

# Fan takes love of Gamecocks to home in Wichita, Kansas

By BRANT LONG  
Staff writer

It's another college football Saturday in Columbia and the Gamecocks are about to take the field. The theme from 2001: a Space Odyssey begins to play at Williams-Brice Stadium . . . and in Wichita, Kansas.

Why, you ask?  
Well, the answer is simple — Ricky Werner.  
Werner graduated from USC in 1983 and in 1984 moved to Wichita, where he is a sales representative for the Levi's Jeanswear Division.

Werner is a truly dedicated fan. And that doesn't mean just a couple of Gamecock sweatshirts either. At game time, Werner calls his mother-in-law, Pat Rabon, in Chapin. She promptly sits the phone by the radio, and he listens to Gamecock announcer Bob Fulton give the play-by-play.

Not just a couple of plays, mind you, but the entire game. He only hangs up at halftime and then calls back once the second half is about to begin.

It all started in 1984 during Carolina's 10-2 Gator Bowl season.

"I got kind of homesick and called three or four times," Werner said in a telephone interview. "Soon, it became a ritual."

The Georgia Tech game — a 34-0 USC loss — was a true test for the dedicated Werner. But as he put it, "I managed to listen to the whole game."

He said he did take a small break when Gamecock quarterback Todd Ellis threw an interception right before halftime, but he still endured. He said the fact that one of his colleagues is a Tech fan didn't soften the blow any.

He said his mother-in-law, on the other end of the "Gamecock connection," goes about her business while the game is on, checking on Werner only when something bad happens, such as a Gamecock turnover.

Werner said his wife Julie, another USC graduate, doesn't give him too hard a time about the phone calls

and, in fact, listens to some of the games also.

On Saturdays now, Werner puts a 3-by-5 Gamecock flag he received for Christmas on his car and plays "2001" on the stereo loudly, in a state where both Kansas University and Kansas State are constantly thrashed by Big Eight Conference opponents.

He said he gets a few funny looks and that most people don't even know what the flag stands for.  
"There's no big football rivalry here," he said. "Everybody waits for basketball."

Werner said the phone calls cost him about \$20 to \$21 every Saturday and called the price pretty cheap when compared to the cost of transportation from Kansas to Columbia, a football ticket, a program, soft drinks, hot dogs, etc.

Werner has made it to a few games over the past years, including last year's Nebraska game in Lincoln and this season's Appalachian State game. His father lives in Columbia, and Werner gets back to town two or three times a year.

Of course, Werner saves on the phone bill when the Gamecocks appear on television, as is the case with this Saturday's game against N.C. State. Werner gave *The Gamecock* his prediction for that contest.

"It's gonna be a squeaker," he said. "I think the defense will play well, and (place kicker Collin) Mackie will get a couple of field goals."

The Kansas Gamecock guru's final score: USC, 16; N.C. State, 10.

But the story doesn't end here. About three months ago, Werner got some new neighbors across the street. And if you can believe it, they're Clemson fans.

Werner said he talks to them every so often, but when asked if the neighbors listen to the games together over the phone, Werner just replied, "I don't think so."

Werner may be far from "home," but one thing is for certain — he's never far from the phone.

### AP Top 20

1. UCLA
2. Notre Dame
3. Southern Cal
4. Miami
5. Nebraska
6. Florida State
7. West Virginia
8. Oklahoma
9. Auburn
10. Wyoming
11. Arkansas
12. Oklahoma State
13. LSU
14. Michigan
15. Clemson
16. Syracuse
17. South Carolina
18. Georgia
19. Alabama
20. Oregon

## Lady golfers win tourney

The Lady Gamecock women's golf team captured the Lady Lion Invitational this past weekend at the Penn State Blue Course in State College, Pa.

USC, with a score of 945, finished 30 strokes ahead of second-place James Madison after the four rounds of play.

Lady Gamecock Kim Belk captured second place individually in a one-hole, sudden-death playoff with a score of 235.



DANA PURSER/The Gamecock

### Getting position

USC freshman midfielder Adam Binding fights for the ball in a soccer match earlier this season. The Gamecocks, ranked 20th in the nation, battled to two scoreless ties this past weekend in the UCLA-Metropolitan Life Soccer Classic. USC, now 10-3-3, tied both San Diego State and the University of California Los Angeles, 0-0, with Gamecock defenders Scott Henderson and Mike Gosselin earning All-Tournament honors. USC returns home Sunday to face region opponent North Carolina State at 2 p.m. at The Graveyard.

# Computer gives top ranking to Clemens

By Associated Press

NEW YORK — Who's the best player in baseball?

Rankings compiled for major league baseball say Boston pitcher Roger Clemens is.

Clemens, who won the Cy Young Award in 1986 and 1987 but slipped to 18-12 this year, had a 96.203 score for the 1987-88 seasons, according to a computer at the Elias Sports Bureau.

