

## **A November 2025 college football game...**

So, the Northwestern University NCAA football team, still in the Big 10 football league, came to Los Angeles to play the University of Southern California (USC) (now also a member of the Big 10 conference football league) at the Los Angeles Coliseum. Chris and I used to go to the Coliseum for many football games in the early 1970s when she was a chemistry graduate student at USC. We would park on campus (free) and walk across the campus and through the rose garden to the large stadium. I think it used to seat about 90,000 people but has been reconfigured with a fancy press box, and deluxe suites so the new capacity is about 75,000 people.

We sort of felt that we should go, just for old-times sake. Both sides offered us tickets at the reduced rate of \$75 per ticket. We used to sit on the 50-yard line about halfway up in the student card section, but now we were relegated 30 yards past the far end zone in the peristyle section, most of which no longer had any seats. After all we still had our split sweat shirts (half USC and half Northwestern) from the 1995 Rose Bowl game featuring those two teams. We went down Vermont Avenue like we used to and noted that the sidewalk north of campus had turned into a large street market with not-so-temporary stores replacing what used to be a sidewalk.

The parking lots on-campus at USC were still there, but payment was now \$50 (payable by registered space online only, no cash allowed). We tried to walk through campus but were blocked by several new buildings and the new double track passenger rail line down Exposition Blvd. The new Lucas Memorial Museum building looked like a futuristic spaceship out of the Star Wars catalog. We finally got to the "South Lawn", which is actually Northwest of the Coliseum. Northwestern University had set up an area there called the "N-Zone" surrounded by all things purple. For each ticket shown, they did offer some sort of food truck meal and poms to wave. They had brought some speech makers, the 6-person dance squad and "Willie the Wildcat". To quote 76 Trombones: "Where is the band?"

Our seats were on the exact opposite side of the oval Coliseum. As we wandered around, we noticed all kinds of stalls selling USC branded items and clothing. A huge variety of food stands were available; many of which served food items that I did not know how to pronounce let alone understand what the contents were. I did recognize \$25 pizza, \$10 lemonade, and \$9 hot dogs. There seemed to be 36 tunnels going into the structure, with each one being named after a different contribution source. Fortunately, large bathroom buildings surrounded the Coliseum as well.

Entertainment was strange. The peristyle end of the Coliseum started off with lots of fireworks overhead. There were three very large video boards so the customers could keep track of the score and the action on the football field. Sadly, much of the football action was on the other side of the field about 150 yards away from where we were sitting. The stadium lights could do tricks and kept turning off and on. Although the USC band took part of the field for halftime, the field lights turned off and there was a 300-drone show of moving colored lights across the sky. The band did play the same USC fight songs that they had played 50 years ago.

There was an interesting local touch to the USC football team. There were twins King Miller (running back) and Kaylon Miller (offensive line) from Calabasas High School two years ago. I had never heard of them at Calabasas High school which had a non-remarkable football team. They decided to join the football squad at USC without any scholarship offer and paid their own way. Both were very important to the success of the USC team this year.