

2006 UCLA SPRING OUTLOOK

BRUINS, BUILDING ON THE SUCCESS OF 2005, REACH FOR HIGHER GOALS IN 2006

In 2005, the UCLA football team achieved the seventh 10-win season in school history with a win in the Vitalis Sun Bowl over Northwestern. Karl Dorrell, the Pac-10 Co-Coach of the Year, became only the fourth Bruin head coach to lead his team to 10 victories.

The Bruins won their first eight games, were ranked as high as seventh on the two major polls (No. 5 on the BCS poll) and finished the year ranked No. 13 by USA Today/Coaches and No. 16 by AP.

The offense averaged 6.27 yards per play, its best since the 1998 season (6.81). Its average of 431.0 yards per game was its highest since the 1998 team compiled an average of 487.25. Its scoring average of 39.1 was its best since the '98 team put 39.7 points per game on the board and the 469 points ranked No. 4 all-time.

Defensively, the season can not be measured solely by statistics. In 2005, the Bruins rallied from double-digit deficits on five occasions, four times in the fourth quarter, to win games. Each time, the defense stiffened and made the plays when necessary, giving UCLA the chance to rally.

In 2006, the Bruins will build upon the momentum created by 10 victories and strive for even greater goals. UCLA returns 12 starters from the 2005 team — five on offense and seven on defense, plus its punter — to form the nucleus of the 2006 Bruin squad.

“As a program, we are eager for the season to begin,” said head coach Karl Dorrell. “We are pleased with the progress the program showed last season and the confidence that began to take hold in our players. However, we still have a lot of hard work ahead of us as we continue to move forward and reach for higher goals.

“Defensively, we will use this Spring to strengthen and build our unit. The new members of the coaching staff have welcomed the challenges ahead of them and are anxious to get on the field with our team. We expect the return of several of our injured players. Many of our younger players now have gained valuable experience. We have the young men in our program who can execute successfully and coaches who look to maximize our players’ potential.

“Offensively, we have established our system and expect to continue to see great results on the field. We may have lost some of our statistical leaders but we have players in place to continue the high level of productivity. This Spring will be very important for our three quarterback candidates as we seek to get them as much experience as possible. They will get the opportunity to grow their skills under fire,” said Dorrell.

On offense, the Bruins welcome back plenty of productive firepower, including players who caught 20 touchdown

passes last season and running backs who accounted for 1,000 yards. Six offensive linemen who earned starting assignments are back this season, led by junior guard Shannon Tevaga, who started all 12 contests last season and has started 18 straight overall; junior tackle Brian Abraham, who made nine starts; junior guard Chris Joseph, who started the first five games before suffering a season-ending knee injury; senior center Robert Chai, who started four of the final five games; junior tackle Noah Sutherland, who started three times, including the final two games; and sophomore center Nathaniel Skaggs, who started in the Vitalis Sun Bowl.

Some of the key skill players returning include junior tailback Chris Markey, the team’s second-leading rusher (561 yards) and top kickoff returner (22.5 yards per return); the team’s second-leading receiver, senior Joe Cowan, who made 35 catches; the team’s third-leading receiver, junior Marcus Everett, who made 32 catches; junior Brandon Breazell, who hauled in 24 passes, four of which were touchdowns; and junior fullback Michael Pitre, who earned honorable mention All-Pac-10 honors.

On defense, the returning starters include: senior defensive end Justin Hickman, who led the team with 5.5 sacks last season; junior defensive tackle Brigham Harwell, who led defensive linemen with 35 stops and 11.5 tackles for losses last season; junior cornerback Trey Brown, who ranked fifth on the team last season with 53 tackles; junior free safety Dennis Keyes, who is the leading returning tackler and was fourth overall on the squad last season with 59 tackles; junior defensive end William Snead, who made five starts; sophomore tackle Chase Moline, who made eight starts; and sophomore linebacker John Hale, who started seven games last season as a true freshman. Sophomore punter Aaron Perez, who had a 39.9 average, and senior snapper Riley Jondle also return for the 2006 season. Senior place kicker Justin Medlock, a second-team All-Pac-10 selection in 2005 and a semifinalist for the Lou Groza Award in 2004, is indefinitely suspended from the team and will not participate this Spring.

In addition, the Bruins will also have the services of redshirt senior Junior Taylor, who made 32 receptions in 2004 but missed virtually all of last season due to a knee injury; and redshirt junior defensive tackle Kevin Brown, who made 25 tackles, including five sacks, in 2004 but missed all of last year with an ankle injury. Taylor will not participate in Spring drills but will be ready for Fall camp.

Other key returnees include: wide receiver Gavin Ketchum; tight ends J.J. Hair, Ryan Moya and Logan Paulsen, who combined to catch 13 passes; defensive linemen Nikola Dragovich, Bruce Davis and Kenneth Lombard; linebackers Eric McNeal, Aaron Whittington and Christian Taylor;

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and defensive backs Rodney Van, Chris Horton, Michael Norris and Byron Velega.

