

Broken Promises

Robinson Can't Deliver

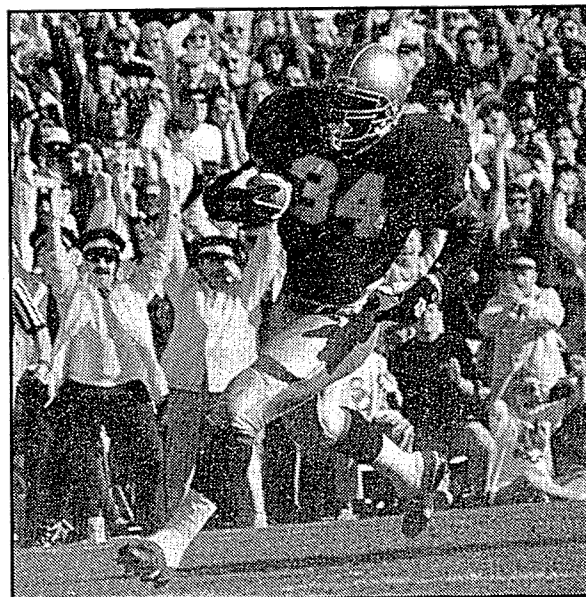
The return of John Robinson brought false hopes to the Trojans, who lost their eleventh straight to the Irish, 31-13

by Bob Belden

October 23, Notre Dame —

Every year when Notre Dame plays USC, you notice some children holding up signs that read, "Haven't lost to USC in my lifetime." Funny thing is, those cute little children are almost teenagers now, and their hand-made signs gained yet another year of usefulness after Notre Dame's 31-13 victory over USC.

"This is a very, very big win," said Notre Dame Head Coach Lou Holtz. "We are coming off of our midterm exam period



Rich Taylor

Junior fullback Ray Zellars skirts the Trojan defense, running the ball into the end zone for six more points in Notre Dame's eleventh consecutive defeat of USC.

for the Trojans

and we'll make good use of the break from school next week to get better. We are pretty banged up."

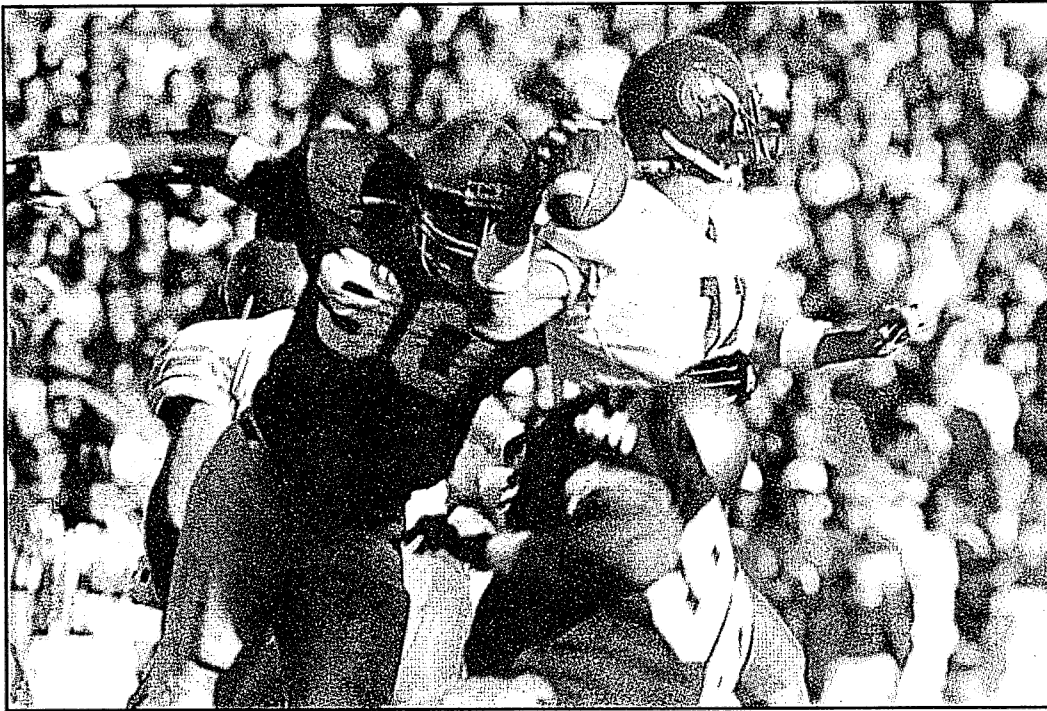
The Irish fans who flocked to South Bend as early as Friday morning barely had time to settle into their seats before they were given an opportunity to dance an Irish jig. Lee Becton sprinted seventy yards on the second play of the game. The fans did not have to wait long for another march when Bryant Young snagged USC quarterback Rob Johnson for a 10 yard loss on third and six.

The ensuing drive epitomized the relentless ball control attack Notre Dame showcased on its way to establishing itself

as a national powerhouse. Beginning on their own 33 yard line, the Irish chewed up 7:49 of the first quarter en route to their second touchdown in two possessions. Paul Failla, starting his first game at quarterback, stopped Irish hearts for a moment with his bounce pass to Lee Becton on the USC ten yard line that Becton scooped up and carried for eight more yards.

