

2021 USC CROSS COUNTRY



MEDIA GUIDE

• Director of Track & Field/Cross Country • Quincy Watts

Former Trojan Olympic great Quincy Watts was promoted to USC Director of Track and Field and Cross Country on June 17, 2021 after eight seasons on Caryl Smith Gilbert's staff as an assistant in charge of sprints, long hurdles and relays.

"Naming Quincy Watts, a Trojan Hall of Famer and Olympic legend, as our new director of track and field and cross country is the best and right decision for us," said USC Athletic Director Mike Bohn. "His impact on both our men's and women's programs over the past eight years has been significant. Consistent with our vision to be the most student-athlete centered program in the country, engaging our student-athletes is an important part of every coaching search process, and I am so impressed with the overwhelming support Quincy has from our current team. He is also highly respected by our former student-athletes and the national track and field community. We are very excited to have a winner and decorated Trojan leading our program, and we have the utmost confidence that he will sustain and elevate the tradition of excellence the USC shield represents."

Watts was the 2021 U.S. Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches Association National Outdoor Women's Assistant Coach of the Year as well as the West Region Indoor and Outdoor Women's Assistant Coach of the Year. At the 2021 NCAA Indoor meet, he helped Kaelin Roberts to her second 400-meter title and the women's 4x400-meter relay team to a second place finish, while at last week's NCAA Outdoor meet Anna Cockrell was the 400-meter hurdles champ, the women won the 4x100-meter relay and three women earned All-America honors in the 400 meters (the first time by any school in the event since 2014).

In his eight years (2014-21) as a USC assistant, the Women of Troy had four Top 3 finishes at the NCAA meet, including winning it in 2018 and 2021 and placing second in 2019, and they never finished below second place at the Pac-12 meet. The Trojan men had a quartet of Top 5 NCAA finishes and Pac-12 runner-up finishes.

Watts guided Trojans to 86 indoor and outdoor All-America honors in the 400 meters, 400-meter hurdles and 4x400-meter relay. His Trojan athletes also claimed 19 NCAA titles and 26 Pac-12 crowns, and they set three collegiate records and 24 school records plus all four USC freshman 400-meter records and the women's 400-meter hurdles freshman record.

Before coming home to USC, Watts spent the 2012 and 2013 seasons as an assistant coach at CS Northridge, primarily working with the distance runners and cross country team. Prior to that, he was an assistant coach at Harvard-Westlake High in Los Angeles (Calif.), where he helped develop one of the strongest distance programs in the country. He began his coaching career as an assistant coach at his prep alma mater, Taft High in Woodland Hills (Calif.).

Watts came to USC from Taft specializing in the 100- and 200-meter dashes, then turned into one of the best 400-meter runners in Trojan history. The four-year (1989-92) letterman won the 1992 NCAA 400-meter race in 44.00, a meet record that stood for 25 years. Watts also ran the anchor leg on the 4x400-meter relay team that set a school record of 3:00.58 while placing second at those NCAAs. As a junior, he finished second in the 400 meters at the 1991 NCAA Championships.

Watts, who was inducted into the USC Athletic Hall of Fame in 2012, also was a wide receiver on the Trojan football team in 1990.

At the 1992 Olympic Games in Barcelona, Watts twice broke Lee Evans' Olympic record in winning the 400 meters. He ran 43.71 in the semifinal before clocking 43.50 in the final (that still stands as the USC record) to become the first 400-meter athlete to run sub-44.0 in a championship meet. He then teamed with Andrew Valmon, Michael Johnson and Steve Lewis to win the gold in the 4x400-meter relay in a then-world record time of 2:55.74 (he ran the second leg in a blistering 43.10).

He also earned a gold medal in the 4x400-meter relay at the 1993 World Championships (in a still-standing world record time of 2:54.29), and a silver medal in that relay at the 1991 World Championships.

Watts was ranked in the world Top 10 in the 400 meters for four consecutive years (1991-94), including No. 1 in 1992.

A native of Detroit, Mich., he was born on June 19, 1970. He and his wife, Kelly, have three children, daughters Talize and Kylie and son Quincy Jr.



2021 USC Cross Country Roster

Runner	Height	Birthdate	Class	Hometown
Alyssa Blockburger	5-7	7/12/02	Sophomore	Tucson, Ariz.
Julia Bounds	6-0	3/23/99	Senior	Redwood, City, Calif.
Alyssa Brewer	5-5	2/19/00	Senior	San Ramon, Calif.
Janiah Brown	5-7	4/8/01	Junior	Calabasas, Calif.
Isabelle Cairns	5-6	8/20/03	Freshman	Woodside, Calif.
Jacqueline Duarte	5-7	8/10/03	Freshman	Chino, Calif.
Maya LaCamp	5-6	5/5/03	Freshman	San Francisco, Calif.
Alicia Liera	5-5	8/15/02	Sophomore	Lynwood, Calif.
Gigi Maccagnini	5-5	1/4/02	Freshman	Melbourne, Australia
Mihajla Milovanovic	5-7	3/21/01	Junior	Chandler, Ariz.
Abygail Paez	5-5	3/29/00	Senior	San Pedro, Calif.
Giovanna Pisano	5-7	6/23/03	Freshman	San Antonio, Texas
Brooke Rodi	5-4	3/21/01	Junior	San Diego, Calif.
Jemima Russell	5-8	5/5/99	Senior	Elsternwick, Australia
Ritika Singh	5-7	7/6/03	Freshman	San Ramon, Calif.

• Associate Head Coach, Cross Country/ Assistant Track & Field • Jebreh Harris

Jebreh Harris is in his first season as USC's associate head coach of cross country and assistant track and field coach for distances, begin promoted to the current position by Director of Track & Field Quincy Watts in the summer of 2021. Harris was originally named the assistant coach for distances and cross country with the USC track and field program on Oct. 21, 2020.

In his first season at USC which didn't begin until late October, Harris guided Isaiah Jewett to a berth on the U.S. Olympic team and to the NCAA and Pac-12 men's 800m titles. Jewett set the school record with a time of 1:44.68 to earn the first NCAA 800m title by a Trojan on June 11, then broke it with a time of 1:43.85 on June 21 at the U.S. Team Trials to finish second and make the U.S. Olympic team for the Tokyo Olympics. Jewett improved over two seconds in his one season working with Harris and broke the school record by more than a second, a record which had stood for 33 years. George Gleason in his one season of working with Harris posted two USC all-time top 10 times, running the third-fastest 5000m time of 14:12.16 and the fifth-fastest 1500m time ever by a Trojan of 3:44.15. Alyssa Brewer and Jemima Russell both advanced to the NCAA West Preliminary Rounds in the women's 800m.

