

SUMMER TROJAN

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USG looks to address funding concerns next academic year

Some Registered Student Organizations grew frustrated with USG's funding process over the last two semesters.



Gloria Jin | Daily Trojan

By **SASHA RYU,**
BECCA SPEIER & HANK YANG
Features Staff Writers

As the start of the semester typically brings exciting feelings and recruitment of new members for many Recognized Student Organizations on campus, some organization leaders struggled with receiving the needed funding to support their RSO from USG as a whole this past academic year.

Many RSO leaders have spoken up about their need for increased USG leadership and direction, especially when it comes to USG offering approved funding to RSOs to host organized activities and events for their members.

Leslie Huang, president of Gate Five Chinese Theater, a student-run organization at USC that hosts theatrical plays and screenings in Mandarin and Cantonese, said USG denied her request for an additional \$3,000 in funding this semester for venue changes.

Huang questioned why this funding was denied and followed up with USG after the request had been denied. She was met with no response and continued to contact USG until she received a response the day before Thanksgiving break, the timing of which Huang was upset about.

"On the USG guideline that was what was written: They said that all funding inquiries would be responded to within two business days," Huang said. When Huang confronted USG about it, she was given a different

response as to why her funding was denied in the first place.

"I was like, 'You just keep giving me mixed answers.' Everyone keeps telling me different things, like is there any transparency along USG in terms of funding, because clearly there's no transparency between USG and the RSO," Huang said. This wasn't the first time USG funding for Gate Five Chinese Theater has been "inefficient" and non-transparent, Huang said.

"This is actually the third semester in a row where something has gone wrong with USG funding," Huang said.

Brian Stowe, USG's previous chief financial officer, said USG's funding department is compiling a list of frequently approved vendors for different categories, such as food, event planning and event services. This will make it more transparent for RSOs to see which vendors USG has approved to be funded at events.

February brought competitive Undergraduate Student Government elections, campaigns and new leadership. Five presidential and vice presidential tickets ran in the 2023 election. Divya Jakatdar and Michelle Lu clinched the presidency and vice presidency, respectively, for the 2023-24 academic year.

President-elect Jakatdar has been on USG in the past and has seen first-hand the issues USG has had when it comes to funding. She acknowledged that there was a negative reaction towards USG for

denying the additional funding requests from RSOs on campus. This additional funding can be given to RSOs in addition to the original funding they received from USG, in the case that they need more funding for their organization.

"When we decided to run [for USG leadership], a big thing was that the funding department in USG was going to be kind of a focal point for us over the course of our term," Jakatdar said. "The backlash that USG has received is definitely fair in a lot of ways. I just think that the whole process is misunderstood on both ends."

USG claimed in its 2022-23 funding guidelines that it makes the funding approval process as fair as possible by doing so on a first-come, first-serve basis. USG allows RSO funding to range up to \$14,000 for each organization.

But additional funding requests are only sometimes approved. USG senators denied Model United Nations' application for additional funding in early February. USG declared the organization's application incomplete, which frustrated MUNSC leaders.

MUNSC president Nicole Iwamasa said one of the club's leaders had gone to USG office hours prior to USG declaring their application incomplete to make sure their applications followed each guideline.

"[USG was] so uncommunicative about it when [the MUNSC representative] went in during

office hours and asked them if the application was complete, and they said they had everything they needed, to then hear that the application was incomplete, it to me demonstrated a lack of accountability and transparency from an organization that tries to make that its pillars," Iwamasa said.

It was very upsetting for MUNSC's application to be denied after going to the optional and additional USG office hours to ensure their application was complete, after following the specific guidelines USG outlined in their funding application.

"[USG] had never indicated that our application was incomplete prior to that. It seems like an inconsistent application of the requirements," Iwamasa said. "They were prioritizing other clubs that hadn't received funding yet, but in their guidelines that they're supposed to follow because they created them, it says funding is first come, first serve."

Iwamasa and other MUNSC members said they think USG's funding guidelines need to be more transparent and standardized. Members of the club's executive board met with Stowe, to discuss why they were denied funding. However, little change occurred as USG offered no change in their decision.

Some 20 student assemblies and committees, such as the Black Student Assembly, Queer and Ally Student Assembly and Student Assembly for Gender

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Anik Panja | Daily Trojan
President-elect Divya Jakatdar said she and vice president-elect Michelle Lu asked many RSOs what they’re looking for in USG’s next leaders.

FUNDING

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Empowerment have money set aside for them each year, which usually results in these groups having little difficulty in receiving their requested fund sums. For other organizations, USG also annually allocates \$349,000, which tends to be the general and travel fund, that is available to any student or RSO.

Asian Pacific American Student Assembly co-executive director Emma Hsu said the assembly received \$91,300 as its allotted budget for the 2023 fiscal year. APASA has received the full funding sum that it applied for from USG for the last two years, Hsu said.