"Maybe I should talk to John MacLeod about joining the basketball team," Failla joked afterwards.

To finish the drive, freshman fullback Marc Edwards blasted in from two yards out for his fifth touchdown of the season and the Irish led 14-0 after fifth-year senior kicker



Ken Osgood

Senior defensive end Brian Hamilton gets one hand around his victim, USC quarterback Rob Johnson, as he prepares to shut down another Trojan offensive drive with a quarterback sack.

Kevin Pendergast's point after.

USC settled down and went to work on its next possession, moving the ball through the air and on the ground deep into

**“No matter what
the records are, this
is always a good game
every year.”
—Kevin McDougal**

Irish territory. A key holding penalty left the Trojans with third and goal at the Irish 23, and junior linebacker Justin Goheen nailed senior tight end Bradford Banta at the Irish five to force the field goal unit onto the field. As USC fans were breathing sighs of relief in hopes of some points on the board, the soaring twosome of Burris and Taylor had other ideas in mind. Leaping in an aerial

blockade, the duo seemed to simultaneously tip the football that fell to the ground.

Notre Dame continued to feed the ball to Lee Becton who turned in the biggest rushing game of his career tallying 177 yards. With Failla deftly executing the option and Becton bouncing off SC defenders, the Irish moved into Trojan territory in four plays. A key completion to junior flanker Mike Miller on third and ten kept the drive alive when Miller side-stepped three defenders to stretch for the first down marker. Burris jogged into the end zone at the 7:22 mark.

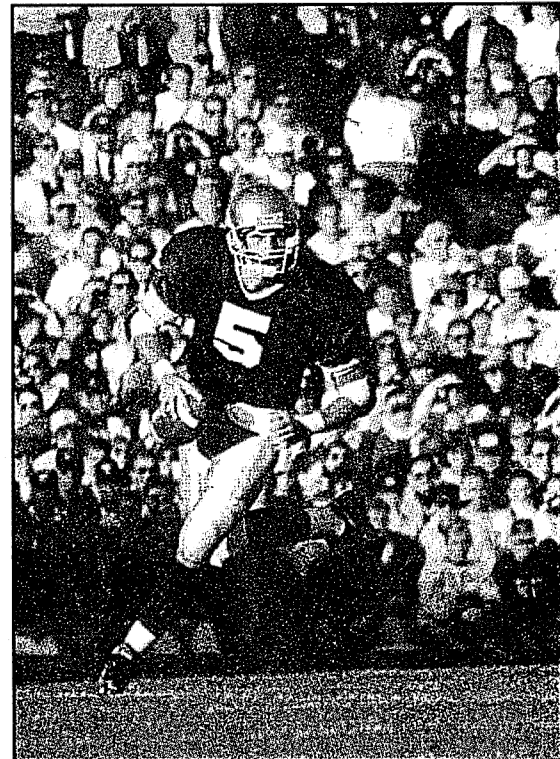
USC wasn't quite ready to give up yet, however, and took advantage of the Irish "bend but don't break" pass defense strategy. Junior quarterback Rob Johnson continued his pinpoint passing attack all the way down to the Irish 13 yard line. Following a string of 13 completions in 15 attempts, Johnson connected with

Deon Strother, who scampered into the endzone with Flanigan and Hamilton trailed him.

Senior split end Clint Johnson took the kickoff and sprinted to the 40 yard line, dodging defenders back to the 30 yard line and finally scampering to the forty again. The Irish found themselves quickly within striking distance after Mike Miller stretched his 5'9" frame to its limit, pulling down Failla's pass for a 23 yard pickup. After a failed end zone toss to senior flanker Lake Dawson, the coaching staff made the perfect call, at the perfect time, yielding, of course, the perfect result. The blitzing Trojan linebackers sprinted past a wide open junior tailback Ray Zellars, who received Failla's dump pass and proceeded to leap and run over

two USC defensive backs before reaching the goal line.

Early in the second half, it looked as though this would not just be another



Ken Osgood

Junior quarterback Paul Failla breaks away from the Trojan defense as he runs the ball for a first down. Failla led the Irish offense in the absence of an injured Kevin McDougal.

defeat of USC, but rather a thorough beating. Zellars showed off his arm for the first time in his career with a 35 yard over-the-shoulder pass to fellow back Lee Becton that placed the Irish at the USC five yard line. The Irish failed to convert the play into points, however, when USC hit freshman tailback Marc Edwards four straight times and took over possession.

With the imposing task of moving the ball

gest game of his career to date and would probably be the most important of his career. Converting a 41 yard gain over the middle of field, Morton put USC in position to add some respectability to the game.

"It's very frustrating, but there were a lot of positive things," said Morton. "Hopefully next year we can get them. I'm glad I had the opportunity to play them."

