

NCAA bid sought as USC faces Tigers

By PATRICK VILLEGAS
Assistant Sports Editor

The 21st-ranked USC men's tennis team will play their final regular season game against the Clemson Tigers this Saturday in a match that could help pave the Gamecock's road to an automatic NCAA Championship bid.

The Gamecocks, with a Region II record of 9-0, leads all Region II teams by two or more games. By solidifying the region title this weekend with a win against Clemson, USC will have made it to the championships for its third straight year and will have gained the automatic NCAA berth.

USC head coach Kent DeMars said that even though the Gamecocks will be favored, Clemson is a scary team to face.

"They are very legitimate and very dangerous," he said. "They have had some good wins to hang their hats on."

This past year, the Tigers have beaten nationally ranked teams such as California-Irvine and Atlantic Coast Conference champion Duke.

Facing a team that both DeMars and USC knows well, the Gamecocks must realize they need to

stop Clemson's Greg Seilkop, the nation's 80th-ranked singles player and 30th-ranked doubles player (along with Mike Williams), in order to come away with a solid win.

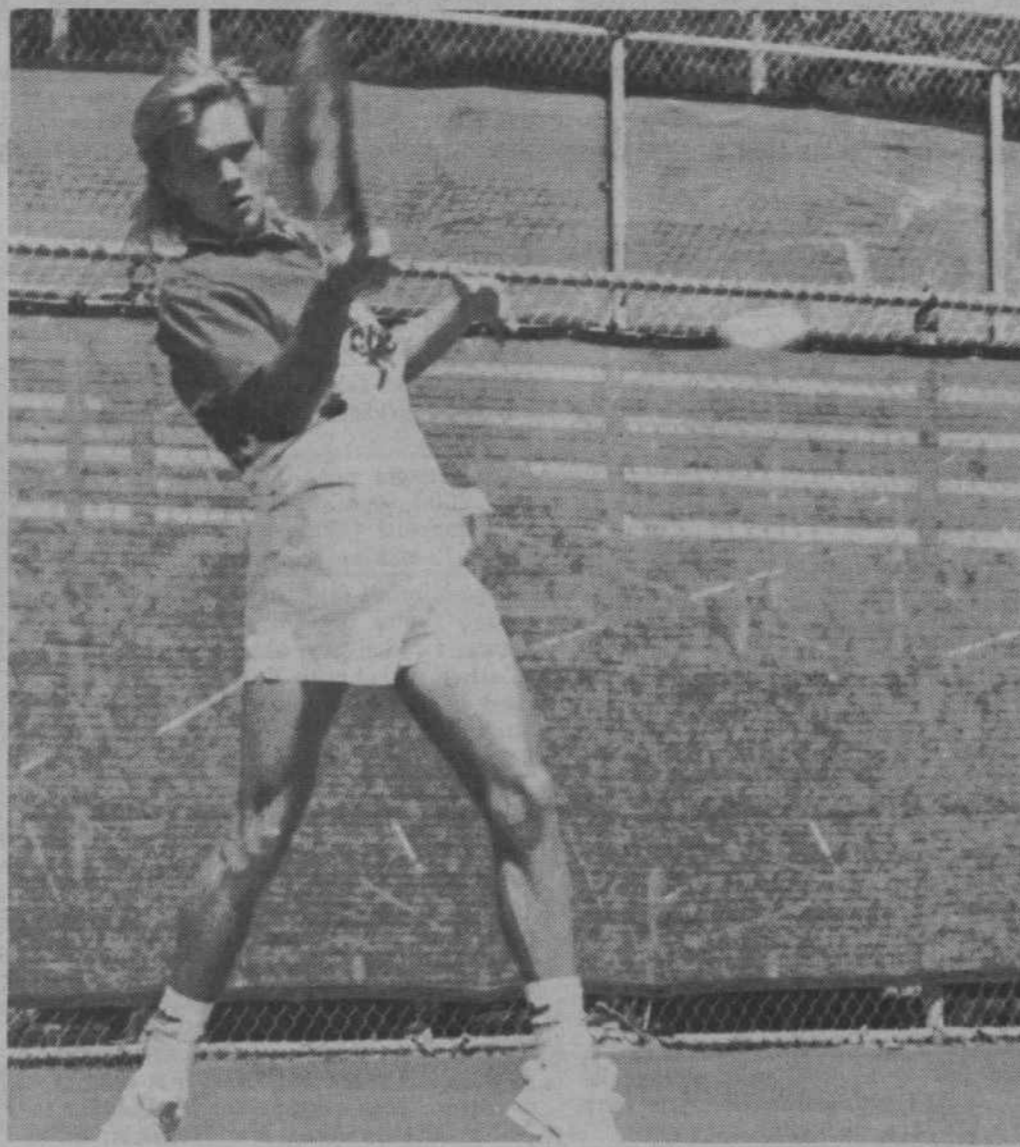
With postseason action almost inevitable for the Gamecocks, DeMars knows that if USC is to advance to the NCAA Final Four, they will need their No. 1 player to return from an injury. When Louie Gloria will return, who is currently in rehabilitation from a February injury, is unknown at this time.

Although Gloria is out of action, DeMars said anything is still possible with the Gamecocks.

"This team is (still) playing pretty remarkable winning the Metro and other games this season (without No. 1 Gloria)," DeMars said.

USC won this past weekend's Metro Tournament in Memphis beating out their closest competitor, Florida State, 40 to 34. Johan Sandberg and Eric Sydow paced the Gamecocks as they led the team to its sixth conference title in eight years.

Saturday's match between the Gamecocks and the Tigers will be held at the Sam Daniel Tennis Center in Columbia at 1 p.m.



File photo
Ranked 38th in the nation, USC tennis player David Hopper hopes to help lead the 21st-ranked Gamecocks to post-season success.

SPORTS BRIEFS

Five S.C. players drafted by NFL

By The Associated Press

Five players from the state of South Carolina were picked Monday in the National Football League draft. Two of those five played for the Gamecocks, led by linebacker Corey Miller, who went in the sixth round when the New York Giants made him the 167th player picked.

"I couldn't be in a better situation," Miller said. "I'm going to a great organization."

The Giants have talked about moving the 6-foot-2, 250-pound Miller to tight end, which he played at Pageland Central High School.

"I wouldn't mind playing tight end. I really enjoy it," Miller said. "He doesn't score many, but for the Giants, he is a very important part of the game."

USC running back Mike Dingle, whose stock plunged after a poor senior season, was an eighth-round pick of the Cincinnati Bengals as the 211th player selected overall. Dingle will join his former backfield mate, Harold Green, a second-round pick in 1990.

The final player picked from the state was USC offensive guard Ike Harris, who was picked in the 12th and final round by Seattle as the 324th player picked.

USC had only one player picked Sunday — offensive tackle Calvin Stephens, who was picked in the third round by New England. Overall, the Gamecocks had three players selected through the 11th round.

USC softball team falters in tourney

From Staff Reports

In this past weekend's Chattanooga Softball Tournament in Tennessee, the Lady Gamecocks dropped all three of their games to fall to 43-11.

USC was pounded twice by Northwest Louisiana 9-3 and 4-0, and 3-1 by Southwest Louisiana.

Earlier in the week, the USC softball team defeated Winthrop in a doubleheader at Lady Gamecock Field 1-0 and 5-4.

Today, USC will play host to Coastal Carolina in a doubleheader, and then will travel to Albuquerque, N.M. to participate in the Diamond Classic this weekend. Among the teams participating in the tourney are Iowa State, Nicholls State, New Mexico, Texas A&M and Cal Santa-Barbara.

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