APASA’s main expenditures are on events, such as its annual Night Market and speaker series. Per USG’s rules, APASA allocates approximately 10% to 15% of its budget to about 31 member organizations.

Hsu suggested that there should be more of an open discussion and conversation between RSOs and USG.

Khalil Daniels, USG’s newly-elected chief financial officer, said he wants to make a change to the funding application process to address these previous concerns.

“We understand that it has definitely been hard for RSOs to get access to that funding, especially when one organization can submit so many applications at once. I feel like that really just takes the equitable component out of it,” Daniels said. “But our entire goal is just to make sure that more RSOs have more access to the funding instead of just a small group of RSOs getting access to that funding.”

In Fall 2022, the Middle Eastern and North African Student Assembly started its trial semester as an established USG assembly — a status MENASA members had been fighting to achieve “for the past two years.”

Eduard Ghazaryan, MENASA’s advocacy liaison, said USG rejected the assembly’s first two applications because it needed to demonstrate a stronger commitment to programming and advocacy.

“We had to show that advocacy was a huge part of our mission, and that’s the reason that the first attempts [to become a USG assembly] were not established — because there were no advocacy efforts,” Ghazaryan said. “This time, we worked on various projects, such as adding the MENA race category on University forms, adding a cultural-specific MENA therapist in the Engemann [Student Health] Center and just basically representation on campus.”

MENASA received \$5,000 in Spring 2023 from USG’s budget of \$349,000. MENASA plans to put the money toward its social, professional and cultural events.

Jakatdar said she and Lu asked many RSOs what they’re looking for in USG’s next leaders.

“For the most part, it always comes back to funding because that’s one of the biggest things that USG can do as a support,” Jakatdar said. “And, you know, we were really excited to take that input and kind of digest that, and that’s kind of informing the way that we’re thinking about this.”

Jakatdar, Lu and Daniels have promised greater inclusivity and intentional representation for everyone in the USC student body, focusing on advocacy within RSOs. One way they plan to do this is by focusing on how RSOs will be using their funding to make events more inclusive for the entire USC community.

“Something new that we’re currently working on right now is trying to see how programming assemblies are going to use our funding,” Daniels said. “We’re really trying to focus more on advocacy with the organization, so making sure that they’re not only doing program events, but also advocating for the communities that they’re serving.”

SUMMER TROJAN

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Thank you, Bob Ross

Bob Ross helped me to realize that I was not just a student, but a person.

By DANIEL PONS
Staff Writer

College has been hard, to say the least. I often thrust myself into an academic whirlpool because I wanted to reach the little lure dangling tantalizingly over its heart. I sloshed forth through the frigid water, only to get sucked into that torrential whirlpool, having thought that I could reach that lure — reach it and have it save me.

Before I exhaled my last breath, thrashed around by the current, I prayed for a savior — that someone, somewhere, would pull me out. And someone did. His name was Bob Ross.

And I know my plight may sound melodramatic in this context, to have a permed guy from Florida be the thing I could point to and say he saved me, but he did. In the midst of impersonal and judgemental academia, where professors felt less like friends and more like cold algorithms I had to please, Bob Ross actually spoke to me. In the softest of whispers, he looked me in the eye and said that he saw in me someone who was able to create. That to have the light pop through, you need darkness. And I believed him. Thankfully, I still believe him.



Lyndzi Ramos | Daily Trojan

He told me that he struggled for years sweating and aching over some intangible idea of perfection. It felt all too familiar. He explained that painting should be for fun. That the canvas should be an outlet for emotion, not the demise of it. That accidents were happy, that you could create whatever you wanted.

It felt so odd that this man, by painting “happy clouds,” could stir such dormant emotions. That I could be awakened from an

emotional and creative coma by listening to this unconventional sage talk over his brush rustling over a canvas. I was a serious adult, I had things to do and independence to exercise. I was meant to succeed, not mess around and waste my time feeling. It was not logical. But things don’t have to be — Bob taught me that.

We are creatures guided by emotion, and when that emotion is gone because something else is guiding us, some invented abstraction

whose fulfillment we tell ourselves should satisfy our emotion, but whose pursuit only kills it, we have lost what it means to be human.

Because life is so much more than and so much simpler than the pursuit of some sort of vague notion of notoriety or achievement. Life doesn’t matter if you don’t feel good doing it; it is so vast and so complex that one goal cannot guide you. We are tethered to existence by emotion and it is emotion that constructs life’s great painting; that the spectrum of human emotion colors the canvas and creates experience; that a complete painting is made with all the colors; that it’s okay to make mistakes; that it’s okay to ease off when inspiration is dry; that it’s okay to let your feelings guide you; that it’s okay. That everything will be okay.

For much of the series, Bob Ross does not have a reference for what he is painting, other than what he feels like doing that day. Sometimes he wants to paint a forest, sometimes mountains (actually he is quite often in a mountain-painting mood), sometimes he wants to make something for someone else. But in all of his paintings, he chooses fulfillment. He always makes something that will make him happy. He gives his trees friends. He adds a little cabin where he would live. He makes the painting monochromatic to show a colorblind

man that he can paint, too. He follows his heart, and encourages his viewers to do the same.

