

## • League

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE B1)

athletics. We wanted to bring in schools similar in nature to the ones we had in the conference. We've expanded the conference significantly westward."

When Naumovich applied for the job, he didn't know all the duties it entailed.

Naumovich, who was an athletic director at GLVC member Quincy, was in Indianapolis for a baseball series in the spring of 2000. He talked with then-commissioner Carl McAloose, who told Naumovich he'd be leaving that summer to take another position in Florida.

Naumovich said McAloose encouraged him to apply and that he'd endorse him. Although Naumovich and his wife were content in Quincy, he applied for the position anyway and got it.

"I think my familiarity with the league helped," he said. "Knowing the athletic directors and representatives helped me during the interview process."

"The other three people were coming in from positions outside of the GLVC."

Besides his constant administrative duties, Naumovich also spends time traveling to schools and talking with people.

He tries to visit each of the 14 conference schools once per year and schedules many trips during the winter and spring months.

Usually he arrives at one school Thursday, has meetings with the athletic director and president and attends a basketball game that evening.

He travels to another nearby school Friday, has meetings with administrators and attends a basketball game Saturday afternoon. Then he heads home.

"It's a way of being visible on campus," Naumovich said. "I get facetime with the (school's) president, answer and address questions, observe officials to see the quality of work and professionalism."

"Everything I'm doing, there's a reason I'm there taking information."

While the conference has grown in numbers, Naumovich has also seen it gain respect.

The GLVC has had a men's basketball team participate in the Division II championship game for 10 straight years, with Southern Indiana winning the championship in 1995 and finishing as runner-up in 2004. Northern Kentucky University won the women's basketball championship in 2000.

Naumovich said the GLVC also became the first Division II conference, and second overall, to use wooden bats instead of aluminum ones in baseball games in 1999.

"At the time, there was a great deal of concern about aluminum bats and the velocity the ball would come off the bat with and endangering players who wouldn't be able to get their gloves up to protect them," Naumovich said. "We thought as a league it was safer to play with wood."

"It made it more baseball again. In our league, now good pitching is rewarded. You're forced to do hitting and running and stealing bases."

"We get more student athletes getting a look from pro scouts. Swinging wood bats helps in the evaluation process."

And he's just happy that students are getting a chance to shine.

"I like it very much," Naumovich said of his job. "I've been able to grow into and do a lot of positive things for the conference, which has been gratifying."

Rose Bowl  
No. 1 Southern California vs. No. 2 Texas



At Pasadena, Calif.  
8 tonight, WRTV-Channel 6

# Hype gives way to title game

## Longhorns, Trojans ready to do battle in Rose Bowl

By RALPH D. RUSSO  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif.

Anticipated all season, set up with matching blowouts and relentlessly promoted for the past month, the Rose Bowl everyone's been waiting for is finally here.

No. 1 USC against No. 2 Texas, with their perfect records, potent offenses, glittery stars, rich tradition and eye-popping pageantry, playing for the national championship in Pasadena tonight.

The game of the year! The game of the century! The game of all time!

Or just another day at work for two-time defending champ Southern California?

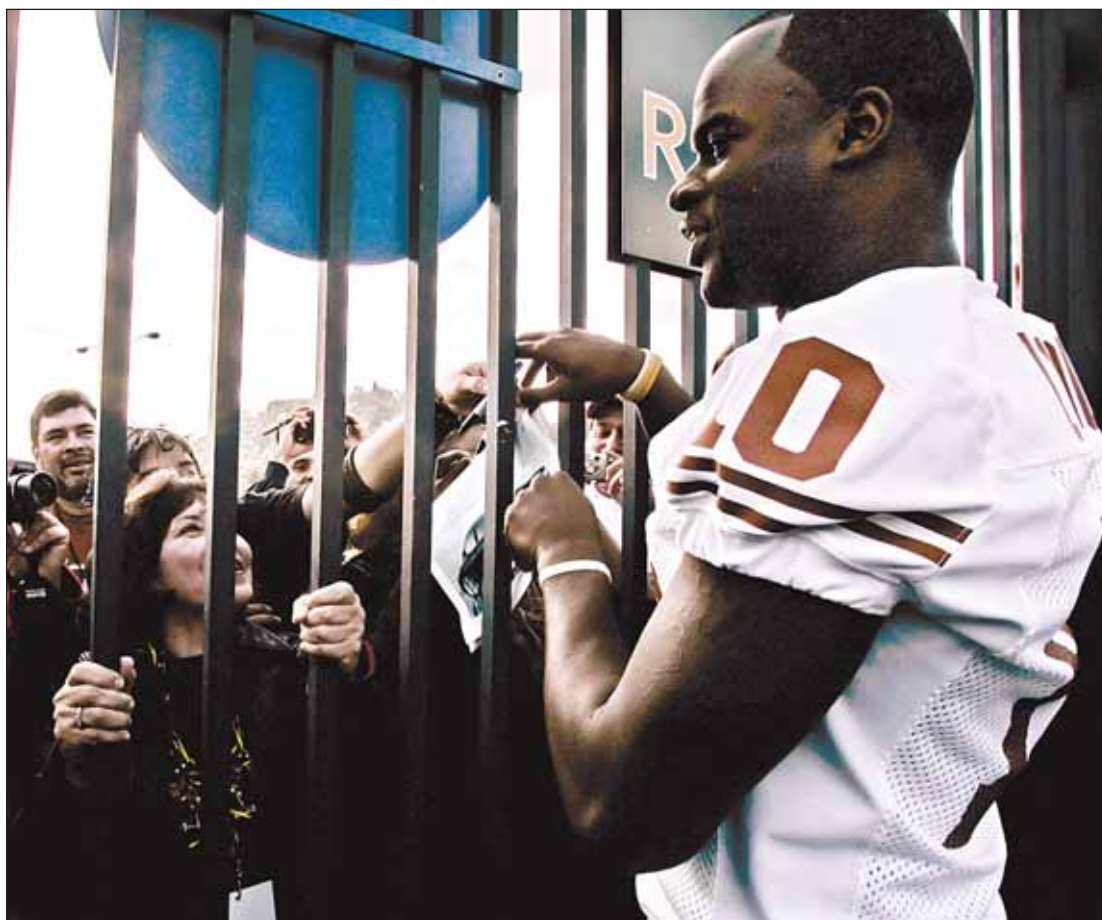
"This is what we have really prepared to do and hopefully built ourselves toward this," USC coach Pete Carroll said Tuesday. "You can't get a big enough game for us."