Harris came to USC from Illinois, where he served as an assistant coach for middle distances and long sprints the two previous seasons. Prior to his stint at Illinois Harris was the head cross country and assistant track and field coach at UNLV from 2012-18. He was also the recruiting coordinator at UNLV for both the track and cross country programs. In addition he served at the 2019 U20 Pan American women's distance coach, the 2018 IAAF U20 World Team men's distance coach and the 2016 U23 NACAC event manager.



In his short time at Illinois, Harris coached freshman Tracy Towns to one of the top 1000m times in program history (2:49.16), later that indoor season Towns scored in the 2020 Big 10 Indoor Championships while racing in the 800m. Also at the 2020 Big 10 Indoor Championships, Harris' event group contributed to scoring points for the Fighting Illini in the men's and women's DMR. Unfortunately due to COVID-19, the outdoor season was cancelled. At the 2019 Big 10 Indoor Championships the Illini Women's DMR took third place with Felucia Phillips contributing on the 400m leg. Konrad Eiring placed first in the 1000m at the Larry Wiczorek Invitational earning him a personal best time in the event (2:26.10).

In his time at UNLV, Harris coached Avi'Tal Wilson-Perteete to the second fastest NCAA 800m time of 2:01.14. Wilson-Perteete earned second-team All-America honors in the 800m for both the indoor and outdoor seasons and broke the Mountain West record in the 800m. Harris also coached Kaysee Pilgrim to a third-place finish in the high jump at NCAA Championships in 2017 and she posted a PR of 6-2.75 earlier that season. Pilgrim earned first-team All-American honors in the high jump and set the Conference record in the high jump.

In total, Harris coached five individual and five relay MWC Conference Champions and 20 All-Conference track and field performances at UNLV. He assisted in leading the UNLV track & field program to the Mountain West Conference Indoor Championship title in 2018. Harris coached UNLV school records in six events: the indoor and outdoor Distance Medley Relay (DMR), indoor 800m, indoor 600m, indoor 5k and outdoor high jump. The 2018 indoor DMR team clocked a time of 11:31.59A, breaking a previous school record that had stood for 20 years.

Before UNLV, Harris spent two years at South Carolina State as assistant head coach of cross country and track & field. He coached Seymour Walter when Walter broke the U.S. Virgin Islands national record in the 800m, posting a time of 1:49.19. Walter went on to compete at NACAC U23, CAC, and World University Games for the USVI. Harris also coached the women's cross-country team to runner-up in the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference. He coached Brittany Stewart to an outdoor 5K conference title, and to a second-place finish at cross country conference championships. 23 school records were broken in his tenure at SCSU.

Harris began his coaching career as a volunteer assistant coach for five years at the University of Tennessee. In 2005, he was on a staff under cross country coach, George Watts where the cross-country team made its first NCAA Championships appearance in three seasons. As a volunteer coach he assisted Tennessee in achieving a team title at the 2003 SEC Indoor Track & Field Championship.

A native of Decatur, Georgia, Harris ran collegiately at the University of Tennessee, where he earned his undergraduate degree in graphic design in 2002. He was a two-time NCAA All-American in the distance medley and the 4x400m relay. He helped lead the team to both NCAA and SEC Outdoor Championships team titles in 2001. Harris also competed at Alabama State prior to Tennessee where he earned all-conference awards in cross country and track & field.

Following college he had a strong professional career which included being ranked No. 2 in the U.S. in the 800m in 2007 and posting a PR of 1:45.56. He competed in two U.S. Olympic Trials finals in the 800m (2004 & 2008) and at seven USATF Championships in total. He ran the leadoff leg for USA's 4x800m relay team which set the U.S. record with a time of 7:02.82 at the Memorial Van Damme Meet in Brussels, Belgium on August 25, 2006, a record which still stands.

2021 USC Women's Cross Country Team Outlook

• Young Team Looks To Take A Step Forward During The 2021 Campaign •

After 671 days the USC cross country program was finally in action again as it opened the 2021 season at the Mark Covert Classic Women's Invite (5K) at the Carbon Canyon Regional Park in Brea, Calif. on Sept. 4. USC did not compete during the 2020 cross country season due to COVID-19 restrictions and a lot has transpired since its last meet at the 2019 Pac-12 Championships.

To start, Jebreh Harris was hired to guide the cross country program and to work with the distance runners on October 21, 2020. With no cross country competitions for the Trojans, the first chance Trojan fans had to see the new distance leader was the 2021 track and field season and the results were outstanding, capped by a school record, NCAA title and an Olympic berth in the 800m for Isaiah Jewett.

There are six returners on the team headed by seniors Alyssa Brewer and Jemima Russell, and an influx of nine new talented runners. USC has three transfer students in Alyssa Blockburger, Janiah Brown and Mihajla Milovanovic, as well as six freshmen in Isabelle Cairns, Jacqueline Duarte, Maya Lacamp, Gigi Maccagnini, Giavanna Pisano and Ritika Singh. Rounding out the roster are returners senior Julia Bounds, sophomore Alicia Liera, senior Abygail Paez and junior Brooke Rodi.

There has been an infusion of enthusiasm into the program under Harris and new USC Director of Track & Field Quincy Watts and the Trojans are excited to get things started this season.

"We are excited about this cross country season. We have some great additions to our roster to compliment our program," said Harris. "Cross country camp was vital for us to bond, grow and understand the expectations of our cross country and track and field programs. We are looking forward with excitement to begin our new journey and prepare for the Championships season."

USC's cross country team demonstrated that things were changing when it went on a four-day (Aug. 18-21) cross country camp at Mammoth Lake to train at altitude. During USC's stay up in the mountains, the young team with over half of the runners being new to the program, worked on chemistry and communication and began developing strong bonds as teammates.

Heading into this season the last time the Trojans did compete was at the 2019 Pac-12 Championships in Monmouth, Ore. and the then sophomore Brewer led the way with a 6K personal best of 21.51.8.



The 2021 USC cross country team opens the season with a third-place finish at the Mark Covert Classic, the Trojans' best finish since winning the 2016 Pepperdine Invitational



Senior Alyssa Brewer is USC top returning cross country runner

MEET THE 2021 TROJANS



Top: The team ready for the start of the 2017 Pac-12 Championships. Below, Amber Gore is congratulated after her second-place finish at the Pepperdine Invitational.

PLAYER BIOGRAPHIES

ALYSSA BLOCKBURGER

Ht. -5-7 Birthdate - 7/12/02
 Class - Sophomore Hometown - Tucson, Ariz.
 Best 5K time - N/A
 Best 6K time - N/A

THIS YEAR:

Sophomore Alyssa Blockburger is in her first season as a middle distance runner on the USC track and field team. She transferred to USC from Arizona following the 2021 season.

