

A LOOK BACK... A LOOK AHEAD

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Sports Editor

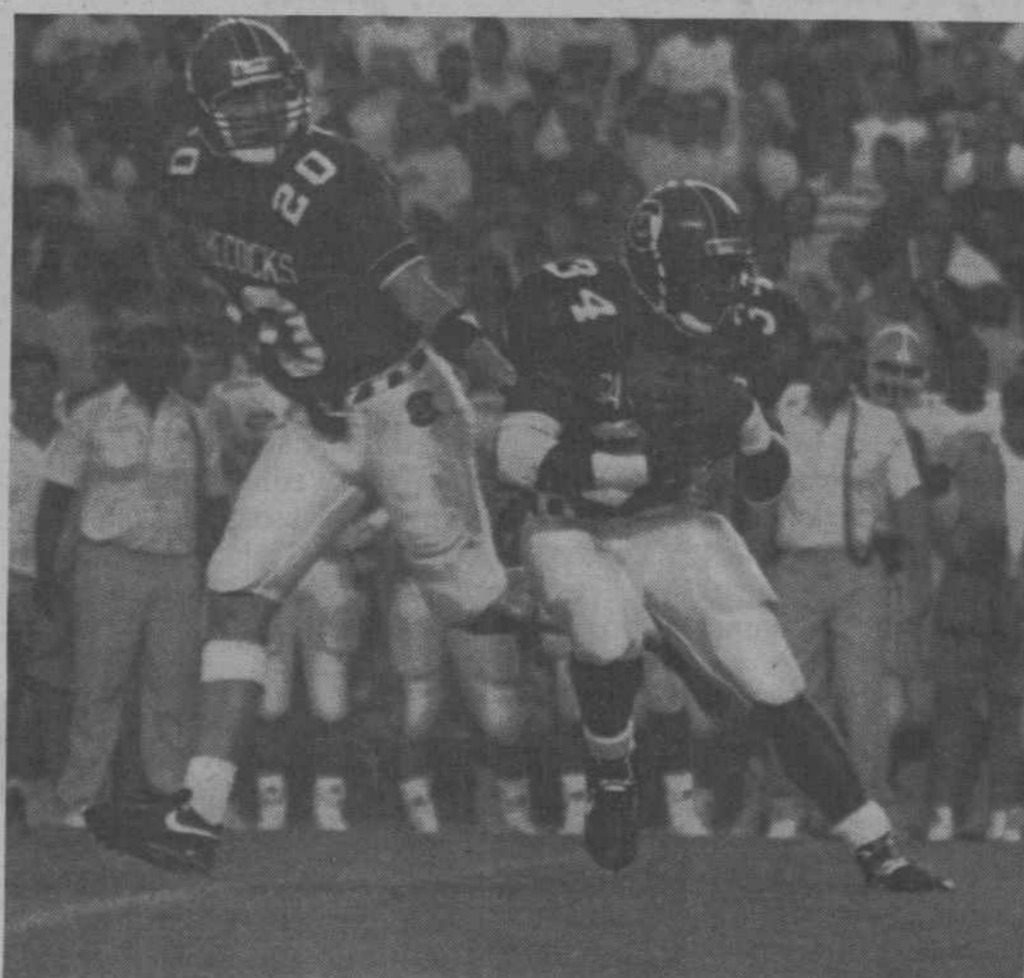
The school year is coming to a close, and it's time to look back at the events, players and games that made up sports from 1990 to 1991. Join me briefly, as we take a capsule look back into time.

FOOTBALL:

Few people realized it then, but the Gamecocks' 27-5 thrashing of North Carolina (the only team that eventual UPI National Champion Georgia Tech couldn't beat in 1990) on Sept. 8th would later stand out as USC's biggest win of the season. Quarterback Bobby Fuller (21 of 36 for 258 yds. passing and 2 TDs) led an offense that racked up 372 combined yards on the ground and in the air. Defensive tackle Marty Dye paced a tough defense that held the Tar Heels to only 91 yards rushing and 206 yards overall at Williams-Brice Stadium.

The Oct. 13th Homecoming Game against East Carolina highlighted a gutsy freshman running-back by the name of Rob DeBoer. DeBoer plowed over the Pirates for 168 yards and two touchdowns on 22 carries.

