

SPORTS BRIEFS

Pep Talk *Continued from page 8*

straight year with 60 or more wins. They are phenomenal.

So why am I predicting the Lakers' first round opponent, the Houston Rockets, to extend their series to five games? To back up all the hype I'm giving this thing, that's why. Oh yeah, and Olajuwon will give them problems too. Their series gets underway Friday night at The Forum.

The second-seeded team in the West, the San Antonio Spurs, is coming into the playoffs having pulled off one of the success stories of the year. The Spurs had the best turnaround in league history after a dismal finish last year. Rookie phenom David Robinson is a force inside. San Antonio will meet the Denver Nuggets Thursday night at The Hemisphere. The Spurs in four.

Also on Thursday, the Portland Trail Blazers will host the Dallas Mavericks. With all the talk about San Antonio, many have forgotten about the Trail Blazers who finished the year with the same record as defending champ Detroit. Portland over Dallas in four.

Friday's other Western Conference first round contest will feature the Phoenix Suns and the Utah Jazz at The Salt Palace. They'll be some great matchups in this series like John Stockton against Kevin Johnson, and Karl Malone against Tom Chambers. The Jazz in five.

I'm running out of room here, but looking on down the road to the best-of-seven conference semifinals, I see Detroit knocking off the Knicks in five and Chicago over the '76'ers in a hard fought

seven-game thriller.

The Bulls will then get a little sweet revenge against Detroit in another seven-game affair for the Eastern Conference championship and the right to advance to The Finals.

In the Western Conference, the Lakers will somehow beat Utah in a tough seven-game war. The Jazz have more potential to neutralize L.A. than any other team in the league. A healthy Magic Johnson won't let it happen though.

The Lakers will next meet the upstart Spurs who will knock off the Trail Blazers in the other Western Conference semifinal, gaining some valuable playoff experience along the way. It won't be enough to beat L.A. though for the conference championship. Not this year. The Lakers will win it in

six and head back to The Finals.

That sets up L.A. and Chicago. Magic and Michael. As much as I'd like to pick the Bulls, it won't happen this year. The Lakers home court advantage will again be a key. Magic will claim his sixth ring as the Lakers win another seven-game series.

Once again, L.A. is atop the league.

By then it will be June. My dad, a die-hard baseball fan who ignores the playoffs, will laugh when he hears the Lakers won it again. After his good laugh, I'll probably check the baseball standings closely for the first time since April and discover that, lo and behold, the Braves are 17 games back.

I guess neither one of us will have missed a thing.

Tennis

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was defeated by FSU's Baker and Preng 6-3, 7-6.

The Lady Gamecocks' number two team of Nall and Dietch set back the Lady Seminoles' duo of Tee and Wagoner 6-3, 6-3 while at the number three doubles position, Culik and Wiese teamed up to defeat FSU's Ivy and Webster 5-7, 6-1, 6-3.

The Lady Gamecocks regular season record now stands at 17-5.

USC's next competition will be May 8-14 at the NCAA Tournament in Gainesville, Fla.

Editor's Note: Results from the women's Metro Conference tennis championships were not available Sunday at press time. The Gamecock regrets the delay.

Williams shatters decathlon record

USC track star Phillippe Williams continued his outstanding season over the weekend at the Mt. SAC Relays in Walnut, Calif.

Williams finished second in the decathlon while shattering the USC school record. Williams finished with 7,598 points, surpassing Wade Brantley's 7,406 points in 1988. He also became an automatic qualifier for the NCAA Track and Field Outdoor Championships to be held May 30-June 2 in Durham, N.C.

Other Gamecock performers were Darren Davis, whose pole vault of 16' 4 3/4" was a personal record. The 4 X 100 and 4 X 400 relay teams also turned in their best times of the season. The 4 X 100 team of Robert Brooks, Nigel Stoddart, David Arnold and Chris Love finished in fourth in their section with a time of 40.84.

The Gamecocks and Lady Gamecocks will be in action on Saturday as they host the Gamecock Invitational at the Weems Baskin Track on the USC campus. The event begins at 9 a.m.

Williams named player of the week

USC junior pitcher/outfielder Brian Williams was named the Coppertone National Player of the Week by *Collegiate Baseball* magazine.

Williams came within three outs of pitching a no-hitter last week against Georgia Tech, the 12th-ranked team in the country.

Williams, who is from Fort Lawn, S.C., was a pre-season All-America pick and struck out 13 batters in that contest. It was his second career start and second two-hitter against Tech.

Softball team wins two in Chattanooga

The Lady Gamecock softball team won two and lost one game in the partial Chattanooga Tournament Friday. The remainder of the tourney was cancelled due to rain.

USC crushed Furman 11-2 in their first game as Dawn Lantiere was 4-for-5 from the plate with a triple and an RBI.

The Lady Gamecocks blanked Georgia State next 2-0. Angie Lear was the winning pitcher, improving her record to 26-11. Lear's season ERA is .82.

USC lost its final game of the day to Northwest Louisiana by a 3-2 score.

USC's record is now 45-12. Next action is today as the Lady Gamecocks will meet Furman in a doubleheader. The first game begins at 3 p.m. at the Lady Gamecock Field. A free trip to Myrtle Beach will also be given away during the doubleheader.

Golfers finish 11th in last tournament

The USC men's golf team finished the regular season this weekend as they placed 11th in the Bank South Eagle Invitational Tournament, played in Savannah, Ga.

The Gamecocks, who finished with a team total of 875, were led by junior Brett Quigley, who finished in a tie for seventh place. Quigley's scores were 72-69-72 for a tournament total of 213.

Senior Rick Williams, in his last tournament appearance as a Gamecock, finished in a tie for 28th place with scores of 70-77-72 for a total of 219.

USC looks toward Metro and NCAAs

The Lady Gamecock golf team finished in fourth place at the Woodbridge Collegiate Golf Tournament at the Woodbridge Golf Club in Kings Mountain, N.C.

USC improved their chances to go to the NCAA Championships in May by finishing ahead of Furman, Kentucky and Duke, who were all ranked ahead of the Lady Gamecocks.

Sophomore Debbie Eckroth once again led the way for the Gamecocks, finishing in a tie for seventh place with a total of 229.

The Metro Championships begin May 4 in Destin, Fla. at the Sand Destin Resort. USC will play host to the NCAA tournament May 23-26 at the Arthur Hills Golf Course on Hilton Head Island.

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