Heisman Trophy winners Matt Leinart and Reggie Bush have led the Trojans to 34 straight victories. Against Texas, they'll become the first Heisman duo to play together in a college game as USC goes for a record third consecutive national title.

The Longhorns also are 12-0, and they've won 19 in a row. Heisman runner-up Vince Young is the dynamic dual-threat who leads an offense that has more than matched USC touchdown for touchdown.

Texas puts up 51 points per game, USC 50. The Trojans are favored by a TD.

"We don't have to be the best team of all time, just tomorrow night," Texas coach Mack Brown said.



University of Texas quarterback Vince Young signs autographs for Longhorns fans after a team photo session at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, Calif., on Tuesday. Texas faces Southern California in tonight's national title game.

It's already the best game Bowl Championship Series officials could have imagined in their eight-year history, with no doubts about who belongs this season.

Plus, the weather will apparently cooperate. After storms soaked the area earlier this week, clear skies are in the forecast.

Everything, it seems, is set. "These two teams have been talked about every day for a month," Brown said. "Good teams enjoy the hype."

Young returns to the site of his breakout performance.

The 230-pound quarterback with sprinter's speed made last year's Rose Bowl look like a pick-up game, running for 192 yards and four touchdowns to beat Michigan 38-37.

"From the Rose Bowl, it kind of just took off and carried over,"

Young said. "A lot of guys on the team, we knew what it takes and understand what we need to do to play well to get to this point."

Young brought a new dimension to Texas. The guy many thought would never complete enough passes to lead a team to a championship threw for 2,769 yards and 26 touchdowns this season.

"There's nobody like this," Carroll said. "There's guys that can run, there's guys that throw, there's quick guys and all that, but nobody's ever been this fast."

The Longhorns began the season ranked No. 2 in the country behind USC, and that's the way it stayed as each team stormed through unbeaten seasons, punctuated with fierce finales on Dec. 3.

Texas wrapped up its return to the Rose Bowl with a 70-3 rout of Colorado for the Big 12 champi-

onship. A few hours later, USC locked up a second straight trip to the BCS title game with a 66-19 romp against UCLA.

Young was brilliant, but not good enough to keep Bush from sprinting away with the Heisman.

Bush ran for 1,658 yards (8.9 per carry), hurdling a few tacklers along the way.

USC's only real close call was against Notre Dame.

Leinart's fourth-and-9 pass to Dwayne Jarrett pulled the winning streak from peril.

After his fumble went out of bounds, Leinart scored with a push from Bush in the closing seconds for a 34-31 win.

The game will stand as a defining moment for Leinart, who returned for his senior year to direct one of the most prolific and balanced offenses in history.

## RISE TO THE TOP

Southern California has won 34 games in a row and is trying to become the first team during the poll era of college football to win three straight national titles. The key moments leading up to and during the streak, which they'll try to extend tonight against Texas in the Rose Bowl:

2000

Dec. 15: Pete Carroll becomes USC head coach.

2003

February: Tailbacks Reggie Bush and LenDale White sign scholarships with USC.

Aug. 30: After winning the job to replace Heisman trophy winner Carson Palmer in spring camp, new starting quarterback Matt Leinart leads USC to 23-0 victory at Auburn.

Sept. 27: California 34, USC 31 in triple overtime.

Oct. 4: USC 37, Arizona State 17. Trojans score 27 straight points in the second half to start The Streak.

Oct. 18: USC 45, Notre Dame 14. Trojans score final 31 points and win 75th meeting with the Irish.