Key losses from last year's squad include: leading receiver and Mackey Award winner, tight end Marcedes Lewis; quarterback Drew Olson, who ranked among the national leaders in passing efficiency and touchdown passes; running back/punt returner Maurice Drew, who led the Bruins in rushing with 914 yards and caught 31 passes; offensive linemen Mike McCloskey and Robert Cleary, each multi-year starters; linebacker Spencer Havner, the team leader in tackles; cornerback Marcus Cassel, who started all 12 games and strong safety Jarrad Page, second on the team in tackles in 2005.

UCLA will again face a challenging schedule which now includes all nine Pac-10 opponents. The Bruins open the season Sept. 2 by hosting Utah in the Rose Bowl. Rice follows the Utes into Pasadena on Sept. 9. After a bye week, the Bruins hit the road for the first time and begin Pac-10 play at Washington on Sept. 23. Stanford and Arizona come to the Rose Bowl on Sept. 30 and Oct. 7. On Oct. 14, the Bruins travel to Oregon and then play at Notre Dame on Oct. 21. Washington State (Oct. 28), Oregon State (Nov. 11) and USC (Dec. 2) complete the home slate. Games at California (Nov. 4) and at Arizona State (Nov. 18) fill out the away schedule. Overall, UCLA is slated to face five schools that played in bowl games a year ago, each in the last half of the 2006 campaign.

OFFENSE

Five starters, plus a multitude of other performers who have started games, give the Bruins an excellent experience level in many key areas. The Bruins have increased their offensive productivity in each of the last few years and that figures to be the case again in 2006.

QUARTERBACK

Drew Olson, who started for parts of the last four seasons (38 starts, including the last 27 straight contests), has moved on and the Bruins quarterback position will feature two redshirt sophomores, Ben Olson and Pat Cowan, and redshirt freshman Osaar Rasshan for the 2006 season.

Redshirt sophomore **BEN OLSON** (6-5, 227) possesses great physical ability. He and Drew Olson waged a camp-long battle for the starting spot last Fall prior to the 2005 season before the more experienced Olson got the nod.

B. Olson was sidelined for the first three games of last season due to a small fracture in his left (throwing) hand. He saw his first action in a competitive game since his senior prep season in the Fall of 2001 at Thousand Oaks, CA High School during the fourth quarter of the 2005 Bruin game against Oregon State. He also played the final series at Arizona and completed two of three passes for 11 yards.

Redshirt sophomore **PATRICK COWAN** (6-4, 215), who earned All-Region honors at St. John Bosco High in 2003, spent last season as the team's No. 3 quarterback. He saw his first action in the fourth quarter of last season's game against Rice, but did not attempt a pass.

Cowan, the brother of senior wide receiver Joe Cowan, has shown a rapid level of development, taking advantage of his opportunities during 2005 Spring drills to make an impression on the staff. As a prep senior, he threw for 1,101 yards and five touchdowns in a run-oriented offense.

OSAAR RASSHAN (6-4, 215), rated among the nation's top prep dual-threat quarterbacks, joined the program in August of 2005 from Garey High School in Pomona, CA. As a prep senior in 2004, Rasshan threw for 1,716 yards and 21 touchdowns and ran for 860 yards and 11 touchdowns. He redshirted last season and worked with the scout team.

"Ben has worked extremely hard to get ready for his opportunity," said head coach Karl Dorrell. "Even though his game time is limited, it was vital that he get back into action last season and begin the process of believing in himself. He had a strong showing during last Fall's camp and the more experience he has with the system, the better he will get. He has a strong arm and great ability. Patrick showed us last year that he has the physical abilities necessary to be a great quarterback at this level. He just needs time to refine his skills and gain experience in the system. His progress was noticeable during the course of the year. Osaar has worked hard to improve his throwing skills and comprehension of the offense. He is an outstanding athlete and it will be interesting to gauge his progress this Spring."

RUNNING BACK

Despite the loss of career all-purpose yardage record-holder Maurice Drew, the Bruins have plenty of talent and experience in the backfield.

One of the better backs in the Pac-10, junior **CHRIS MARKEY** (5-11, 203) ran for 561 yards on 110 carries and three touchdowns to rank second on the squad a year ago. The Louisiana native returned 17 kickoffs for 383 yards and a 22.5 yard average, which ranked eighth in the Pac-10. Markey also caught 17 passes (sixth on the team) on the year for 231 yards and two more touchdowns. His total of 1,223 all-purpose yards (101.9 avg.) ranked 14th in the Pac-10 and tied for 25th in school history for one season.

Markey finished the 2005 season with a career game in the Sun Bowl versus Northwestern when he carried 24 times for 161 yards and earned co-MVP honors. He rushed for 40 or more yards in six games last season. A capable receiver who had six multi-catch games, Markey caught three passes versus Arizona State for 120 yards and a touchdown. As a true freshman, he had a breakout game at Oregon where he rushed for 131 yards and led the team with five receptions for 84 yards. In all, he accounted for 238 all-purpose yards in that game and was named the Pac-10 Offensive Player of the Week.

True sophomore **KAHLIL BELL** (5-11, 206), who led Bay Area prepsters his senior season with 2,292 rushing yards and 31 touchdowns at Marin Catholic High School

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in Kentfield, CA, had a big freshman season for the Bruins. Bell rushed 52 times during the year for 310 yards and three scores. He had six games with 20 or more yards of rushing on the year, including a season-ending 136-yard, two-touchdown effort on 19 carries against Northwestern in the Sun Bowl, earning him a share of the Sun Bowl MVP honors with Markey.

