

Monday, December 10, 1990

Junior guard scores 26 as USC pounds Temple

By DAVID CARAVIELLO
Staff Writer

The USC men's basketball team did more than just win a ballgame Saturday night at Frank McGuire Arena.

With an 87-63 shellacking of Temple, the 24th-ranked team in the Associated Press poll, USC was able to string together two complete halves of basketball for the first time this season and show marked improvement at the free-throw line. More importantly, they proved that last week's victory at the Tournament of Champions was not an aberration.

"I'm just really proud, and to me the MVP is the team," said Felton, coach of the 21st-ranked Gamecocks. "We put together two solid halves. I've always said once we do that, we'll make a lot of progress, and tonight we took another step toward being a very good team."

The Gamecocks did it offensively. Guard Jo Jo English connected on seven of eight three-point shots, including seven straight, tying a school record and finishing with a game-high 26 points.

The Gamecocks did it defensively. Like quick starts? It doesn't get any quicker than this: Joe Rhett takes the opening tip from center Jeff Roulston and hits a layup. Guard Barry Manning steals the inbound pass and goes in for another layup. The next inbound pass gets tipped and ends up in Manning's hands again, and the junior nails a 15-footer. It's 6-0 before the standing-room-only crowd of 12,516 has filed into their seats, and English makes it 9-0 on his first try after Temple guard Mark Macon misses two free throws.

And only 59 seconds into the game.

The quick start even astonished Felton. "We had one of the most unbelievable starts I've ever been associated with. We were on fire," Felton said.

But this game belonged to English, who turned it into his own personal highlight reel with his offensive explosion and with his defense on Macon. The 6-foot-4-inch English even rejected a shot by heralded 7-foot Temple center Donald Hodge in the second half.

"I don't think of myself as a three-point shooter, I think I'm more of a scorer," English said. "But I have confidence in myself that I can make it, and my teammates have confidence in me to make it."

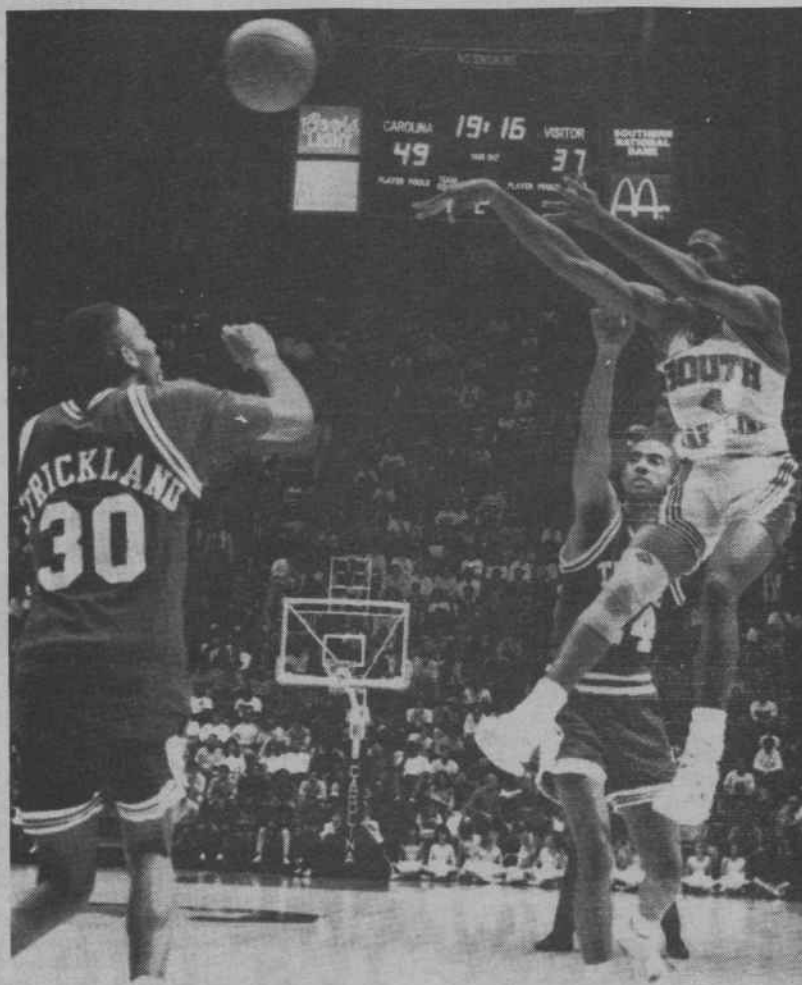
"Tonight (Temple) played a zone, and I was looking more to penetrate and pull up. But when the three-pointer was there, I took it," he said.

English's outside shooting forced Temple Coach John Chaney to switch from his patented match-up zone defense and employ a man-to-man.