Bob Ross might not be thought of as among the artistic ranks of Velázquez, Monet or even Singer Sargent. But that doesn’t matter, because it does not have to matter. He simply did the thing that brought him joy — painting. And he shared that joy with the world. With every viewer. With me.

And I’m not going to peddle some kind of idealized scripture about the man, he had his troubles that he had to work through and fight to do what he loved. Hell, the pursuit of passion is hardly ever an easy one. But that doesn’t mean you have to suffer for it, and it doesn’t mean you are not allowed to be happy in its pursuit, and it doesn’t mean you can’t take breaks and enjoy other things, too.

Bob Ross gave me the courage to know that, however valid my feelings were, I still had the power to create my own world.

As I swirled in my whirlpool, Bob Ross gave me a brush and told me to do as I pleased. The whirlpool was real, but my power to get out was even more so. So I painted myself a meadow and a mountain, with outcroppings full of wildflowers and kind people. Because although I still have a lot to climb, I can at least enjoy my time getting to the summit.

I miss how the stars shine back home

Light pollution takes the darkness — and life — out of Los Angeles nights.

By DAPHNE YAMAN
Opinion Editor

During this past fall semester, I took an astronomy course as a fun way to fulfill one of my GE requirements. Although I can’t say that I got along with my professor or the course material, a topic that we skimmed over one class period has since stuck with me: light pollution.

The term is exactly what it sounds like — the phenomenon of artificial light sources becoming so bright and ubiquitous that they begin to pollute the natural darkness that nighttime brings. Light pollution is most often a concern in large cities, and it’s becoming worse globally with each passing year.

At the time I decided to take this astronomy course, I was a sophomore and had been living in Los Angeles for a year. And yet, for some reason, I had never taken the chance to really analyze the night sky that befell me every dusk. Since that fateful class discussion, however, I’ve

realized how the nights have been stolen from Southern California, and I have never been able to forgive the L.A. skyline for its unrelentingly bright night-time horizon.

Being born and raised in the suburbs of southwest Michigan, I always took the darkness of night for granted. Nighttime started with cicadas and mayflies; lightning bugs winked at you as you stargazed. Maybe a frog croaked. Maybe a small bat flew by. Maybe an owl started calling out.

Wildlife thrives where there is darkness and space, two pieces of the environmental puzzle that urbanization has rendered impossible to salvage. It’s rather upsetting to see as someone who grew up with the experience of true nightfall.

Oftentimes, back home, even street lamps are scarce; a car’s brights come in handy. There are no skyscrapers or sirens to disrupt the tranquility and serenity that the stars bring. Neighbors gather around bonfires and toast s’mores while young children run around playing Sardines or Ghost in the Graveyard. The smell of mosquito repellent hangs in the air. Our artificial light sources were

sparklers, lamps and occasional celebratory fireworks. Nighttime at home brought people together.

In great contrast, rather than a deep, dark black, the night sky of L.A. resembles more of a mucky gray color. Life runs under the assumption that there are stars present, but that they’re just hidden away. There’s no possibility of romanticizing a beautiful kiss under the night sky because city lights block out the alluring appeal of a natural cover. There are no cicadas, mayflies or owls. Even a night out on the beach is often set ablaze by the illumination from the cityscape behind it, with the waves catching glimpses of light and reflecting them back to the shoreline in woe.

In L.A., people don’t come together the way they do back home. Although the city nightlife leaves nothing to be desired between clubs and parties and rooftop dinners, it seems as if with the coming of the moon, the sense of community dissipates. I do realize that this is also because of security reasons, but even in gated communities, like student housing facilities, outdoor nighttime



Daphne Yaman | Daily Trojan

It’s important to take a moment, pause and appreciate the darkness of nighttime whenever possible. Try not to take it for granted.

gatherings between small groups of friends or neighbors are rare.

After coming back to Michigan for likely the last summer before I graduate, I want to take my love of these moments back with me. The cover of night is meant for more than just parties. Although nights in L.A. don’t compare to those back home, I can still

engage in the pastimes that come with the stars and moon.

I want everyone to try and spend at least one night a month with people close to them. Don’t go out, but don’t stay in, either. Southern Californian nights aren’t perfect by any means, but that poses the challenge to do the best we can with our environment and people around us.

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New Latin releases for your summer playlists

From Mexican regional music to Urbano Latino, here are four songs to listen to.

By **ALEXIS LARA**
Arts & Entertainment Editor

Maybe you were fooled by the cloudy Los Angeles skies or colder than normal weather, but summer is supposedly happening in Southern California. At this point, curating playlists for warm weather road trips or endless beach days is on everyone’s agenda. While last year’s radio stations were saturated in Bad Bunny’s award-winning “Un Verano Sin Ti,” it’s time for a new wave of Latin music to ring in our ears. If you’re looking to welcome the approaching summer days, here are four new Latin releases to play next time you’re on aux.