Redshirt junior **DERRICK WILLIAMS** (5-10, 208), another talented runner, has displayed the ability in practices to be a part of the regular running back rotation. More of a power runner, he carried five times against Rice for 32 yards in limited action last season. On special teams, he has some experience as a kickoff returner.

Redshirt junior **MICHAEL PITRE** (5-11, 230) from El Modena High School in Orange, CA, won the fullback job in 2004 Fall camp and has been a steady performer during the last two seasons. In 2005, Pitre carried 15 times for 69 yards and a touchdown. He also caught 10 passes for 67 yards and two more touchdowns. In 2004, he appeared in 11 games, catching 10 passes for 128 yards and a touchdown and carrying twice for four yards. In each of the last two seasons, he has earned honorable mention all-conference acclaim.

Fourth-year junior **JIMMY STEPHENS** (6-2, 244) will compete for playing time behind Pitre. Stephens appeared in 11 games last season and had one carry for eight yards and one reception for three yards in 2005. In 2004, Stephens made steady progress while seeing limited game action.

Senior **DANNY NELSON** (6-1, 225), a converted linebacker, will see action at the fullback position this Spring. Nelson played in all 12 games last season as a linebacker and special teams performer, making nine tackles and adding one kickoff return. In 2004, he saw action in eight games, totalling 12 tackles. He started the 2004 season-opener at linebacker against Oklahoma State and made seven stops. He earned JC All-America honorable mention honors in 2003 at Arizona Western College.

Several walk-ons could add depth at the running back positions, including redshirt junior **BEN IDEMUNDIA** (6-0, 231), redshirt freshman **CRAIG SHEPPARD** (6-1, 192) and redshirt freshman **RYEN CAREW** (5-11, 191).

"We return quality performers in our backfield who are capable of producing the kinds of results we need to keep this offense on an upward swing," said Dorrell. "We have multiple backs who are dangerous as runners, receivers and returners."

"Chris is an exciting player to watch. He has taken on a larger role each season he has been in the program and this year, he will be even more prominent. Bell made excellent progress over the course of last season and his first Spring practice will be very important for his continued development. Pitre and Stephens give us experience at the fullback position. This Spring will be an opportunity for the others to really show us what they are capable of delivering on the field as we look for more quality depth at the position."

WIDE RECEIVER

This position had several players take big steps up the production ladder last season. Three returnees have made at least 30 receptions in a season and seven returnees caught at least one touchdown pass a year ago. Young veterans like Joe Cowan, Marcus Everett and Brandon Breazell each answered the challenge of stepping up after the loss of Craig Bragg from the 2004 team and Junior Taylor due to injury early in the 2005 season. First-time performers like Gavin Kethum, Andrew Baumgartner and Matt Willis produced positive results as well and provided depth in the rotation.

Senior **JOE COWAN** (6-4, 220) is the leading returning receiver after grabbing 35 passes, second-most on the team last season, for 469 yards and three scores. He started all 12 games in 2005 and had nine multi-catch games. His best game came against Arizona State when he snared three balls for 109 yards, including a 91-yard touchdown. In 2004, he made two starts and made 13 receptions for 228 yards and one touchdown. Cowan, who reminds some observers of former Bruin standout Danny Farmer, will look to further refine his skills this Spring and ready himself for a big senior season.

Two true juniors, **MARCUS EVERETT** (6-1, 200) and **BRANDON BREAZELL** (6-0, 165), will each look to continue to build on the solid seasons they had in 2005. Everett started six of the 10 games in which he saw action and caught 32 passes (third on the team) for 390 yards and two touchdowns. He had seven multi-catch games last season, including six-each against Oklahoma and California. Everett started four games in 2004 and finished the year with nine catches for 110 yards. Breazell saw action in all 12 games in 2005 and caught 24 passes for 297 yards and four touchdowns. He had eight multi-catch games with a best of four against both Rice and Washington State. His 23-yard over-the-shoulder catch in overtime gave the Bruins the victory at Stanford last season. Breazell earned Special Teams Player of the Game honors in the Sun Bowl by returning two onside kicks for touchdowns.

Redshirt senior **JUNIOR TAYLOR** (6-1, 213) missed virtually the entire 2005 season after suffering a knee injury on the second play (a 16-yard reception) of the Oklahoma game. Taylor underwent surgery to repair a torn anterior cruciate ligament in his left knee and sat out the remainder of the season. He had started each of the first three games and had made six catches for 109 yards and a pair of touchdowns. In 2004, Taylor tied for second on the team with 32 receptions and 463 receiving yards (14.5 avg.) while starting in 11 games. His average of 38.6 yards per game ranked 19th in the Pac-10 while his 2.67 receptions per game ranked T-22nd. He recorded two touchdown catches, a 29-yard scoring grab in the Las Vegas Bowl and an 83-yard catch-and-run at Oregon, the eighth-longest in school history. His 76 career receptions rank 20th on the all-time school list and his 1,041 career receiving yards ranks 22nd all-time on that school list.