BEFORE USC:

As a freshman at Arizona, Blockburger had a season-best time of 2:09.41 in the 800m to place sixth at the Desert Heat Classic on May 1. She finished in the top six in every regular season 800m race in which she competed. She did not reach the finals of the 800m at the Pac-12 Championships, but did run a leg on the 4x400m relay which posted a time of 3:44.22 to finish fifth. She also competed with the 4x400m relay at the NCAA West Preliminary Rounds which ran 3:36.08 to finish 13th.

HIGH SCHOOL:

Blockburger graduated in 2020 from Tucson High in Tucson, Ariz. Had an indoor 400m PR of 57.46 to take third at the 2020 Great Southwest Classic. She placed 10th in the 400m with a time of 56.86 at the 2019 USATF National Junior Olympics. She won the 400m at the Willie Williams Invitational – High School Events with a time of 57.55 on March 16. She had a 400m PR of 55.92 to win the 400m at the Great Southwest Classic on June 8. She finished third in the 400m with a time of 57.35 at the 2018 Arcadia Invitational.

PERSONAL:

Alyssa was born on July 12, 2002 in San Luis Obispo, Calif... Her parents are Cynthia and Sheldon Blockburger and her twin brother, Johnnie, is also on the USC track and field team... Her father Sheldon served as USC's jumps and multi-events coach from 2016-18.



ALYSSA BREWER

Ht. - 5-5 Birthdate - 2/19/00
 Class - Senior Hometown - San Ramon, Calif.
 Best 5K time - 18:51.9, California State Meet (11/25/17)
 Best 6K Time - 21:58.8, Pac-12 Championships (11/1/19)

THIS YEAR:

Senior Alyssa Brewer is USC's top returning cross country runner. **2019** : Led USC in two of the four races she competed. She was 25th at the Highlander Invitational on Sept. 28 with a team-leading time of 21:59.8. That was her 6K PR until running 21:58.8 and finishing 95th to lead the Trojans at the Pac-12 XC Championships on Nov. 1. **2018** : She had a strong first campaign with the cross country team. She opened in the UC Riverside Invitational 5K on Sept. 13 and placed 51st with a time of 19:12.8. Brewer then had a time of 18:55.7 to place 33rd at the Master's XC Invitational on Sept. 29, second among Trojans to help lead the team to a fifth-place finish. She ran her first 6K at the Pre-Nationals Meet in Wisconsin on Oct. 13 and had a time of 24:05.5. She posted a 6K PR of 22:27.23 to finish second among the Trojans at the Pac-12 Championships on Oct. 26.

HIGH SCHOOL:

Brewer is a 2018 graduate from California High in San Ramon, Calif. She was named California High's Outstanding Female Athlete of the Year as she won 12 of 13 800m races during the season, placing second in the other one. She was a two-time California state champion in the 800m run, winning in 2016 with a PR of 2:06.86 and winning in 2017 with a time of 2:07.07. Her time of 2:06.86 was the fastest run in the Northern Section since 1981. She was the USAFT Junior Olympic Champion in the 800m in 2016, the 800m record-holder at the NCS Meet of Champions and Tri-Valley Meets, the California High 400m and 800m record holder and Dan Gabor 400m and 800m meet record holder. She was the Arcadia 800m champion in 2017 and 2018. She also has bests of 55.05 in the 400m and 4:56.06 in the 1600m. Brewer earned a Max Preps Athlete of the Month Award in 2017, was a Mile Split All-American in 2017 and California High team MVP from 2016-18. She was also All-League in cross country in 2017 and won the NCS Division I cross country meet. She had a 5K personal best of 18:51.9 to finish 43rd at the California state meet on November 25. Brewer also played on the soccer team while in high school.

PERSONAL:

Alyssa was born on February 19, 2000 in Walnut Creek, Calif...Her parents are Dale and Melissa Brewer and she has one brother, Andy....Her hobbies include reading, hiking, biking, camping, skiing, playing ping-pong and hanging out with friends...Her favorite foods include pancakes, tuna casserole and pizza...Her favorite movie is Lord of the Rings and favorite musical group is Queen... Says her sports hero is Stephen Curry because he somehow seems to find a way to win, getting off a last second buzzer beater shot and outworking everybody, all despite his less than ideal stature...also for simply having fun on the court and letting success come...She is majoring in Health and Human Sciences and would like to become a nurse.

Alyssa Brewer Cross Country Results

	<u>Date</u>	<u>Meet (Distance)</u>	<u>Finish</u>	<u>Time</u>
2018	Sept. 15	UC Riverside Invitational (5K)	51st	19:12.8
	Sept. 29	Master's XC Invitational (5K)	33rd	18:55.7
	Oct. 13	Pre-Nationals Meet (6K)	232nd	24:05.5
	Oct. 26	Pac-12 Championships (6K)	87th	22:27.23
2019	Sept. 14	UC Riverside Invitational (6K)	98th (82nd)	22:53.4
	Sept. 28	The Master's Invitational (5K)	39th	18:55.8
	Oct. 19	Highlander Invitational (6K)	*25th	21:59.8
	Nov. 1	Pac-12 Championships (6K)	*95th	21:58.8 (PR)



JANIAH BROWN

Ht. - 5-7 Birthdate - 4/8/01
Class - Junior Hometown - Calabasas, Calif.
Best 5K time - 21:33.2
Best 6K time - N/A

THIS YEAR:

Junior Janiah Brown is in her first season as a distance runner for USC. She transfers to USC from Mt. SAC with two seasons of eligibility remaining. She also competes for USC's cross country team.

BEFORE USC:

Brown competed at Mt. SAC for two seasons. Finished fourth in the 800m with a time of 2:15.01 at the 2020 Beach Opener. Took second in the 1500m with a time of 4:55.61 at the 2020 Beach Opener Community College Meet. She also competed in cross country with a best 5K time of 21:33.2 and a best 3.1 mile time of 19:15.3.

HIGH SCHOOL:

Brown graduated from Oaks Christian in Westlake Village, Calif. in 2019. She had an 800m best of 2:12.01.



ISABELLE CAIRNS

Ht. - 5-6	Birthdate - 8/20/03
Class - Freshman	Hometown - Woodside, Calif.
Best 5K time - 18:20.3, CIF Division 2 Championships (11/30/19)	
Best 6K time -N/A	

THIS YEAR:

Freshman Isabelle "Issy" Cairns is in her first season as a distance runner on the USC track and field team. She also competes as a runner on the Trojan cross country team.

HIGH SCHOOL:

Cairns is a 2021 graduate of St. Francis High in Mountain View, Calif. She has personal bests of 2:12.83 in the 800m (St. Francis record), 57.02 in the 400m, 18:20.3 in the 5K and 17.44.8 in the three-mile races. Was her school 2021 Track Athlete of the Year and Female Athlete of the Year, as well as been given the Most Valuable Player Award and Most Inspirational Award. She was the 2019 Stanford Invitational 800m champion, winning with a time of 2:12.90. She was an honor roll student all four years, a National Spanish Honors Society member and a National Honor Society member.