“Bye” by Peso Pluma

Peso Pluma, a name that recently entered mainstream music, sings with a norteno style that appeals to audiences across all corners of the world. His newest single “Bye,” released May 26, is the latest milestone in his flourishing career. Peso Pluma collaborated with Eslabon Armado on the track “Ella Baile Sola” in March, which catapulted to the top of charts — reaching No. 1 on Billboard’s Global 200 list. As the first song of the regional Mexican genre to accomplish this feat, “Ella Baile Sola” and Peso Pluma are forging a new path for Latin artists in mainstream music. Peso Pluma recently joined fellow Mexican artist Becky G on the world renowned Coachella stage in April. Singing their song “Chanel” in addition to his own song “PRC” made for another significant milestone in Peso Pluma’s career. His newest release strays from the playful and lighthearted feel of



Danna Paola, singer and actress, has released seven albums. She also starred in the popular Spanish TV show “Elite” as the mean girl Lu Montesinos for three years.

“Ella Baile Sola” and instead uses the signature brass instruments found in norteno music to create a song about heartbreak and moving on. Lyrics such as “El dolor poco a poco se fue borrando / Tú y yo, nuestras almas se abandonaron / Yo sé, fue por bien de los dos,” bring a

heavy hearted tone. Translated into English, he sings, “The pain slowly faded / You and me, our souls abandoned each other / I know, it was for the good of both of us.” The candid words stain the song with a notably somber sentiment that he has not included in his past work.

“Le Va Doler” by Grupo Frontera

Grupo Frontera is another group of artists that successfully crossed into mainstream music in the last year. The six-man band from Texas rose to fame with their 2022 chart-topping cover of Morat’s “No Se Va.”

Reworking popular songs through the styles of norteno and cumbia genres proved to be a successful formula for the relatively new band. Following its April collaboration with Bad Bunny on “un x100to,” Grupo Frontera built on its growing fanbase with another single, “Le Va Doler,” released May 25. The song begins with fast tempo guitar picking and adds in other instruments one by one so the listener can hear the construction of the song in real time. The catchy chorus and cheerful melody distract the audience from the heartbreaking lyrics describing a breakup: “Sé que lo que suelto son palabras de despecho / Que estoy dolido por el daño que me han hecho / Quizás mañana me logre sentir mejor / Pero sé que tarde o temprano la logro sacar del pecho.” In English, “I know that what I release are words of spite / That I am hurt by the damage that has been done to me / Maybe tomorrow I can feel better / But I know that sooner or later I manage to get it off my chest.” While this is a breakup song, even more so it is a song of moving forward. It speaks of the pain of progressing alone but the satisfaction that it is felt on both sides of the fence. “Le Va Doler,” which translates to “she will hurt,” repeats in the chorus to bookend every mention of the singer’s pain with that of their ex.

“Tqum” by Sofia Reyes and Danna Paola

The future pop song of the summer “Tqum,” was released May 25 by Latin singers Danna Paola and Sofia Reyes. Both well-known pop singers, the collaboration produced a fast-tempo song, witty lyrics and complementary tones of their voices

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K-pop and U.S. release frequencies just aren’t the same

Daphne Yaman
NON-STOP K-POP



Being a K-pop fan is simply better than being a fan of United States music culture. There, I said it. This conversation began when I was talking to my boyfriend about ENHYPEN’s recent album release, “DARK BLOOD,” and I mentioned how the group hadn’t released any major Korean pieces since last summer. In K-pop time, this is a long, long period for a musical dry spell. Ten months between releases feels like an eternity. My genuine surprise at ENHYPEN’s release delay stunned my boyfriend. This is because for U.S. artists (only speaking on behalf of the musical culture that I’m familiar with, but I’m sure artists in other parts of the world behave similarly), it’s normal for artists to stay dormant for years. Perhaps, I’ve become a little too accustomed to K-pop timeframes. Take one of the most popular Western musicians: Beyoncé. Queen Bee’s “Renaissance,” which dropped in 2022, came after a three-year drought. Similarly, Eminem, who was crowned the

“King of Hip-Hop” by Rolling Stone, only released three albums in a seven-year span between 2010 and 2017. And he’s still regarded as one of the best in his genre. Although Queen Bee and Slim Shady’s discographies are objectively amazing, this would just not fly in the K-pop realm. BLACKPINK is one of the few groups to have a long hiatus that didn’t affect its popularity. The group went silent from October 2020 to September 2022, an aspect that was not received well by fans and was likely only possible due to its already solid global popularity. However, it’s still a point of contention between fans to this day. This isn’t meant to belittle or bash Beyoncé or Eminem — their record sales speak for themselves — it’s just meant to serve as a comparative point. According to most fans and K-pop websites, popular K-pop groups will have at least one comeback a year, but this usually becomes two or three, especially if there are holiday-themed releases like Stray Kids’ “Christmas EveL.” From my experience, this usually entails at least one mini album, and either another mini album or an astounding single EP. It is pretty rare for a group to release a full album — that is, an album with at least eight songs or so — and the ones that are released usually contain repackages or revamped versions of old songs.