"I have not seen any team in the nation that is better or (more) well-coached than South Carolina," Chaney said in a prepared statement. "On offense, they are tremendous."

But English was not the whole offensive attack. Manning had a stellar game of his own and scored 16. Rhett used some slick inside moves to score 20. Roulston, who held Hodge to only seven points, scored nine, and Michael Glover chipped in eight.

English's offensive efforts will surely overshadow the defense he played on Macon. The Temple guard needed 24 points to reach 2,000 for his career, and English held him to 22. Macon had only eight at the half and scored most of his points on long jumpers in the waning moments of the game.



Renee Meyer/The Gamecock

USC guard Jo Jo English elevates for a shot in Saturday's 87-63 win over 24th-ranked Temple. English led all scorers with 26 points.

Only twice did Temple threaten to make the game close. The Owls went on a 14-5 run midway through the first half and cut a 14-point lead to seven on a Vic Carstarphen three-pointer and two free throws by Hodge. But Felton called a timeout with his team leading 36-29 and halted Temple's momentum. English came out after the timeout and hit a three-pointer, and Manning added one of his own after an Owl turnover to make it 42-29. The threat was over.

Temple cut the lead to seven, 60-53, with 10:49 to go in the game, but three straight baskets by Glover boosted the lead back up to 12. Temple would get no closer than 12 the rest of the game.

"We came back a couple of times, but they were able to hit the outside jump shot all night," Chaney said.

The victory gives the 5-1 Gamecocks their third straight win over a big-time opponent and gives them a good shot at moving into the AP Top Twenty next week. Temple drops to 2-2 with the loss.

Glover was best able to put the game into perspective. "We wanted to come out and prove we belonged in the Top Twenty and prove last week wasn't a fluke," the senior captain said. "We wanted to show we were legitimate, and we did."

Comeback story complete for Gamecock forward

By DOUG AUBE
Sports Editor

Joe Rhett's comeback story is complete.

The 6-foot-8-inch junior from Columbia's Eau Claire High School has returned to the USC basketball team in full force after last season's pacemaker surgery.

The starting forward for Coach George Felton is the Gamecocks' leading scorer with a 15.1 average after hitting seven of 12 shots and scoring 20 points in Saturday night's win over Temple.

"The medical profession gave him his clearance, and he felt good," Felton said. "I think that's behind us. When we first recruited him, I thought Joe Rhett had tremendous potential. I don't think that's changed."

Rhett downplays his good play this season.

"At first, I thought it (his basketball career) was over," Rhett said. "Right now I'm happy to be playing and that the doctors gave me the OK to play."

The Rhett story started last season when Rhett began experiencing a shortness of breath during a USC road trip following USC's game with Louisville on Feb. 8. Felton convinced Rhett to see a doctor and, upon examination, it was determined he had an irregular heartbeat.

Rhett's surgery was successfully performed on Feb. 22, and the USC basketball team rode the success into an inspirational 93-80 win over Virginia Tech that night.

"The whole situation was hard to adjust to," Rhett said. "But the surgery went well."

Next came a long road of recovery for Rhett in which he had to face both the physical and mental part of getting his life back to the level he wanted.

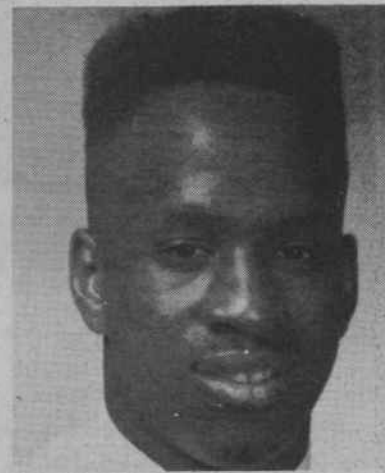
Rhett made enough progress to be given permission to sit with his teammates on the bench on March 3 in USC's game against Florida State.

"Sitting was hard, just being able to watch and not being able to play was tough. It was something I had to do though," he said.

Then came the off-season and the process of getting back in shape.

"I wasn't able to work out with the team. I couldn't lift weights with them or run with them," Rhett said. "I tried to get in the best shape I could."

The question of whether or not



Joe Rhett

Rhett was going to be able to play, or even if he would play if he was allowed, was still unanswered. The death of Loyola-Marymount's Hank Gathers after a heart attack further complicated the matter.

"It made me see how easily it could happen. I wondered if I could or should play again," Rhett said.

But the fire still burned inside Rhett, and when his doctors gave him clearance to play and the university worked out the legal paper work with his lawyers, Rhett and his family were faced with a tough decision.

"I decided it (playing) was something I wanted to do. I was in a good shape, and the team was all behind me," Rhett said. "The whole thing was a total team effort. The guys were real supportive of me."

"There are a lot of people in similar situations — people who have been there. And they have been real supportive of me with letters and calls."