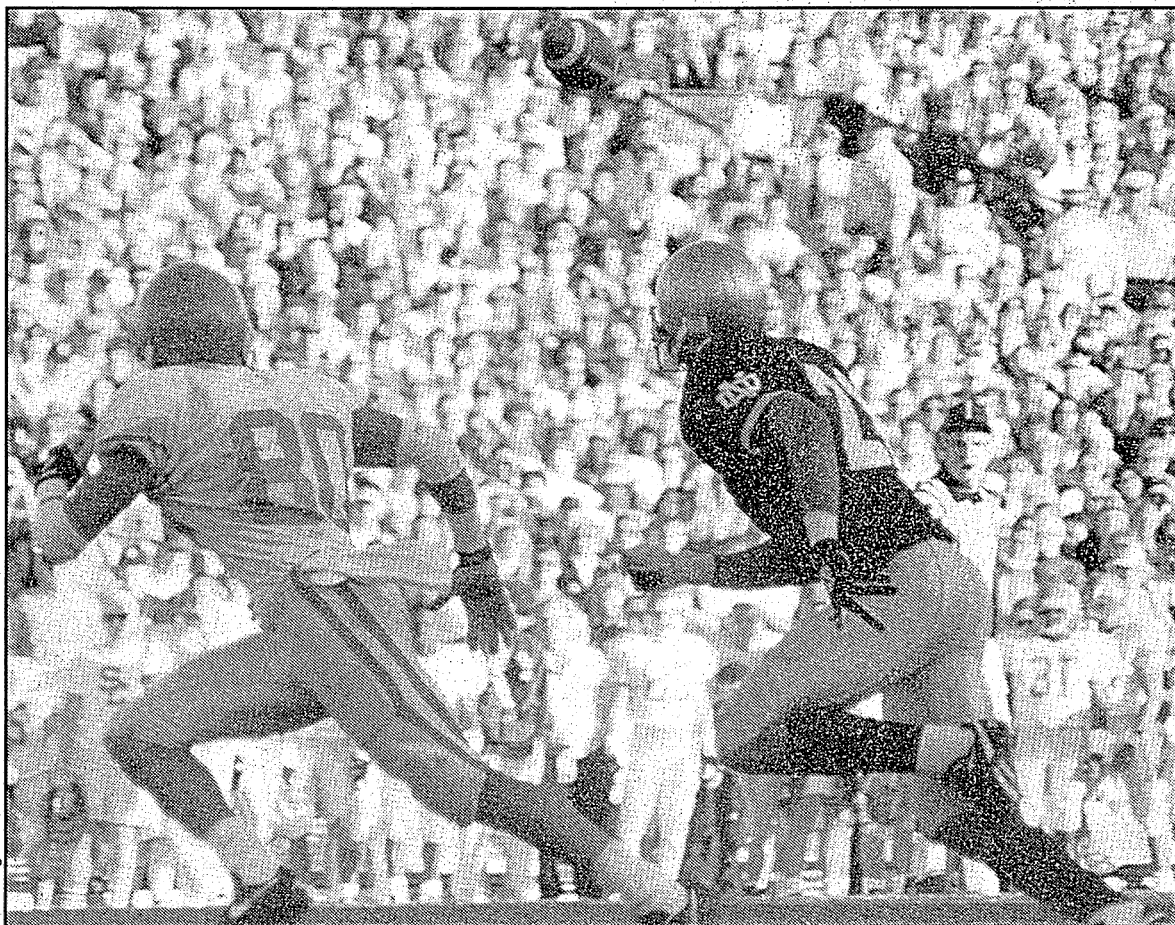
Another player who had strong feelings

senior year was to have the opportunity to go out to South Bend and "beat the hell out of the Irish."

"I'm disappointed, but I have a lot of buddies here and I hope they will get them next year," said McGinest. "I don't think it will last much longer."

USC managed to get into double digits when sophomore tight end Johnny McWilliams scored on an 8 yard toss from

From the hands of a waiting Johnnie Morton, sophomore free safety Bobby Taylor snatches away a Rob Johnson pass. Taylor's interception came after Morton placed USC deep in Irish territory with a 41 yard gain. Taylor ran the interception back 47 yards to begin another Irish scoring drive.



Ken Osgood

99 yards and the Irish student body creating a deafening din, USC went three and out under the heavy pass rush of sophomore defensive end Thomas Knight, who exhibited a talent for timely sacks.

The remainder of the game proved less eventful from the Irish offensive standpoint.

Johnnie Morton seemed determined to remind the country at this point that he is one of the premiere receivers in Division I college football, regardless of the outcome of the game. Morton said before the game that the contest would certainly be the big-

about the game was senior defensive end Willie McGinest, who claimed the only reason he had stayed at Southern Cal for his

Johnson. An onside kick gave USC the ball, but Rob Johnson was pressured by a surging defense.

The final score was 31-13, and this Notre Dame team was more powerful at every position on the field. Coach John Robinson acknowledged this after the game.

"I was very impressed with their efficiency and power," said Robinson. "There is no question that we are not as strong as they are. We just weren't a match for them."

Coach Holtz's impression of his team was not quite as positive however.

"We are not a good team. We have to get better." □

**We won today's
game in the trenches.
To win you have to
win up front.
—Bryant Young**