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A Ridiculous Decision

There are times when an official university decision seems so ridiculous, and the proper course of action so obvious, that one can only marvel at how responsible and intelligent people could act in such a way.

Such is the case with USC's decision to continue sending season football tickets to South Carolina General Assembly members despite the state attorney general's opinion that the practice might be illegal. That USC should discontinue the practice, as Clemson has done, seemed the only sensible reaction to the ruling. Evidently, USC President William H. Patterson and board Chairman T. Eston Marchant disagree.

Giving free football tickets to legislators has always had an unseemly appearance to it, but not until recently passed ethics legislation went into effect did anyone consider the possibility that it was illegal as well. When a potential recipient asked if accepting the tickets would violate the new law, USC joined Clemson in asking the attorney general for a ruling. Upon receiving the ruling, Clemson officials reacted in the only wise and honorable way—they stopped sending legislators free tickets and informed them that if they wanted tickets, they could purchase them like anyone else. USC officials, on the other hand, chose to ignore the decision they had asked for and sent out the tickets Thursday along with a letter explaining the opinion and offering legislators the option of paying for them, keeping them or returning them.

The Opinion

The opinion, written by staff attorney Edward E. Poliakoff, said in part: "The circumstances surrounding the proposed gift of season tickets to legislators could reasonably sustain an inference that the purpose of the gift is to influence the recipients in the discharge of their official duties as they involve legislative matters affecting the ticket donors." Such is prohibited in Section 13 of the ethics law, and the punishment provided for in Section 16-211 of the 1962 South Carolina Code of Laws is imprisonment for five years or a fine not exceeding \$3,000 and one year imprisonment. It must be noted, however, that the factual determination whether the ticket donations are illegal must be made by the State Ethics Commission which is not yet operational.

Of course, it seems almost impossible that any fine or jail sentence will result from the gifts of free tickets this year. The ethics commission, even should it agree with the attorney general's opinion and rule the practice illegal, would probably not penalize USC, since the law at the present time is so unclear. But there are still some costs involved.

The most obvious cost is that of the tickets themselves. Each recipient is sent two season tickets for seven Carolina home football games, and the recipients are the 170 General Assembly members, the lieutenant governor, the clerk of the Senate and the clerk of the House of Representatives. Season tickets cost \$49 each, so the total runs to \$16,954. Isn't it interesting to see how your student fees (which went up this year) are spent?

Another, though less tangible, cost is the loss of respect for USC by anyone who follows what's been going on. The shenanigans that took place last year in the football coach and athletic director selections, the current law school admissions controversy and this ticket decision certainly won't heighten the prestige of this school in the eyes of the taxpayers. The question remains: even if this practice is legal, should USC continue to follow it?

Carolina athletic teams have long proven they can compete with other schools, including Clemson, in sporting events. It's a shame that in the realm of ethical and moral decision making, USC doesn't fare nearly as well.

Linebackers ready for Tech

By RAY COOPER
Gamecock Staff Writer

The Gamecocks are going to play a five-man front on defense this year, which Coach Carlen calls the "fifty defense." With five men on the front line this leaves only two linebackers to fill positions, however, these are two key positions to fill.

The linebacker positions are now being filled by Gary Mott (6-0, 213), from Statesville, N.C. and Ricky Payne (6-0, 221), sophomore from Conyers, Ga. These two men will play a key role in stopping the rushing attack of Gamecock opponents this year.

The fifty defense is designed to somewhat protect the linebackers from would be blockers. The middle guard on defense takes some of the pressure off the linebackers in defending against the run. The nose guard is Bubba Shugart (6-0, 222) junior from Walhalla, played offensive tackle last season, but he made the transition to defense in spring practice.

The defensive team is now preparing for the Wishbone Attack they will face Saturday against Georgia Tech. Right linebacker Payne feels Georgia Tech will come out running against the Gamecocks. Payne also feels that the fifty defense will help him play better at his linebacking position. Payne said that Shugart is a real fine nose guard and that he should help the defense against the dive up the middle.

Payne also noted a different spirit on the Gamecock team this year. "The defense respects the offense and the offense respects the defense," he said. This type of respect was not present on the team last year according to Payne. This year we are "more of a team," he said.

Left linebacker Mott said he is looking forward to the season this year and he thinks the Gamecocks will be ready for their opener against Georgia Tech Saturday.

The primary responsibilities of the linebackers against Georgia Tech will be to stop the inside plays

and the inside dives, according to Mott.

Both linebackers said they were not looking forward to any special game this year and that they were anxious for the season to get under way. Mott and Payne will be backed up this year by Grahl Philips 5-11, 209) senior from Seneca.

Coach Carlen says that some freshmen may also be able to add some depth to the linebacking core this year in case of an injury to one of his first three linebackers. W.T. Williams (6-2, 205) from Lincoln, Ga. and Steve Bernish (6-5, 225) from White Bear Lake, Minn. should be two freshmen able to fill any vacated positions at linebacker.

The Gamecock defense is in the right frame of mind to tackle the opposition this year. Coach Carlen says his defensive team will not be strong this year, but don't be surprised if they are strong enough to stop their opponents short of the goal line.

Soccer team rallies to win

By BILLY COX
Gamecock Sports Writer

With the USC Soccer Club trailing the Columbia Soccer Club (CSC) 2-1 early in the first half, acting coach Sandy Bucknam cupped his hands on the sidelines and offered his men some tender encouragement. "Quit standing and go to the ball, ya meatheads!" he screamed.

The Gamecocks exploded for six goals in the final stanza and won going away, 7-3.

Actually, Saturday's contest was to have marked the debut of Carolina's 1975 season, but due to scheduling conflicts, Georgia Southern had cancelled out. Instead, the opponents arrived in the form of CSC, a local amateur organization.

Yank Albers, USC's official coach, played for CSC but confessed before the match, "We're gonna lose because of conditioning." For a little over a half, at least, no one was taking any bets.

CSC scored early on gambling goalie Paul Bristol, grabbing a 2-1 lead. USC's offense, meanwhile, partially due to the defensive wizardry of Kenny Jefferson, was rendered impotent.

"The only penetration we've got is through the air," noted Albers while taking a breather. "We need to get it to (John) Rosier on the ground and open 'em up."

The free-wheeling Rosier finally broke through late in the first half to cut the margin to 2-1, but play was still a bit ragged.

"Today's been sortuva bad day," said Bristol at halftime. "It'll be just a matter of time, though. As soon as people learn how to rotate and switch, we'll do all right."

USC's slumbering giant finally awoke, though, beginning with Rosier's score up the middle for the tie. Steve Rogowsky blasted one in from the side, and seconds later, Tim Hankinson kicked in a long-range shot.

Fullbacks Mike Hankinson and Carl Sebris were also playing with flare, blunting CSC's attack by intercepting passes at every corner.

Following a CSC score, Bristol nailed a lid over his goal and strangled all subsequent threats. At the other end, Clark Dean set Rosier up for another goal, Tom Heath knocked another in from the side, and, with 10 seconds left, Rosier belted in still another.

Bucknam, who also doubles as the manager for the baseball team, said, "The difference in the second half was because we kept the ball on the ground. In the first half they were cutting off our high passes."



Gamecock Staff Photo by Steve Valk