

TIM BOBOSKY | PHOTO EDITOR

Rover Patrick Chung brings down Washington's Robert Lewis during the Ducks' 45-21 win over the Huskies on Saturday. Chung, a redshirt freshman, is Oregon's leading tackler this season with 51.

# UNSUNG HERO

*Through seven games, Patrick Chung is the Ducks' leading tackler as an 18-year-old redshirt freshman*

BY LUKE ANDREWS  
SPORTS REPORTER

Redshirt freshman Patrick Chung has quietly established himself as one of the Oregon defense's stand-out performers.

After his team-high 11 tackle, one interception performance against the Huskies, don't expect Chung's silent demeanor and under-the-radar style to last too long.

"I continue to be very impressed and pleased with the play of Patrick Chung," Oregon head coach Mike Bellotti said. "He continues to get better and better."

Chung has been a force for the Ducks from his rover position, compiling a team-high 51 total tackles this season. In addition to being the leading tackler against the Huskies, Chung led the team in solo tackles against USC with nine and was second with 10 total tackles in Oregon's 31-17 win against Arizona State.

He has also displayed his ability to defend the pass, ranking among the team leaders with three pass breakups. The 5-foot-11, 197-pound Chung intercepted his first pass last weekend, picking off Washington's Isaiah Stanback on the first play of the second half. He returned it 26 yards to set up an Oregon score.

And, at age 18, he's accomplishing all this as one of the youngest members on Oregon's roster.

"For a youngster, he is playing at a level comparable with the seniors on our defense," Bellotti said. "That position is a playmaker by design and he's done a great job of filling that bill."

In his first collegiate action against Houston, Chung was fourth in tackles with four unassisted and two assisted tackles. Chung has since solidified himself as a presence on an Oregon defense that has allowed an average of only 352.4 yards per game. However, the Rancho Cucamonga, Calif., native attributes his success to his teammates.

"Everybody else doing their job allows me to do mine," Chung said. "I feel like if everybody is making plays, I need to make plays, too."

For Chung, it was a long and unusual journey to Oregon. Before settling in the San Gabriel Mountains and Rancho Cucamonga, Chung was born in Kingston, Jamaica, where he lived until the age of nine. He then moved to Florida before his family relocated to Southern California when he was 10.

Chung attended Rancho Cucamonga High School, where he was a two-time first-team all-Baseline League pick and was rated one of the top 90 prospects in California by

SuperPrep Magazine.

He helped the Cougars to a 7-4 record his senior season as a wide receiver and free safety, ranking as the team's second-leading tackler with 74 and second-leading receiver with nine receptions for 209 yards and two touchdowns.

Following his successful high school career, Chung knew from an early age that playing in the green and yellow was what he wanted.

"I've always liked Oregon, even the jerseys when I was a little kid," Chung said. "It's an all-around good school."

Chung, who arrived at Oregon after celebrating his 17th birthday, redshirted his first season and garnered scout team defensive player-of-the-week accolades for his preparation for the Oklahoma game. He also received an award for special teams preparations the week prior to games against Arizona and UCLA last season.

Judging by his current play, Chung has reaped the rewards of having an extra year to gain experience.

"Just learning the defense, hanging out with these starters, so I can get a feel of how the games are supposed to go and how practice is supposed to go," Chung said of the benefits. "Just getting used to the whole football thing."

His progress was obvious for Oregon's coaching staff as well.

"He's making more plays, getting more comfortable and cognizant of the defense," Bellotti said. "He's become a more consistent tackler. He's a ferocious, courageous tackler, and he probably has the athleticism to play corner(back). So he's a perfect fit in terms of that rover position."

Along with his instincts, Chung also possesses the natural tools for the position. He topped all of last year's newcomers in the secondary with a 297-pound bench press and clocked in as the team's second fastest player with a 4.56 second 40-yard dash.

His physical abilities have not only been displayed on the defensive end but on special teams as well. Chung returned two kicks against Fresno State for a 17-yard average and remains a key to the special team's vast improvement this season.

