

J.K. YORK/The Gamecock

Gamecock freshman forward Joe Rhett lays in an easy score in USC's Monday night blowout of Coastal Carolina. Rhett led the Gamecocks with nine rebounds and also scored 12 points in the victory.

Balanced scoring paces Gamecocks

By JEREMY GARLINGTON and JEFF NICHOLS
Staff writers

The USC basketball squad equaled its best start since the 1973-74 season by running away from the Coastal Carolina Chanticleers 92-65 Monday night at Carolina Coliseum.

The Gamecocks improved to 12-3 on the season by defeating their second non-conference opponent in three days behind a balanced scoring attack from both the starters and the bench.

"It was a great team win and great effort tonight," head coach George Felton said. "We are pleased with the win. We came out with some intensity."

From an offensive standpoint, the Gamecocks could virtually do no wrong, shooting a blistering 61 percent from the field. Meanwhile, the Chanticleers came out shooting poorly, hitting only 28 percent of their shots in the first half.

Center John Hudson opened the USC scoring at the 19:34 mark, tying the score at 2-2 and entering his name in the record books. Hudson's basket surpassed the 100,000-point mark in the Gamecocks' 81 years of basketball history. Following this milestone, Hudson hit a 12-foot jumper to put USC in the lead for good.

Hudson's baskets were the beginning of a 17-2 spurt which gave USC a 17-4 lead with little more than four minutes gone in the contest.

Down 25-8, Coastal managed a slight comeback, going on a 18-9 run to cut the USC lead to eight on a Rich Scantelbury jumper with 5:47 remaining. However, the Chanticleers would come no closer as USC went on a 10-2 scoring run to close the first half and lead, 46-28.

Coastal Carolina head coach Russ Bergman blamed his team's performance on a lack of mental preparation which seemed to affect his team's shooting. The Chanticleers managed to connect on only 34 per-

cent of their shots for the game.

"At this time during the season, I thought we would be ready to play a team like South Carolina," Bergman said. "We were not mentally prepared for this game."

Coastal scored the half's opening 4 points to cut the lead to 14, but that's as close as they came as USC put the game out of reach with another strong performance from Felton's reserves.