For someone like me who is a multi-stan, this makes being a fan of K-pop a full-time job. For instance, after ENHYPEN’s May 22 mini album release, KARD, a four-person mixed-gender group (yes, they exist) dropped its sixth mini album, “ICKY,” on May 23. Funnily enough, CIX, another flawless discographical group, also released its sixth mini album, “Save Me, Kill Me,” on Monday — just a week later. Stray Kids is set to drop a full-length album, “5-STAR,” on Friday. P1HARMONY has a comeback scheduled for June 8. Following that up, ATEEZ is set to release “THE WORLD EP.2 : OUTLAW” on June 16. And these are just the groups that I religiously follow. In all honesty, back-to-back comebacks like this only happen about once a year, and it’s just out of pure coincidence brought on by their companies. But boy, do I get excited when it happens. It’s like the K-pop Olympics. Some may like to criticize the frequency of releases from groups by claiming that this clearly pushes the “quantity over quality” agenda for fans. Similarly, it could be argued that this is a perfect recipe to burn out artists. And I feel compelled to agree. However, there are a few factors in place that differentiate

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Beyoncé released the album “Lemonade,” in 2016, followed six years later with her most recent album “RENAISSANCE” in 2022.

YAMAN

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the music-making processes K-pop artists and U.S. artists go through to create pieces.

One of the main practices that sets the two apart is the fact that, although it's becoming more popular and expected, there are still quite a few mainstream groups, like BLACKPINK, that don't write or produce their own songs. They just perform them.

Those that do write and produce their own pieces, like BTS, Stray Kids and (G) I-DLE, usually receive extensive help either from in-company composers or from outsourcing tracks from across the globe. This, along with the fact that there are multiple members in each group that help in the production process, can ease some of the stress of creating music en masse.

Because of the collaborative effort that's enacted to make music, songs are released with high frequency without necessarily disrupting the caliber of the pieces. If the music I was listening to was garbage, I wouldn't have been a K-pop stan for so many years — seven, to be exact.

In terms of burnout from songwriting, as a writer myself I truly understand the strain of writer's block — albeit I don't have nearly as much pressure on me to write as a K-pop idol would. If burnout is to be discussed, though, there should be more discourse surrounding award shows, performance showcases and the ridiculous amount of travel and training that is expected from idols. I'm definitely not a doctor, but those have to be taking a more serious toll on the performers than sitting in a studio making music.

All this is to say that being a K-pop stan is something to celebrate: K-pop blows U.S. music culture out of the water.

Daphne Yaman is a junior writing about K-pop in her column, "Non-Stop K-Pop." She is also the opinion editor at the Daily Trojan.

LATIN | Latest Spanish artists breaking into mainstream music



Ralph PH | Wikimedia Commons

Coachella 2023 became Mexican music stomping grounds like never before with artists such as Peso Pluma, Becky G, Fuerza Régida's Jesús Ortiz Paz taking the stage for the first time in their careers. On Dec. 16, 2022, Fuerza Regida and Grupo Frontera released hit song "Bebe Dame."

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that blended seamlessly.

27-year-old Mexican singer Paola is not new to the industry. Rather, she cemented herself as a Mexican pop princess with the release of her debut album at only six years old in 2001. With numerous other releases and acting credits since then, Paola continues to evolve as an artist.

As for the also 27-year-old singer hailing from Monterrey, Mexico, Reyes is no stranger to collaborations, as she previously worked with fellow Latin artists such as Maria Becerra and Abraham Mateo. While she has also made a name for herself

in the Latin music industry, Reyes hopes this song with Paola will support both of their careers.

"It's so important to support each other as Mexican artists," said Reyes in an interview with *Rolling Stone* about the new song. "I love Danna so much. I feel like I've known her for years."

"Sangre y Fe" by Cruz Cafuné and Quevedo

"Sangre y Fe" is the ultimate collaboration of Urbano Latino artists, Cafuné and Quevedo. This song was released on May 26 as a part of Cafuné's third album

"Me Muevo Con Dios." The song has the same energetic and crisp rhythm that characterizes the other songs on the album and is met with the signature beat drop and style of a Quevedo song.

The Spanish rappers team up to create a song speaking on their self-made journeys, noting a religious influence in the lyrics. With the title of the song translating to "Blood and Faith," and the name of the album meaning "I Move With God," a biblical tone rings throughout.

With over 2 million monthly listeners on Spotify, the rise of 29-year-old trap artist Cafuné

should amplify with the release of this new album. "Sangre y Fe" is already his second-most streamed song with around 2 million streams. The song is not the first collaboration between these two artists with "INTRO - SPEECH CRUZZI" coming out on Quevedo's debut album, "DONDE QUIERO ESTAR," earlier this year.

