

The Batter's Circle

By D.R. Haynes

Mets may be headed to World Series again

For the past few seasons the New York Mets have been the most dominant team in the National League. They have won their division two out of the last three years, and they look as if they plan to successfully defend their title again this season.

Back in 1986 the Mets picked up the theme, "You gotta believe" towards the end of the season. They really started believing when they won their division and took the National League Pennant by whipping the Houston Astros to earn a trip to the World Series.

The Mets met the Boston Red Sox in the World Series, and it took all seven games to determine a winner. An unforgettable error committed by Red Sox first baseman Bill Buckner proved to be the play that would give the Mets their first World Series Championship since 1969.

Last year the Mets won their division but was ousted in game seven of the League Championship Series by the Los Angeles Dodgers. New York was highly favored to win because of some injuries occurring in the Dodger lineup late in the season. Furthermore, the Mets had the better regular season record racking up 100 wins with no team finishing close to them. Pittsburgh finished second and 15 games behind New York.

This year the Mets are in the hunt in the National League East with a 39-32 record. They lead the Chicago Cubs, who are 40-33, by one percentage point through Sunday.

The Mets rank fifth in the National League in pitching with a team ERA of 3.22. Their 477 strikeouts lead the League. However, they tie Atlanta and Pittsburgh for the fewest number of shutouts with four.

All eyes are on pitching ace Dwight Gooden. At age 24, he has already reached an important milestone in his career by winning his 100th game. After having a short bout with drug abuse after the 1986 season, "Dr. K" has returned to his Cy Young Award winning ways. He has posted a 9-2 record to go along with a 2.56 ERA

and 90 strikeouts this season.

David Cone was the main man for the Mets last year. He registered a 20-3 record for his team. Cone led his team in strikeouts with 213. His rising popularity brought about the "cone heads" who were some Mets fans wearing plastic cones when Cone pitched. Cone has not found nearly as much success this season with a 4-5 win-loss record and an inflated 4.46 ERA.

Sid Fernandez and Bob Ojeda were probably disappointments for the Mets by winning only 22 games between them last year. If these two get on track the Mets could show off a four man rotation with four 20-game winners.

The Mets may be a predominately pitching powered team, but they are not too shabby offensively either. Howard Johnson, after being the subject of many trades, is having his best year of his major league career. He is leading his team in batting with a .289 average. In the power categories he has 19 homers and 45 RBIs which also lead the Mets.

Second on the club in homers is Darryl Strawberry with 15. Last year the "straw man" made a legitimate claim at the National League MVP award only to lose out to Kirk Gibson of the Dodgers.

Strawberry belted 39 dingers to go along with 101 RBIs. Strawberry is having a hard time getting hits with a sub par .224 batting average at this point in the season.

Quietly, Kevin McReynolds moved into superstar status by having a fine season last year with a .288 average, 27 homers, and 99 RBIs. McReynolds is doing well this season with a .283 batting average complemented by seven homers and 31 RBIs.

It would not surprise me to see the Mets win their division again with all of their talent. Their destiny at the beginning of the season looked ominous with fights among teammates occurring in spring training.

It seems, however, that they have put their problems behind them and are continuing to win. There have been lots of surprises in baseball so far but don't be surprised if the Mets end up in the World Series again this season.

Gadd acquitted in steroids case

By MARY PEARSON
Editor in chief

A former USC assistant football coach is looking forward to returning to his job as an assistant coach at the University of Utah after what he called the trial of his life.

"The best part of the whole deal was to be able to go back to work again, and one of the first things I have to do is to thank all the people at work and in Columbia who supported me through this ordeal," said Tom Gadd.

Gadd, 42, was one of four former assistant coaches indicted April 19 by a federal grand jury in connection with steroid charges. He was acquitted of the two misdemeanor steroid charges by a jury last Wednesday.

During the two day trial, Gadd listened to testimony by assistant football coach Jim Washburn who claimed he and Gadd had arranged to get steroids for a player having problems gaining weight.

"Basically the whole case came down to a conversation that took place five years ago at William Brice Stadium. I was amazed at the difference in memory everyone exercised when they were on the stand," Gadd said during a telephone interview Monday.