PERSONAL:

Isabelle was born on Aug. 20, 2003 in London, England and moved to the U.S. in 2014...Her parents are Paul and Kym Cairns and she has one sibling, Euan...She volunteered over 150 hours of community service work during her four years of high school...She is a Business Administration major at USC and after school would like to work in the sports marketing industry.



JACQUELINE DUARTE

Ht. - 5-7
Class - Freshman
Best 5K time -18:04.3
Best 6K time -N/A

Birthdate - 8/10/03
Hometown - Chino, Calif.

THIS YEAR:

Freshman Jacqueline Duarte is in her first season as a distance runner on the USC track and field team. She also competes as a runner on the Trojan cross country team.

HIGH SCHOOL::

Duarte is a 2021 graduate of Chino Hills High in Chino Hills, Calif. She had an 800m PR of 2:11.66 and a 1600m best of 4:42.58. In cross country she had a 3-mile best of 16:40.5. As a freshman Duarte won the CIF SS Div. I 1600m title and placed third in the State Meet. In 2019 she closed strong to win the California State Meet 1600m title with her PR of 4:42.58 which ranked No. 1 for California and No. 5 in the U.S. among high schoolers. She also put her speed on display in the 800m, winning her first nine races at that distance last year, including a 2:11.66 PR to win the CIF-SS Division 1 title. That time ranked CA No. 12 overall. She was also the CIF SS champion in the 1600m in 2018 and 2019 and ran on the CIF SS 4x400m relay champion team in 2018. She was also a 2019 Brooks PR qualifier. She received the Chino Hills Scholar-Athlete Award.

PERSONAL:

Jacqueline was born on Aug. 10, 2003 in Fullerton, Calif. ...Her parents are Marco and Maria Duarte and she has three siblings, Nigel, Damian and Isabella...She was also a top-notch soccer recruit and had received offers prior to deciding to focus on track...Her hobbies include soccer, hiking and biking...She volunteered for the Catechetical Student Body at her church and served with the Best Buddies Club throughout high school which worked with special needs students...Her favorite movies are The Greatest Showman and Crazy Rich Asians...Says Brenda Martinez is her sports hero and a mentor who shows you can overcome anything...Her favorite food is pasta...Would like to travel to Bali someday...She is a Communication major at USC.



MAYA LACAMP

Ht. - 5-6 Birthdate - 5/5/03
Class - Freshman Hometown -San Francisco, Calif.
Best 5K time - 18:59.9, CIF Division 5 Championships (11/30/19)
Best 6K time - N/A

THIS YEAR:

Freshman Maya LaCamp is in her first season as a distance runner on the USC track and field team. She also competes as a runner on the Trojan cross country team.

HIGH SCHOOL:

LaCamp is a 2021 graduate of Lick Wilmerding High in San Francisco, Calif. She had an 800m PR of 2:16.53 and a 1600m PR of 4:59.34. She won the 2021 Pittsburg (CA) Relays 1600m title with a time of 5:20.01. Her cross country 5K best time is 18:59.9. She was named the Lick Wilmerding female Athlete of the Year. Was the founder of the Ping Pong Club.

PERSONAL:

Maya was born on May 5, 2003 in Paris, France...She has one brother, Lucas...Her interests include baking, creative writing, playing the piano and traveling...Lists her favorite musical artists are Amy Winehouse, The Weeknd and Pitbull and favorite movies are The Princess Bride and Bend It Like Beckham...Her favorite foods are fried rice or Pho...Someday she would like to travel to Fiji and Egypt...She is majoring in International Relations and is looking to add a second major in French..



ALICIA LIERA

Ht. - 5-5
Class - Sophomore
Best 5K time -N/A
Best 6K time -N/A

Birthdate - 8/15/02
Hometown -Lynwood, Calif.

THIS YEAR:

Sophomore Alicia Liera is in her first season of competing in cross country for USC, as the Trojans did not compete in 2020 due to COVID-19.

HIGH SCHOOL:

Liera graduated from Warren HS in Downey, Calif. in 2020, where she was a two-year varsity letter winner in cross country and track and field. She has PRs of 18:09 in the three-mile race, 11:18.56 in the 3200m race and 5:15.56 in the 1600m race. She began her career at Lynwood High and set school records in the 1600m and 3200m.

PERSONAL:

Alicia was born on Aug. 15, 2002 in Huntington Park, Calif..Her parents are Antonio Liera and Bertha Jauregui and she has three siblings, Junnuen (19), Anthony (10) and Isaiah (7)...She volunteered at the Getfit youth fitness club and the Thurgood Marshall Elementary School...Enjoys cooking and baking in her spare time and likes street tacos and sushi...Some day would like to visit The Caribbean... After finishing school, would like to open a restaurant and continue running...She is a Business Administration major at USC.



GIGI MACCAGNINI

Ht. - 5-5
 Class - Freshman
 Best 5K time - N/A
 Best 6K time -N/A

Birthdate - 1/4/02
 Hometown - Melbourne, Australia

THIS YEAR:

Freshman Gigi Maccagnini is in her first season as a distance runner on the USC track and field team. She also competes as a runner on the Trojan cross country team.

HIGH SCHOOL:

Maccagnini is a 2020 graduate of Caulfield Grammar School in Melbourne, Australia. She has bests of 2:04.81 in the 800m and 4:22.75 in the 1500m. She ran the 2:04.81 at the 2021 Canberra Track Classic. Maccagnini was the 2019 U18 Oceanian Championships gold medalist in the 800m. Won the U15 400m title at the 2016 Australian Junior Championships with a time of 57.37.

PERSONAL:

Gigi was born on Jan. 4, 2002...Her interests include listening to music and walking her dogs...Her favorite band is Nirvana, favorite musician is Tyler the Creator and her favorite book is titled "Prefume"...Lists her favorite food as Vegemite toast...Someday would like to travel to Madagascar and the Galapagos Islands...She is currently an undeclared major at USC.



MIHAJLA MILOVANOVIC

Ht. - 5-7 Birthdate - 3/21/01
 Class - Junior Hometown - Chandler, Ariz.
 Best 5K time - 18:29.7, Illinois State Invite (9/13/19)
 Best 6K time - N/A

THIS YEAR:

Junior Mihajla Milovanovic is in her first season as a distance runner at USC, following two seasons at Loyola (Ill.). She also competes with USC's cross country team.