Orel Hershiser, the Most Valuable Player of the National League playoffs and the World Series for the Los Angeles Dodgers, was second at 96.135.

Frank Viola of the Minnesota Twins was third at 96.097 and Dwight Gooden of the New York Mets fourth at 95.169. Outfielder Dwight Evans of Boston was the top non-pitcher, ranking fifth with a score of 94.795.

Don Mattingly of the New York Yankees in 1987 achieved the first 100 in the eight-year history of the rankings, which are used to determine what draft choices are used as compensation for free agents. Mattingly slipped to 87 this year and was passed by George Brett of the Kansas City Royals at first base in the American League.

The ranking, instituted as part of the strike settlement in 1981 between the Major League Baseball Players Association and the owners, combine statistics such as batting average, plate appearances, home runs and runs batted in for hitters, and starts, innings, earned-run average, saves and strikeouts for pitchers. The statistics used vary from position to position.

Philadelphia's Mike Schmidt was the top-ranked third baseman in the National League and is the only player to lead his position in all eight seasons. Gary Carter of the Mets, who led at NL catcher for seven years, dropped to sixth. Alan Ashby of Houston took over as No. 1.

Ozzie Smith of the St. Louis Car-

dinals led NL shortstops for the fifth straight season and Ryne Sandberg of the Chicago Cubs led NL second basemen for the fifth straight year. Todd Worrell of the Cardinals was the top NL reliever for the second straight season.

Atlanta's Dale Murphy, who led NL outfielders from 1983-87, dropped to ninth. Pedro Guerrero of St. Louis led NL outfielders, followed by Darryl Strawberry of the Mets and Kal Daniels of Cincinnati.

At first base, Will Clark of San Francisco replaced Keith Hernandez of the Mets, who had led for four straight years.

Hershiser succeeded Houston's Mike Scott as the top NL starter. The Mets placed four starters in the NL's top 12 — Gooden (2), Ron Darling (4), David Cone (8) and Sid Fernandez (12).

Wade Boggs of Boston led at third base in the American League for the second straight year and joined Clemens as the only American Leaguer to repeat.

Marty Barrett of Boston and Julio Franco of Cleveland tied for the lead at second base, replacing Johnny Ray of California.

Alan Trammell of Detroit was the leader at shortstop, beating Cal Ripken of Baltimore, the AL shortstop leader from 1984-87. Ripken dropped into a tie for second with Toronto's Tony Fernandez.

Carlton Fisk of the Chicago White Sox replaced Ernie Whitt of Toronto as the AL's top catcher. Harold Baines of the White Sox and Brian Downing of California tied for designated hitter, replacing Larry Parrish of Boston, who had led for the last two years when he was with Texas. Dennis Eckersley of Oakland replaced Mark Eichhorn of Toronto as the top reliever.

In the AL outfield, Evans succeeded Toronto's George Bell as No. 1. Kirby Puckett of Minnesota was second and Jose Canseco of Oakland was third. Bell dropped to eighth.

By JEREMY GARLINGTON  
Staff writer

If you've ever wandered by the athletic fields near the Sol Blatt P.E. Center on a Sunday afternoon, chances are good you noticed an unfamiliar sport being played.

Questions such as "Why would people want to run around passing a deformed football backwards?" and "Why aren't those maniacs doing the passing wearing pads?" may pop to mind after being conditioned by watching football games at Williams-Brice Stadium.

Insane, you say?  
USC rugby team members would disagree with most of their skeptics. Although theirs is only a club sport,

which means it isn't funded by the athletic department, the team has generated a fair amount of support for its efforts.

Forty members play in the club. Side A, the first-string team, and Side B, the second-string team, each have 15 members, and remaining players act as substitutes.

Although most of the action takes place in the spring, the club plays in both the fall and spring semesters.

The rules of rugby are complex, especially to those unfamiliar with the sport. The main objective of the game is to move the ball forward by lateral movement and kicking.

Positions are divided mainly bet-

ween halfbacks and fullbacks. When an attacking side reaches the "try," or scoring zone, it must touch the ball to the ground or the points are nullified. Four points are awarded for a try, and two are given for an extra point. Most important, the ball cannot move forward in the air, or it is turned over to the other team.

This fall, the USC club has an 0-3 record, with losses to Georgia 16-0, Georgia Tech 24-9 and The Citadel 15-7.

Even though Side A has not won a match this season, club President Chris Murphy remains confident the team will see success in fall competition.

"I feel we are a really good team,

but we just have to jell," Murphy said. "Once that happens, we should begin to roll to victory."

This weekend, the team will play in the state tournament at A.C. Flora High School. In its first match, USC plays the Charleston Rugby Football Club at 10:30 a.m. The winner of the match will play the winner of the Clemson-Old Gray match.

Leading USC will be forwards Rob Palmer, Rob Kersey, Murphy and backs John Hamilton and Brett Cargill.

"We have a real good group of guys, but we must work together," he said. "I think we still have a good chance to win the tournament."

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