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True sophomore **GAVIN KETCHUM** (6-4, 190) impressed the coaching staff from the beginning of Fall camp last season. He went on to appear in all 12 games and had three starts (Washington State, Arizona, Arizona State) while catching 11 passes for 153 yards and one touchdown. He posted three-catch games against both Washington State (29 yards and a touchdown) and Arizona State (80 yards).

Redshirt senior **ANDREW BAUMGARTNER** (6-0, 189) was awarded a scholarship last season after an outstanding Fall camp. He went on to see action in all 12 games and had two starts (California, Northwestern). Baumgartner caught six passes on the year for 111 yards and one touchdown (Oklahoma). He was named to the honorable mention All-Pac-10 academic team.

Redshirt senior **MATT WILLIS** (6-0, 186) walked on to the Bruin team in the Spring of 2005 after being a member of the UCLA track team. A speed receiver, Willis also got a look in 2005 as a kickoff return man. He appeared in eight games and totaled three catches for 29 yards, including a touchdown grab against USC.

Redshirt sophomore **RYAN GRAVES** (6-1, 175) worked with the scout team in 2004 and 2005. As a prep senior in 2003, he made 62 receptions for 1,271 yards and 15 touchdowns and earned All-America acclaim.

Redshirt freshman **JAMIL TURNER** (6-1, 190) will look to impress in his first Spring Practice after being a member of the scout team last season. Turner was credited with 74 catches for 1,468 yards and 20 touchdowns while earning All-Region honors for Bethel High School in Spanaway, WA as a prep senior in 2004.

"Joe, Marcus and Brandon each took large steps towards becoming a go-to type of receiver," Dorrell said. "All three should enjoy the benefits of last season's experience as we move forward this Spring. Gavin gives us another big target on the outside and performed well. Junior started to take his game to another level during the latter half of the 2004 season. We look forward to his return in the Fall in terms of both production and leadership."

TIGHT END

The Bruins welcome back three tight ends with experience from a year ago which will help make up for the loss of Mercedes Lewis, who won the John Mackey Award last season.

Redshirt senior **J.J. HAIR** (6-5, 248) saw action in all 12 games last season and made two starts (Rice, Washington). He excels as a blocker and made one catch for five yards in 2005. He saw action in nine games in 2004, making two receptions for 15 yards.

A couple of true sophomores, **RYAN MOYA** (6-3, 230) and **LOGAN PAULSEN** (6-5, 222), gained valuable experience last season. Moya saw action in all 12 games and started against Oklahoma and Arizona State. He made 10 catches on the year for 153 yards and two scores (48 yards vs. Oregon State and 58 yards vs. Northwestern). Moya was rated as one of the nation's top tight ends by

rivals.com after making 44 catches for 557 yards and 11 touchdowns in just six games at Oak Ridge High School in El Dorado Hills, CA as a prep senior in 2004. Paulsen played in six games for the Bruins last season and made two catches for 33 yards. He and Moya also saw action on special teams. Paulsen was selected as one of the nation's top tight end recruits by scout.com after making 36 receptions for 513 yards and two touchdowns at Chaminade High School in West Hills, CA as a senior in 2004.

Redshirt freshman **ADAM HEATER** (6-5, 245) played on the scout team last season. Heater was recognized by Tom Lemming as one of the nation's top 20 tight end prospects after making 10 catches for 120 yards and three touchdowns for Snohomish, WA High School as a prep senior in 2004.

Redshirt sophomore walk-on **TYLER HOLLAND** (6-4, 240), who switched to tight end during the 2005 Spring session, is also in the mix.

"J.J., Logan, Ryan and Adam each have the ability to help us at this position," Dorrell said. "This Spring will be a great opportunity for one or more of them to show the staff that they want to be the next great UCLA tight end."

OFFENSIVE LINE

The offensive line has improved its run blocking and protection abilities the past two seasons and that figures to be the case again in 2006. The offense averaged over six yards per play for the second straight season and improved its passing yardage per game by almost 50 yards a contest. In addition, six players who started games along the line in 2005 are set to return.

True junior **SHANNON TEVAGA** (6-3, 310) is developing into one of the top linemen in the Pac-10. He has started the last 18 games at strong guard and, a year ago, was an honorable mention all-conference selection. In 2004, he spent most of the first six weeks playing on the FG-PAT squad before moving into the starting lineup at strong guard at Arizona State (game seven). He earned third-team Freshman All-America honors and first-team Freshman All-Pac-10 acclaim from The Sporting News.

Fourth-year senior **ROBERT CHAI** (6-3, 285) stepped in for center Mike McCloskey to start games during his first three seasons and has done a solid job. Last year, he started four games (Stanford, Arizona, Arizona State, USC) at center. Chai also played in a reserve role in games against San Diego State, Rice and Oregon State. In 2003, he started the final eight games of the year and also started two games in 2004.

True junior **BRIAN ABRAHAM** (6-6, 300), a former prep All-American, started nine games last season at strong tackle. Abraham played on the PAT-FG team in 2004 and saw limited snaps with the offense against Stanford, Arizona and Washington State.

True junior **CHRIS JOSEPH** (6-4, 290) made his first career start last season against San Diego State and went on to start the next four games at weak guard before

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suffering a knee injury against California. He underwent surgery and was forced to miss the rest of the season. An outstanding student, Joseph was selected to the CoSIDA/All-District-8 and All-Pac-10 All-Academic teams. In 2004, he played on the PAT-FG team in the first five games of 2004 before he suffered a partially torn knee ligament in practice.