Washburn testified that Gadd helped obtain steroids for former South Carolina linebacker Carl Hill. An article by The Associated Press quoted part of Washburn's two hours of testimony.

"I think Carl was frustrated about his inability to gain weight, and he asked us about the possibility of using steroids. We left it at that. We told him if he was serious, for him to think about it — it was

"I felt I was innocent all along. When you feel that strongly about it you have to present your case. I wouldn't have gone to the court room with it if I hadn't felt that strongly."

Assistant football coach, Tom Gadd

a serious matter —and if Carl indeed wanted to try steroids to come to us."

After Hill told the coach he wanted to give steroids a try, Washburn said the coaches would pay for them. He did not recall paying for the drugs, however, the article said.

But Gadd contended that he told Hill to see a physician and get a prescription for the steroids if he wanted them and that he said nothing about helping him obtain steroids.

According to *The Greenville News* it was this differing testimony and the instrumental testimony of Mike Hooten that brought the innocent verdict.

In the article by *The News* Gadd's lawyer Joel Collins said that Hooten testified although Coach Washburn asked him to consider using steroids, Coach Gadd was not a part of that, and "that in fact Washburn told him he should keep that a secret from Coach Gadd."

The incident that led to Gadd's arrest was an article that appeared in *Sports Illustrated* in which former USC football player Tommy Chaikin told

his story of the horrors of steroid use. In that article Chaikin claimed that steroid use among USC football players from 1983-87 was widespread.

It was this article that prompted an investigation by the U.S. Attorney's office and the State Law Enforcement Division.

The investigation led to the arrest of four former assistant coaches Gadd, Washburn, Keith Kephart and Tom Kurucz.

The other three coaches pleaded guilty to the charges earlier this past month. One other man was charged and later pleaded guilty on June 15, John Landon Carter of Maryland. All are awaiting sentencing.

According to *The News* Gadd could have been sentenced to a maximum of two years imprisonment and fined \$101,000 if convicted on both counts.

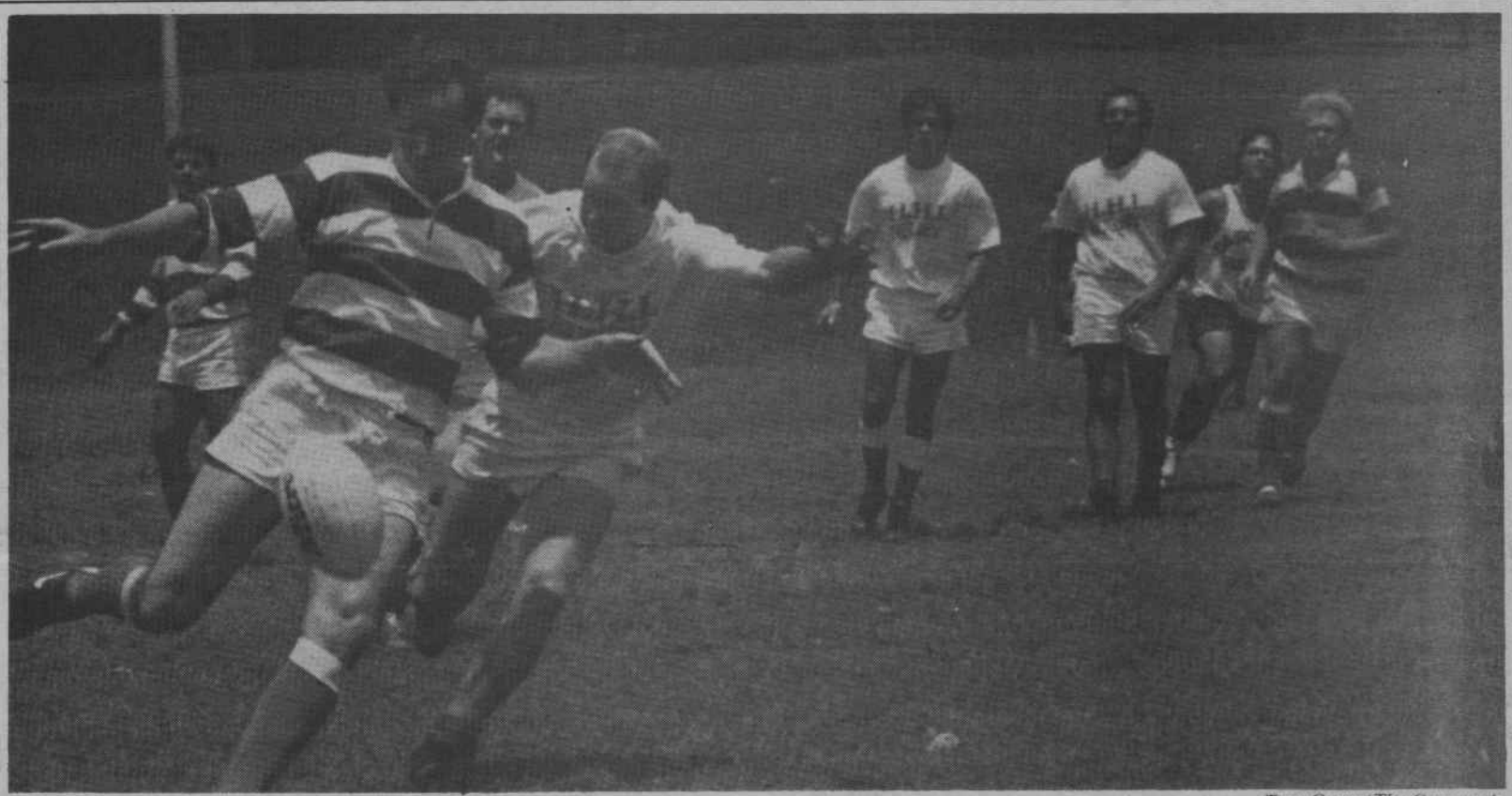
Gadd, however, said he never doubted the outcome of the trial, adding that he felt there had been unfairness in the way the whole case was conducted.