Whether you are traveling the world or relaxing at home, every moment this season belongs in a pair with a summer song. These new Latin releases will undoubtedly boost the mood and energy of any gathering.

Not everyone will be at the beach all summer!

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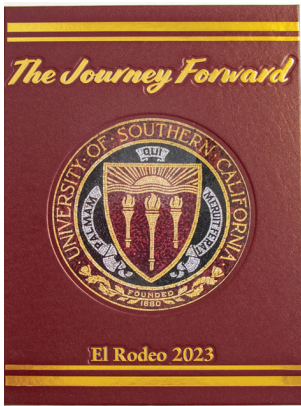
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ACROSS

- 1 Acronym in genetic sequencing
7 Collect
11 Sort
14 Steamy brew
15 Part of an analogy
16 Female hamster
17 One way to be marked
18 Result of extreme rage
20 How-____
21 Dizzying camera technique invented for 58-Across
23 Four Corners state with six corners
25 It may punctuate a sarcastic remark
26 Stingy sort?
29 Lecterns

- 31 Structure climbed in the climactic scene of 58-Across
35 To the ____ degree
36 Camel and sand, for example
38 Gave a wide berth, say
40 Nickname for Francisco, often
43 Bow-shaped woodworking tool
44 Unsettling cry to hear during a haircut
45 Empty space
47 Ulysses S. Grant's given name at birth
49 Chicago exchange, informally, with "the"
50 Filmmaker Lee
51 Hatcher of "Desperate Housewives"
52 Bullets, e.g.
53 ____ Sutra

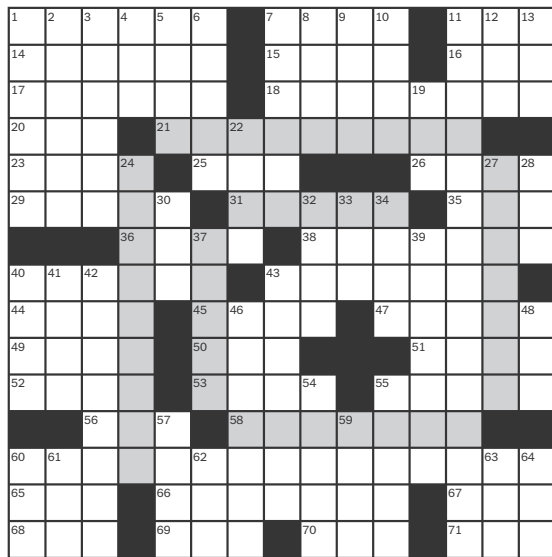
- 55 "Stubborn things," per John Adams
56 Possible focus of an M.R.I., in brief
58 1958 film that is the subject of this puzzle
60 Goofing off
65 Help
66 Minor quarrels
67 Bill advocating for science
68 Thickness
69 Genre for the Mighty Mighty Bosstones
70 {2, 4, 6, 8}, e.g.
71 Vessel for a nursery rhyme trio

DOWN

- 1 Flirt with, in a way
2 Mr. in a 1983 Styx hit
3 "What a shame"
4 Sault ____ Marie, Mich.
5 Await resolution
6 Betray, in a way
7 Noted Venetian marketplace
8 Award with a Best Play category
9 The gamut
10 Cops, in slang
11 Cry after being narrowly defeated
12 Bagel go-with
13 Critical
19 Simmer setting
22 Bucketsful
24 "Master of Suspense" who directed 58-Across

ANSWER TO TODAY'S PUZZLE

8 A N I L E S V X S A T D
E A N S D N I S N D Q I V
Q N N O R V G N I A E X N O W
S L O V E V W V X O W W V
I R E L G N V O R E W
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M V S L E R J O H O N V D
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H I N R E M O L V I Q O D
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A X E T d O d V J N E S B V
E O d O I S I V E I L I O H
X T I d V E R Y d S I R C



PUZZLE BY AARON M. ROSENBERG

- 27 58-Across co-star James
28 Indication of learnedness, for short
30 "That feels goo-oo-ood!"
32 One of 17 in New Orleans
33 Allhallows ____
34 Novelist Philip
37 58-Across co-star Kim
39 "Do we have the green light?"
40 Deer stalker
41 [I'm standing right here]
42 Operation Overlord locale
43 Hallucination, e.g.
46 Way to travel, for many tourists
48 Prefix with demeanor or behavior
54 Many-eyed giant of myth
55 Guinness Book adjective
57 Display options, in brief
59 Product in a snail-shaped dispenser
60 Plan (out)
61 Peanut product
62 Chortle
63 Big Apple sch. with campuses in Abu Dhabi and Shanghai
64 Interior secretary Haaland

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TENNIS | Sieg made the semifinals in both draws

| continued from page 8 |

not over for the freshman, as she and her doubles partner Cayetano had a match in the doubles semifinals against UNC’s freshman Reese Brantmeier and senior Elizabeth Scotty. The freshman-senior duo went down somewhat quietly in that match and lost in straight sets, 6-4, 6-3.

