

## SPORTS

# Ducks lose more starters to injuries

By Jake Berg  
Emerald Sports Editor

Just when the Oregon football injury situation was at its worst, it got worse.

Starting quarterback Danny O'Neil's first season came to an early end Tuesday as Oregon coach Rich Brooks announced a right-thumb injury would sideline the redshirt freshman for the remainder of the season.

Also, starting defensive end Matt LaBounty will miss the next three weeks because of arthroscopic surgery on his left knee Tuesday.

O'Neil suffered the injury early in Oregon's 29-6 win over New Mexico State last Saturday, but stayed in for the entire first half.

"Every time I threw the ball," O'Neil said after the game Saturday, "I looked down, and (the thumb) was out, so I put it back in."

Team surgeons decided surgery would be needed next week to place a pin between the two bones to ensure the hand heals properly.

O'Neil passed for 713 yards and seven touchdowns in his five games as a starter for the Ducks.

Junior Brett Salisbury, sidelined after hernia surgery until two weeks ago, will start Saturday at 13th-ranked California. Salisbury played all of the second half against New Mexico State, and has completed 10 of 15 passes for 139 yards and two touchdowns in his two games this year.

Salisbury said after the New Mexico win that he is prepared for his first start.

"Definitely," he said Saturday. "I've got to be ready to play."

Brooks said Wednesday that this is what Salisbury has been waiting for all year.

"I think this is the opportunity he's been looking for," he said. "Now he's the starter, and it is his opportunity to show everybody how good he can be."

What was thought to be only a minor knee injury to LaBounty instead required arthroscopic surgery on his left knee Tuesday. The senior suffered a slight cartilage tear and strained ligaments in his left knee Saturday, putting him out for three weeks.

LaBounty, Oregon's career leader in sacks, started 29 consecutive games on the Ducks' defensive line. Sophomore Gary Williams will start in his place at California.

LaBounty is the second member of Oregon's starting defensive line to be sidelined. Senior end Jeff Cummins may miss the rest of the season with a foot injury he suffered during Oregon's second game.

More bad news came Oregon's way Tuesday as starting outside linebacker Ernest Jones suffered a knee injury in practice and was unable to finish drills. The extent of the injury and Jones' status for Saturday's contest will not be determined until later this week.

Back from the ranks of the injured are linebackers Joe Farwell, Terrell Edwards and John Taumoepeau, starting free safety Eric Castle, and starting center Greg Phillips. Sophomore tailback Sean Burwell will play Saturday in his first start since the second week of the season.



Photo by Jeff Paslay

Junior Brett Salisbury will finally get a chance to start at quarterback on Saturday against California. He replaces the injured Danny O'Neil.

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