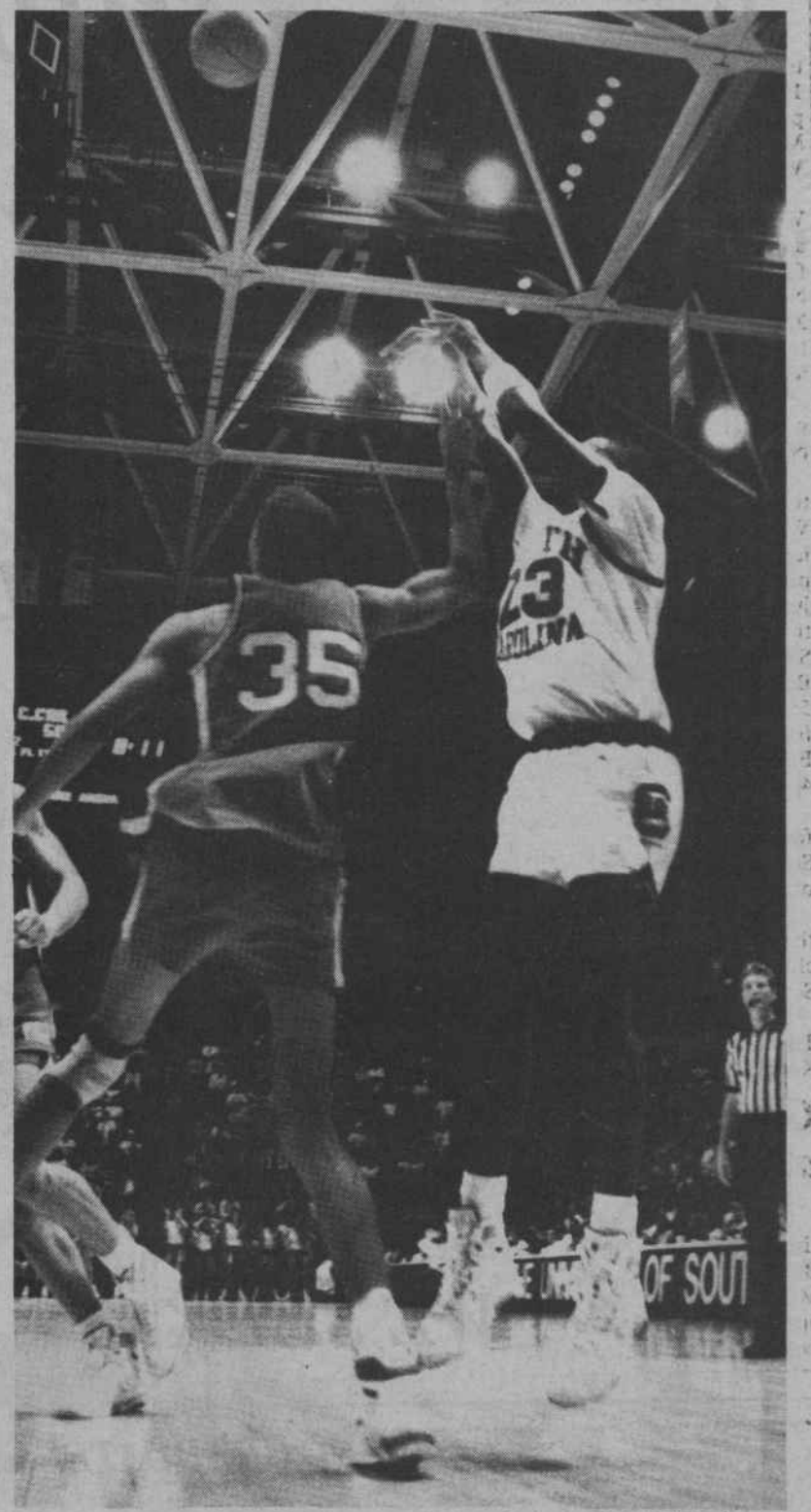
"Everyone who came in off of the bench contributed, and that's good to see. That ought to help us later on in the season," Felton said. "Michael Glover came in and did a nice job for us. He's played well of late. Jo Jo (English) is playing with more confidence and Jeff (Roulston) has played much better."

Roulston was a perfect five-for-five from the field for 10 points, freshman Troy McKay scored nine points and was perfect on five free-throw attempts, while Glover and English added eight points apiece. English gave the crowd of 6,865 reason to cheer in the second half when he took a Roulston outlet pass and dunked at the 12:03 mark to put the Gamecocks up, 61-41.

Something else to cheer about was the steady play of senior Bill Vernau, who celebrated his 22nd birthday with four points and two assists. Vernau capped the scoring on a crowd-pleasing, game-ending layup to give the Gamecocks their final 27-point margin of victory.

The starters weren't bad, either. Center Hudson led the Gamecocks with 15 points, freshman forward Joe Rhett scored 12 points and grabbed nine rebounds, and point guard Brent Price added 14 points.

Scantelbury led the Chanticleers with 17 points, followed by Derek Wilson with 16 and Robert Dowdell



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USC freshman guard Troy McKay shoots a jumper as a Coastal Carolina player sticks a hand in his face. The Gamecocks defeated the Chanticleers 92-65 Monday night at the Carolina Coliseum.

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Opinions expressed in THE GAMECOCK are those of the editors and not those of the University of South Carolina.
The Board of Student Publications and Communications is the publisher of THE GAMECOCK. The Student Media Department is the parent organization of THE GAMECOCK.
Change of address forms, subscription requests and other correspondence should be sent to THE GAMECOCK, Box 85131, University of South Carolina, Columbia, S.C. 29208.
Subscription rates are \$18.00 for (1) year, \$10.00 per fall or spring semester and \$4.00 for both summer sessions. Third class postage paid at Columbia, S.C.
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