This was the furthest a USC doubles team had gone since 2019, when Angela Kulikov and Rianna Valdes lost in the semifinals.

“[Cayetano and I] work really well together, and we know what works best,” Sieg said. “[Doubles] is similar [to singles] in the way where you have to problem solve and kind of figure out what plays work best. But it’s nice to have someone else do that with you.”

UNC dominated women’s doubles as a Tar Heel team won the title, but it wasn’t the duo that beat Sieg and Cayetano. Two UNC pairs duked it out in the finals.

Although Sieg and Cayetano had competed together throughout the season, prior to the first round of the NCAA Championships against UNLV, USC had six matches in which the

duo was not competing together. The duo finished the season with a 17-5 record.

Sieg, still early into her USC career, became the first Trojan to make the singles and doubles semifinals in the same season. She was also the only player to make the semifinals in both brackets.

“I’m super proud of myself,” Sieg said. “If someone would have told me that on day one, I would have been very happy. So, I’m glad I was able to do it individually but also to do it both in doubles. I was happy that I was the only one to do that, so it’s just really cool and special.”

Since she was competing in both the singles and doubles tournaments, Sieg had to play two matches on four of the five days she was competing.

Sieg is looking ahead toward the rest of her Trojan career and the next NCAA tournament as USC tennis is done for the season.

“I’m just going to keep working on my aggressive mindset,” Sieg said. “Whenever I get up on the court and do my thing, it pays off, and it works really well. So, I’m just going to keep working on trusting that and staying consistent with it.”



Freshman Maddy Sieg ended the season with a 32-3 overall singles record, by far the best on the USC team. This past weekend, she became the first Trojan to ever make the semifinals in doubles and singles in the same year.

Vic Xu | Daily Trojan

KURUP | The Lakers collapsed under the pressure of the playoffs

| continued from page 8 |

The regular season and the playoffs are the same sport, but a different game. In the postseason, referees reduce the amount of ticky-tack calls. Coaches shorten their rotation to 6-8 players. Defenses get tighter. Offenses get slower. Every. Possession. Matters.

There are 82-game players, who can keep a team afloat through the injuries and

inconsistencies of the regular season. And then there are 16-game players who can play and adapt to those playoff tweaks.

The Lakers failed to steal a single game against the Nuggets because they only rostered five of these such players — LeBron James, Anthony Davis, Rui Hachimura, Austin Reaves and Dennis Schröder . In a desperate attempt to salvage the sinking ship, Ham started his five

best players in Game 4 for the first time all postseason, but came up short against the Nuggets’ seven 16-game players.

While the feel of the playoffs is much different than that of the regular season, the latter still matters. Over those 82 games, teams develop habits, both good and bad. The Lakers were elite at getting to the line in the regular season — they lead the playoffs in

free throw differential. The Lakers struggled to generate quality looks from the 3-point line — they attempted the second-lowest amount of threes in the playoffs.

In the postseason, the superstars have to increase their level of play, intensity and urgency. The role players have to be net positives on both ends of the floor. The coaches have to win the game of adjustments while sticking to what’s working.

And, of course, they have to get lucky.

The Lakers failed to check just about all of those boxes and let a chance at another banner in the rafters slip away in the process.

Sahil Kurup is a rising senior writing about the Los Angeles Lakers and the endless drama that follows them. His column, “Road to Revival,” runs every other Wednesday.

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	7		5	6	3			

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Trojan Tennis duo falls short at NCAA Individuals



Freshman Maddy Sieg and senior Eryn Cayetano made the semifinals in the doubles bracket, while Sieg also made the semifinals for singles.

USC didn't bring home the hardware despite making it all the way to the semifinals.

By **THOMAS JOHNSON**
Staff Writer

It was a historic run for USC women's tennis, but freshman Maddy Sieg (singles and doubles) and senior Eryn Cayetano (doubles) came up just short, falling in the semifinals at the NCAA Individual Doubles Championships Friday. Earlier that day, Sieg also competed in the singles championships, losing in the semifinals. Sieg dropped her singles match to a familiar face in UCLA freshman Fangran Tian 6-3,

6-2. Tian ended up winning the singles championship and became the second freshman in three years to take home the title. "[Tian] was very solid, and she knows how to work the point and find the weakness of the other player," Sieg said. "Credits to her; she's a great competitor and plays very, very well. Hopefully, the next time I can do a little bit better. But congrats to her, I'm glad she won the tournament." Sieg and Tian played each other three times in singles throughout the season, with Tian winning two of those matches. The USC freshman was injured in her first match against Tian, giving Sieg an 0-2 record against her crosstown rival. Sieg finished

the season with only three losses in singles for a record of 32-3. Even though it was her first NCAA tournament, Sieg tried not to let the bright lights get to her. "Looking at the draw on the first day, I could see it was pretty stacked," Sieg said. "There was a lot of good competitors in it, so I definitely was a little bit nervous, but I was also confident because I'd had a great season already and I know what I can do." In her first-ever Individual Championships, Sieg won her first four matches between Monday and Friday before going up against Tian. The Connecticut native dominated in her first two matches, taking both in straight sets.

