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## NCAA & College Sports News



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### [USC QB Booty undergoes back surgery](#)

Fri. Mar 31, 2006, 8:06pm

March 31, 2006

LOS ANGELES (AP) — John David Booty, the leading candidate to replace quarterback Matt Leinart at Southern California, had surgery Friday to repair a bulging disc in his back and will miss the rest of spring practice.

Booty has struggled with back problems since high school and was sidelined by spasms on the first day of spring workouts last week.

Friday morning, he underwent a procedure called a microscopic discectomy.

"It went really well," Trojans coach Pete Carroll said. "The doctors made a point that it was something that they had to do."

Carroll said Booty will be out of action for eight to 12 weeks, but is expected to be ready for training camp in August.

The coach said he will not announce a starting quarterback at the end of spring practice as he has every other year of his tenure at USC.

Redshirt freshman Mark Sanchez — Booty's main competition for the starting job — has been taking snaps with the first team during spring practice.

"I don't have to make any decisions because when we started out, John David was well ahead of Mark," Carroll said earlier in the week. "It couldn't happen at a better time."

Booty, who will be a fourth-year junior in the fall, graduated from Evangel Christian Academy in Louisiana a year early to join the Trojans. He has spent three seasons on the sidelines watching Leinart lead the team to a 37-2 record and a pair of national championships.



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He decided to have the surgery after meeting with Dr. Robert Watkins on Wednesday.

“Dr. Watkins felt that having surgery was the best option at this point, so we didn’t want to wait any longer,” Booty said in a statement before the procedure. “We have a great team and I wish I could’ve been out there practicing with them this spring. Now I’m just going to focus on starting my rehab, getting better and returning to the field as soon as I can.”

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