

USC TROJANS



RT ZACH BANNER

POSITION OUTLOOK FOR 2016

QUARTERBACKS - USC has had 7 QB's taken in the last 14 drafts. In '13, for the first time in 18 yrs, USC headed into the season without a clear cut #1 QB. Cody Kessler and Max Wittek split time early, but Kessler ended up the bowl MVP. He finished w/2,968 (65%, 20-7). In '14 Wittek trans and Kessler threw for 3,826 (70%) with an outstanding 39-5 ratio, while rFr Max Browne (PS#1) played in 6 (3-7-42). Kessler threw for 3,536 (66.8%, 29-7) in '15 while Browne was limited to just 3 (8-12-13). True frosh Sam Darnold (PS#12) beat out a PS#6 QB that was IFS (transferred) and rFr Jalen Greene (move to WR) for 3rd string but was still able to RS. Browne is 6'5" (Kessler 6'1"), has a bigger arm and should bring the deep ball back to the offense. Darnold's mobility makes him a different type of USC QB. They are much less exp'd as Kessler (#3DC CLE) set the career records for comp % (67.5%) and int rate (1.5%). This unit could still come close to '15's numbers with 3 VHT's incl a PS#28 true frosh that was IFS.

RUNNING BACKS - In '13 Tre Madden had 117 ypg over the first 5 but was inj'd (only 28 at L7) and finished #2 (703, 5.1). Javious "Buck" Allen (PS#44) was 6th string into spring and after just 137 (4.7) in the first 8, he finished #1 (785, 5.8, 252 rec). True frosh Justin Davis (PS#13) was #2 before being OFY (#4, 361, 6.8). Madden was OFY in '14 and Allen led w/1,489 (5.4, Doak Walker semi). Davis was #2 (595, 4.6). Allen left early for the NFL (#4DC). True frosh Ronald Jones (PS#9) broke Charles White's frosh record (987, 6.5) in '15. He had just one 100 yd gm (177 vs AZ) but it broke Lendale White's single gm Fr record. Davis finished out games with 15 rush att's in the last 13 min vs UCLA and posted 567 yds over the last 6. He was #2 with 902 (5.3). True Fr Dominic Davis (5'10" 175, PS#51) had 171 all-purp yds while Aca/Cedric Ware (PS#48) added 36 yds. The top 3 RB's comb'd for 2,341 (5.8) which was an improvement over '14 (2186, 5.0). This year they lose Madden (452, 5.3) and a pair of FB's but with the top 2 back they remain among the elite RB units.

RECEIVERS - In '14 Nelson Agolor became the 1st WR in USC history to post B2B 200 yd gms and was #1 (1313, 12.6). True Fr JuJu Smith-Schuster was #2 (724, 13.4). Agolor left early for the NFL (#1DC) and they lost a #6DC TE, DB Adoree' Jackson (PS#4) was the first Trojan to start on both sides of the ball since the late '60's. JuJu battled thru leg, hand & ankle inj's but did not miss a game and was #1 by far (1454, 16.3). Soph Steven Mitchell (PS#10) was #2 in rec's (37, 335, 9.1) while Jackson was #2 in yds (414, 15.3). Sure-handed Darreus Rogers added 289 (10.3) while Deontay Burnett (6'0" 170 So, PS#112) had 161 (16.1). They are deep at TE (also used as FB's). TY the unit returns almost entirely intact as bkp David Mellstrom (1 rec) is the only departure. They add in 4 VHT WR's and are among the nation's best.

OFFENSIVE LINE - USC has their 5th OL coach in 5Y in Neil Callaway (WKU '13-'15, UAB HC from '07-'11). In '14 for the 1st time in the modern era of USC football, they had three 1st year Fr st'g in the same gm in Toa Lobendahn (PS#26), Viane Talamaivao (PS#13) and Damien Mama (PS#3). While USC trimmed the sks to 7.0%, the rush numbers dropped (161, 4.0). LY all 5 st'rs were back and the car sts climbed to 99. Max Tuerk, perhaps the best C in the country, was OFY in Wk 5 and Lobendahn was OFY after 7 gms. They had similar numbers (168, 4.5, 38 sk). TY they only lose C Tuerk (5/38, #3DC SD). They rank #2 in the FBS with 131 car sts back. Their LG, LT and RT were all P12 performers. USC has my #1 OL in the country (15 VHT's).

