deal to learn that Harrington listed him as someone he's learned the most from.

"Really? That's an incredible compliment, especially coming from Joe," Schmid said.

So what was it about Schmid that stood out in Harrington's eye?

"His work ethic," Harrington said. "I thought I knew how to work hard, and then I saw Ryan Schmid. The way he carries people every day and how all his hard work rubs off on us."

## A family work ethic

Schmid doesn't consider himself any more talented or smarter or more dedicated than anyone else he's around. To him, he's just following in the footsteps of his father, Mike Schmid. As a child, Schmid would watch his dad go to work all day as a civil engineer and then come and immediately start working around the house.

"He doesn't understand how to relax," Schmid said.

Schmid never heard his father complain about any of the chores he was doing or about the long hours he was putting in at the office. He considers his dad to be an "incredible role model" and sees himself as being a reflection of Mike.

One house project that Mike Schmid will probably have to soon start on is a separate room for all of the Duck paraphernalia that Schmid's mother, Sue, keeps buying. The two proud parents loyally attend every game and will be there Saturday to watch their oldest son compete in his final game at Autzen Stadium against Oregon State.

"With 100,000 people, I could probably still hear my mom. She gets really into it," Schmid said. "She's got the pompoms and that stupid little Duck whistle that everybody blows. Really, if there's Duck stuff, she probably has it."

While his parents are a strong in-

fluence on Schmid, they didn't push him into being so involved with Christianity. Schmid found that on his own when he moved away from the comforts of his home.

## Finding God

As a freshman in college, he turned to Christ. And it wasn't one of "those voices from heaven calls," as he put it, that was his one defining moment. It was more of a gradual process.

"I just made a decision to do that, and as I pursued it, it became more and more real," Schmid said. "It was something I needed. I just really craved it."

Soon, he was involved with campus organizations such as Athletes in Action and Campus Crusade for Christ. He loved the interaction he had with other people involved and how alive he felt when he read the Bible and let Christianity take full rein of his actions.

But there was one moment that really reaffirmed his belief in Christ and his belief in his ability to be an outspoken leader. It occurred in April 2000, in a week that will be remembered on the University campus as "Ryan Week."

"I don't think any of us expected it to blow up the way it did," Schmid said. "That was a crazy, crazy week. Man, that was nuts."

## Do you agree?

A couple of weeks prior, the words "Do you agree with Ryan?" began popping up on classroom chalkboards. They were written in chalk on sidewalks along 13th Avenue. Fliers with the message were passed out around campus and placed on tables in the Erb Memorial Union.

Students began wondering who this "Ryan" was and what they were supposed to agree with. Rumors ran rampant. While sitting in his Writing 122 class, Jeff Schmid had to laugh when his older brother's name was being tossed around the room in off-base opinions as to what the message was about.

So finally, on Friday of "Ryan Week," Ryan Schmid stepped into the EMU Amphitheater, grabbed a microphone and answered everyone's questions. He had been chosen by Campus Cru-

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