His tough running style is now no secret, but what you may not



File Photo

Bobby Fuller hands the ball off to Albert Haynes during USC's 27-5 drubbing of North Carolina at Williams-Brice Stadium on Sept. 8th.

know about DeBoer is what a modest, pleasant, down-to-earth person he is off the field. DeBoer is also one of the only athletes I've ever interviewed that I don't have to look up to. (Don't get me wrong

Rob, I admire your athleticism. All I meant was that we're both only 5-foot-10.)

BASKETBALL:

A game that I will remember for the rest of my life was the Gamecocks' 76-74 upset of fourth-ranked UNC on Nov. 30th at the Charlotte Coliseum.

Down by 14 points in the second half, USC roared back to tie the game on a Barry Manning three-pointer with under a minute left. Both teams swapped baskets until team captain Michael Glover hit the winning layup with :07 left.

The Gamecocks went 9-1 to start the season and were ranked 12th in the nation after defeating St. Joseph's and BYU in late December. USC picked up its 20th win in a NIT first-round victory over George Washington University. Guard Jo Jo English earned second team All-Metro honors.

BASEBALL:

The Gamecocks' biggest baseball win came on a busy production day when I was cooped up in the newsroom working hard on the April 8th edition.

Having already lost two of three games to the Seminoles in a weekend series at Sarge Frye

Field, USC upset top-ranked Florida State 9-4 on Sunday, April 7 behind the tough pitching of starter Jared Baker and reliever Rob Mosser.

The Gamecocks collected 15 hits while Baker took a no-hitter into the sixth before Mosser came on for the save.

USC is presently 34-18 with five games left before the Metro Tournament. The Gamecocks have been ranked as high as 14th this season.

PRO SPORTS:

NBA-

The Charlotte Hornets finished the 1990-91 season by winning a franchise record 26 games and continuing to attract sellout crowds at home night after night. But will Hornets fans continue to support the team if things don't change soon?

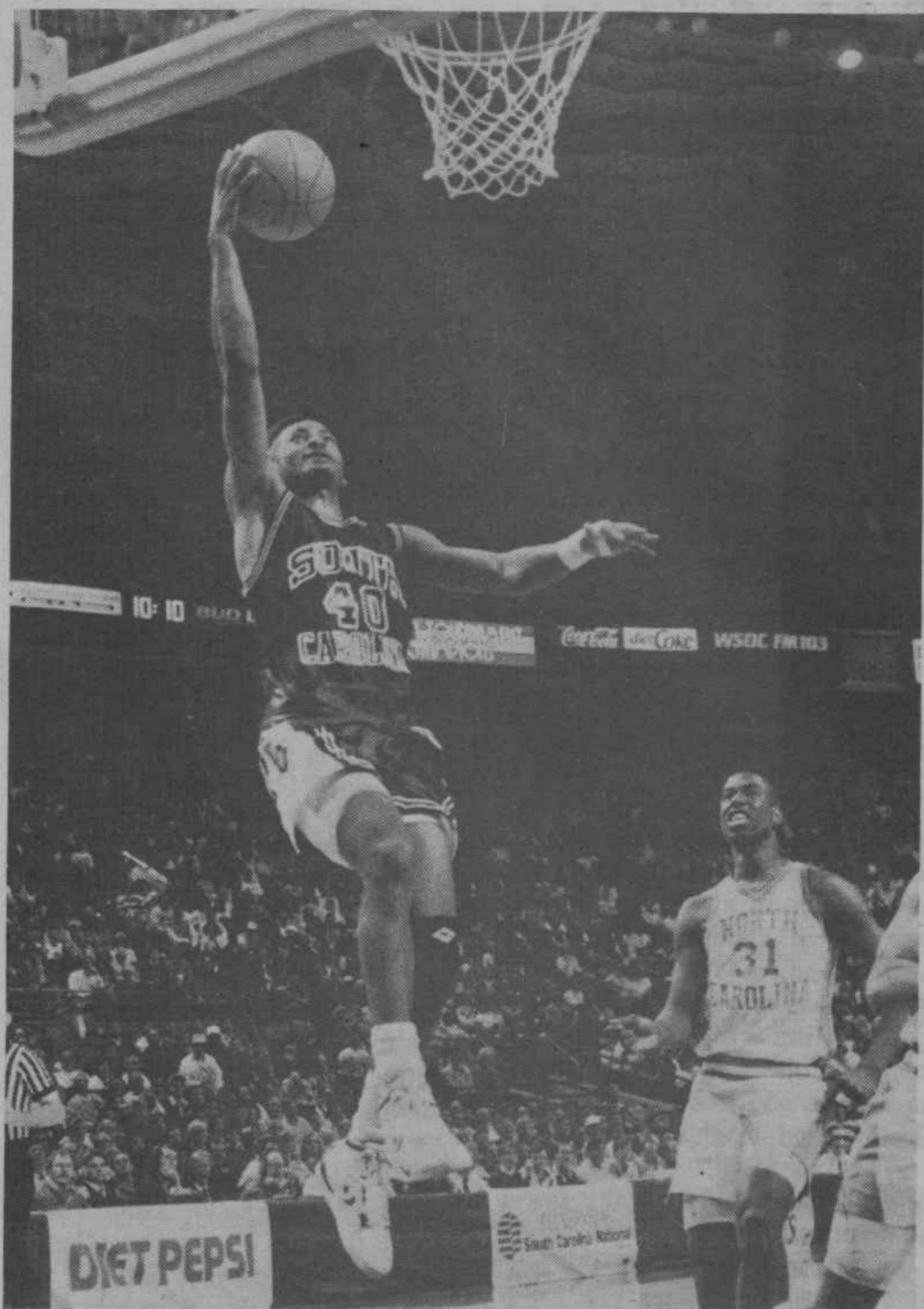
Hornets forward Johnny Newman has proven that he can score consistently, but he typifies the lack of inside aggressiveness that Charlotte needs in order to become competitive with the rest of the Central Division.

