

Webfoot gridders change look following departure of Miller

By Aaron Knox
Of the Emerald

The Oregon football team has the unenviable task in 1987 of replacing its all-time total offense leader, last season's top receiver, and its entire kicking game.

In all, the Ducks must replace 14 starters, and their total of ten who are returning is the lowest in the Pacific 10 Conference this year.

To make matters worse, the Ducks must do all this against a schedule of opponents that, for the second-consecutive year, includes eight 1986 bowl game participants. So why is coach Rich Brooks smiling?

Perhaps it is because he knows so little is expected of his team this time around, but there is no question Brooks is making some decidedly optimistic noises about the Ducks' chances to surprise some people.

"I'd like to see us play better against the really good teams," Brooks said before the season opened. "We've been getting beat by the teams that were supposed to beat us, and the worst thing is that we haven't even played them very well," he added.

If Brooks' hopes are to be realized, it will likely be on the legs of the ground game. Sophomore Derek Loville rushed for 544 yards and seven touchdowns last season, and fellow second-year back Latin Berry amassed over 600



File Photo
With an inexperienced quarterback filling Chris Miller's shoes, the Ducks will expect more from tailback Derek Loville (32).

yards in total offense while playing behind Loville at tailback for most of the year.

Brooks has moved Berry to fullback, but the Pac-10 triple jump champion missed most of spring drills competing for the Oregon track team, and he will be scrambling to master the new position in the fall. He should improve as the year goes on.

Chris Miller may be gone to the greener pastures of the NFL, but offensive coordinator-quarterback coach Bob Toledo and his system remain. As Brooks points out, he has had one outstanding option QB (Reggie Ogburn) and one outstanding pro-set QB (Miller) in his tenure at Oregon. Redshirt freshman Bill Musgrave hopes to tip the balance to Toledo's pro-set.

The inexperience at quarterback and depth at running back combine to shift the offensive emphasis this year. Where Miller filled the skies with an average of 36 passes a game, Musgrave should only be attempting 25 or so, if Brooks' game plan is clicking.

Musgrave will have at his disposal a core of quality receivers, led by senior J.J. Birden, who was leading the team in receptions last year before a leg injury sidelined him. Berry and Loville combined for 55 catches, and speedy Rod Green averaged 17.6 yards on each of his 29 grabs.

Explosive redshirt-freshman Tony Hargain will start as a receiver, but may see action from as many as four different positions, including quarterback.

The most glaring change on the field this year, however, will be on defense, where Brooks has scrapped the 4-3 alignment he favored for ten years. In its place, Brooks has installed a 3-4 defense (see related story, Page 9).

After watching his team finish dead-last both against the run and in scoring defense last season, Brooks figured it was time to shake things up.

"They say if it ain't broke don't fix it. Well, (the defense) is broke so we're going to fix it," he said. Broke to the point that opposing rushers averaged nearly five yards a crack, and teams piled up more than 214 yards a game by land against the beleaguered Ducks.

Impact players should include nose tackle Rollin Putzier and strong safety Anthony Newman. The untested linebackers will also have to deliver if the defense is to carry this team for any stretch.



File photo
Oregon football teams have found the running a little rough during most of coach Rich Brooks' ten years at the helm, winning just 38 percent of the time. But talented young players like Latin Berry (above) and fiscal solvency make the future look bright.

Brooks reflects on his coaching tenure at Oregon

By Aaron Knox
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The bright sunlight that floods coach Rich Brooks' office on the early August afternoon of this interview is hardly a reminder that the annual ordeal, which is the college football campaign, is less than a month away.

But to the seasoned eye it is merely the calm before the storm. With a decade of Oregon autumns under his belt as coach of the Ducks, Brooks is nothing if not seasoned.

His tenure is the second longest in Oregon football history, and ranks third among current Pacific 10 Conference coaches. Only Don James, entering his 13th season at Washington, and Terry Donahue, in his 12th year at UCLA, have remained longer in the conference.

Looking back at his first ten years at Oregon, Brooks displays the candor, intensity and self-deprecating wit that have marked his career. The tension of the season at hand, though, is never far away.

A full five days before freshmen report to officially open the 1987

season, Brooks' thoughts of the impending season betray themselves occasionally in a restless reaching for the telephone that rests behind his desk.

The phone remains silent, and the receiver on its cradle, but periodically Brooks extends his hand to it as if by instinct. He drums his fingers nervously on the mouthpiece for a few seconds before releasing it. It is a gesture that suggests unspoken anxieties, but the conversation is, for the most part, upbeat.

"I know some people aren't happy with the job I've done. Hell, I'm not happy with what I've done," Brooks said, his hand straying towards the phone. "But the pressure I feel most is the pressure I've put on myself."

In 1977 there was almost no pressure on Brooks as he took over the Ducks in his first head coaching assignment. Oregon had gone 4-7 under Don Read in 1976, but the decision was made to go with the untested Brooks, who was an assistant at UCLA and had previously

coached at Oregon State and in the professional ranks with the Los Angeles Rams and San Francisco 49ers.

