

# COLISEUM

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But the odds are overwhelmingly in USC's favor.

USC has defeated Oregon 29 times in 41 meetings, including 19 victories out of 24 games played in L.A. The Trojans are also 13-point favorites.

USC coach Larry Smith doesn't care much about those facts.

"I don't think anyone has an edge," he said. "It doesn't matter what your name is, what color your jersey is or your past history. I don't care if you're favored by 116 points in Las Vegas. In this league, you have to take care of one game at a time and you better play your living butt off."

At last check, Oregon players still have their butts, but it isn't for lack of effort.

The Ducks have won three straight, including a big victory over Arizona State last week. Against the Sun Devils, Oregon quarterback Danny O'Neil threw for 207 yards and showed his maturity as the Ducks' signal-caller.

"Danny has played better each week," Brooks said. "Except for not diving on a fumble down deep and a couple of oth-

er decisions, he played almost flawlessly last week. I told him Monday he's no longer a rookie. He's a veteran, and I expect him to play that way all the time."

After a terrible start, Oregon's running game has become a key in the Ducks' offensive attack. Tailback Sean Burwell has run for over 100 yards in Oregon's last three games and has given the Ducks strong, double-barreled offense for the first time in over a year.

Smith said Oregon's running game has made its passing game more effective.

"After two games, they stopped throwing the ball so much," he said. "They went to timely passing. They're not throwing the ball far, but they're catching it and running with it. They get the tight ends in the passing game and Burwell is not only a great threat running but also catching the ball."

Much of Oregon's success on the ground has been made possible by the toughness of the offensive line. Brooks said Saturday's game will present the biggest challenge to the offensive line and the offense as a whole.

USC held Washington to 271 total offense last week, the Hus-

kies' lowest output of the year.

"This will be our most severe test for the offensive unit," he said. "The offensive line has met most every challenge so far, and I'm really anxious to see how they respond to this one."

At first look, USC's 1-1-1 record may not seem to constitute a No. 20 ranking, but the Trojans have yet to play at home and have played a grueling schedule thus far.

The Trojans tied with Marshall Faulk-led San Diego State and defeated a strong Oklahoma team before the loss to the Huskies.

"I'm glad the first three game are over from the standpoint that we're coming home," Smith said, "but I'm not too glad from the standpoint that I felt we should have won all three."

The USC offense is led by quarterback Rob Johnson, who returns to lineup after missing the second half of the Washington game with a concussion. Tailback Estrus Crayton carried for 105 yards last week, and Curtis Conway is one of the leading receivers in the Pac-10.

Kickoff for the game is at 3:30. The game will be televised live on Prime Network.

# Edwards returns to roster, two Ducks lost

The Ducks got some good and bad news for Saturday's contest with USC.

The good news is the return of starting outside linebacker Terrell Edwards to the Oregon lineup. Edwards was sidelined with a thigh contusion in his right leg against Arizona State last week. Edwards was on crutches after the game, but practiced with the team Wednesday. He may see limited action depending

on the injury's improvement.

The bad news is the losses of inside linebacker John Taumoepeau and offensive tackle Justin Starck. Taumoepeau sustained ligament damage in his foot in Tuesday's practice.

"He's definitely out this week," Brooks said, "and he may be out 4-6 weeks."

Starck suffered ligament damage in his left knee and will not play on Saturday.

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# Blazers open fall training camp

PORTLAND (AP) — A quicker, younger Portland Trail Blazers team will convene Friday for the start of the fall training camp.

Coach Rick Adelman is confident the Blazers have the ability and desire to make it to the NBA Finals for the third time in four years, and maybe this time win it all.

"It's very difficult to win a championship," he said Wednesday. "We've been close a couple of times but we have as good a chance as anybody else. I don't see anybody on our team

stepping down from the challenge."

The Blazers picked up free agent guards Rod Strickland and Mario Elie during the off season to bolster their returning starting lineup from 1992.

Portland also added rookies Tracy Murray, Dave Johnson and Reggie Smith. Now Adelman must figure out how the new and old components will mix.

"It gives us flexibility," he said, "but it's going to boil down to how they fit together."

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by Rick Ball



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