

USC

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and had only 10 yards last week in their 31-15 loss to Arizona. This week, they will face an Oregon defense that is ranked first in the Pac-10 in total defense and third in rushing defense.

Tailback Sultan McCullough — whose brother, Saladin, was the Ducks' tailback the last time the teams met in Los Angeles in 1997 — leads the Trojans with 84 yards per game. Back-up Petros Papadakis averages just more than 20 yards a game.

"We cannot run the ball right now," Hackett said, "Abandoning our running game has put more pressure on [Palmer]."

If the Trojans have a strong point this year, it comes from the line-backer position. Zeke Moreno and Markus Steele are both candidates for the Butkus Award, which is given to the nation's best line-backer, and have combined for 21 tackles for a loss, totaling negative 63 yards.

"Zeke is the leader of this defense," Hackett said. "But his best football, and our best football, are yet to come."

That's what worries Oregon head coach Mike Bellotti, who

“They are very scary because obviously their backs are to the wall, and I have to have my kids play with the same kind of intensity.”

Mike Bellotti
Oregon head coach

thinks the Trojans are more dangerous because of their losses.

"They are very scary because obviously their backs are to the wall, and I have to have my kids play with the same kind of intensity," Bellotti said.

"I just hope they don't get it all figured out against us."

USC didn't get it all figured out against Arizona last weekend. The



Backup USC quarterback Mike VanRaaphorst (11) came in for the injured Carson Palmer in the Trojans' heartbreaking 33-30 triple-overtime loss at Oregon last year.

Emerald

Wildcats ran off 21 points in the first quarter as the Trojans' defense crumbled. South California gave up its biggest pass play since 1992, a 75-yard bomb from Ortege Jenkins to Bobby Wade to open the game, and an 80-yard run by tailback Clarence Farmer to end the quarter. When the dust settled, Arizona had 188 yards of total offense to the Trojans' 93.

"Our defense has been bitten by the big play bug," Hackett said.

Besides Arizona's big plays, USC gave up a 36-yard touchdown pass against Colorado and a 36-yard touchdown run to Oregon State's Ken Simonton.

The bottom line, according to Hackett, is that the Trojans just aren't clicking.

"We have stumbled, we are out of sorts. There's no question about it," Hackett said. "There are a lot of reasons for it, not one particular reason."

Now USC will try to "figure it all out" against the ninth-ranked team in the country.

have reason to hate the Ducks. Those poor Oregon Staters. Made fun of by fans, media and the football community throughout the nation, while just a 45-minute drive away, that other state university was propelling itself into the nation's elite. How dare it!

Now, those Beavers have a decent team. Anything could happen, including Oregon and Oregon State running their tables through Nov. 18. The big prize — the Rose Bowl — would be on the line.

Not simple revenge.

The ultimate revenge.

So don't think for a moment that the Ducks are out of the woods yet. Had they not made so many enemies last season, well, then perhaps the road to Pasadena would be a little more certain.

For those who still don't buy the power of redemption, look at what happened in Seattle last Saturday. The Beavers were a missed field goal away from taking Washington into overtime. Is it mere coincidence that Oregon State's game against Washington the year before was its worst that season?

The point is this: What goes around, usually comes around.

Oregon better be ready to put up some fights.

Pez Sez

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games the rest of the way.

Revenge.

Looking beyond USC, think about Arizona, and then Arizona State. Both were games that were decided in the final moments. Both of those final moments swung fatefully in the Ducks' favor.

The Wildcats are looking good. What would be more fitting than snapping the glorious Autzen winning streak?

Revenge.

After facing the Arizona schools and Washington State, Oregon plays its final home game on Nov. 11 against California. Sure, they're not so great this season, but they weren't last season, either. Again, the teams' last meeting came down to the final moments, with the Ducks converting a certain loss into a breathtaking win when Brian Johnson intercepted the Bears' pass into the end zone.

Revenge.

Of course, no team would love to shove the dagger into Oregon like Oregon State would.

More than anyone, the Beavers

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away.

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