Redshirt freshman **NATHANIEL SKAGGS** (6-4, 275) moved to the center position from the defensive line during the Sun Bowl practices following a series of injuries to Bruin centers. He started the bowl game at that position and seems to have found a home. In the 2005 season-opener at San Diego State, Skaggs had started at defensive tackle, and appeared in seven total games last season. In 2004, he stood out on the scout team.

Redshirt junior **NOAH SUTHERLAND** (6-4, 290), a converted defensive lineman, started three games (Oregon State, USC, Northwestern) last season at offensive tackle and showed plenty of promise. In 2004, he saw action in eight games on the defensive side of the ball. He got his first chance on the offensive side of the ball during 2005 Spring practices.

Redshirt junior **P.J. IRVIN** (6-4, 310) saw his first game action in 2004 against Arizona. He is expected to battle for playing time at weak guard. He earned 2002 All-America acclaim, from PrepStar magazine, at Agoura High School.

Redshirt sophomore **AARON MEYER** (6-3, 295) will battle for playing time at the center position. In 2005, he played virtually the entire contest versus Oregon State. He originally caught the attention of the coaches while performing on the scout team in 2004. Redshirt sophomore **SCOTT GLICKSBERG** (6-4, 300) saw limited action this past season at tackle. He played against San Diego State, Rice and Oregon State and also saw action on special teams against USC. He spent the 2004 season as a scout team player on both sides of the ball. Redshirt sophomore **TONY LEE** (6-4, 291) underwent knee surgery last season and missed most of the year. When healthy, he is expected to contend for playing time at tackle.

Redshirt sophomore **NICK EKBATANI** (6-5, 280), a transfer from Los Angeles Harbor College, is expected to get a long look from the Bruin coaching staff this Spring in his first time out with the blue and gold. He will be competing for playing time at tackle this Fall.

Redshirt freshman **ALEKSEY LANIS** (6-6, 326), a 2004 prep All-American from Los Angeles' Crenshaw High School, is expected to compete for playing time at a guard position this Spring. He was a member of the scout team in 2005. Redshirt freshman **JUSTIN BROWN** (6-6, 256), an All-Region selection from Long Beach, CA Poly High School spent last season as a member of the scout team and will look to impress during Spring practice at the tackle position.

Redshirt sophomore **CHRIS JOHNSON** (6-3, 280) figures to compete for playing time at a guard position this Spring. He moved over from the defensive line in prac-

tices last season during his redshirt year. Johnson played in the final nine contests of the 2004 season along the defensive line, making his debut against San Diego State. He totaled five tackles on the year, including one sack and one tackle for loss. Johnson earned All-Region honors at John Curtis Christian High in River Ridge, LA in 2003.

Several non-scholarship players, including redshirt junior center **BRIAN RUBINSTEIN** (5-11, 265), redshirt junior **JAMAAL RHODES** (6-3, 304), redshirt junior **PHILIP RAUSCHER** (6-4, 290), who switched from defense, and redshirt sophomore **MICAH REED** (6-4, 310) will also be in the mix.

"We developed a level of depth and versatility along the line a year ago which should pay off for us this Spring," said Dorrell. "We have a number of players with starting experience returning and an exciting group of younger players looking to take the next step. We did a much better job in protecting our quarterback and developing our overall offensive game from the point of attack last year and we will continue that trend in 2006."

DEFENSE

A year ago, the Bruins lost significant players in the two-deep as defensive linemen Kevin Brown and Nikola Dragovic; linebackers Justin London, Wesley Walker, Fred Holmes and Aaron Whittington and defensive back Chris Horton all missed several games due to injury. Several younger players reaped the benefit of experience. That experience, the return to health of some key veterans and the aggressive schemes of new defensive coordinator DeWayne Walker, will all combine to help produce improved results on the field during the 2006 campaign.

DEFENSIVE LINE

Redshirt junior **KEVIN BROWN** (6-2, 297), who possesses both strength and quickness and the potential to be an outstanding tackle, suffered a sprained left ankle in a pre-season scrimmage and underwent surgery two days later, forcing him to miss the entire season. Brown made his first career start on the defensive line in the 2004 opener against Oklahoma State and went on to lead all defensive linemen with 25 tackles from his tackle position. His five sacks led the team and his 8.5 tackles for loss tied for the team lead in that category as well. As a true freshman in 2003, Brown was contributing regularly on the defensive line when, for the good of the team, he agreed to move to offensive guard. He started the same week as the move and ended up starting three games on offense at the end of the season.

True senior **JUSTIN HICKMAN** (6-1, 261) has the ability to be one of the Pac-10's top defensive ends in 2006. He started all 12 games in 2005 and led the team with 5.5 sacks. He was credited with 31 tackles, eight tackles for loss and one fumble recovery, helping him earn honorable mention All-Pac-10 acclaim. In 2004, he appeared in 10 games, started eight times, while totalling 22 tackles, four tackles for loss and 1.5 sacks. He was the only lineman to start the first five games of the year, the first

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two at left end and the rest on the right side. He then underwent surgery on his left knee and missed two games. Hickman came back against Washington State and went on to start against Oregon, USC and Wyoming.

