

"The offensive line and quarterback are the most important areas for us because we were last in the Pac-10 last season in total offense," Brooks says. "I think we scored 14 points per game. You don't win many games scoring 14 points."

"We had a fairly productive offense for two years prior to last year. We must return to that productivity," Brooks says.

Part of the Brooks plan is to resuscitate the split back veer offense used successfully in Oregon's back-to-back winning seasons. You may say goodbye to the Power I.

"It's going to be a big improvement," Lusk says of the veer. "We'll be unpredictable."

Unpredictability is what Brooks is counting on to spark the offense.

In the veer, Oregon can utilize Dwight Robertson's speed to turn the juice on around the end. By no small coincidence, the veer will help Lusk as well.

"It will take the pressure off (Lusk) from a passing standpoint," Brooks explains. "The defense can't jam the middle. It will have to cover the perimeter."

The veer, in effect, will involve more people in the offense, taking some responsibility that had mounted in the stalled Power I away from Lusk.

"It's awfully difficult for one man to carry the load," Brooks says. "Last year, with our offensive line the way it was, Kevin had extra responsibility. That was unfair."

Lusk agrees. "You're either the goat or the hero," said Lusk. "If things go well, you get too much credit. When things aren't right, you get the blame. You just let the chips fall."

To illustrate his point, Lusk speaks of the seemingly endless string of injuries to himself and the offensive lineman.

"The leg was never 100 percent," Lusk says. "Overall, it showed a lot. Injuries were the



Kevin Lusk

key to the offensive line. We had new people almost every week. That hurt. One good thing came out of that was that we got a lot of experience there."

This season everyone reported to fall camp healthy. The question mark now is were the injuries of a year ago Lusk's downfall, or was it Lusk who was Lusk's downfall?

Lusk worked out all summer in Eugene, to insure that the injuries would not do the damage they did last year. And as far as Lusk's performance goes, Brooks would like to think the season ending romp over the Beavers was a good indication. Lusk completed 8 of 14 for 146 yards and a touchdown as the Ducks swept pass the hapless Beavs 47-17.

"I think his play in the Oregon State game last year came close to what I thought he could play last season," Brooks says.

Plenty of lesser talent with the Beavers, but Brooks and Duck followers hope the game was a true indication of things to come: a little redemption for Lusk and the Duck's offensive line.

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