



Adam Amato Photo Editor

Cornerback Steven Moore (4) has two interceptions this season and has batted down three other passes.

## Confident Corner

Senior Steven Moore sticks by the attitude that no one can beat him on the field

By Hank Hager  
Sports Editor

In the Pacific-10 Conference, tall receivers are the rule.

They've got size, strength and seemingly superhuman leaping ability, allowing them to jump over cornerbacks inches smaller than them. Pac-10 receivers — such as Washington's Reggie Williams and USC's Mike Williams — have tortured these defensive players ever since they entered the conference.

By the same token, it has become the norm for Oregon cornerbacks to lack the same size and physical strength. But these players have gotten by.

Rashad Bauman, for instance, overcame his height disadvantage in his five seasons with the Ducks.

Oregon has another skilled corner who aspires to compete with the Pac-10's tallest and who has taken the spotlight and run with it.

Senior Steven Moore, former understudy to Bauman and a friend to the current professional, has emerged as a player to watch in Oregon's secondary.

"He's always been confident," Oregon safety Marley Tucker said. "He's a senior and knows what he has to do and what we have to do as a team."

Moore was the poster boy last season for the Oregon secondary; a group that ranked 115th in the nation in pass defense. That's out of 117 Division I teams.

If there's ever a way to lose your mental edge, playing for that group would have been it. But Moore, like the other members of the group, has yet to lose sight of what they're playing for.

If the Los Angeles native was as tall as he is mentally strong, he would easily tower ten-feet high.

"It was hard, but with me, I'm my biggest critic," Moore said of last season. "I don't think anybody can put me down more than I can put down myself. I think that makes it easier because I'm harder on myself than anybody else could be."

Moore's play this season has been

noticed by the Oregon coaching brass. Oregon's secondary coach, John Neal, who was at Alabama-Birmingham last season, has seen all the tapes from last season's games.

"I don't think (last season) carried over at all with him," Neal said. "It's a new start. Football is pretty much year-to-year."

Looking for comparisons between Moore and Bauman would be an easy task.

Bauman was listed at 5-foot-8-inches with the Ducks, while Moore stands 5-foot-9-inches tall. Bauman played an integral role with the team the day he arrived on the Oregon campus, and while Moore didn't see much action until his sophomore season, he has been the de facto leader of the Ducks' cornerbacks ever since he received prime playing time.

About the only comparison you can't make between the two is the team's success with each. Bauman led the Oregon defense to the Fiesta Bowl in 2001. Moore was a member of last season's team that fell from grace.

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## Oregon receivers 'focused' after tough Cougar contest

The Oregon receivers have resolved to bounce back after a sub-par performance against Washington State

By Jon Roetman  
Sports Reporter

When a football player experiences a sub-par performance in a big game, he has two options for a response.

Option one involves finding a big rock to crawl under.

Option two — in the case of the Oregon receivers — involves calling for the ball and redeeming themselves by making plays.

Disappointed with last week's outing against Washington State, Demetrius Williams, Samie Parker and Kellen Taylor are looking to get the Duck offense back on track against Utah.

"It's real important that everyone is doing their job," Oregon wide receiver coach Dan Ferrigno said. "When we perform like we did the other day, just from a receivers standpoint, you're

not going to win many games. It's important that we take a positive step, put that game behind us and get better this week."

By most standards, Williams had an excellent game against the Cougars, finishing with nine catches for 175 yards and a touchdown. But it was Williams' fumble after a 47-yard reception late in the first quarter that deflated the momentum Oregon had gained after a blocked punt.

Determined to not to make the same mistake twice, Williams said he's ready to get back on the field.

"I need to improve on being more focused, catching the ball all the time and making sure I secure the ball after the catch," Williams said. "It's important for us to make the catches that we need to and make some plays after, which we know we can."

Parker stayed relatively quiet against Washington State, finishing with four catches for 58 yards. His day will be remembered for a Jason Fife pass he let bounce off his shoulder pad in the back corner of the end zone.

Despite Parker's momentary loss of focus, the rest of the receiving corps stands behind him.

"He's our go-to guy," Williams said of Parker. "We look to him when we're in a desperate situation. I think we have to step up more to help Samie out in those roles."

"I don't see him not being our go to guy all season. He's our best receiver and we all look to him when we need a play."

Taylor finished the Washington State game with three catches for 50 yards and said he won't be satisfied until the Oregon offense can put together a complete game. Taylor is currently third on the team in receiving with 12 catches for 119 yards and said Friday is a perfect time for the receivers to show off their talents.

"We all bring different strengths," Taylor said. "(Williams) is tall, long and rangy. Samie has the speed and I'm intense. With all three of us out there we have a good blend of speed and size."

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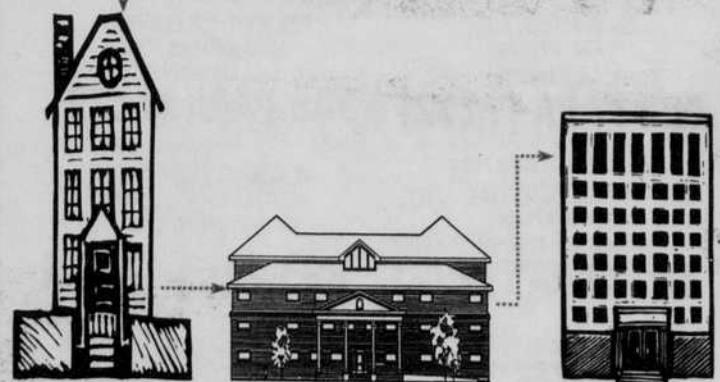
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