

slightly happy to have Musgrave back is senior tailback Derek Loville, Oregon's alltime leading rusher who gained 1,202 yards last season and had six games in which he rushed for at least 100 yards.

When Musgrave went down, the Ducks' passing game went with him.

"When he was gone it put a lot of pressure on me, because the defense really narrowed down on our running game," Loville said.

This season, Loville said, Brooks has told him he might not carry the ball as much as he did last year, but he'll be used more as a receiver.

"Obviously Derek Loville is a great player, and he's going to get the ball in his hands," Brooks said.

Another big-play performer, wide receiver and punt returner Terry Obee, didn't get the ball much after Musgrave was hurt, but he figures prominently in the Ducks' plans this season.

So does fullback Latin Berry, the team's second-leading rusher the past three seasons and the Pac-10 long jump champion.

Oregon has a new offensive coordinator in Mike Bellotti, the former Chico State head coach who took over when Bob Toledo resigned to join the Texas A&M staff.

But Brooks said the offense won't change much, although Musgrave said he'll have more of a chance to dump the ball off earlier to receivers if the situation warrants.

On defense, five starters return, including linebacker Mark Kearns, who also went down with a season-ending injury against Arizona State last year.

Other top defenders include all-conference cornerback Chris Oldham, who had five interceptions last season and led NCAA Division I in kickoff returns at 29.4-yards per attempt.

"He covers every receiver he goes up against. He intercepts

the ball. He runs it back. He returns kickoffs like a crazy man. He'll tackle and hit with anyone. He's an outstanding football player who in my opinion doesn't have a weakness," Brooks said.

Brooks also counts on strong defensive help from nose tackle David Cusano, linebacker Peter Brantley and free safety Derek Horton. He said he's confident about the rest of his front line defensive players, but worries about a lack of depth.

Brooks said he's happy with placekicker Gregg McCallum, who will replace Kirk Dennis, but his biggest concern is punting. Marc Penso and Ben Rough are battling for that position.

Overall, though, he's optimistic that, in his 13th season as head coach, Oregon is ready to finally make it to that longawaited post-season appearance.

"We've been at this level too long," he said. "It's time to go

on to the next one."

"On paper," Brooks said, "it looks as good as any team I've had here probably. How that translates into wins and losses I'm not smart enough to figure out."

After many seasons of struggle, he also feels good about the coming years. New locker rooms, training facilities and athletic offices are under construction adjacent to Autzen Stadium at a cost of nearly \$10 million.

And the Oregon athletic department expects at least \$3 million a year from the controversial new "Sports Action" game administered by the Oregon Lottery Commission. The game allows people to bet \$1 and try to pick the winners, against the point spread, in four to 14 professional football games each week.

"It feels good to see we're not going from hand to mouth, that there is a future in our program now," Brooks said.

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Football Continued from Page 5D

predominantly known for basketball," Schembechler joked, "but we will try to live up to our basketball team."

That won't be a problem at Nebraska, Southern Cal and Penn State, schools where basketball is a game you play while waiting for the football season to begin.

Although Nebraska's Tom Osborne has the best winning percentage of any active coach in college football, the Cornhuskers have not won a national championship during his 16-year reign. That might change this year, thanks to another dynamite offense and a creampuff non-conference schedule that doesn't include a single team from last year's final Top 20 poll.

Southern Cal must replace Heisman Trophy runner-up Rodney Peete, who went to the NFL after quarterbacking the Trojans to two Rose Bowls. But coach Larry Smith has a robust running attack and one of the nation's best defenses, with safeties Mark Carrier and Cleveland Colter and a line that has played together for three years.

Losing seasons occur at Penn State about as often as Halley's comet, so the Nittany Lions are expecting major improvement after last year's 5-6 mark. The biggest confidence booster is the return of tailback Blair

Thomas, who sat out last season after undergoing major knee surgery. Thomas rushed for 1,414 yards in 1987, the third highest single-season total in Penn State history.

While Joe Paterno returns for his 24th season at Happy Valley, four other powerhouse programs have new coaches.

Jimmy Johnson went from Miami to the Dallas Cowboys. Oklahoma's Barry Switzer and Texas A&M's Jackie Sherrill left programs plagued by allegations of cheating, and Vince Dooley retired after 25 years at Georgia.

Switzer, Sherrill and Dooley were each replaced by an assistant — Gary Gibbs at Oklahoma, R.C. Slocum at Texas A&M and Ray Goff at Georgia. The new head man at Miami is Dennis Erickson, an offense-oriented coach from Washington State.

Following in the footsteps of Switzer, Johnson and Co. won't be easy. At schools like Oklahoma and Miami, which has lost an average of one game per season since 1985, wins are taken for granted.

"Expectations are extremely high," Erickson said. "Losing is an unheard of word around here, and anytime you follow a successful coach like Jimmy, that's what you expect."

All-American quarterback

Steve Walsh skipped his senior season at Miami and followed Johnson to the Cowboys. His successor, junior Craig Erickson, reportedly has an even stronger arm.

"He has the talent to be as good as anybody I've been around," said Dennis (no relation) Erickson. That's quite a compliment considering that last year he coached the nation's leading passer, Timm Rosenbach.


Like Walsh, Rosenbach passed up his last year of college eligibility to play in the pros. So did running backs Tim Worley of Georgia, Sammie Smith of Florida State, Bobby Humphrey of Alabama and Barry Sanders of Oklahoma State.

Running records may fall this season, but kicking marks appear to be safe because of a new rule banning the use of tees for field goals and extra points. Tees can still be used on kickoffs.

The rule is designed to deemphasize the importance of placekickers, who were booting the ball longer and more accurately than ever.

"I think we're going to find that we're taking the kickers out of the game," said Larry Shank, coach of West Liberty College in West Virginia. "A good field-goal kicker was good for a couple of wins a year."

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