Dec. 7: USC takes over No. 1 spot in The Associated Press Top 25, starting a record streak that now stands at 33 consecutive polls.

2004

Jan. 1: Left out of the BCS title game, USC beats Michigan in the Rose Bowl 28-14.

Jan. 4: USC is ranked No. 1 in the final AP poll to earn a share of the national title with LSU, the Trojans' first championship in one of the major polls since 1978 and first AP title since 1972.

Oct. 9: USC 23, California 17. The Trojans hold Cal out of the end zone after a first-and-goal in the winning moments.

2005

Jan. 4: USC overwhelms Oklahoma 55-19 in the Orange Bowl to win the national championship outright.

Oct. 15: USC 34, Notre Dame 31. The closest the Trojans have come to losing during the streak. Leinart's perfect pass on fourth-and-9 pass, a fortuitous fumble and the Bush Push give USC its school-record 13th straight road victory.

Dec. 3: USC 66, UCLA 19. Trojans set Pac-10 record with 23rd straight conference victory and beat ranked opponent for 16th straight time.

# Loss proves Notre Dame needs help on defense

By TOM COYNE  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

TEMPE, Ariz.

Notre Dame showed signs of being a dominant team again under first-year coach Charlie Weis.

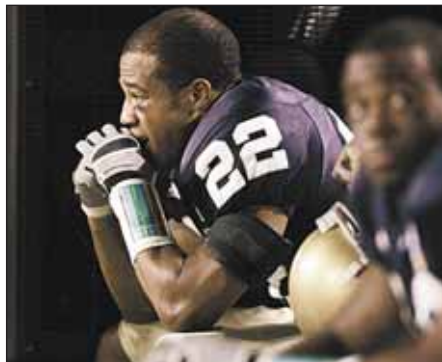
But the Fighting Irish's 34-20 loss to Ohio State in the Fiesta Bowl on Monday showed they still need work to contend for a national championship. They learned they can't win on offense alone.

"We made some strides toward where we want to be, but when you end your season like this, it's taking a step backward," receiver Jeff Samardzija said. "We didn't finish like we wanted to."

The biggest obstacle facing the Irish (9-3) is a defense that gave up far too many big plays.

The Notre Dame defense gave up:

- An average of 397 yards a game, the highest total in school history.
- 44 points in an overtime loss to a so-so Michigan State team.
- A 61-yard pass to USC's Matt Leinart on fourth-and-9 that set up the Trojans game-winning touchdown.
- Four touchdowns of 55 yards or more and a school-record 617 yards total offense against fourth-ranked Ohio State (10-2) in



Notre Dame's Ambrose Wooden watches from the sidelines late in the fourth quarter of the Fighting Irish's 34-20 loss to Ohio State in the Fiesta Bowl in Tempe, Ariz., on Monday.

the Fiesta Bowl. The 617 yards were seven more than the Trojans had against the Irish in 2002.

"We have a lot to do this offseason," cornerback Ambrose Wooden said.

The Irish did improve drastically on offense, averaging 477 yards a game total offense, 132 yards better than the season before.

Brady Quinn set just about every school passing record and finished fourth in the Heisman Trophy voting, the best for an

Irish player since Rocket Ismail was second in 1990. The Irish haven't had a Heisman Trophy winner since receiver Tim Brown in 1987.

But the drought that bothers the Irish the most is the 17 years without a national championship, the longest such streak in school history.

The loss to Ohio State not only kept Notre Dame from reclaiming from Michigan the title of the school with the best all-time winning percentage, it also showed the Irish weren't ready to reclaim their spot among college football's elite.

"I didn't expect that coming from this team," tight end Anthony Fasano said. "Losing three games and coming out here and working and not getting the job done, there are definitely some things we need to work on."

Quinn's school-record of consecutive games with touchdown passes stopped at 17 in Monday's loss, and the Irish scoring at least 30 points in a game ended at nine games.

The 20 points scored against Ohio State left the Irish shy of breaking the school record of 37.6 points a game, set by the 1988 team. Notre Dame averaged 36.6 points this season.

Looking ahead, the Irish lose lineback-

ers Brandon Hoyte and Corey Mays, the team's top two tacklers, but the other nine starters on defense return.

Most of Notre Dame's key players on its record-setting offense return.

The Irish lose right guard Dan Stevenson, right tackle Mark LeVoi, receiver Maurice Stovall and possibly Fasano, if he decides to turn pro. Fasano said he likely will make a decision in the next week.

The Irish used six players regularly on the line, with Bob Morton playing at guard and center, so they will need to find just one starter on the line.

Samardzija returns at one receiving spot. And Rhema McKnight, the leading receiver the previous two seasons before injuring his right knee against Michigan, returns for a fifth year, leaving the Irish with a strong passing game.

The Irish could also find some help from a recruiting class expected to be one of the school's best in years.

Weis told his players after the game that they have to decide how they're going to react to the loss.

He said they can either feel sorry for themselves or they can use the disappointment as motivation.

"It's either one or the other, which way do you want to go?" he said.

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