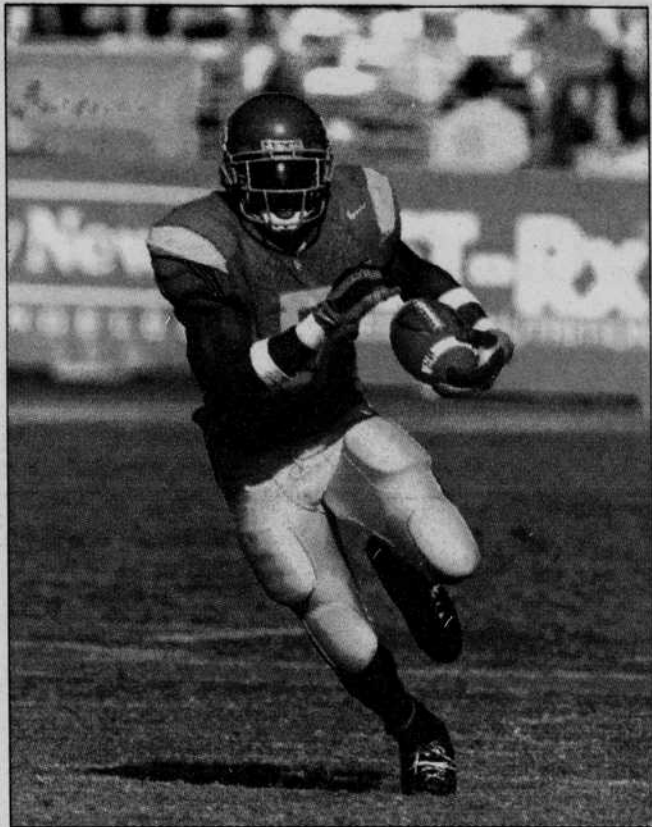




Running back Reggie Bush, seen here earlier this season, has been a major contributor to the USC offense in 2004. He is currently seventh in the Pac-10 in rushing.

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GOTW: Moore's athleticism, size spark Cardinal offense

Continued from page 8

Edwards' favorite target this season has been tight end Alex Smith. He leads the team with 10 receptions for 117 yards and one touchdown.

Two-sport athletes Evan Moore and Mark Bradford have also provided a spark for the Cardinal offense at the wide receiver position. The 6-foot-7, 235-pound Moore has caught eight balls for 133 yards and three touchdowns, and Bradford has caught seven passes for 116 yards. Moore and Bradford also play for the nationally ranked basketball team.

"Evan Moore has really shown to be a big factor for them," Carroll said. "He is a big stud out there catching the ball. He has had some marvelous catches in the first two games. That is a matchup that we're concerned about and we hope our guys can hang in there."

The Cardinal will need all of its weapons to penetrate the Trojan armor. Southern California has been giving up less than eight points per game and causing turnovers at an alarming rate; forcing 12 turnovers in their three games this season, including eight interceptions.

USC's defense is led by linebacker Matt Grootegoed and defensive lineman Shaun Cody, both All-American candidates. The Trojans still haven't allowed a team to score more than 14 points or go over 300 yards of total offense.

The Trojan offense isn't anything to look past either, with Heisman hopeful Matt Lienart leading the team at quarterback. The junior signal caller is 19th in the nation in passing efficiency with a 151.8 rating and has completed 64 percent of his passes for 739 yards and seven touchdowns.

While Lienart may be driving the

Trojan offense, sophomore running back Reggie Bush is the engine. Not only is he part of USC's two-headed monster with LenDale White in the backfield running the ball, he is also contributing catching the football.

Bush is second on the team in rushing yards (252), receptions (10), receiving yards (171) and first on the team in total touchdowns (6).

Fellow sophomore Steve Smith leads the Trojan receiving core with 18 receptions (21st in the nation) for 209 yards. The former high school All-American has stepped in well for the departed Mike Williams.

USC's powerful offense may be challenged by the experienced Cardinal defense, who returns nine of its starters. One of them is 2003 second-team All-Pac-10 Conference safety Oshiomogho Atogwe. He has led the team in tackles during the past two seasons and has been named to the Jim Thorpe Award "Watch List," an award given to the nation's top defensive back.

"They (Stanford's secondary) will be tough," Carroll said. "They are a very disciplined group and very skilled technique wise. This is clearly the best group we've seen."

Teevens said his defensive group as a whole may not have the same superstar power as USC, but its continuity is what makes it a tough defense.

"We have more seniors on the defensive side of the ball, so there is maturity and a comfort level after having started for a number of years," Teevens said. "They play well as a group, and I think we have mixed our schemes against the people we have played to date."

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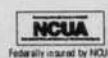
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