

## BROOKS

Continued from Page 2

doing it to please somebody else or not.

ODE: Is there any kind of frustration that you've been here this long and haven't been able to reach the Rose Bowl yet? You've come close a number of times.

Brooks: Yes, there is definite frustration. I hate to lose. I've never grown accustomed to it even though I've lost a lot of games here. And it's even more frustrating the last couple of years where we've had a better chance and better teams.

Three years ago when we were 6-1 and Bill (Musgrave) broke his collarbone after beating Washington and USC back to back, and we ended up losing to Arizona State in a very close game after Bill broke his collarbone, I thought we had a great chance that year of going to the Rose Bowl. We didn't make it and that was very frustrating.

ODE: What kind of things do you think you could improve in as far as coaching goes?

Brooks: I try to evaluate that every year and change things from time to time. I try to become aware of changes in attitudes of players because they've changed a great deal over the years—how best to motivate them and get the most effort out of them.

ODE: Do you think that as far as athletes in general go today that they have developed a god-like attitude over the last 10 years?

Brooks: I don't think that's a problem at this level. I think most players at this level may have a dream of playing professional football, but many of them realize that this is going to be their last football experience.

I do have a few who think that they are going to be pro players and that's the only thing on their mind, and I try to convince them that education is pretty important, regardless of whether they play pro football or not.

ODE: Who are some of the best players you have ever coached?

Brooks: Oh, I've been around a lot of great players. In the days at Oregon State with Pete Pifer, who was just inducted into the Oregon Hall of Fame, and playing with a guy like Terry Baker, who won the Heisman Trophy. I coached Jess Lewis and John Sandstrom, who both made all-American at Oregon State—they were both defensive linemen that I coached. Then at UCLA, there was Jerry Robinson, who is still with the Raiders, and Wendell Tyler.

Then at the Rams and the 49ers, I coached a lot of great players: Jimmy Johnson, Ralph McGill, Merlin Olsen, Deacon Jones.

I've had a lot of great players here. Gary Zimmerman, Bryan Hinkle, Steve Brown, Chris Miller, Bill Musgrave, Lew Barnes, Tony Cherry, Vince Goldsmith, one of the great ones ... I mean, I could go on and on and on.

ODE: Do you keep in touch with a lot of your former players?

Brooks: Yeah, I do.

ODE: Even the ones from way back? The Merlin Olsens and all those guys?

Brooks: Yeah, in fact, I tried to recruit his son this year. He went to Stanford on me.

## Rich Brooks

**PERSONAL:** Born Richard L. Brooks on August 20, 1941 in Forest, California. Family: Wife Karen, daughter Kasey Holwerda, daughter Kerri, and son Brady.

**EDUCATION:** Earned B.S. in physical education at Oregon State University in 1963 and master's in education in 1964 at Oregon State.

**COACHING CAREER:** Began coaching career in 1963 at Oregon State as assistant freshman coach. Taught general science at Las Palmas Junior High and was assistant coach at Norte Del Rio High School in 1965. He then served assistant coaching stints at Oregon State (1965-69), UCLA (1970), Los Angeles Rams (1971-72), Oregon State (1973), San Francisco 49ers (1974-75) and UCLA (1976) before being named Oregon's head coach on December 17, 1976.

**PLAYING EXPERIENCE:** Played single-wing tailback on freshman team at Oregon State in 1959. Played as back-up defensive back and part-time starter as sophomore. Took over as regular in three-deep secondary and played back-up quarterback in 1961.

from 1991 Oregon Football Press Guide

ODE: Now, just about college football in general. There was a lot of talk and hopes last season that soon they would come up with a playoff system rather than a bowl system. What do you think about that?

**'I'm supposed to win all of my games, I'm supposed to graduate every one of my players ... I'm supposed to have this wonderful environment that everybody's going to be successful in.'**

— Rich Brooks

Brooks: I don't think there is any way that you can come up with a fair and equitable playoff system. The polls are flawed—I don't think they are accurate by any stretch of the imagination, but most of the plans for a national playoff would come by choosing the top four teams in the polls, and then play off after bowl games. You're going to continue to take students out of class if you

do that.

Some of the reasons to do it are financial, which I think is the wrong message again.

I think that the controversy between the UPI poll, which is now going to be the USA Today with the coaches' poll, and the AP poll is good. You know, that keeps interest up in college football. Last year we had two different champions in Georgia Tech and Colorado—I personally voted for Georgia Tech on the coaches' poll.

The system isn't perfect, but it's better than the alternative of trying to have more games.

ODE: There's also been a lot of talk about student-athlete graduation rates, black athlete graduation rates. How much do you tell your players to get up in the morning to go to class?

Brooks: I think we ... do what we can to encourage our players to graduate.

I'm a little bored or angered with all the rhetoric about how college athletics uses athletes. I feel used a lot by some of my players, academically. Because they're here just to play football, and I keep trying to get them to go to class, but some of them aren't very interested in

Turn to **BROOKS**, Page 7



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