

USC whips Wolfpack

By JOHN MILLS III
Staff writer

RALEIGH, N.C. — Causing numerous turnovers and keeping the ball on the ground, USC protected an early lead en route to a 23-7 victory over the North Carolina State Wolfpack Saturday night.

Junior quarterback Todd Ellis completed 13 of 23 passes for 172 yards and recorded just one interception, while the Gamecock running attack netted 184 yards against the top-ranked defense in the country. Junior running back Harold Green led USC on the ground with 85 yards on 24 carries.

"It's by far the best that I've seen us run in a while," said Green, who also caught six passes for 62 yards.

But the first points of the game were scored by the USC defense. With 9:15 left in the first quarter, linebacker Patrick Hinton intercepted a pass from Wolfpack quarterback Shane Montgomery and returned it 83 yards for a touchdown.

"I caught the ball, and I broke out and just ran for the end zone," said Hinton, who had three interceptions and a fumble recovery on the evening.

USC head coach Joe Morrison said he was proud of Hinton.

"Patrick Hinton has a way of being around the football most of the time," Morrison said. "He's a fine football player, and he gets around the football."

The Gamecocks threatened to score again in the final two minutes of the first quarter. But on second-and-goal from the 12-yard line, Wolfpack linebacker Corey Edmond picked off an Ellis pass and returned it 16 yards to the 25-yard line. The N.C. State offense, however, was unable to advance the ball and was forced to punt.

On the next Wolfpack possession, Hinton intercepted another Montgomery pass and raced inside the State 20-yard line. Clipping was called on the Gamecocks, however, and the ball was brought back to the USC 18-yard line.

Neither team could score again in the opening half, and Ellis appeared to remain in a slump, passing 11 times, completing only four for 31 yards and throwing one interception. At the half, the Gamecock offense still had yet to score any points, extending their scoreless streak to six consecutive quarters. USC was embarrassed two weeks ago when they were shut out by Georgia Tech, 34-0.

But the Gamecock offense began working in the second half.

Kicker Collin Mackie gave USC a 10-0 lead by booting a 44-yard field goal with 8:03 remaining in the third

quarter. That score was set by a 43-yard pass to freshman Robert Brooks. Mackie added another three points with eight seconds left in the quarter by kicking a 24-yard field goal, extending the lead to 13-0.

The Wolfpack struck back. In the final play of the third quarter, Montgomery connected with wide receiver Danny Peebles for 50 yards, taking N.C. State to the Gamecock five-yard line.

Fifty-seven seconds later, the Wolfpack was on the board as Montgomery kept the ball on third down and dove one yard for the touchdown. Kicker Damon Hartman made the extra point, cutting USC's lead to 13-7.

Following the Wolfpack score, USC came back with a 75-yard scoring drive. The Gamecocks killed more than five minutes as they drove to the Wolfpack 20-yard line, where Ellis took over and threw a 20-yard touchdown pass to wide receiver Eddie Miller, increasing the lead to 20-7.

With 8:52 remaining, Wolfpack tight end Bobby Harrell caught a Montgomery pass and fumbled it into the hands of Hinton, who would add his third interception inside the last minute.

Mackie added a field goal with 1:15 left to complete the scoring.

Defensively, the Gamecocks had to deal with Wolfpack wide receivers Peebles and Naz Worthen, who caught a combined 14 passes for 228 yards. But the USC blitz was effective throughout the game and forced Montgomery to pass quickly when his receivers were not in position.

The Gamecock defense was more psyched up than they were against Georgia Tech two weeks ago, said defensive end Kevin "Chief" Hendrix.

"The defense was really motivated this week, because we did so badly when we played Georgia Tech. We waited all the way until the second half to play. We knew we had to come out this week and play from the start, and that's what we did."

An elated Morrison said after the game he was proud of the way his team reacted to the loss to Georgia Tech and recent allegations of rampant drug use on the team by former player Tommy Chaikin.

"I was very, very proud of them," Morrison said. "They've been through a tough two weeks. They've responded very well. They played the whole game with a great deal of heart."

Sixth-ranked Florida State will be at Williams-Brice stadium next week. ESPN will televise the game; kickoff has been changed to 8:08 p.m.



USC linebacker Patrick Hinton celebrates after the Gamecocks' 23-7 victory over N.C. State Saturday in Raleigh. Hinton had three interceptions and one fumble recovery to lead the way for USC.

SPORTS BRIEFS

USC continues winning ways

USC's volleyball team won three games on the road during the weekend, pushing its record to 21-8. The Lady Gamecocks have won their last eight matches and 14 of their last 15.

Friday night, USC played at Memphis, beating Memphis State 15-9, 15-2, 12-15, 15-11. The win put the Lady Gamecocks in first place in the Metro Conference with a 4-0 record.

On Saturday in Oxford, Miss., the Lady Gamecocks defeated South Alabama 16-14, 15-8, 15-12, and host Mississippi 15-6, 15-1, 15-6.

USC is tied with Florida State for 10th place in the South region.

Intramurals have winners

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Men's C Runner-up: Charles Branham

Men's Open Team Champion: Cavaliers

Men's Open Team Runner-up: Delta Organization

Fraternity Team Champion: Sigma Alpha Epsilon

Fraternity Team Runner-up: Alpha Tau Omega

Hinton's interceptions key to Gamecock victory

By JOHN MILLS III
Staff writer

USC linebacker Patrick Hinton was where the turnovers were.

Hinton intercepted three passes and recovered a fumble as the Gamecocks defeated the North Carolina State Wolfpack, 23-7, in Raleigh Saturday.

When the Gamecocks' defensive team took an early fall break during the first two quarters of their loss to Georgia Tech, it seemed nothing

could be done to salvage the 1988 season. However, the defensive performance displayed by USC Saturday was top-notch.

The entire group of 11 was excited to play a full game of football, and Hinton was the most outstanding. Not only did he want to win the game, he strived to be everywhere the ball was, his coach said.

"Hinton is always around the ball and that is what makes him a good football player," head coach Joe Morrison said.

The Wolfpack got as close as the 16-yard line

when Hinton intercepted his first pass. Shane Montgomery had thrown several flat screen passes in a row. Eventually, the defense figured out what the offense was doing, and Hinton placed himself in the path of the ball.

When he intercepted his second pass, there were similar circumstances. Montgomery began throwing lazy screen passes down field, and Hinton jumped in the way before the ball had even been released. Many of the reporters in the press box wondered if Montgomery had intentionally thrown the ball to Hinton.

When Hinton recovered the fumble, Bobby Harrell did come down with a clean reception, but Hinton was in the game to win. He went for the ball, too. When they both came down, Hinton ripped the ball away from Harrell and advanced five yards.

ESPN, who televised the game, awarded Hinton the player of the game award. He seemed to take his sudden fame in stride when asked about his interceptions and fumble recovery.

"I caught the ball, and I broke out, and I just ran for the end zone," he said.

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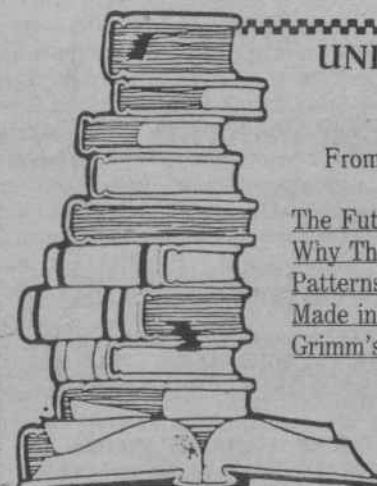
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