"I was nervous, but I was able to calm [down] just by knowing my game plan and what I wanted to do," Sieg said. "I had played [UNC's Carson Tanguilig] before, so I was pretty clear on what I had to do, but I just knew what my game was and kind of paid attention to myself, and it worked out." It was a comeback win for Sieg in the Round of 16 against Georgia's Dasha Vidmanova, dropping the first set before taking the next two to complete the reverse sweep. Sieg then won her quarterfinals match 6-1, 4-6, 6-3. Despite losing to Tian, championship aspirations were

| see **TENNIS**, page 7 |

The Lakers failed to adapt

Sahil Kurup



ROAD TO REVIVAL

"The playoffs are nothing like the regular season. They are two completely different sports." That was former Golden State Warriors General Manager Bob Myers back in 2019 during the Sloan Sports Analytics Conference. The Los Angeles Lakers' admirable postseason run to the Western Conference Finals validated Myers' claim in many ways. Myers is an underrated piece in the Warriors' championship success over the last decade. Managing a winning squad is all about pushing the right buttons, finding the right pieces to fit the puzzle and acquiring the right players for the right roles. It's built on an essential understanding of the game and what's needed to succeed in the regular season versus the playoffs. Needless to say, Myers gets it. Lakers General Manager Rob Pelinka has a similar understanding of what is necessary to build a championship team — he put together a defensive dynamo in 2020 for the Lakers' 17th championship. But it is incredibly hard to win in the NBA, a nuance of the game often overlooked by fans. There are 30 teams and 450 players, but only one team hoists the Larry O'Brien trophy. From the front office down to the 15th player on the roster, so much has to go right to even make the NBA Finals, let alone win it all. Pelinka was praised for the Russell Westbrook trade he pulled off at this season's trade deadline, adding D'Angelo Russell, Malik Beasley and Jarred Vanderbilt to thrust the purple and gold back into the playoff discussion. Down the stretch of the playoffs, though, the veracity of Myers' statement came to light — all three regular season rotation mainstays were rendered unplayable. Specialists do not see consistent minutes in the playoffs. Beasley is a 3-point sniper but can't guard a chair. Vanderbilt is a defensive workhorse but a complete zero on the offensive end. Russell is the best of the three because of his offensive capabilities, but his lack of lateral quickness and defensive awareness made it difficult for Head Coach Darvin Ham to keep him on the floor against the Denver Nuggets. Possessing one elite skill can get you to the highest level, but it can't always win you games at that level — you must be able to play both ends of the floor. Guys like Stephen Curry, Trae Young or Luka Dončić are otherworldly offensive aliens making up for their defensive shortcomings. In the conference, Myers said, "The more dimensions you have to your game, the harder you are to take away."

| see **KURUP**, page 7 |

Track & Field shows out at West Preliminary Rounds

USC had sixteen different athletes qualify for the National Championships.

By **JUSTIN WHITE**
Staff Writer

Sixteen Trojans and four relays qualified for the NCAA National Championships during the West Preliminary Rounds this past weekend. The squads performed well in the West Preliminary Rounds, including a number of athletes setting new personal bests and some even qualifying during the first day of preliminaries. "We went in and we felt very confident that these young athletes would do well," Head Coach Quincy

Watts said. "I'm very excited with how they performed." The Trojans had four relay berths and 16 athletes who qualified for the NCAA National Championships. Four relays also qualified for the quarterfinals. Before the preliminary rounds began, the team had some unforeseen circumstances that threw it for a whirl. "Several of our athletes who were key came down with ... some type of virus ... and they were in the hospital throughout the week," Watts said. "But when it came time to compete on meet day, they showed a lot of resilience, and they advanced, and I'm very proud of them." Watts said Director of Operations Russ Romano had to

get up at 2 a.m. to get the athletes to the hospital once they started feeling sick. Romano was key to ensuring those who could play were ready to go for their events. "We talked about this in the team meeting the night before the competition," Watts said. "We talked about adversity; we talked about 'expect the unexpected.' We get all these things that are going to come in and try to be distractions." Looking forward to the NCAA National Championships starting early June, Watts said the teams are still confident despite the setbacks, especially after fighting through it in the preliminary rounds to get to this point. "My relay team, we're going to have

to clean up some things with our stick passing," Watts said. "On the women's side and then, with our relays, both relays should have a chance." Watts said while the younger athletes on the team may have jitters when the bright lights come on, he wants to make them believe this is nothing that they haven't done before. "It's a mix of veterans and a mix of freshmen, we tried to tell them that it's the same track meet," Watts said. "We're racing against the same people that we compete against well all year." The NCAA National Championships begin June 7 and run until June 10 in Austin, Texas at Mike A. Myers Stadium.