DEFENSIVE LINE - The Trojans play a 5-2 D with 2 good sized OLB. I will classify it as a 3-4 for this position review. In '14 with DE Leonard Williams (#1DC NYJ), they allowed just 97 ypg rush (2.9) in P12 play. LY they ret'd 4 of the top 6 but allowed 142 (3.9) in P12 play with 38 sacks on the year. This year they lose 1st Tm P12 NT Antwan Woods (13 st, 41 tkl, 3 sk), DE Greg Townsend (13 st, 44 tkl, 3 sk), DT Delvon Simmons (14 st, 57 tkl, 4 sk, 6.5 tfl), Claude Pelon (2 st, 26 tkl) & NT Cody Temple (5 tkl). Kenny Bigelow (10 tkl '15) tore his ACL in the spring. They do have 3 VHT soph's who got their feet wet in '15 but this unit is my biggest concern on the team.

LINEBACKERS - LY USC had to replace their #1 tkl'r (#7DC) but ret'd 1st Tm P12 Su'a Cravens (#5 tkl'r, PS#2), #3 tkl'r Anthony Sarao (PS#16) and basically had 10 of the top 11 back. True frosh Cameron Smith (PS#27) would have been the #2 tkl'r but was OFY in game 10. He was the first true frosh to start an opener s/1978 (Riki Ellison). My computer (pg 43) called for USC to allow 24.0 ppg and they gave up 25.7. This year they lose Cravens (14 st, #1 tkl'r, 15 tfl, #2DC WAS), Scott Felix (10 st, 28 tkl, 4 sk), Anthony Sarao (13 st, #5 tkl'r, 5 tfl) and Lamar Dawson (8 gm, 31 tkl). While not as exp'd as '15, the unit is chock-full of VHT's (9).

DEFENSIVE BACKS - In 9 seasons under Pete Carroll, the Trojans' avg PDR finish was #8 (never lower than #16). In '10 the unit lost all 4 st'rs (#2 & #3 DC's) and had its lowest finish in my PDR at #61 (60%, 30-15). They only moved up to #57 & #46 in '11 & '12. In '13 they were back to #11 (57%, 20-17) and then #24 in '14 (58.8%, 20-14) as Adoree' Jackson (PS#4) earned P12 Fr DPOY (10 st, #8 tkl'r, 10 pbu). LY they lost their FS (#4 tkl'r) going from 1 ret st'r to 3 but surprisingly slipped to #87 (63%, 25-14). Six soph and frosh were in the two deep including PS#1 true frosh Iman Marshall (#4 tkl'r). This year the only loss is CB Kevon Seymour (4 st, 24 tkl, #6DC BUF). USC may have the most improved PDR in the country.

SPECIAL TEAMS - LY USC lost its K & PR (10.6). Adoree' Jackson had 690 yds on KR's (23.0) and 251 yds (10.5) with 2 td's on PR's. Alex Wood hit 13-17 FG's (long 43, 10 TB 65 KO) and Kris Albarado avg 41.0 (net 35.7). This year they lose their P & K. They ret Zach Smith (40 gm) at LS and also have Jake Olson who has been a big part of the USC program since he was a child. USC should improve from its #76 finish as John Baxter returns as ST coordinator. He has 10 Top 33 finishes in my ST rankings in 12Y at Fresno, 4 at USC and LY at Michigan.

COACHES - Clay Helton is finally getting his opportunity to HC the Trojans program. The "long timer" on staff, (interim bowl HC '13) was OC here for 3 yrs, QB cch here for 3Y and spent 3 ssn at Memphis ('07-'09 OC). He took over as interim HC again LY and then was given the job after going 5-4 in his 9 gms. The new OC is Tee Martin who starts his 5th ssn on staff. He served as Pass Gm coordinator/WR cch the L4Y. The former Tenn QB led the Vols to a National Title in '98. New DC Clancy Pendergast, in his 2nd stint as USC's DC, was the DC with Arizona (NFL) '04-'08, Cal ('10-'12), USC ('13) and the 49ers (NFL) LB coach the L2Y. He ran the same 5-2 when he was here

in '13. ST cch John Baxter begins his 2nd stint in the same cch'g role here ('10-'13). He spent LY coordinating Mich's Top 30 FBS ST unit.