Brooks and the Ducks struggled together to a 2-9 mark in that inaugural campaign, but Brooks remembers some good that came out of it, including the emergence of Vince Goldsmith on defense.

"We started a true freshman (Goldsmith) against Georgia in the first game of the year, and he made 13 unassisted tackles," Brooks recalled. Goldsmith went on to start for four years and earned Canadian Football League Rookie-of-the-Year honors before moving to the NFL.

"Plus we had a remarkable recruiting year that paid dividends later," Brooks said of the year that produced Brian Hinkle and Scott Sutherland on defense and Vince Williams and Goldsmith on offense. The Ducks also ended the year in what has become the expected fashion when they beat Oregon State. It continued Brooks' remarkable string of unbeaten Civil War contests that continues to this

day. In 19 meetings between the Ducks and Beavers in which Brooks participated as a player or coach, his record is 17-0-2.

It was the next season that placed the burden of expectations squarely on Brooks' shoulders. Although they finished with another 2-9 mark, the Ducks lost four straight games they led going into the last six minutes, and six by a combined total of 19 points. In spite of the record, Sporting News magazine named Oregon the nation's most improved team.

"It was tremendous disappointment after disappointment," Brooks recalled. "But the players kept bouncing back and making a great effort."

Brooks calls it his most difficult year. "You start to wonder if you're ever going to win, but we stuck with it, won a couple games at the end and came out strong in '79," he said.

Brooks had made the decision

Brooks employs 3-4 alignment to improve defensive quickness

By Gary Henley
Of the Emerald

There's no question Oregon football will seem a little unusual with someone other than Chris Miller taking the snaps at quarterback this year.

Not only will the Ducks look a little different offensively, but Oregon will have a new look on the other side of the ball as well.

Head coach Rich Brooks and his staff have done away with the old 4-3 flex defense in favor of the 3-4 alignment.

The flex defense was made famous by the Dallas Cowboys during the 1960's when Tom Landry and his staff were trying to find a way to stop the effectiveness of the pulling guards on running plays.

With the four defensive linemen and three linebackers, the flex was designed to encourage the one- and two-yard gains but give up no more than that something the Ducks had trouble accomplishing during 1986.

The Oregon defense gave up 4.8 yards per run last season and 214.2 rushing yards per game. Four teams gained over 300 yards rushing in games against the Ducks, including Colorado who gained 368.

The 3-4 will simply have three down linemen instead of four, with two inside and two outside linebackers. It's the first defensive change the Ducks have made since Brooks' first year at Oregon, when the Ducks went from the 50 defense to the 4-3.

"We looked at our overall performance at the end of the (1986) season and decided we needed a change," Brooks said.

Defensive coordinator Denny Schuler pinpointed three reasons for the change.

"First of all, we had a lack of proven defensive linemen. We have some good young players, but we had some injury problems, and we felt it would be easier to field a three linemen team instead of four."

"Secondly, we wanted to improve team speed. And third, we want to utilize our personnel better. We need to have our best people in there — the best linebackers and the best defensive lineman over the center."

The "best defensive lineman" will be senior Rollin Putzier, who started all 11 games, received Pacific 10 Conference honorable mention, and led the Ducks with 71 unassisted tackles last season.

"Rollin had a good spring. He had a lot of

success at the new position (nose tackle). He's 6-5, 275, and he has excellent strength," Schuler said. Putzier may get double-teamed throughout the season, he added.

"We don't anticipate him getting doubled that much," he said.

Brooks maintains that Putzier's height will not be a disadvantage.

"There's a lot of nose tackles out there that are 6-foot or 6-1, but he has the strength and ability to perform well," he said.

Schuler is in his second year as the Ducks defensive coordinator, a position he has held with Utah State and California. He spent the 1985 season as a special defensive assistant with the Los Angeles Rams.

The flex defense has a history of being one of the most unique and complicated defenses, but Schuler said it's no more complicated than the 3-4.

"With the 3-4, we've developed a more attacking defense," he said. "It involves more moving and shifting of linebackers. One linebacker will always rush — you just don't know which one. The 4-3 was more of a 'read and react' defense, with very few stunts."

Brooks added that one advantage is they will have quicker people in the lineup, having trad-

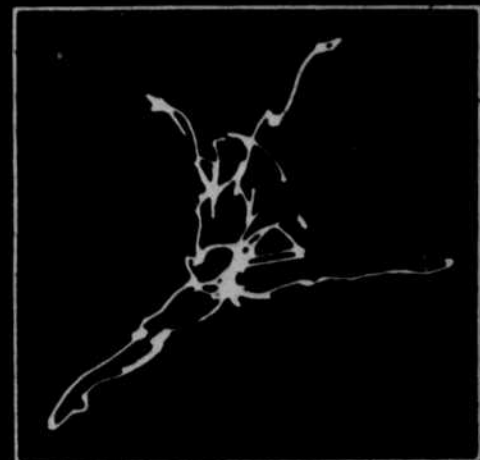
Turn to Defense, Page 10D



File Photo
Defensive lineman Rollin Putzier (75) will be an integral part of Oregon's new 3-4 defense, which has been employed to increase speed and mobility.

Turn to Brooks, Page 10D

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