MICHAEL KLEWS

 Michael Klews protected quarterbacks at Castro Valley High and the University of Oregon back in the 1990s. Since 2002, he has been protecting the good citizens of Eugene, Oregon, as a patrol officer with a specialty in collision investigation.

 Born in Germany, Klews was 12 when he came to the United States and entered Canyon Middle School. He knew little English and even less about football.

 “My aunt took me to one or two games at Cal, but I didn’t know what I was watching,” he recalled.

 Klews joined the frosh-soph football team at CVHS as a sophomore, mainly to be with a couple of buddies. But his size (already approaching 300 pounds) and speed were hard to ignore. John Brosnan, the varsity coach, quickly promoted him to the varsity.

 “He was one of my favorites,” Brosnan said. “I have a picture of him on my wall. Helluva player. Great speed, good feet. A good team player and a good leader.”

 Klews became an immediate starter with the Trojans, mostly at offensive tackle and occasionally at guard. He also played defense, but offensive line was his forte. He made second team All-Hayward Athletic League as a junior, first-team all-league as a senior and played in the prestigious Alameda County vs. Contra Costa County All-Star Game.

 Klews played “a fair amount” his freshman year at Oregon (1994) -- even started a game against Iowa -- when the Ducks went 7-1 in conference play and met Penn State in the Rose Bowl. During a practice for that Rose Bowl game, Klews tore his ACL, although the injury wasn’t properly diagnosed at the time.

 “I had the knee wrapped and actually got in the game – for one play, a field goal attempt,” he said.

 It turned out that Michael’s ACL injury required two surgeries in a four-month period, forcing him to redshirt the next year. He returned to see periodic playing time as a redshirt sophomore in 1996, then made his impact as a starter in 1997 and 1998.

 Klews rotated through all the offensive line positions, except center. He even played both guard and both tackle positions in the same game, against Nevada his junior season.

 Klews started in the Ducks’ 41-13 win over Air Force in the 1997 Las Vegas Bowl and in their 51-43 loss to Colorado in the 1998 Aloha Bowl. His play on the offensive line helped enable Akili Smith to pass for a school record 3,763 yards and receive Pac-10 Offensive Player of the Year honors in 1998.

 Klews and his wife, Janel, have three teenage children (two boys and a girl). His sister, Barbara Andersen, teaches German at Castro Valley High.