BEFORE USC:

Milovanovic was on the Loyola (Ill.) track and field team from 2019-21 in track and field and cross country. She only competed in one meet in 2021, taking 8th in the one-mile with a time of 5:22.65 at the GVSU Indoor Tune-Up Meet on Feb. 19. Competed indoors in 2020 before COVID-19 shutdown the season, posting PRs in the mile (5:17.12), 3000m (10:17.95) and 5000m (17:42.92). The 5000m time of 17:42.92 earned her 11th place at the Missouri Valley Indoor Championships on March 1. Also ran cross country in the Fall of 2018 and 2019. Had a 5K best of 18:29.7 to finish 23rd at the Illinois State Invite on Sept. 13, 2019. She was a Dean's List student.

HIGH SCHOOL:

She graduated from Chandler High in Chandler, Ariz. In 2019. She was a four-time All-Arizona team selection in track and cross country. She was an honorable mention for Arizona Central Cross Country Runner of the Year in 2018. She had high school bests of 10:58.63 in the 3200m, 5:10.60 in the one-mile, 5:05.65 in the 1600m, 4:51.04 in the 1500m and 2:19.18 in the 800m. She owns the Chandler school record in the 1600m. She was named to the All-Section team three times for track and cross country. As a junior in cross country she placed third at the 2017 AIA Division 1 State Championships, the highest finish ever by a woman from Chandler HS. Milovanovic also competed in swimming for Chandler High.

PERSONAL::

Mihajla was born on March 21, 2001...Her parents are Suzi and Michael Milovanovic and she has a brother Mateja, who is a Division I swimmer...She is involved with many activities which align her with her Serbian heritage...Someday would like to travel to Spain, Costa Rica and Greece...She is a Spanish major with a minor in Migration Studies...After USC she would like to attend law school and focus on immigration.

Mihajla Milovanovic Cross Country Results				
	Date	Meet (Distance)	Finish	Time
2018	Sept. 29	Loyola Lakefront Invitational (5K)	49th	19:00.6
2019	Sept. 6	Valparaiso Crusader Open (5K)	30th	19:14.0
	Sept. 13	Illinois State Invite (5K)	23rd	18:29.7
	Sept. 28	Loyola Lakefront Invitational (5K)	49th	19:00.6
	Oct. 19	PreNational Invitational (6K)	DNF	-----



ABYGAIL PAEZ

Ht. - 5-5 Birthdate - 3/29/00
 Class - Senior Hometown - San Pedro, Calif.
 Best 5K time - 21:26.9, Master's XC Meet (9/28/19)
 Best 6K time - 25:16.2, Highlander Invitational (10/19/19)

THIS YEAR:

Junior Abygail Paez is in her second season of competing with the USC cross country team, as USC sat out the 2020 season due to COVID-19. She transferred to USC as a 2019 Spring admit freshman from Los Angeles Harbor College. **2019:** She appeared in three races for the Trojans, improving her 5K and 6K times at each meet. She set her 5K PR of 21:26.9 at the Master's XC Meet on Sept. 28. She ran a 6K PR of 25:16.2 at the Highlander Invitational on Oct. 19.

BEFORE USC:

Paez attended Los Angeles Harbor College in the Fall of 2018. She ran and trained as an unattached athlete.

HIGH SCHOOL:

Paez is a 2018 graduate of San Pedro HS in San Pedro, Calif. She competed in track and field and basketball in high school. She posted PRs of 58.9 in the 400m and 2:22 in the 800m. She ran the first leg for San Pedro's 4x400m relay which was a 2018 California State qualifier. She was on the honor roll all four seasons.

PERSONAL:

Abygail was born on March 29, 2000 in Torrance, Calif. Her parents are Martha and Anthony Paez and she has two sibling, Anakin and Alexandra....Her hobbies include surfing, poetry, skating and drawing...Her favorite movie is American Hustle, favorite actress is Jennifer Lawrence and favorite musician is Celia Cruz...Lists Brenda Martinez as her sports hero...Paez is a Business Administration/ Management and Social Entrepreneurship major at USC...After school she would like to start an environmental consulting firm.

Abygail Paez Cross Country Results

	<u>Date</u>	<u>Meet (Distance)</u>	<u>Finish</u>	<u>Time</u>
2019	Sept. 14	UC Riverside Invitational (6K)	157th	26:24.3
	Sept. 28	The Master's Invitational (5K)	202nd	21:26.9 (PR)
	Oct. 19	Highlander Invitational (6K)	158th	25:16.2 (PR)

GIOVANNA PISANO



Ht. - 5-7	Birthdate - 6/23/03
Class - Freshman	Hometown - San Antonio, Texas
Best 5K time - 18:49	
Best 6K time - N/A	

THIS YEAR:

Freshman Giovanna Pisano is in her first season as a distance runner for the USC track and field team. She also competes for the Trojans' cross country team.

HIGH SCHOOL:

Pisano is a 2021 graduate of Phillips Exeter Academy in Exeter, N.H.. She had a best of 10.44 in the 3200m and a best of 17:47 in the 5000m, both Exeter Academy records. Prior to that she attended Antonian College Prep and as a freshman she placed seventh in the 800m, sixth in the 1600m and fifth in the 3200m at the 2018 TAPPS 6A State Meet.

PERSONAL:

Giovanna was born on June 23, 2003...Her parents are Steven Pisano and Susan Hertel...She has two brothers, Matthew and Justin...Volunteered at the Methodist Stone Oak Hospital in her hometown...Her hobbies include cooking, hiking, writing letters and watching documentaries about musicians...Lists her favorite musicians as Janis Joplin and Jimi Hendrix...Her favorite television show is Breaking Bad and her favorite books are No Country for Old Men and Sharp Objects...Says Benedict Cumberbatch is her favorite actor...Niki Lauda is her sports hero as he was detail oriented, courageous and knew how to learn from his losses...Favorite foods are honeycrisp apples, pesto pasta, shrimp, salmon and dark chocolate caramels with sea salt...Would like to visit Yellowstone National Park, Lake Tahoe and Ireland...After USC would like to start her own mug collection, invest in small businesses (especially coffee shops) and find a fulfilling career...Is a Biological Sciences major at USC.





BROOKE RODI

Ht. - 5-4 Birthdate - 3/21/01
 Class - Junior Hometown - San Diego, Calif.
 Best 5K time - 19:32, CIF DII XC Championships (11/25/17)
 Best 6K time - 23:57.1, UC Riverside Invitational (9/14/19)

THIS YEAR:

Junior Brooke Rodi is set to compete in her second season with the USC cross country team, as USC sat out the 2020 campaign due to COVID-19. **2019:** Rodi ran in two races for the Trojans and was the team's sixth finisher at each meet. She posted a 6K PR of 23:57.1 at the UC Riverside Invitational on Sept. 14. In her final race of the season, she had a time of 20:17.5 at the 5K Master's XC Meet on Sept. 28.