True junior **BRIGHAM HARWELL** (6-1, 274) switched to defensive tackle during the 2005 Spring practices and went on to start 11 of the 12 games at that position a year ago. He led the Bruin defensive linemen with 35 stops and 11.5 tackles for loss and added four sacks. His 0.96 tackle for loss average ranked ninth in the Pac-10.

Harwell played in all 12 games as a true freshman in 2004, starting four times at defensive end. On the year, he registered 22 tackles and 2.5 tackles for loss. He started for the first time at California and made five tackles. Against Washington State, he started and scored UCLA's first touchdown of the game when he recovered a fumble in the end zone.

Redshirt junior **WILLIAM SNEAD** (6-4, 253) appeared in all 12 games at defensive end and started five times (California, Washington State, Oregon State, Stanford, Arizona) last season. He was credited with 20 tackles, 1.5 tackles for loss, two fumble recoveries and 1.5 sacks. Snead shifted to defensive end from linebacker in 2004 and appeared in all 12 games as a key reserve that season, and will look to continue his development this Spring.

Redshirt junior **BRUCE DAVIS** (6-3, 245) has contributed to the defense at both defensive end and linebacker, playing the former position for the majority of the 2005 campaign. He saw action in all 12 games last season and recorded 28 tackles, including six tackles for loss and two sacks. He was credited with a career-best seven stops in the San Diego State contest. Davis made his first collegiate start in his first college game against Oklahoma State in 2004. He also started at Illinois before coming off the bench in the final 10 games of the 2004 season. Davis finished with 17 tackles, 3.5 tackles for loss and was second on the team with 2.5 sacks.

This Spring, redshirt sophomore **KENNETH LOMBARD** (6-1, 268) will move to end after playing tackle a year ago. In 2005, he saw action in all 12 games and made three starts (California, Washington State, Oregon State). He totaled 21 tackles, including three tackles for loss and one sack. A standout in the classroom as well, Lombard was selected Pac-10 All-Academic first team. In 2004, he saw extensive action at defensive tackle in the opener against Oklahoma State. He started at Illinois, becoming the first true freshman defensive lineman to start a game since Ken Kocher and Anthony Fletcher each did it in the 1999 Rose Bowl against Wisconsin. Lombard also started the following game at Washington, but suffered a shoulder injury that sidelined him for the remainder of the season and was granted a substitute year of eligibility.

Redshirt junior **NIKOLA DRAGOVIC** (6-3, 252) won a starting job at defensive end during Fall camp and started the first four games of the 2005 season before an injury sidelined him for the rest of the year. Due to that injury, he

will not compete in Spring Practice but should be ready for Fall camp. He made four tackles in the opener at San Diego State and recorded a sack and a blocked PAT. He made three stops and recovered a fumble versus Rice, and made two stops, including one for loss against Oklahoma. He made two tackles versus Washington before suffering a torn anterior cruciate ligament in his left knee during the contest. In 2004, he saw action in nine games at defensive end. He had five tackles, including one sack and one tackle for loss.

True sophomore **CHASE MOLINE** (6-1, 274) saw action in all 12 games in 2005 with nine starts and was selected a first-team freshman All-American. He was credited with 25 tackles, including 3.5 tackles for loss and one sack. He made six tackles in a game twice.

A number of walk-ons — redshirt senior **BRIAN RUZIECKI** (6-3, 292), redshirt junior **SCOTT KEARNEY** (6-1, 285) and redshirt sophomore **TRAVIS MARTIN** (6-4, 242) could also be in the defensive line mix. Ruziecki appeared in seven games at defensive tackle in 2005 and totaled two tackles.

Redshirt freshmen **CHINONSO ANYANWU** (6-4, 210), and **JESS WARD** (6-4, 260) gained experience on the scout team in 2005. Anyanwu, an end, recorded eight sacks in 2004 as a standout at Los Angeles' Crenshaw High School. Ward, a tackle, was the L.A. Times' Desert/Mountain Lineman of the Year in 2004 at Rim of the World High School in Lake Arrowhead, CA.

WILL PEDDIE (6-5, 251), a senior walk-on, saw his first career action in 2004 at tight end. He moved to defensive end last season and will compete for playing time during Spring drills.

"Our defensive line, with the return to health of some of our key players, will perform at a more consistent level," said Dorrell.

"Our tackles will be much improved. Kevin (Brown) will return and should become a big-play defender for us. Brigham had an impressive first season at the position. He looked very comfortable after moving inside. Kenneth made steady progress during the course of the season and Chase really battled for us at the position last season."

"Justin emerged as a capable playmaker at defensive end last season. Nikola had an excellent start to the season wiped out by injury. William showed plenty of promise. The linemen now have experience and must begin to take the next step in their development this Spring, both individually and as a unit."

LINEBACKER

UCLA loses three senior starters (Spencer Havner, Wesley Walker, Justin London) at this position, but also returns three players who started games last season in Christian Taylor, John Hale and Aaron Whittington.