"They say I have been a real inspiration to them," he said.

Rhett has also been an inspiration to his team. He has been the Gamecocks' leader this season making the all-tournament team in both tournaments USC has been in (the Great Alaska Shootout and the Tournament of Champions). Rhett has been one of the big reasons why the Gamecocks are 5-1 and nationally ranked.

"This is his third year, and he's really matured," Felton said. "He's starting to come into his own. I can't sing more praises about him."

It seems the question of whether he would be the same player after surgery has been answered as the Joe Rhett comeback has come full circle.

Gamecock athletics reach highs, lows in 1990 seasons

From Staff Reports

The 1990 sports campaign was a diverse one for USC, from the joy of the Gamecocks joining the Southeastern Conference to the fire at the new fieldhouse. From USC's victory over No. 4 North Carolina in basketball to Beth Hunt's decision to leave the Lady Gamecock basketball team for a pro career overseas, here is a recap of a very interesting year.

Baseball: The Gamecocks completed their 20th consecutive winning season, finishing with a 33-25 record and third place in the Metro Conference.

Head coach June Raines picked up his 550th career coaching victory with a 3-2 win over Louisville in the Metro Conference Tournament in Hattiesburg, Miss.

Men's Basketball: USC finished the 1989-90 season with an even 14-14 record and finished fifth in the Metro.

Women's Basketball: The

Lady Gamecocks finished the 1989-90 campaign with a 24-9 record, advancing to the Sweet 16 of the NCAA Tournament and finishing the season ranked 16th.

Head coach Nancy Wilson got her 300th career win with a 64-46 win at Cincinnati. USC was also the Metro Conference regular-season champs.

Softball: The Gamecocks finished fourth in the South Region with a 49-14 record.

Michelle Dellosso and Tricia Popowski were both named All-American. Andrea Beall, Stacy Agee and Angie Lear joined those two on the All-South Region team.

Men's Swimming: The Gamecocks finished with a 4-5 dual meet record and a 19th place team finish at the NCAA Championships.

The Gamecocks finished first in the Metro Conference for the seventh straight year. Head coach Kris Kirchner, who left USC after

the 1990 season, was named Metro and NIC Coach of the Year for the fifth time.

Ray Burton, Jeff Hike, Dennis Meehan and Rick Havekost were named All-American.

Women's Swimming: The Lady Gamecocks finished the season ranked 21st, with a 5-3 dual meet record.

USC won their fifth straight Metro Conference title. Isabelle Arnold was named All-American and Michele Smith was Honorable Mention All-American.

Men's Tennis: USC finished 17-9 and won their fifth Metro Conference title in six years.

Head coach Kent DeMars was named Region II Coach of the Year.

Women's Tennis: The Lady Gamecocks won the Metro Conference championship and ended the season with a 18-6 record.

USC advanced to the second round of the NCAA Championships, falling to UCLA 6-0. Nathalie Rodriguez, Robin Dietch and Michelle Duda were named All-Metro Conference.

Track and Field: USC finished second in the Metro Confer-

ence Championship. Phillippe Williams and David Arnold were named All-American and both men, along with Robert Brooks, qualified for the NCAA Championships.

Soccer: USC finished the 1990 season 14-5-2, advancing to the second round of the NCAA Tournament. It was the sixth-straight NCAA appearance for the Gamecocks.

Football: The Gamecocks finished the season 6-5 with an impressive 29-10 win over West Virginia on Thanksgiving night on ESPN.

It was Head coach Sparky Woods' second winning season in as many years at USC. Woods was also named defensive coach for the annual Blue-Gray All-Star Game.

Volleyball: The Lady Gamecocks finished the season with a 23-14 record.

USC won the Palmetto State Tournament for the second straight year but was eliminated from the Metro Conference Tournament in the first round.

Poor shooting by USC aids Lady Tigers in rout

From Staff Reports

Sharon Wells scored 17 points Saturday night as Clemson rolled to a 73-40 win over the Lady Gamecocks at Littlejohn Coliseum in Clemson.

USC shot only 24.5 percent in the contest, and only 18 percent in the first half, where the Lady Tigers, 5-0, took a 37-18 lead. The Lady Gamecocks also committed 27 turnovers to Clemson's 19.

USC was led by sophomore Marsha Williams with 14 points. Karen Middleton had six and freshman Wendy Moss had five.

Clemson had the edge in steals 17-4, assists 15-7 and rebounds 44-34. Twelve Clemson players scored in the game. Jackie Farmer followed Wells' 17 points with 12.

The 33-point win was the largest margin of victory for Clemson in the series.

The Lady Gamecocks fell to 3-2. USC plays a prelude to the SEC schedule in 1991-92 as they play host to the Lady Bulldogs of Georgia Tuesday at Frank McGuire Arena at 7 p.m.

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