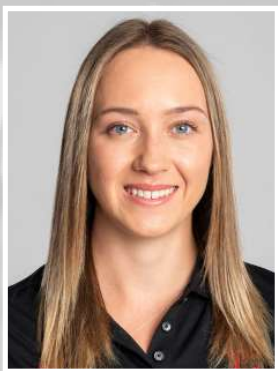
HIGH SCHOOL:

Rodi is a 2019 graduate of Point Loma HS in Point Loma, Calif. She competed in both cross country and track & field. As a senior she finished 20th with a 5K time of 19:47.2 at the prestigious Stanford Invitational on Sept. 29 and took second with a time of 19:18.5 in the 3.11-mile Eastern League Championships on Nov. 6. Rodi also won the 1.5-mile race at the Wolf Pack Cross Country Invitational on Aug. 31 with a time of 9:09. She helped lead the Pointers to a second-place finish at the 2017 CIF Division II cross country finals at Balboa Park by finishing fourth with a time of 18:54 to qualify for the California state championships. She set her cross country 5K PR of 19:32.1 in placing 77th at the 2017 CIF State DII XC Championships in Fresno, Calif. on Nov. 25. In track, she has an 800m PR of 2:15 and a 1600m best of 5:10. She was an honor roll student all four years at Point Loma HS.

PERSONAL:

Brooke was born on March 21, 2001 in San Diego, Calif...Her parents are Beth and Brad Rodi...She has a twin sister, Megan...Her favorite hobbies are going to the beach, watching movies and playing with her dog...Lists her favorite actor as Ryan Gosling, her favorite song as The Middle by Zedd and favorite movie as anything with Adam Sandler in it...Her favorite foods are pasta and hamburgers...Says her sports hero is Shalane Flanagan because she represents being a good athlete and good person on and off the track...While completing grades 7-12, Brooke performed over 200 hours of community service with Madcaps, a mother-daughter philanthropy effort...Also, served in leadership in the Circle of Friends Club for three years, her last as president...Rodi is majoring in Business Administration.

Brooke Rodi Cross Country Results				
	Date	Meet (Distance)	Finish	Time
2019	Sept. 14	UC Riverside Invitational (6K)	130th	23:57.1 (PR)
	Sept. 28	The Master's Invitational (5K)	143rd	20:17.5



JEMIMA RUSSELL

Ht. - 5-8 Birthdate - 5/5/99
 Class - Senior Hometown - Melbourne, Victoria, Australia
 Best 5K time - 19:18.0, Master's Invitational (10/19/19)
 Best 6K time - 22:27.2, Highlander Invitational (10/26/19)

THIS YEAR:

Senior Jemima Russell is in her third season of running cross country for USC, as the team sat out the 2020 season due to COVID-19. **2019:** Russell competed in all four meets for the Trojans. She opened the season with a then 6K PR of 23:31.7 to finish third among the Trojans at the 6K Highlander Invitational. She ran her first 5K race as a Trojan and had a time of 19:18.0 at the Master's Invitational. She set a 6K PR of 22:27.2 to finish third among USC's runners at the Highlander Invitational on Oct. 19, cutting over a minute off her time run on the same course a month earlier. She was also USC's third finisher with a time of 23:11.1 at the Pac-12 Championships in Oregon on Nov. 1. **2018:** Russell used most of the cross country season practicing with the team and stretching out her distance running. She ran her only race of the season and first career 6K race at the Pac-12 Championships on Oct. 26 and had a time of 23:55.72. She finished 100th overall and was USC's final runner to figure in the scoring.

HIGH SCHOOL:

Russell is a 2018 graduate of Caulfield Grammar School in Melbourne, Australia. She has PRs of 2:04.81 in the 800m and 55.33 in the 400m. She competed at the 2018 IAAF World U20 Championships and placed 13th in the 800m with a PR of 2:04.81 and ran on the 4x400m relay team which eared a silver medal. She won the 200m and 400m dashes at the 2017 Australian U20 Athletics Championships. She was the 400m state All-School Junior champion in 2012, 2014 and 2015 and the 800m state All-School Junior champion in 2016. Competed for Sandringham Athletics Club and was a four-time 400m champion and was a three-time 4x400m state champion at the Zatopek 10. She also competed in cross country in high school.

PERSONAL:

Russell was born on May 5, 1999 in Carlton, Victoria, Australia...Her parents are Sharon and David Russell and she has two sisters, Kaitlin and Mietta Russell...Her mother won a bronze medal in the 800m at the 1990 Commonwealth Games...Says her favorite pastimes are brunching, beaching, napping, shopping and driving...Chose to attend USC because of its highly ranked Business and Accounting School and its very successful track and field program...Also, as an international student a degree from USC provides a point of difference for her when she returns home to seek employment...Once headed out for a short 20-minute job in Bali and arrived home an hour and a half later after a fateful wrong turn...Her favorite foods are cheesecake, raspberries, mango and chocolate...Says her favorite movie is Parent Trap and favorite television shows are Suits and Scandal...Someday would like to live in Hawaii for a few months and learn to surf well and to visit the Swiss Alps and learn to snowboard...Her favorite musical artists are Vance Joy and Ed Sheeran...In the summers does beach patrolling as part of Surf Live Saving...She is an Accounting major at USC and would like to pursue a career in International Business.

Jemima Russell Cross Country Results				
	Date	Meet (Distance)	Finish	Time
2018	Oct. 26	Pac-12 Championships (6K)	100th	23:55.72
2019	Sept. 14	UC Riverside Invitational (6K)	119th (101)	23:31.7
	Sept. 28	The Master's Invitational (5K)	70th	19:18.0 (PR)
	Oct. 19	Highlander Invitational (6K)	46th (44th)	22:27.2 (PR)
	Nov. 1	Pac-12 Championships (6K)	107th	23:11.1

RITIKA SINGH



Ht. - 5-7
Class - Freshman
Best 5K time - N/A
Best 6K time - N/A

Birthdate - 7/6/03
Hometown - San Ramon, Calif.

