



## Horn Top 20 presented by Altstadt: No. 6 USC Trojans



Perhaps no other team enters the season with as much hype as the USC Trojans. Lincoln Riley brings a surplus of talent from Oklahoma including Heisman hopeful Caleb Williams, Mario Williams, and Pittsburgh transfer Jordan Addison. But remove the sunglasses and Riley has a lot of holes to fill left, 27 to be exact with the outgoing transfers following the new coaching hire. Will be there growing pains in L.A.? Or will Riley restore the Trojan program back to its glory?

### Horn Top 20 Roundtable Discussion

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### What You Need to Know

AP Poll Ranking: #14

2021 Record: 4-8 (3-6) 4th in Pac-12 South

2021 Bowl Result: Did Not Qualify

NCAA Championship Winner Odds: +2500

Pac-12 Champion Odds: +220

Regular Season Win Total: O/U 9.5

To Make CFB Playoff: Yes +400/No -550

2022 Schedule

Sep. 3 – Rice

Sep. 10 – at Stanford

Sep. 17 – Fresno State

Sep. 24 – at Oregon State

Oct. 1 – Arizona State

Oct. 8 – Washington State

Oct. 15 – at Utah

Oct. 29 – at Arizona

Nov. 5 – California

Nov. 11 – Colorado

Nov. 19 – at UCLA

Nov. 26 – Notre Dame

Player to Watch,  
Caleb Williams, QB

A big reason for the Trojans’ high ranking in the polls is due to the fact that Caleb Williams followed his head coach from Norman to Los Angeles. Does anyone blame him? Who could forget Williams’ 6 touchdown performance against the Longhorns in Oklahoma’s thrilling comeback? Or his big brain play to keep the Sooners from joining Texas in the “holy s\*\*\* we lost to Kansas?” camp. Sure, he had his growing pains but he also combined for over 500 yards, 6 touchdowns, and zero interceptions in his last two games of the 2021 season. If USC gets *that* version of Williams this season, a Heisman and a Pac-12 title could be on the table. The keyword is could.

Breakdown Marcus Spears

There is a lot to process when moving from one pinnacle school in college football to another. Lincoln Riley is no stranger to the pressure of leaving Oklahoma and setting his sails to the west coast to coach at USC. He brings a successful reign from the Sooners, where in his six years, he has a 55-10 record, four times Big 12 champions and in 2018 was named Coach of the Year in the conference.

As he takes his talents to Southern California, he brings longtime offensive line coach Josh Henson as the offensive coordinator. Henson has 23 years of college football experience and will likely keep things together while Riley calls plays. Alex Grinch will run the defense who ran Riley’s defense at Oklahoma the last two seasons. He is someone Riley can trust to come up with and execute a game plan to contain Pac-12 offenses.

Riley brought some talent along with him. Caleb Williams is the sophomore quarterback better known for replacing Spencer Rattler. At the same time, they trailed Texas 28-7 in the Red River Rivalry last October, throwing for 212 yards, two touchdowns and rushing for 88 yards with a touchdown in the 55-48 comeback victory.

There were plenty of transfers to join the Trojans this upcoming season, with six projected starters on offense, including Williams. One will be last year’s Consensus All-American and a Biletnikoff winner from Pitt Jr. Jordan Addison will join a revitalized receiving core. At Pitt. Addison caught 100 passes for 1593 yards while leading the nation with 17 touchdowns. Along with Addison, former Sooner Mario Williams follows Riley and Colorado Brendon Rice will fill the receiving position.

Out of the backfield, former Oregon back Travis Dye led the Pac-12 with 1673 yards from scrimmage and 18 touchdowns last season. Former Virginia offensive tackle Bobby Haskins will protect the blind side at tackle.

Defensively there are three transfers, pass rusher Romello Height from Auburn, graduate transfer linebacker Shane Lee from Alabama and cornerback Mekhi Blackmon who transferred from Colorado. The middle linebacker Lee anticipates returning to his freshman form at Alabama, where he had 86 tackles for losses, with 6.5 of them.



Winding out the defense, they have junior defensive tackle Tuli Tuipulotu who clogs up the lane. Last season he had 7.5 tackles for losses and 5.5 sacks. Sophomore Xavion Alford will be vital to secondary success, where he led the Trojans with three interceptions.

Moving from the Pac-12 to the Big Ten in a few years, they want to finish strong in the Pac-12. The expectations remain high for Lincoln and the Trojans as they are expected to win right out of the gate.

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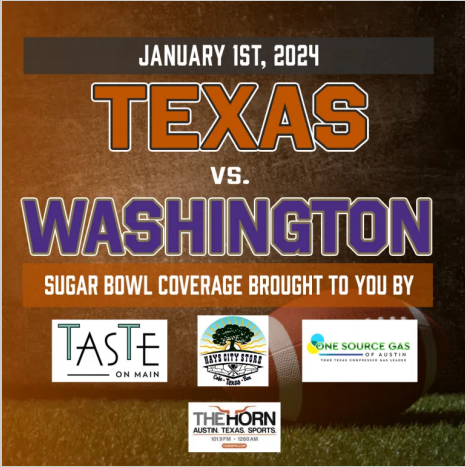
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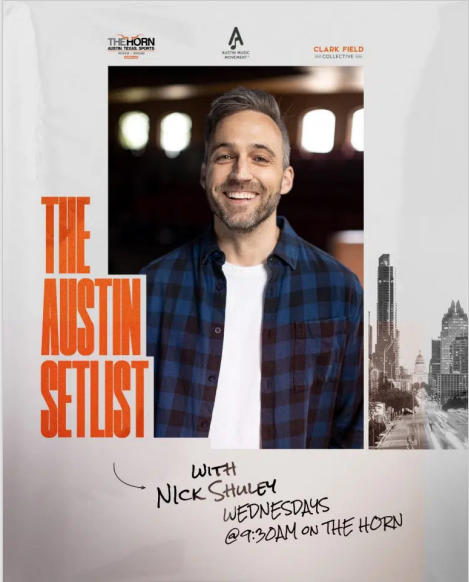
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Patrick's Big Fat Poll of the day asks, How many more losses will Texas have in the regular season?



- 1
- 2
- oh no!
- zero

Voting Ends: Never

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