THIS DECADE 52-27(165.8%)#25 - Under Pete Carroll, USC was the only tm to finish in the AP Top 4 each yr from '02-'08. They lost only 9 games in those 7Y but then lost 9 gms the next 2 seasons to finish the decade 102-26. In '10 Carroll left for SEA and Lane Kiffin was hired. They were hit hard by NCAA probation (postssn ban '10 & '11) and they've had 27 losses in the L6Y. At midyear in '11, USC was NR and it was far-fetched to think of USC as a Top 10 team for '12, but the Trojans won their final 4, finished #6 and catapulted to #1 in the AP preseason in '12. USC became the first AP #1 team to finish NR s/64 (Miss) and the 1st ever to lose 6 gms. USC also failed to beat a ranked team for the 1st time s/97. In '13 they improved to 10-4 despite having 2 interim HC's (Kiffin fired, Ed Orgeron left before bowl). They moved up to 14 ret st'rs in '14 and avoided Oregon. They were #15 preseason AP. USC had 5 players on the 1st Tm All-P12 Tm (UCLA 1) but lost the South Title to the Bruins. They beat Neb in the bowl to finish 9-4. Last year, with another interim HC they won the South but lost to Stanford and then lost to Wisconsin in the bowl to fall to 8-6.

2015 ANALYSIS 8-6 - USC had 14 ret st'rs, the sanctions were gone and they had the best depth since Carroll departed. They did draw both Stanford & Oregon from the North. The Trojans outscored Ark St and Idaho 114-15 and moved to #6. They led Stanford 28-24 with under 5:00 left 3Q but wore down (lost 41-31). They blew out Ariz St (35-0 at half). On a Thursday Night they were upset at home again, 17-12 (USC 346-299 yd edge) as HC Steve lost to his old team (UW players fired up). Sark was fired and Clay Helton was the interim HC. USC had a 343-237 yd edge at half vs ND and led 31-24 4Q but lost by 10. At 3-3 they were favored over #3 Utah at home and won 42-24. They led Cal 27-14 before allowing a late TD (6 pt win). USC led AZ 38-23 giving up a TD with :10 left. They trailed Colo 17-3 late 2Q but won by 6 with temps in the 30's. Oregon had a 578-424 yd edge in a 20 pt blowout but USC still won the South beating UCLA 40-21. The Trojans only trailed Stanford 27-22 4Q but lost by 19 in the Pac-12 Title game. Wisconsin got a 29 yd FG with 2:27 left in the Holiday Bowl to deal USC its 6th loss.

ALSO ON ROSTER: FB Reuben Peters 6'0" 225 So. DB Kevin Carrasco 6'0" 185 Jr. WR Lance Mudd 6'1" 200 So. WR Jake Russell 5'11" 170 Jr. DB Jonathan LaBonty 6'0" 200 So. TE Stelan Smith 6'0" 195 So. WR Yoonf Quansah 5'8" 165 Jr. DB James Talton 5'11" 185 Jr. WR Jackson Boyer 6'3" 195 Jr.

PHIL'S FORECAST

OFFENSE - USC has 10 st'rs back on offense including 9 of their top 10 rushers, their top 8 rec's and one of the most veteran O-lines in the country (131 car sts ret). It would not surprise me to see them top '15's 33.9 ppg despite losing QB Kessler.

DEFENSE - The Trojans lose 6 st'rs from their front 7 but should have one of the best secondaries in the country. They have allowed 25.2-25.7 ppg the last two years and even though they are weaker up front, the Trojans could improve on those totals.

2016 - When the true frosh report in August they will be up to 81 schlp players on the roster, which is basically full strength. USC has 15 ret st'rs (tied 2nd most Pac-12). They were -2 net upsets LY (pg 24) and rate a +1.5 on my Stock Market Indicator. Pointing down is that they were +11 in my Turnovers-Turnaround (pg 30). To be the best you have to beat the best and USC clearly has that opportunity this year drawing Alabama and Notre Dame in the non-conf schedule while also pulling the top 3 (Stanford, Wash, Oregon) out of the North. They face 3 of those teams as well as UCLA on the road. If all the teams in the South played the same schedule, I would pick USC to win it. They still can but check out the 4 November games in 4 consecutive weeks in Oregon, at Wash, at UCLA and ND. They have the talent to stand toe to toe with every foe on their schedule.