THIS YEAR:

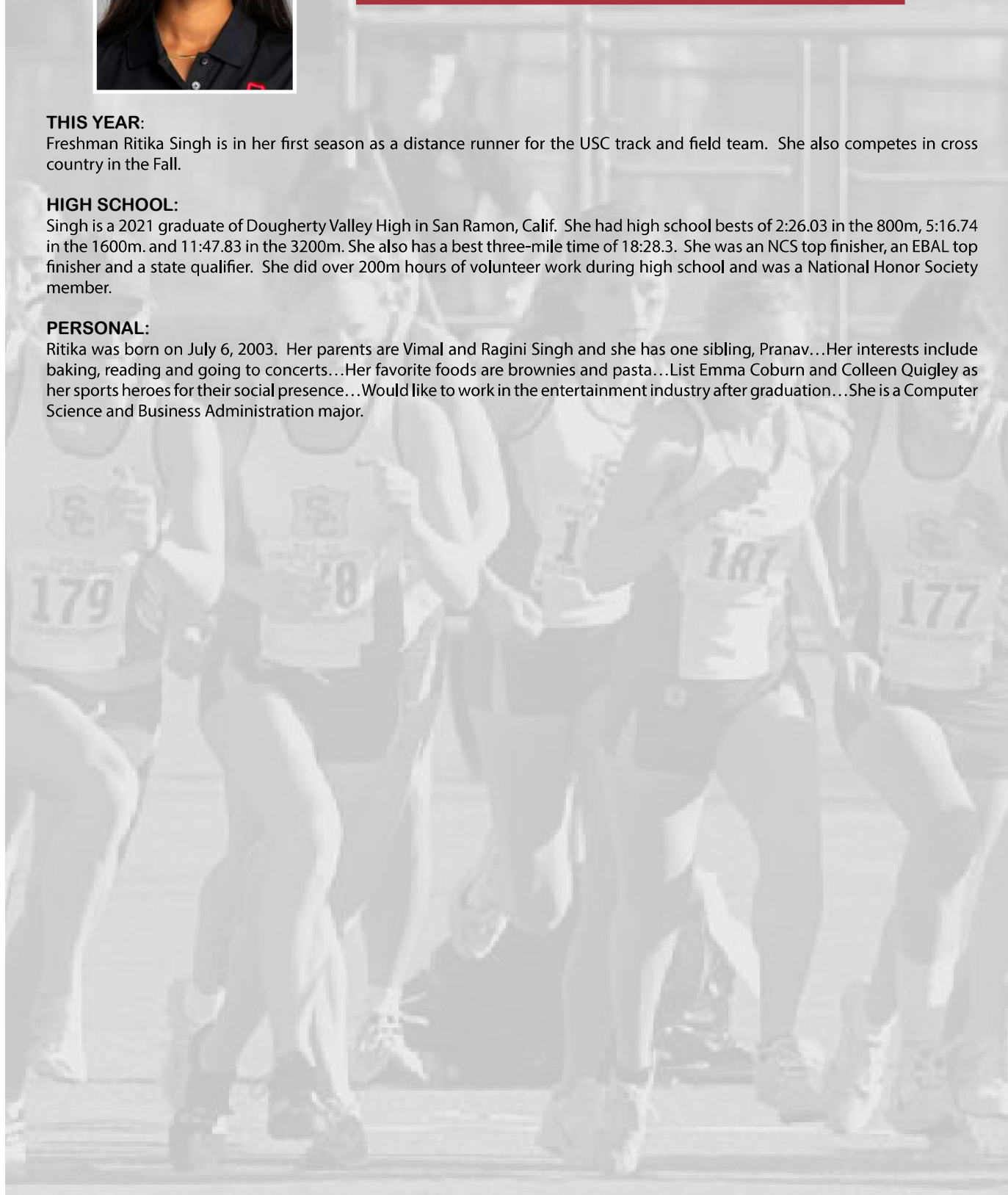
Freshman Ritika Singh is in her first season as a distance runner for the USC track and field team. She also competes in cross country in the Fall.

HIGH SCHOOL:

Singh is a 2021 graduate of Dougherty Valley High in San Ramon, Calif. She had high school bests of 2:26.03 in the 800m, 5:16.74 in the 1600m, and 11:47.83 in the 3200m. She also has a best three-mile time of 18:28.3. She was an NCS top finisher, an EBAL top finisher and a state qualifier. She did over 200m hours of volunteer work during high school and was a National Honor Society member.

PERSONAL:

Ritika was born on July 6, 2003. Her parents are Vimal and Ragini Singh and she has one sibling, Pranav...Her interests include baking, reading and going to concerts...Her favorite foods are brownies and pasta...List Emma Coburn and Colleen Quigley as her sports heroes for their social presence...Would like to work in the entertainment industry after graduation...She is a Computer Science and Business Administration major.



TROJAN FAMILY: Even when not competing the Trojans come out in force to support their teammates.



TROJANS ALWAYS TOUGH IN THE CLASSROOM, TOO:

The Trojans are always strongly represented on the Pac-12 All-Academic team and this year's team enters the season with almost every returning runner maintaining a GPA of 3.0 or higher. Leading the way for the Trojans are Jemima Russell (3.72 GPA) and Alyssa Brewer (3.68 GPA). Brewer was named 2021 CoSIDA Academic All-District 8 and the USC women's track and field team was named the Women's Outdoor National Scholar Team of the Year. Additionally, Brewer, Russell and Alicia Liera were named to the 2021 Pac-12 All-Academic team.

In the 2010-11 school year, the cross country team had the best GPA among USC's women's sports and was presented a letter of recognition by USC president C.L. Max Nikias at the Founders Club at the Galen Center. The cross country team has also routinely been given an NCAA Public Recognition Award, making it six consecutive seasons with the 2020 recognition (USC did not compete during the 2021 cross country season).

The Trojan cross country runners have earned 38 Pac-12 All-Academic honors in the last seven seasons. In 2011, Zara Lukens was named to the First Team as well as being named a Renaissance Scholar, an academic honor that is awarded to select undergraduate students who graduate with a major and a minor (or two majors) in widely separated fields of study.

CROSS COUNTRY CAMP IN MAMMOTH



TRAINING WAS NEVER AS MUCH FUN!



CROSS COUNTRY SCORING

Team Competition:

A cross country team may consist of 12 runners, or more if otherwise agreed upon by the teams competing.

Team Scoring:

All runners who finish a race shall be given an overall finish place. However, only the first seven runners on any one team may be used in scoring places. An order for team-finish placing is established by removing all runners behind the top seven finishers on each team. Those teams not finishing at least five runners likewise shall not be included in the order of team finish.

The score shall be determined by totaling the points of the first five runners of each team to finish. The team scoring the lower number of points shall be the winner. For example, a team with runners finishing 1, 5, 7, 24, 39 for a total of 76 would defeat a team with runners finishing 2, 3, 4, 48, 52 for a total of 109.

Although the sixth and seventh runners of a team to finish do not score points toward their team's total, their places, if better than those of any of the first five of an opposing team, serve to increase the team score of the opponents.

Ties in team scoring shall not be broken, except for advancement to the championship finals.



