

Oregon battles 1-5 Falcons Saturday

Quarterback dilemma still faces football team

By JEFF DICKERSON
Of the Emerald

For the second straight week, Oregon football coach Rich Brooks must be concerned about his team's situation at quarterback Saturday, as the Ducks face a hungry team from the U.S. Air Force Academy.

Freshman Mike Owens will start at quarterback for the Ducks, but if injuries continue the way they have for Oregon signal callers, Owens' replacement may turn out to be a surprise to some.

Defensive backs Danny McCalister and Dennis Clay have practiced this week at quarterback because of injuries to all three regular quarterbacks — Kevin Lusk, Mike Jorgensen and Owens. But Owens is healthy enough to play, and Thursday, Brooks announced that Jorgensen may yet recover from the rib injury he sustained against Arizona to back up Owens against the Falcons.

"Jorgensen's condition is much-improved over last week," Brooks said. "He still cannot throw 100 percent, but it's not quite as painful in his chest and side when he does throw."

"He can now complete the full throwing motion, and if his improvement over the next two days (Friday and Saturday) is the same as it has been during the week, he should be able to see limited playing time Saturday."

Jorgensen worked out with the team Thursday, running at close-to full speed, and directing the offense in shared offensive drills with Owens.

If the freshman quarterback cannot play Saturday, and Brooks said there is no way of knowing prior to game time whether he will or not, then McCalister would come in if Owens was unable to finish the game. McCalister, who was originally recruited as a quarterback, went through a crash course at the position this week.

Air Force also has an up-in-the-air situation at quarterback.

Senior Ed Antoine should start for the Falcons. Antoine ranks second on the team in

total yardage behind fullback John Kershner, but Sophomore Marty Louthan — a former Churchill High School standout — may see some playing time as well.

Louthan saw action last year in the Falcons' only winning effort over Hawaii and also Navy. Other Falcon quarterbacks who may see action Saturday include sophomores Pat Bendrick and Jim Miller.

For Brooks, the urgency at quarterback can only be supplanted by the urgency of the need for a win under his belt. Both the Ducks and the Falcons



Mike Owens

are 1-5 on the season and needing a victory this week to keep their hopes of a winning season alive. Both teams must win the remainder of their games to reach the 6-5 mark at the end of the season.

The latest line has the Ducks at least two-touchdown favorites over Air Force, but in the past, Oregon has had trouble



Photos by David Corey

Freshman quarterback Mike Jorgensen may or may not play this weekend. It all depends on how well he recovers from the injury to his ribs he sustained against Arizona last week.

getting motivated for teams it was "supposed" to beat. There shouldn't be any danger of that happening, Brooks said.

"Both teams should be licking their chops for another win — I'm sure Air Force will be fired up, and if we do not prepare properly for the game we will get beat. It's a chance for a win, and I'm sure we will be ready to play," he said.

Last week, Oregon dropped its third game in a row by losing to Arizona, 18-14. Brooks said he saw some good things in the defeat, including the improved play by the offensive line, but noted that overall play will have to continue to improve for the Ducks to start winning. After Air Force this week, Oregon plays the UCLA Bruins at Autzen Stadium next Saturday.

A win over Air Force would certainly help morale before having to play the highly touted Bruins, but Brooks doesn't think the Falcons will be pushovers.

The Falcons come to Eugene boasting some staunch

defensive play both in the backfield and on the line, and a fairly strong running game on offense, Brooks said.

"We're bigger than they are, but not much," he said. "They are probably a little quicker than we are and they have a couple of fine defensive players in safety John Jackson and tackle Bob Avila."

Avila is small (6-1, 215) for the defensive line, but Brooks characterized the sophomore lineman as "a fine athlete — he's tough and he's quick." Johnson is the safety who ran back a pass interception for a touchdown against the Ducks in Autzen Stadium in 1979.

On offense, the Falcons have a credible running attack out of the wishbone set, and should present some problems for the Oregon defense. Kershner and senior halfback George James provide much of the offensive punch in rushing yardage, while sophomore wide receiver Mike

Kirby can come up with the big pass play.

DUCK NOTES — Senior tailback Reggie Brown and senior fullback Vince Williams will complement Owens in the backfield...Brown leads the Ducks with 403 net rushing yards and Williams is second on the team with 101 yards...Greg Moser and Osborne Thomas lead the Ducks in pass receiving; Moser leads the team with 19 receptions for a 14.6-yard average, while Thomas ranks second with 15 receptions and a 13.9-yard average; Brown also has 17 receptions for an average of 6.8 yards...The Ducks are at the cellar of the Pacific 10 Conference in offense efficiency, but boast the third ranked defense in the conference...Oregon will be missing the services of senior linebacker Andy Vobora and junior flanker Mark James due to injuries to both players.

Kickers play in Washington

Oregon's women's soccer team heads to Seattle this weekend to take on the Washington Huskies on Saturday. It will be the second meeting between the two clubs as the Duck women claimed an easy 6-0 win earlier this month at Autzen.

Now ranked ninth nationally, the Ducks survived a scare Saturday against Western Washington, eventually settling for a 0-0 tie. Oregon scored a goal with five minutes left, but was ruled offside on the play.

Oregon punched Puget Sound, 3-0, last Sunday in its latest outing.

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