

# YOUNG GUNS

Six true freshmen have made the transition from high school to college and found time on the field

By **Mindi Rice**  
Senior Sports Reporter

The class of 2003 was in the midst of its final year of high school just one year ago.

Across the country — but predominantly on the west coast — young men who had signed letters of intent with the Oregon football program were nearing the end of their senior season of prep football.

Six of those players have since stepped foot onto the field in an Oregon uniform, four starting a game in their true freshman season, while two have seen time on the field without a starting role.

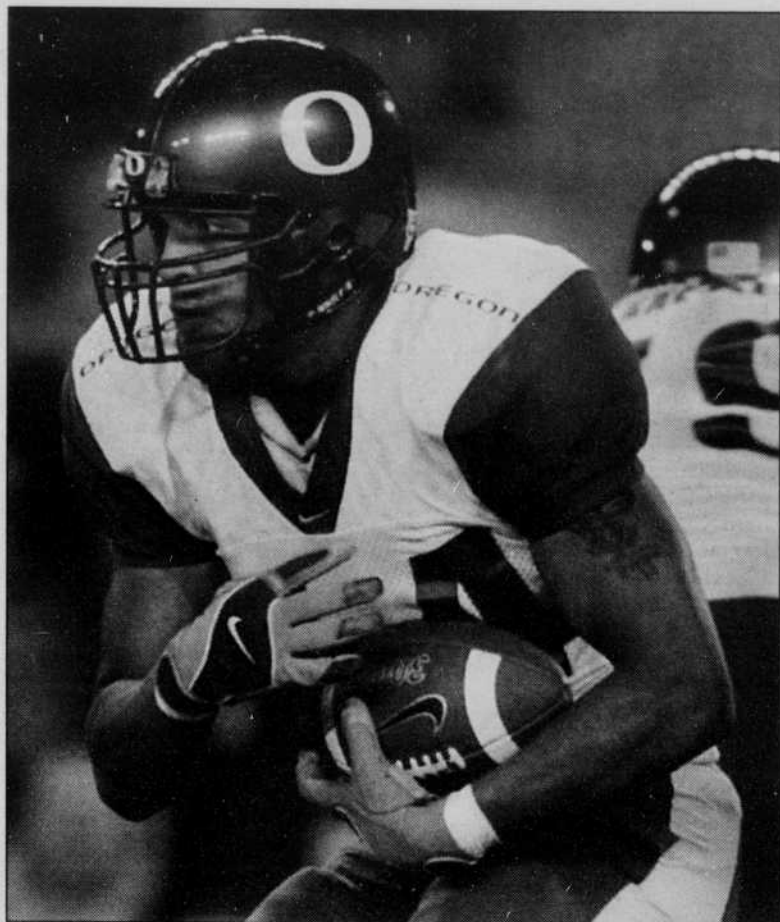
"It's been crazy," tight end Dan Kause said. "You go from playing in high school, with 800 people max at your games, and now you're the person you grew up watching on TV on Saturday. I always watched college football on Saturday, that was my day, and now I'm that guy."

Punter Paul Martinez has started all eleven Oregon games, while Dante Rosario has started two games and Kause and Kyle Weatherspoon have each started one game.

Rosario has 14 carries for 48 yards and eight catches for 80 yards. He's scored one touchdown — a one-yard run against Stanford — this season.

Kause has three receptions for 31 yards while Weatherspoon has three carries for 17 yards and seven catches for 109 yards.

One of the non-starters, receiver Jordan Carey, had a high-profile play earlier this season. He grabbed a loose ball in the endzone during the Michi-



Mark McCambridge Photographer

Dante Rosario has played in all 11 games for Oregon in his true freshman season.

gan game to score a touchdown.

"I ran the same offense since fourth grade," Carey said. "So coming here and you have a playbook that's six inches thick and all kinds of different routes and adjustments and how to read the defense, it's been a big learning process for me, and I'm still learning."

Martinez took on the starting punter role at the beginning of the season and is the only punter who has seen time this season. He's averaging 37.5 yards per punt with a long of 66 yards.

For the starting job, Martinez beat out two freshmen that spent last season redshirting.

"There's a lot of pressure to do good because you are a true freshman," Martinez said. "You've got to meet up to the level of play."

The level of play these freshman inherited is high — a program in the top half of one of the big six football conferences in Division I football.

"It's almost kind of surreal at times — you step back and look at it," Kause said. "The good thing about it is it's still the same game you played in high school. It's still a hundred-yard field. And you've got other guys doing it, so you've got someone to relate to."

Defensive end Victor Filipe has also played this season. Although he has not started, he has had to make the same adjustments as his teammates.

"It's a big adjustment on the field, and it's as big, if not bigger, off the field," Kause said. "A lot more is demanded of you in college than it is in

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