

Hints might help with heat, passion, football



Brant Long

Pep Talk

Every year about this time I get that warm feeling down in my tummy.

No, it's not from the easy, light-hearted evenings of fraternity rush.

And, no, it's not from the excitement of my carefree, whirlwind social life.

It's that ever-present athletic demon of the southeastern United States: football.

You got it. It's the time of year when the leaves crumble to the ground, students and fans alike break out their sweaters and sweat-shirts to cope with the chilly weather and ... wait — chilly weather, leaves crumbling? Let me start over.

It's the time of year when the scorching, earth-crumbing heat makes Williams-Brice Stadium feel like an oven and young men and women who may have (how should I say this?) drank like fish during tailgating, start drooping like flies. God is letting us football fans know that, "Hey, the thermostat up here *does* work."

So much for my vivid introduction. This, my friends, is a guide to those who, for some reason, may not know what every USC student should know about Gamecock football.

Maybe I'm not the most qualified to give this guide to you, but I have been a Gamecock fan since just before birth and I would rather rip out my innards (for our gentle readers from the North, that means guts) than to pull for Clemson. So, I think I'm qualified enough. Of course, you really have no say in the matter.

Anyway, here are some helpful tips to carry with you to each and every USC home football game.

1. Please don't come to Williams-Brice in long pants and a sweatshirt. This isn't Antarctica, this is the South. And, ladies and gentlemen, unless you live on the sun, it does not get much hotter than it is here. Shorts and a T-shirt are usually appropriate, but anything cool and comfortable will

leave your arms free to make obscene gestures at the official who calls back a Gamecock touchdown because of illegal motion.

2. Don't wear a hat from some college that isn't even playing. For instance, it is USC vs. Duke and you strut in with your UCLA hat on. Unless you're jetting out to L.A. after the game to cheer the Bruins on against some other beach bums from California, support your home team.

3. I mentioned it earlier, but I'll reemphasize this point. Don't drink a brewery's worth of beer before the game. You'll probably end up tossing your cookies on some powerful alumni or you'll pass out and wake up Monday or Tuesday on Row 32.

4. Don't try to carry on a conversation during "2001." Just give it up.

5. When they announce scores at halftime, don't ever, and I mean ever, cheer when Clemson is winning a game. It's just bad etiquette.

6. This is the same as No. 5, just insert Miami of Florida.

7. Yell ... loudly.

8. When the official makes a call in USC's favor act as if he just gave you a million dollars. If he calls a penalty against USC, act as if he just shot your dog.

9. Even if the Gamecocks get down, don't give up hope. Veteran USC fans know what I mean: Clemson (49-0), Florida State (59-0). The guys are doing their best no matter what they score.

10. Forget about steroids and George Rogers. That jazz is over.

11. Don't give the cops the beach ball if it starts flying around the student section. Dear Mr. Policeman, visitation is restricted enough; don't cut out our mindless fun.

12. Gamecock football is different from anything any of you new fans have ever seen. Sit back and enjoy.

With these simple tips, you will appear as educated in Gamecock football as Sparky himself. Oh, that reminds me, tip number 13. Sparky rules at Williams-Brice. If Sparky, or any one of his garnet clad troops, gesture for you to be quiet or urge you to stand up, you'd better move.

Football season is a passion here. Enjoy the 1990 season, and Go Cocks!



Junior linebacker Joe Reaves readies on defense in last season's 24-3 victory over Western Carolina. USC begins the 1990 season Saturday at home against Duke.

Gamecocks ready for action against Duke

By STEVE JOHNSON
Staff Writer

"Starting out against the defending A.C.C. Champions doesn't make it an easy start but it's an exciting time of the year because it's time to play football."

So went the opening remarks at the first weekly press conference of the season from head coach Sparky Woods who will lead the Fighting Gamecocks onto the field to play against the Duke University Blue Devils at 7:00 p.m. Saturday night at Williams-Brice Stadium.

A definite challenge lies ahead for USC when they try to contain the explosive offense of the Blue Devils.

One of Duke's main weapons is tailback Randy Cuthbert, who was second in the ACC in rushing last season with 1,023 yards and third in the ACC in receiving with 50 catches for 470 yards. The quarterback tandem of Billy Ray (2,035 passing yards and 15 touchdowns in 1989) and Dave Brown (1,479 yards and 14 TD's) should be one of the nation's best quarterback combinations.

Duke head coach Barry Wilson says the two quarterbacks have both been playing so well that he will not name a starter until after Friday's practice.

A quick look at the Gamecocks roster reveals the return of plenty of fine talent. Among those re-

turning are school-career scoring leader Collin Mackie, who made 12 of 19 field goal attempts in 1989 and has yet to miss an extra point after 86 attempts. Punter Darren Parker was fifth in the nation last year with 49 punts for 2,170 yards and a 44.3 yards per punt average.

Leading the way offensively will be runningback Mike Dingle, who rushed for 502 yards and 6 touchdowns last season and wide receiver Robert Brooks who caught 34 passes for 471 yards and 4 touchdowns in 1989.