True sophomore **JOHN HALE** (6-4, 225) saw action in 11 games last season with seven starts. A tough youngster

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who played both inside and outside a year ago, Hale became the first true freshman since 1999 (Asi Faoa) to start a game at linebacker, recording 20 tackles on the year. He enters Spring drills competing for playing time at Sam linebacker.

Redshirt junior **AARON WHITTINGTON** (6-2, 210) figures to be in the thick of the competition at the Will linebacker spot. In 2005, he saw action in seven games while battling nagging leg injuries most of the year. He earned the starting nod in the first two games of the season against San Diego State and Rice. Whittington, who also played special teams, finished with 16 tackles for the season, including one tackle for loss. In 2004, he saw action in eight contests and started the Illinois game, registering eight tackles. He finished the year with 18 tackles and was named to The Sporting News All-Pac-10 Freshman team.

Redshirt junior **CHRISTIAN TAYLOR** (6-0, 220), who earned a scholarship a year ago, will compete for a starting spot at Mike linebacker. He saw action in all 12 games in 2005 on defense and special teams and his total of 43 tackles ranked seventh on the team. He had one tackle for loss and returned a fumble for a touchdown.

True junior **FRED HOLMES** (6-1, 245), who figures to compete for playing time in the Fall, will miss Spring Practice due to off-season surgery. Slowed by injury for parts of the 2005 season, he saw action in nine games and was credited with two tackles. A standout on special teams in 2004, Holmes appeared in 11 contests that season, missing only the bowl game. He totaled six tackles, including one tackle for loss.

Senior **ERIC McNEAL** (6-2, 209) saw action in all 12 games in 2005 and will compete for playing time at Will linebacker. He began the season as a safety and moved to outside linebacker for the last third of the campaign. McNeal recorded 35 tackles on the year, including three tackles for loss and one interception. He had one starting assignment at strong safety against Oregon State. In 2004, McNeal saw action in all 12 games as a reserve safety and special teams player. He finished with 28 tackles and one interception and was named the defensive winner of UCLA's Captain Don Brown Memorial Award for Most Improved Player.

Redshirt freshman **REGGIE CARTER** (6-1, 225) was a scout team standout in 2005. A fast, physical player, Carter will compete for playing time at the Mike linebacker spot. Carter was rated among the nation's top inside linebackers by rivals.com in 2004 after making 130 tackles, including 20 sacks, for L.A.'s Crenshaw High School.

True sophomore **KYLE BOSWORTH** (6-2, 215) saw action in nine games in 2005, mostly on special teams, and is expected to compete for playing time at Sam linebacker after being credited with one tackle last year. His twin brother **KOREY BOSWORTH** (6-2, 218) redshirted last year and will compete for playing time at the Mike linebacker position. Both Bosworth brothers

earned All-Region acclaim at West High School in Plano, TX in 2004.

SHAWN OATIS (5-11, 203) was redshirted during his freshman season and is making a switch from safety to Will linebacker during Spring drills. Oatis was ranked among the nation's top defensive backs by several prep publications as a senior at Chino, CA High School in 2004.

Three walkons, redshirt sophomores **JAMEL GREER** (6-0, 230), **NICKY RODRIGUEZ** (5-10, 220) and redshirt freshman **MARK CORDELL** (5-11, 242) will attempt to add depth at the position.

"Linebacker may be a position with relatively little returning experience, but it has players with plenty of ability," said Dorrell. "This Spring we will identify the players who can make the biggest impact for us. We are looking forward to coaching these youngsters and see how they progress as we prepare for the Fall."

SECONDARY

The Bruins return several players with experience in the secondary and will begin the process of looking to replace Jarrad Page, a four-year starter at safety, and starting cornerback Marcus Cassel. There will be competition for starting jobs and playing time at cornerback and at both safety positions during Spring drills.

Redshirt junior **CHRIS HORTON** (6-1, 200) is expected to compete for the starting strong safety spot. A wrist injury in Fall camp kept him out of the first six games last season. Horton returned to action on special teams against Oregon State and on defense (free safety) at Arizona and made his first career start at USC. On the year, he started twice and made 26 tackles in his six games. In 2004, he saw action in nine games and earned a reputation as a playmaker. Horton recorded 27 tackles, including 0.5 tackle for loss. He also had an interception and blocked two punts.

DENNIS KEYES (6-1, 192), another talented redshirt junior, will compete for the starting spot time at free safety. A year ago, Keyes saw action in all 12 games, starting nine times. His total of 57 tackles ranked fourth on the team and No. 1 among returning players. Keyes had eight tackles for loss, two sacks and tied for the team lead in forced fumbles with two. In 2004, he appeared in eight games and recorded 10 tackles.

Redshirt junior **TREY BROWN** (5-10, 189) has started 17 consecutive games at cornerback. A year ago, he ranked fifth on the team in tackles with 53 stops, had one interception and tied for the team lead with 10 pass defenses. He ranked eighth in the Pac-10 in passes defended (0.92).

Brown started the final five games of 2004, totalling 46 tackles (seventh on the team), including five tackles for loss. He also made two interceptions, returning one for a score at Oregon. In 2003, Brown was named the defensive scout team Player of the Year.