It's high time for General Manager Allan Bristow to take the blame for trading away 26-year-old Armon Gilliam (16.6 ppg, 8 rpg) for 31-year-old Mike Gminski (10.6 ppg, 7.3 rpg). Was the loss of points, boards and youthful energy really worth the two inches worth of height they gained by acquiring the old, sluggish center?

Bristow can redeem himself at the June 26th NBA Draft. With a shot at one of the top three picks, Charlotte would do themselves a favor by picking up an aggressive big man like Georgetown's Dickembe Mutombo, New Mexico's Luc Longley or Nebraska's Rich King.

My MVP for the regular season has to be Utah Jazz forward Karl Malone. Compare "The Mailman" to scoring champ Michael Jordan, and you'll notice the following. Jordan averaged only two more points per game than Malone while Malone grabbed twice as many rebounds as Jordan. As a total player, you have to give Malone the nod.

"Air Jordan" will take flight in the playoffs though. Jordan and the



File Photo

Barry Manning scores an easy layup in last fall's 76-74 upset of 4th-ranked UNC. Manning and Joe Rhett led all USC scorers with 15 that night.

rest of the Chicago Bulls will be wearing championship rings when it is all over after they defeat the Portland Trailblazers in a tough seven-game series.

The major leagues-

Sure, there are still about 150 games left, but the Braves are only a few games out of first place in the National League West. Atlanta's team pitching is the fifth best in the NL thanks in large part to the inspired pitching of veteran lefthander Charlie Leibrandt (2-1, 2.67 ERA). Catcher Mike Heath will have a good shot at winning the batting crown if he can keep it up, but the Braves need more offense if they intend to catch San Diego, Cincy and L.A.

Miscellaneous:

A special thank you to Kathy Blackwell and the rest of the staff for giving me the opportunity to do something I truly love. Endless thanks to my assistant, Patrick Villegas, for putting in such long hours and being so willing and committed.

Thanks to all my writers for contributing to this section. Thanks to all the readers for your feedback (both bad and good.) Your responses helped us to do a better job and let us know that our work was being read.

And finally, good luck to all the Gamecocks sports teams as we begin to enter a bigger and better conference next year.



File Photo

Pitcher Jared Baker hurled a no-hitter through six innings against the top-ranked Florida State Seminoles.

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