

Carroll looks to lead Trojans to national glory

■ After nearly two decades away from college game, Pete Carroll will bring his Trojans to Autzen Stadium with a 1-1 record

By Hank Hager
Oregon Daily Emerald

After a season in which the USC Trojans fell to their worst record in a decade, a cry went out in Southern California for a change. Paul Hackett was out as head coach; replacing him is Pete Carroll.

After spending 16 years in the pro ranks — including four as a head coach — Carroll returns to the college game, where he once spent 10 years as a graduate assistant, secondary coach and defensive coordinator. The 2001 season is his first as a head coach at the college level.

When Carroll's name first popped up as Hackett's potential replacement, there was an outcry from USC alumni. Because Carroll had never been a head coach in college, some Trojan fans worried he wouldn't be up to the challenge. Carroll hadn't been on a college campus in an official manner since 1983 with the Pacific Tigers, and some believed the college game may have passed him by. But once he was hired, his doubters disappeared.

"I just knew from the first day he came in at the press conference that he was for real," junior linebacker Mike Pollard told the Daily Trojan. "I knew that he would be taking us places we've never been."

Unlike Hackett, who was far from being a player's coach, Carroll is much more popular among his former players and is begin-



Courtesy USC Media Services

USC head coach Pete Carroll has returned to collegiate sidelines for the first time since 1983, after coaching in the NFL for six seasons. In two games this season, Carroll has a 1-1 record.

ning to endear himself to some on the Trojans' roster.

"[Carroll] can relate to players, and he really cares about us, and that's what we need," junior running back Sultan McCullough told the Daily Trojan.

From 1974-83, Carroll spent 10 seasons at Pacific, Arkansas, Iowa State, Ohio State and North Carolina State. In 1978, while a secondary coach under the tutelage of Lou Holtz, Carroll helped guide the Razorbacks to an Orange Bowl victory. Carroll again returned to a major bowl in 1980,

this time with Ohio State. The Buckeyes lost by one point, 17-16, to USC.

After proving himself in the college game, Carroll got the call to join the Buffalo Bills in 1984. From there, he spent time with the Minnesota Vikings, New York Jets, San Francisco 49ers and finally the New England Patriots. Carroll was head coach for one of his five seasons in New York, and all three with the Patriots, going 33-31 overall.

While with the Vikings, Carroll was an understudy to legendary

coach Bud Grant while overseeing the team's defensive backs.

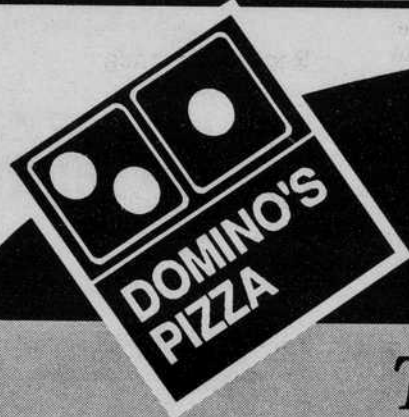
"He's got that intangible I think head coaches have to have," Grant said. "The thing that helps Pete the most as a head coach is his ability to see the whole picture. He's secure enough in his knowledge and his ability to take what he learns on the practice field and use it to make the tough decisions and stand by them."

Two games into the 2001 season, Carroll has led the Trojans to a 1-1 record and has enjoyed what he's seen so far. But it has also been a sur-

prise — albeit a favorable one.

"I underestimated what [college] would be like," the first-year collegiate head coach said. "I did not give the athletes enough credit at this level. Their responsiveness, their intensity, their attitudes and their willingness to learn — it has really made this a fun experience so far, more so than I would have imagined. Obviously, since I have been comparing it to the NFL, it has been very different and exciting."

"It has really been fun."



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