The last time USC hosted the Pac-12 Cross Country Championships was in 2009. Here is the start of the 2009 Pac-10 Championships hosted by USC at Skylinks Golf Course in Long Beach, Calif. This year the conference championships will be hosted by Utah at the Regional Athletic Complex in Salt Lake

RECENT RESULTS

- TROJANS EYE A STEADY INCLINE TO THE CROSS COUNTRY PROGRAM -

USC cross country coach Jebreh Harris is in his first team of guiding the program and looks to start the foundation this season and steadily increase the success. The last Trojan team victory was at the 2016 Pepperdine Invitational and the last USC individual runner to finish as the overall winner was Amber Gore at the 2019 Master's XC Invitational. The following is the most recent season results and USC's top finisher at each meet:

2016

Date	Meet	Top Trojan - Place		Team Finish
Sept. 1	Pepperdine Invitational (4K)	Ricks	1st	1st
Sept. 17	UC Riverside Invitational (6K)	Racette	30th	7th
Oct. 1	Sac. St. Regional Preview (6K)	Racette	31st	13th
Oct. 15	Highlander Invitational (5K)	Racette	4th	5th

Oct. 28	Pac-12 Championships (6K)	Racette	60th	12th
Nov. 11	NCAA West Regional (6K)	Racette	91st	N/A

2017

Date	Meet	Top Trojan - Place		Team Finish
Sept. 1	Pepperdine Invitational (4K)	Gore	2nd	4th
Sept. 16	UC Riverside Invitational (6K)	Gore	46th	25th
Sept. 16	UC Riverside Invitational (5K)	Berry	20th	18th
Sept. 23	UNLV Invitational (5K)	Gore	10th	4th
Oct. 14	Highlander Invitational (5K)	Gore	6th	8th

Oct. 27	Pac-12 Championships (6K)	Gore	79th	N/A
Nov. 10	NCAA West Regional (6K)	Gore	103rd	N/A

2018

Date	Meet	Top Trojan - Place		Team Finish
Sept. 15	UC Riverside Invitational (6K)	Gore	18th	---
Sept. 15	UC Riverside Invitational (5K)	Brewer	51st	---
Sept. 29	Master's XC Invitational (5K)	Gore	1st	5th
Oct. 13	Pre-Nationals Meet (6K)	Gore	139th	36th

Oct. 26	Pac-12 Championships (6K)	Gore	73rd	12th

2019

Date	Meet	Top Trojan - Place		Team Finish
Sept. 14	UC Riverside Invitational (6K)	Weber	75th	17th
Sept. 28	Master's XC Invitational (5K)	Weber	17th	4th
Oct. 19	Highlander Invitational (6K)	Brewer	25th	7th

Nov. 1	Pac-12 Championships (6K)	Brewer	95th	12th

HISTORY OF CROSS COUNTRY AT USC

The Trojans' history in cross country in the Pac-12 has been limited in team competition. The men competed in the Pac-10 from 1969 to 1972 and then again from 1985 to 1993. Their highest finish was fourth place in 1969 and 1971.

The women began fielding a cross country team in the Pac-10 in 1990. The Women of Troy had their highest league finish in 1996 and 1997, when they took sixth-place in the Pac-10 Cross Country Championships.

Tom Walsh took over as head coach in 1993 and was able to move the team out of the conference cellar after it had finished last in the conference the first five seasons. The Women of Troy's fledgling program had finished between sixth and eighth place all but three seasons between 1995-2007. USC finished eighth in 2007 as Sarah Cocco placed 11th and was named second team All-Pac-10 Conference. She then placed 18th at the West Regional and was invited to compete at the 2007 NCAA Championships. The Trojans placed 9th in 2008 in a highly contested finish with teams 5-9, as Zsafia Erdelyi was Troy's top finisher at 17th. She went on to take 8th at the West Regional and was invited to the NCAA Championships where she placed 120th. Erdelyi again led USC at the Pac-10 Championships in 2009 (22nd) and 2010 (14th), while the team placed ninth and 10th respectively. David Freeman took over the program in 2013 and he was followed by Patrick Henner in 2017 and they guided the Trojans through the 2019 season. USC sat out the 2020 season due to COVID-19, but hired Jabreh Harris to take over the reigns of the program and he began laying the foundation for the future in the Fall of 2020.

Several Trojans have qualified to run at the NCAA Championships, with Sarah Ellis (2001), Brooke Thomas (2002), Iryna Vashchuk (2003-04), Cocco (2007) and Erdelyi (2008). Emebet Shiferaw, who finished 51st in 1995 and seventh in 1996 at the NAAs, is the only Women of Troy cross country runner to be an All-American (1996). Her time of 17:53 in 1996 was second among all Pac-10 runners, as Arizona's Amy Skieresz won the national title.

Over the past seven seasons USC has had 38 runners earn Pac-12 All-Academic team honors and since 1998 has had 11 runners earn first-team designation including Kate Neeper, who was a first-team selection from 2003-05, Chanel Fischetti in 2007, Zara Lukens in 2008-10, Katherine Ellis in 2009 and Jackie Dion in 2013.

The Trojans' only NCAA champion in cross country was Max Truex, who won the individual men's title in 1957. Men's cross country has been an NCAA sanctioned sport since 1938 and women's cross country began in 1981.

TROJAN CROSS COUNTRY RUNNERS QUALIFYING FOR THE NCAA CHAMPIONSHIPS

1990	Amy Goodwin
1995	Emebet Shiferaw
1996	Emebet Shiferaw (Cross Country All-American)
2001	Sarah Ellis
2002	Brooke Thomas
2003	Iryna Vashchuk
2004	Iryna Vashchuk
2007	Sarah Cocco
2008	Zsafia Erdelyi

Emebet Shiferaw



Brooke Thomas



Iryna Vashchuk





*Zsafia
Erdelyi*



*Tina
Kefalas*



USC cross country alumni Zsafia Erdelyi (Hungary) and Tina Kefalas (Greece) represented the Trojans at the 2012 London Olympics in the marathon. USC was the only school in the country with two runners qualified for the Olympic marathon race in London. Erdelyi competed again at the 2016 Rio Olympics and placed 52nd.

USC's Beautiful New Track & Field Home • The Colich Track & Field Center •



USC Director of Track & Field Quincy Watts, Parker Kennedy, USC President Carol L. Folt, Janine & John Colich, Leslie and Joe Antunovich



Senior distance runner Jemima Russell speaks at the dedication of the Colich Track & Field Center



The dream became a reality with the opening of the Colich Track & Field Center on Sept. 10, 2021



2021 USC CrossCountry Schedule

Sept. 4 -	Mark Covert Invitational	Brea, Calif.
Sept. 18 -	UC Riverside Invite	Riverside, Calif.
Oct. 16 -	Highlander Invitational	Riverside, Calif.
Oct. 29 -	Pac-12 XC Championships	Salt Lake City, Utah
Nov. 12 -	NCAA West Regional	Sacramento, Calif.
Nov. 20 -	NCAA XC Championships	Tallahassee, Fla.