"He has an unrivaled enthusiasm, which you love to see as a football coach, and it shows up on special teams as well as defense," Bellotti said. "You like to see players who enjoy the game. We were going to let him off the special teams later in the game (against Washington), and he said 'no way,' and that's something

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## IN BRIEF

### Patriot linebacker returns after minor stroke

New England linebacker Tedy Bruschi practiced with the Patriots eight months after he had a minor stroke.

Head coach Bill Belichick will decide when to use him in a game, but Bruschi said he has no doubt it will be this season. The Patriots have a bye this weekend and their next game is at home against Buffalo on Oct. 30.

Seattle Seahawks safety Ken Hamlin, severely beaten outside a Seattle nightclub, was moved out of intensive care and into a private room, the player's representative told The Herald Everett.

The representative, Joel Anderson of Capital Sports and Entertainment, wrote in an e-mail that the player had been moved, but he didn't know whether doctors had upgraded the safety's condition from serious but stable, the description provided since Hamlin suffered a fractured skull and a

blood clot near the left side of his brain in the assault early Monday morning.

Tampa Bay quarterback Brian Griese will miss the rest of the season after tearing ligaments in his left knee.

Griese was injured during the second quarter of Sunday's 27-13 victory over Miami, and just before Tuesday's NFL trade deadline the Bucs acquired Tim Rattay as a backup for Chris Simms and Luke McCown.

— The Associated Press

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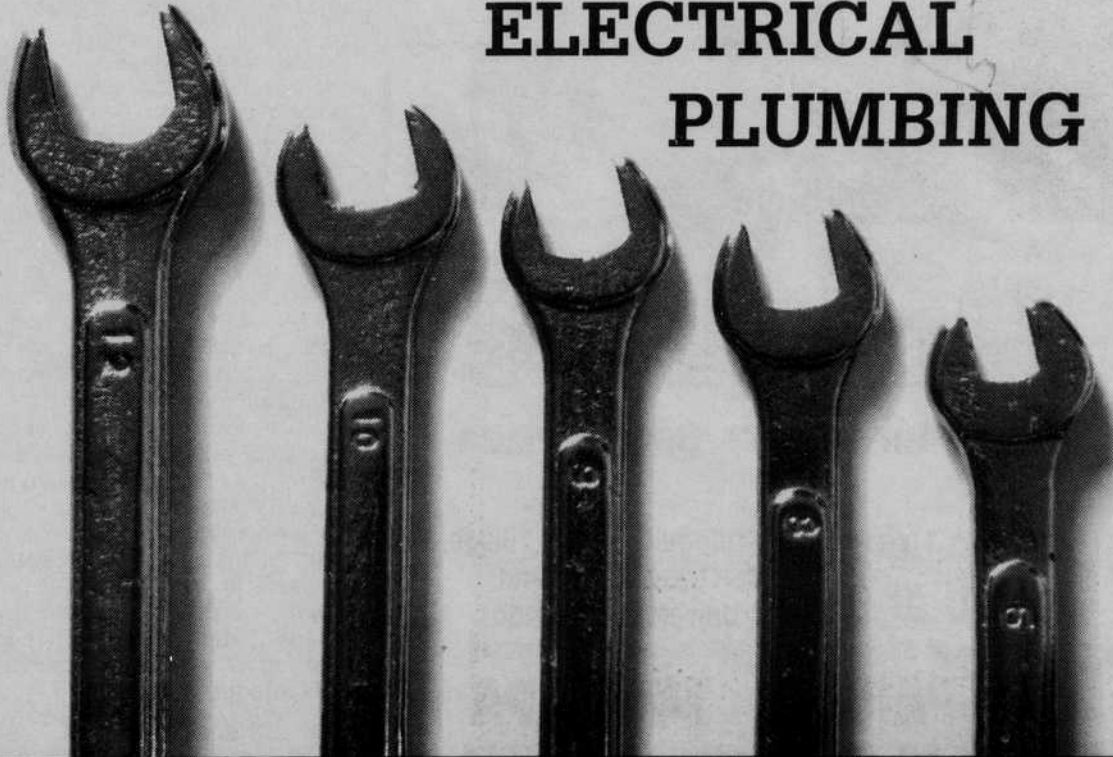
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