Defensively, the Gamecocks return leading tackler linebacker Patrick Hinton (108 in '89), defensive end Corey Miller (77 tackles, 7

QB sacks) and free safety Leon Harris who lead the secondary with 3 interceptions last season.

The big story at the quarterback position lies with the tremendous amount of pressure there will be on new QB Bobby Fuller, who will have some big shoes to fill following in the footsteps of USC career passing leader Todd Ellis.

USC is ranked number three in the nation in terms of schedule toughness.

The Gamecocks hope to make it through the tough schedule in good enough shape to try and notch their first ever bowl victory.

Duke coach nervous but looking forward to Gamecocks

By The Associated Press

DURHAM, N.C. — Duke head football coach Barry Wilson will have more than the usual first-game jitters when the Blue Devils play at USC this weekend.

"I have been on a lot of trips in my coaching career, but there is not one that will be more important to me personally," Wilson said at his weekly news conference Tuesday.

The Saturday game will mark the head coaching debut for Wilson, an assistant for the past three seasons under Steve Spurrier, who is now the head coach at Florida.

Wilson said he was glad the Blue Devils, the defending Atlantic Coast Conference co-champions, are opening the season with a tough opponent. The Gamecocks were 6-4-1 last season, including a season-opening 27-21 victory over Duke.

"I'd rather not get some false impressions of our team by playing a patsy early," Wilson said. "To be honest, I'd rather go and play a good football team that is representative of the rest of our schedule."

Wilson named senior Billy Ray, who beat out junior Dave Brown, as the starting quarterback Monday.

Ray started the first eight games last season and threw for 2,035 yards and 15 touchdowns. Brown started the last three games and threw for 1,297 yards and 11 touchdowns in victories over Wake Forest, North Carolina State and North Carolina.

"Billy earned the starting position. It was certainly not a case of Dave doing anything poorly. Based on our evaluations, Billy was literally just a nose ahead of Dave," Wilson said.

"I feel certain both will play, but there is no set number of plays predetermined for either one of them," he said.

Wilson is concerned about the health of all-ACC tailback Randy Cuthbert, who ran for more than 1,000 yards last year despite not starting until the seventh game. The junior has not been able to practice at 100 percent because of a slight knee inflammation.

"I don't think he's as quick now as he was at the end of last season, but he may be running stronger," Wilson said. "He's added about 10 to 12 pounds, but its good weight."



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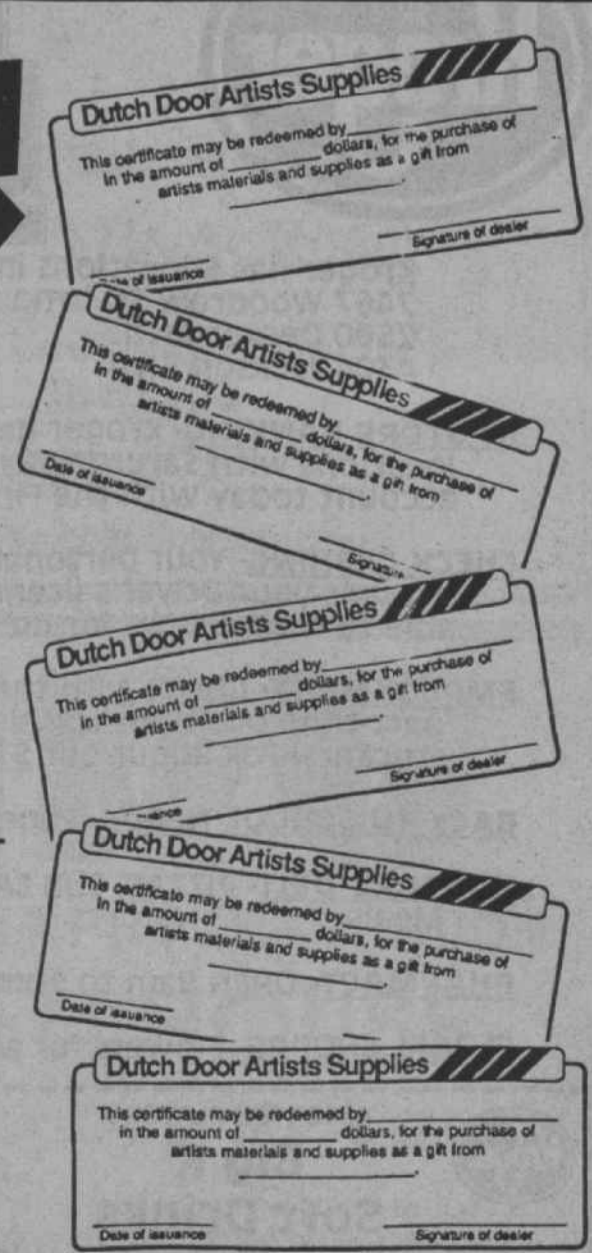
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