OFFENSE

JERSEY #
IN MAROON

2016 PROJECTED STARTING LINEUP

JERSEY #
IN MAROON

DEFENSE

QB 4 Max Browne Jr. 6-5 220 **PS#1**. 6 gm, 30 (43%) '14, 3 gm, 113 (67%) LY. **14** Sam Darnold (6'4" 215 Fr) **PS#12**. Off Sct Tm POY LY. **19** Matt Fink (6'3" 180 Fr) **PS#28**. Dual-threat QB. In for spring '16.
TB 22 JUSTIN DAVIS SR. 6-1 195 **PS#13**. 20 gm, 956 (5.3) F2Y. 8 st, 902 (5.3), 3rd Tm P12 LY. **25** Ronald Jones (6'0" 185 So) **PS#9**. 14 gm, 987 (6.5), 3rd Tm P12 LY as true. Aca/Cedric Ware (6'0" 200 So) **PS#48**.
WR 7 STEVEN MITCHELL JR. 5-10 190 **PS#10**. 3 st, 82 (11.7) '14, 6 st, 335 (9.1) LY. **2** Adoree' Jackson is **PS#4**. 11 st (1WR), 138 (13.8), 684 KR (29.7), 1st Tm Fr AA as true. 14 st (1WR), 414 (15.3), 690 KR (23.0) LY.
WR 1 DARREUS ROGERS SR. 6-1 215 **PS#22**. 7 st, 502 (11.7) F2Y. 11 st, 289 (10.3) LY. **13** DeQuan Hampton (6'4" 220 Sr) **PS#9JC**. 12 gm, 165 (11.0) LY. Michael Pittman is **PS#4**. IFS. Tyler Vaughns is **PS#3**.
WR 9 JUJU SMITH-SCHUSTER JR. 6-2 215 **PS#6**. 12 st, 724 (13.4), 2nd Tm P12 as true. 14 st, 1454 (16.3), 2nd Tm AA LY. **15** Isaac Whitney (6'3" 205 Sr) **PS#43JC**. 1 st, 112 (14.0) LY. 10 Jalen Greene (6'1" 195 So) **PS#40QB**.
TE 48 TAYLOR McNAMARA SR. 6-5 245 **PS#5**. 11 gm at Okla '12-'14. Grad trans. 14 st, 83 (6.9) LY. **82** Tyler Petite (6'6" 240 So) **PS#9**. 2 st, 145 (9.7) as true LY. **88** Daniel Imatorbhehbe (6'4" 240 rFr) **PS#30**. Cary Angino is **PS#9**.
C 50 TOA LOBENDAHN JR. 6-3 290 **PS#26**. 13 st, HM P12 as true. F/7 st, OFY LY. '14 Nicole Falah (6'4" 285 Jr) **PS#23**. 1 st, 14 gm 2Y. **62** Khalief Rodgers (6'3" 305 Jr) **PS#20**. 9 st, 16 gm 2Y. **LS 92** Zach Smith (6'1" 220 Sr) 40 gm 3Y.
RG 60 VIANE TALAMAIVAO JR. 6-2 320 **PS#13**. 1 st, 112 (14.0) LY. 1st Tm Fr AA as true. 8 st LY. **68** Jordan Simmons (6'4" 325 Sr) **PS#5**. Jordan Austin (6'5" 280 So). **84** Richie Wenzel (6'3" 265 So) **PS#231**. **LS 61** Jake Olson (6'4" 195 rFr).
LG 51 DAMIEN MAMA JR. 6-4 327 **PS#3**. 4 st as true. 13 st, HM P12 LY. 70 lbs s/arrival. **77** Chris Brown (6'5" 305 So) **PS#36**. 2 st LY. **66** Cole Smith (6'4" 280 rFr) **PS#120**. Frank Martin (6'5" 301 Fr) **PS#11**.
RT 73 ZACH BANNER SR. 6-9 350 **PS#6**. 2 gm, OFY (hip) '13. 13 st '14, 14 st, 1st Tm P12 LY. **70** Chuma Edoga (6'4" 290 So) **PS#3**. 2 st, 13 gm as true LY. Best athlete on the OL. **78** Nathan Smith (6'6" 265 Fr) **PS#36**. IFS.
LT 72 CHAD WHEELER SR. 6-6 300 **PS#95**. 14 st '13. F/8 st, OFY w/inj '14. 12 st, 2nd Tm P12 LY. EJ Price (6'6" 325 Fr) **PS#11**. **63** Roy Hemsley (6'3" 315 Fr) **PS#60**. **76** Clayton Johnston (6'6" 290 Fr) **PS#73**.
K 39 Matthew Boermeester Jr. 6-0 180 4-4 PAT, 1 TB/22 KO in 4 gm LY. Michael Brown (6'2" 194 Fr) **PS#91**. Preferred walk-on for fall. **46** Wyatt Schmidt (6'3" 215 So) **PS#114**. DNP LY. **36** Chris Tilbey (6'5" 220 Jr).

