

INJURIES

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The last time Okken took over under these circumstances was in 1988, when Musgrave went down with a broken collarbone against Arizona State.

Okken played in three games while backing up Pete Nelson and Bob Brothers, as the Ducks lost their last five games after starting the season 6-1 behind Musgrave.

It is a season Duck fans and players remember maybe too well, but Brooks remains confident in this team.

"I think we have a better overall team (than 1988)," he said. "I believe Jon Okken will perform better than our other quarterbacks have when Musgrave is out, but that remains to be seen. He has a lot of poise, a good passing arm, and the players have confidence in him."

Okken took over the No. 2 quarterback job from Brothers following the Idaho game and was very impressive in a relief performance against Utah State, completing four of five passes for 20 yards and one touchdown. He is also a little bit better runner than Musgrave and gives the Ducks some options in that regard.

Beyond the status of Musgrave, the Ducks have several other key players with injuries that make them either doubtful or out for Saturday's game.

Starting wide receivers Joe Reitzug and Michael McClellan have missed practice time this week because of knee injuries, and along with guard Jon Tattersall (knee), tailback Howard Blackwell (knee), and nose tackle Marcus Woods (ankle), are doubtful for Saturday's game.

Oregon also sustained its third season ending injury when cornerback Muhammad Oliver suffered posterior ligament damage to his left knee against the Huskies. Oliver's injury leaves the Ducks vulnerable at an already thin cornerback position. The Ducks also lost receiver Tony Hargain and fullback Brandon Jumper for the season during the Idaho

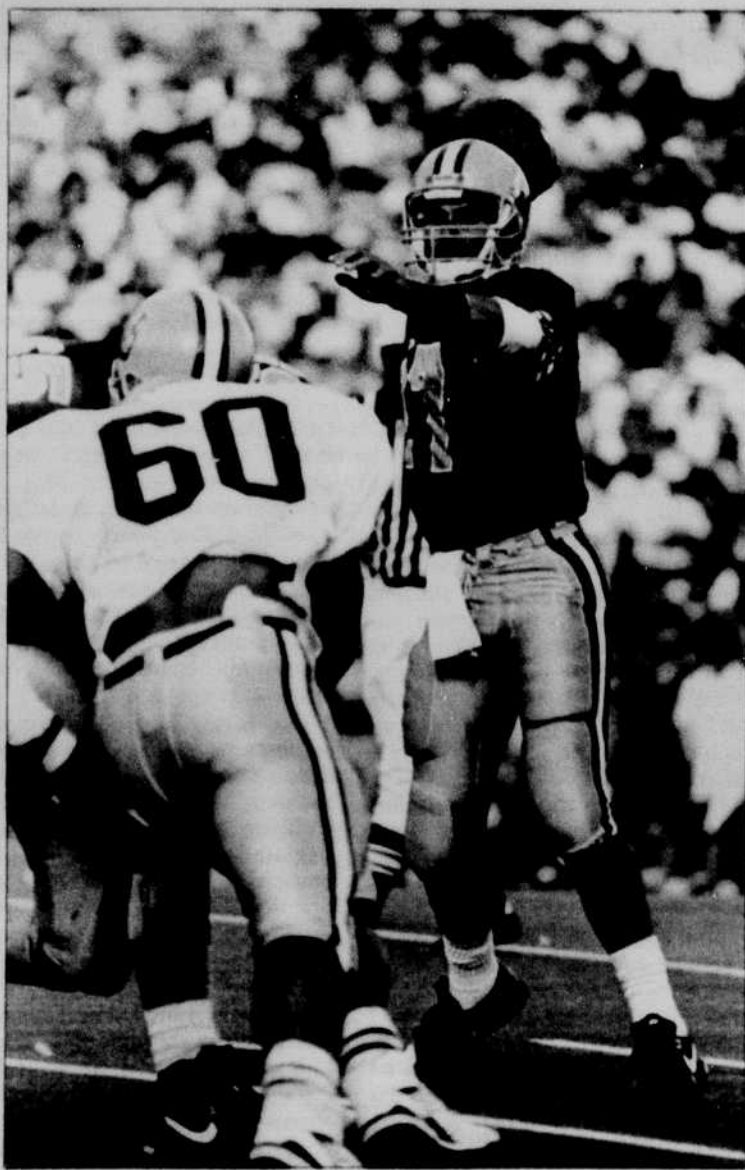


Photo by Eric Evans

Jon Okken may be at the helm of the Oregon offense if quarterback Bill Musgrave's injury prevents him from starting.

game.

On the brighter side, the Ducks will have the services of tight end Jeff Thomason, who saw limited action against the Huskies, offensive guard Bud Bowie, and outside linebacker Andy Conner. Both Conner and Bowie played against Washington and Conner will start Saturday at his outside linebacker spot.

Arizona State has not fared much better this year in the injury department. The Sun Devils' starting quarterback, Paul

Justin, suffered a dislocated shoulder in the second half against Missouri - a game in which he had already thrown for 577 yards - and has not played since.

Justin might see some action this weekend, but no definite word has been given.

Also, the Sun Devils have lost two straight, and played without nine starters in last week's loss to California. Six players who are either starters or back-ups for the Sun Devils weren't even on the roster at the beginning of the season.



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