True junior **RODNEY VAN** (6-1, 185) will compete for playing time at the right cornerback position. A fine all-

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around athlete, he appeared in 11 games last season and was a member of several special teams units. He made 22 tackles on the season, including one tackle for loss, and one interception. Van saw action in all 12 games in 2004 and totaled 12 tackles and one forced fumble. Although he saw most of his action on special teams, he had four tackles at California after playing most of the second half at cornerback.

Other cornerbacks competing for playing time are true junior **MICHAEL NORRIS** (5-11, 185) and redshirt sophomore **BYRON VELEGA** (5-10, 190).

Norris made 18 tackles last season while working as a nickel back and on special teams. He had one tackle for loss, one interception (San Diego State) and one sack and was selected Pac-10 All-Academic second team. He appeared in all 12 games in 2004 for the Bruins and utilized his speed on special teams, recording seven tackles.

Velega, a prep teammate of Rodney Van at Long Beach Poly High, saw action in all 12 games last season. He was credited with 25 tackles on the year while playing defensive back and on special teams. He redshirted in 2004.

Redshirt junior **MATTHEW SLATER** (5-11, 197), who saw action in three games in 2005 as a wide receiver, will move to cornerback this Spring. He is a hard worker who saw limited action in 2004 and redshirted in 2003.

True sophomore **BRET LOCKETT** (6-2, 195) is expected to contend for playing time at the strong safety position. He saw action in all 12 games last season, primarily on special teams, and was credited with two tackles. Lockett made 54 tackles for Diamond Bar, CA High School as a prep senior in 2004 while earning All-Region acclaim.

True sophomore **ROBERT KIBBLE** (5-10, 170), is expected to battle for playing time at the free safety position this Spring. He saw action in 11 games last season, mostly on special teams, and recorded 11 tackles. Kibble, an All-Region performer, made 80 tackles as a senior at Westfield High School in Houston, TX.

Another player looking to work his way into the playing rotation this Spring is redshirt freshman free safety **AARON WARE** (6-0, 190). Ware, the younger brother of former Bruin and current Philadelphia Eagle Matt Ware (2001-03), was rated as one of the top athletes in the nation by PrepStar and came to UCLA from Oaks Christian High School in Westlake Village, CA. He was a standout on the scout team during practices last season.

Walk-on redshirt junior **CHARLIE SCHUH** (6-1, 198) will join the battle this Spring for playing time at the strong safety position. Schuh saw action in all 12 games last season, mostly on special teams (kickoff cover and kickoff return), totalling four tackles and one forced fumble on the year.

"Chris and Dennis each gained quality experience at safety last season and Trey played very well at cornerback. They are the leaders in our secondary and we need them all to take the next step in their development.

"We have a number of exciting young athletes and I expect this to be an area of intense competition across the board. Overall, we still need to raise our level of consistency in the secondary and that will be the goal this season," said Dorrell.

SPECIALISTS

Senior **JUSTIN MEDLOCK** (6-0, 186) has established himself as one of the better kickers in the country. However, he is currently suspended indefinitely for a violation of team rules. He was on the pre-season list for the Lou Groza Award in 2005 after being a semifinalist for the Award the year before. Last season, Medlock connected on 13 of 17 field goals (his percentage of 76.5 ranked third in the Pac-10) and all 50 of his point after attempts. He ranked eighth in the Pac-10 in scoring in 2005 with 8.1 points per game (89 points) and was named second-team All-Pac-10. He enters the 2006 season with 42 career field goals (fourth on the UCLA career list) and a career percentage of .750 (third among Bruins with at least 21 career field goals). He is also only the second Bruin to kick at least four field goals of at least 50 yards during a career.

Redshirt senior **RILEY JONDLE** (6-3, 213) returns for his fourth consecutive season as the long snapper for punts and field goals and **PAT COWAN** (6-4, 215) enters Spring drills as the new holder.

Junior **CHRIS MARKEY** (5-11, 203) averaged 22.5 yards on 17 kickoff returns last season (383 yards) which ranked eighth in the Pac-10. He also returned three punts for an average of 16.0 yards (48 yards). In 2004, he had 18 kickoff returns for 399 yards and his 22.2-yard average ranked seventh in the Pac-10.

Sophomore **KAHLIL BELL** (5-11, 206) averaged 15.9 yards on his 11 kickoff returns last season (175 yards).

Redshirt sophomore **AARON PEREZ** (6-2, 232) averaged 39.9 yards per punt, which ranked eighth in the Pac-10, in his first season as the Bruin punter. He had a long of 52 yards and placed 19 kicks inside the 20-yard line. Twenty-two of his fifty-four punts were returned for a total of only 156 yards and the Bruins' net punting mark of 35.6 yards per kick ranked fifth in the Pac-10.

Sophomores **JIMMY ROTSTEIN** (6-0, 160) and **BRIAN MALETTE** (5-11, 179) both participated in the Sun Bowl game. Rotstein converted all five of his extra point attempts in the contest, while Malette handled the kickoff duties and was successful on his only extra point attempt.

"We have tightened up our special teams play considerably the past two seasons and must keep improving this season," Dorrell said. "If Justin is available, we have an experienced placekicker who could be among the best in the country. We have dependable return men who have performed well in the past and we figure to be improved in this area. Our punter gained valuable experience as last season progressed and we expect him to be much better as a sophomore."