OLB 45 Porter Gustin So. 6-5 250 **PS#7**. 2 st, 25 tkl, 5.5 sk, 1.5 tfl as true LY. **40** Jabari Ruffin (6'3" 245 Sr) **PS#3**. 1 st, 22 tkl '13. OFY '14. 14 gm, 11 tkl LY. **99** Oluwale Betiku (6'3" 250 Fr) **PS#7**. **97** Wyatt Vucin (6'2" 195 Sr).
DE 94 Rasheem Green So. 6-5 285 **PS#7**. 14 gm, 19 tkl as true last season. Tall, long & physical. **93** Liam Jimmons (6'5" 280 Fr) **PS#135**. IFS. Connor Murphy (6'7" 265 Fr) **PS#45**. IFS. Expected to play this year.
NT 91 Noah Jefferson So. 6-4 330 **PS#7**. 1 st, 14 gm, 23 tkl as true last season. **92** Jacob Daniel (6'4" 325 So) **PS#20**. 3 gm, 3 tkl as true last season. Josh Fatu (6'3" 290 Jr) **PS#154JC**. 52 tkl, 14 tfl at JC last season.
DE 44 Malik Dorton So. 6-2 275 **PS#65**. 2 gms, 2 tkl LY. **89** Christian Rectort (6'5" 275 rFr) **PS#64**.
53 Kevin Scott (6'5" 305 rFr) **PS#181**. **LB 51** Joel Foy (6'1" 225 Jr) 7 gm, 1 tkl LY. **50** Grant Moore (6'0" 220 So).
OLB 42 Uchenna Nwosu Jr. 6-3 240 **PS#128**. 12 gm, 9 tkl as true. 1 st, 31 tkl, 1.5 tfl last season. **59** Don Hill (6'2" 245 So) **PS#94**. 5 gm, 7 tkl LY. Jordan Josefa (6'2" 230 Fr) **PS#91**. **49** Matt Bayle (6'2" 215 rFr) **DNP LY**.
MLB 35 CAMERON SMITH SO. 6-2 245 **PS#27**. 9 st, 78 tkl, 1 sk, 6 pd then OFY. **P12 Fr DPOY**, 2nd Tm P12, 1st Tm Fr AA LY. 10 John Houston (6'3" 220 rFr) **PS#4**. Michael Hutchings (6'1" 225 Sr) **PS#14**. 14 gm, 19 tkl as true. 2 st, 33 tkl 2Y.
LB 58 Osa Masina So. 6-4 245 **PS#6**. 12 gm, 25 tkl as true LY. **18** Quinton Powell (6'2" 210 Sr) **PS#23**. 27 gm, 33 tkl, 4 tfl F2Y. 13 gm, 12 tkl LY. **34** Olajuwon Tucker (6'3" 235 Jr) **PS#55**. 7 gm, 3 tkl as true. 3 st, 40 tkl, 3.5 tfl LY.
CB 2 ADOREE JACKSON JR. 5-11 185 **PS#4**. 10 st DB, 49 tkl, 1st Tm Fr AA as true. 13 st, 35 tkl, 9 pd, 1st Tm P12 LY. Isaiah Langley (6'0" 175 So) **PS#10**. 11 gm, 12 tkl as true LY. **18** Ajene Harris (5'11" 185 So). Jalen Jones (5'8" 155 So).
CB 8 IMAN MARSHALL SO. 6-2 200 **PS#1**. 12 st, 67 tkl, 12 pd, 1st Tm Fr AA LY. Jack Jones is **PS#5**. **23** Jonathan Lockett (5'11" 180 Jr) **PS#44**. 12 gm, 5 tkl as true. 2 st, 18 tkl LY. **28** CJ Pollard is **PS#45**. **41** Deion Hart (6'0" 195 Sr).
SS 4 CHRIS HAWKINS JR. 5-11 195 **PS#16**. 4 st, 32 tkl '14, 14 st, 70 tkl LY. **22** Leon McQuay (6'1" 190 Sr) **PS#6**. 10 st, 55 tkl, 8 pbu, 3 int F2Y. 2 st, 18 tkl, 3 pbu LY. **30** Kyli Ross (6'2" 185 rFr) **PS#14**. Davonte Nunnery (5'10" 205 So).
FS 8 MARVELL TELL SO. 6-2 195 **PS#9**. 2 st, 36 tkl, 1 tfl, 4 pbu as true. Jamel Cook is **PS#30**. **24** John Plattenburg (5'11" 185 Jr) **PS#68**. 6 st, 32 tkl as true. 8 st, 34 tkl, 3.5 tfl LY. **37** Matt Lopez (5'11" 185 Jr) 18 tkl 2Y.
P 36 Chris Tilbey Jr. 6-5 220 Australian. Could be a strong runner for P spot. Only P on scholarship.
46 Reid Budrovich (5'11" 185 So) **PS#114**. DNP LY. Michael Brown (6'2" 194 Fr) **PS#91**. Wyatt Schmidt (6'3" 215 So).

