

Mark McCambridge Emerald

Olshansky, seen here wrapping up Oregon State's Steven Jackson, had 16 tackles in the season's last two regular-season games.

## Olshansky

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out there any more. He knows what gap he's got. He knows, on the d-line, he sees feet going across; he sees that motion.

"He's picked up on things that us linebackers pick up on when we're standing up, and he's looking at the ground."

Olshansky has played athletics of some kind his entire life, which may be why he's such an adept student of the game of football. He played basketball in the Ukraine and gave that up for football when he was noticed by a coach at his high school, St. Ignatius Preparatory in San Francisco.

But he says he isn't going to give up football for basketball any time soon.

"At first I think (my basketball experience) helped, because I was pretty athletic for a big guy. I was pretty light on my feet," Olshansky said. "But now, at this level, everybody's a good athlete. It's just how much work you put in the offseason, that's what you get out of it."

Olshansky has been putting in a lot of work himself in the offseasons. That's one of the main reasons he gives the Oregon defense, a defense that has taken a lot of hits this season, reason to think the Ducks could be making more hits in the future.

"For me, I have one more year after this year, and that excites me a lot," Mitchell said. "And plus, when I'm gone, and the next guys

step up, they're going to do just as good a job — or a better job — than when I was here."

Olshansky will be back next year along with Ngata, and the defensive line should be rounded out by Robby Valenzuela, who played in every game this year, and Devan Long, who should fill in for departing senior Seth McEwan.

And the young defense will get a chance to prove itself in the Seattle Bowl, which head coach Mike Bellotti called a "springboard" for next season.

Olshansky said he isn't disappointed about going to a less-than-prominent bowl or missing out on the opportunity to play near his family in the Bay Area.

"We're happy we've got a chance to play in the postseason," Olshansky said. "Obviously we'd like to play in a bigger bowl, but honestly it's unrealistic for the season we've had. So we're just happy to be in the postseason."

When Olshansky and the Ducks get to Seattle, there's no way to know if there will be enough Oregon fans to start a cheer.

"I love the fans. I'm very thankful for their support," Olshansky said. "I like the fans, I like to get the crowd into it a little bit — I'll wave at them a little bit. For sure, I appreciate the support."

And perhaps then the chants will be about his play instead of his unique name.

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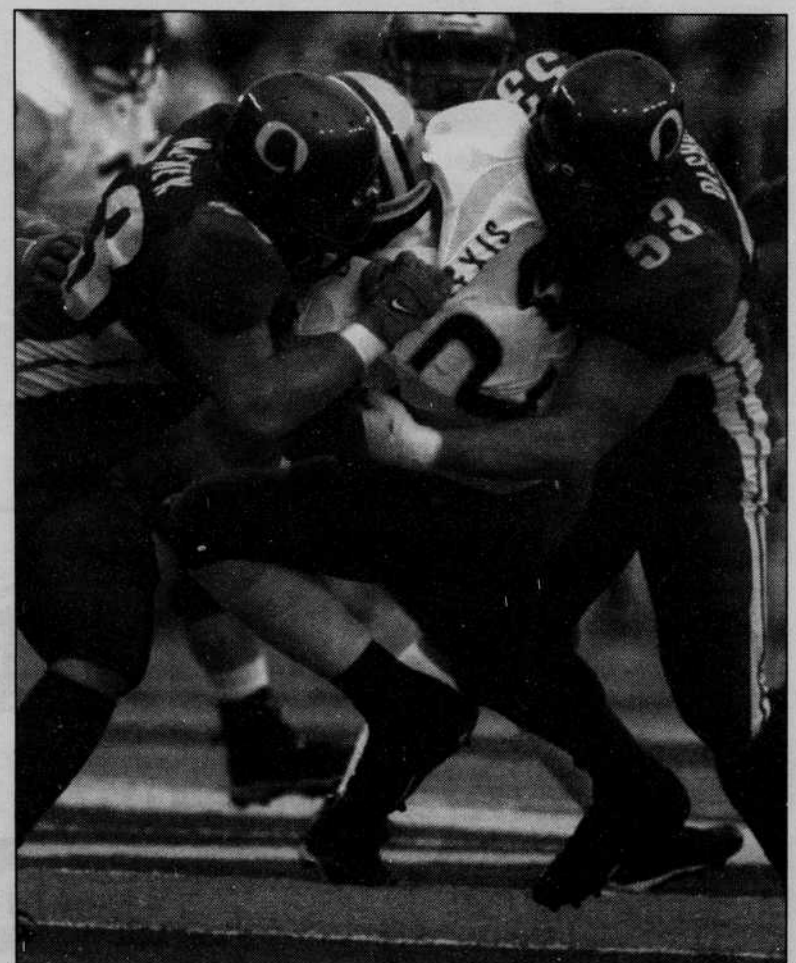
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### Igor Olshansky file

**Born:** Igor Olshansky on May 3, 1982 in Dnepropetrovsk, Ukraine.

**High school:** Joined the football team at St. Ignatius Prep in San Francisco in his junior season, and by his senior year he was named to All-Metro League team as a defensive lineman.

**Oregon:** Redshirted 2000 season, spent most of 2001 on bench but started against Washington State and UCLA...notched three tackles in Fiesta Bowl and helped limit Colorado to 49 rushing yards, earning a mention on Sports Illustrated's All-Bowl team... This season, he ranks fifth on the team with 60 tackles, has added three sacks and eight tackles for loss in starting all 12 games.



Adam Amato Emerald

Olshansky (right) spearheads an Oregon rush defense that is ranked 15th in the nation, and is holding running backs like Rich Alexis to 106 yards per game.