"I am glad it turned out that way. I am sorry it had to start in the first place. I also think that other coaches had a chance to speak to the investigators where I did not. If I had, maybe it wouldn't have gone as far as it did," he said.

He added, "I felt I was innocent all along. When you feel that strongly about it you have to present your case. I wouldn't have gone to the court room with it if I hadn't felt that strongly."

Gadd said his next big challenge is getting the preparations done for the first day of practice and getting the players fit for the first big game of the season in September.

Gadd said he's looking forward to closing out this particular chapter of his life.



Tara Gurry/The Gamecock

Old White wins 12-6 over Hilton Head Island June 17 in one of the Palmetto State Rugby games. For more information on playing rugby, call Jim Cross at 245-4561.

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residence halls.

"We all believed that after one semester it would be old news, and she wouldn't have to put up with much abuse. But she was hearing all of these things from her peers about what people were saying about her at Carolina, and that really made her feel bad.

"My fight for visitation never concerned my daughter. I was simply responding to the concerns of my constituents. It's unfortunate she is being made to suffer by some cowards," he said.

Fair, an ex-officio member of the USC Board of Trustees, was the leading supporter of restricted visitation at USC. The board voted in April to phase out overnight, opposite-sex visitation over the next four years. This fall, Burney residence hall will house women with restricted visitation and Douglas will similarly house men.

Miss Fair was not assigned a definite space in housing for the fall, although she had applied for Wade Hampton as her first choice.

Vice President for Business Affairs

Richard Wertz said Miss Fair's assignment, and those of others students as well, may have been held up in order to present her with the option of living in Burney.

USC has not yet received formal notification of Miss Fair's decision.

Student Body President Marie-Louise Ramsdale said she was sorry Miss Fair would not be attending USC.

"We would have worked with her to make her a part of the university system," Ramsdale said. "I think the majority of the students understand that she was not the instigator of the investigation into our visitation policy.

"I'm sorry if any threats were made. I'm sure there were some made in jest, but I doubt any were made seriously."

Rep. Fair said he would not attempt to change the visitation policy at the school his daughter decides to attend.

"I don't anticipate having to get involved at another institution," he said. "I think there is enough concern now that someone else will take the reigns, as it were."

Head for the mortuary.

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