

Gamecocks hold on to defeat Virginia Tech 28-21

By RICH TAYLOR
Assistant Sports Editor

Jerry Inman intercepted a Will Furrer pass with 12 seconds left in the game as USC held on to defeat Virginia Tech 28-21 Saturday night at Williams-Brice Stadium.

In winning their first game of the season, the Gamecocks had to survive a late Tech drive that saw a 33-yard touchdown pass from Furrer to Bo Campbell with 22 seconds left negated by an illegal formation penalty against the Hokies. Inman's interception on the next play ended the Tech threat.

Inman gave credit to the USC defensive line for applying pressure on Furrer throughout the course of the game.

"It (the interception) was an easy play to make," Inman explained. "The line was making good plays all night putting pressure on the quarterback. I just reacted to the ball being thrown. I saw the ball coming the whole time and just wanted to make the play."

USC coach Sparky Woods credited a vocal crowd of 68,200 for having an impact on the game's outcome.

"I want to thank the crowd," Woods said following the game. "I thought it was a factor in the ballgame. It is certainly an advantage playing at Williams-Brice Stadium when the people are as loud as they were tonight."

"I was proud of our defense against a good offensive team. They hung in there and got the ball back. We still need more improvement, but we're getting better. I think we have gained some confidence from this win."

"Virginia Tech has a great football team. We've been struggling the last two weeks and came out

with a victory tonight. It feels very good."

Tech took an early 7-0 lead, driving 61 yards in only 5 plays on their initial possession. Starting on their own 39, tailback Tony Kennedy pieced together runs of 18, 19 and 4 yards to give the Hokies a second-and-6 at the USC 20. After Furrer scrambled 13 yards to the 7, Kennedy rumbled up the middle for the score.

Not to be outdone, the Gamecocks took the ensuing kickoff and fashioned a 6-play, 76-yard drive of their own. On first-and-10 from their own 35, quarterback Bobby Fuller found a wide-open Eddie Miller along the left sideline for a 55-yard gain to the Tech 11. Three plays later, Fuller connected with Robert Brooks on a 3-yard touchdown pass. Marty Simpson's point after made it 7-7 with 8:32 remaining in the first quarter.

After a Tech punt, USC took over on their own 48. With Fuller effectively mixing running and passing plays, the Gamecocks drove to the Tech 3-yard line. After gaining a yard to the 2, Bennett swept left behind Leroy Jeter for the touchdown. Again, Simpson's point after was true, and USC led 14-7 with 1:48 left in the first quarter.

The Gamecocks scored again with 5:17 remaining in the first half. Taking over on their own 48 after a Tech punt, Fuller led USC on a methodical drive highlighted by key pass completions to David Pitchko and Robert Brooks. On third-and-14 from the Tech 45, Fuller found Pitchko for 16 yards to the 29. Three plays later, on third-and-9, Fuller and Brooks combined for a 13-yard gain to the 15.

Freshman tailback Terry Wilburn rushed five consecutive times,

setting up third-and-goal from the 2. On the next play, Fuller faked a hand-off to Wilburn and passed to a wide-open Jeter for the score. The touchdown capped a 14-play, 52-yard drive that consumed 7:21. After Simpson's third point after of the evening, the Gamecocks found themselves on the long end of a 21-7 score.

Tech cut the USC lead to 21-14 just before the half on a 6-yard Furrer to Bo Campbell touchdown pass. The drive's big play was a 13-yard Furrer to Marcus Mickel completion on second-and-10 from the USC 15.

Tech took the second half kickoff and drove 70 yards in 13 plays to tie the score. On third-and-2 from the USC 7, Furrer found a wide-open Campbell in the left corner of the end zone for the score. Ryan Williams' point after made the score 21-21 with 9:17 remaining in the third quarter. Tech, however, would not score again.

Following a Gamecock punt, the Hokies were on the move again. But on second-and-7 from the 50, USC linebacker Robert Gibson intercepted an errant Furrer pass and returned it 16 yards to the Hokie 45.

On first-and-10, Fuller passed 15 yards to Miller over the middle. Pitchko then made a great sideline catch to give the Gamecocks first-and-goal at the Hokie 4. After Wilburn lost two yards around left end, Fuller passed incomplete to Jeter in the end zone, setting up third-and-goal from the 6. Operating out of the shotgun, Wilburn scored on a perfectly executed draw play to give USC the lead. Simpson again converted and the Gamecocks led 28-21 with 2:24 remaining in the third quarter.

The Gamecocks squandered an opportunity to extend their lead



Teddy Lepp/The Gamecock

Running back Brandon Bennett reaches for an extra yard Saturday against Virginia Tech.

when Simpson was wide right on a 30-yard field goal attempt with 9:22 remaining in the game. Tech, however, did not threaten again until their final possession, which ended with Inman's interception.

The Hokies won the statistical battle, outgaining the Gamecocks 394-328 in total offense and registering 24 first downs to USC's 18. Perhaps most importantly, though,

the Hokies turned the ball over three times, as opposed to USC's none.

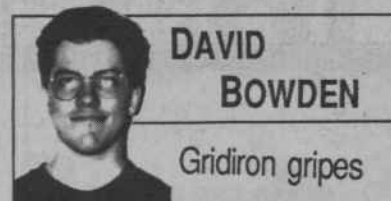
Fuller completed 17 of 24 passes for 238 yards and two touchdowns for the Gamecocks. Pitchko led USC receivers with four catches totaling 67 yards, while Bennett gained 53 yards rushing on 17 attempts.

Furrer led Tech with 194 yards

passing, but was intercepted twice. Kennedy led all rushers with 93 yards on 14 carries.

The Gamecocks (1-1-1) travel to Greenville, N.C., next Saturday for a 1:30 date with East Carolina. Virginia Tech will travel to Norman, Okla. to face the nationally-ranked OU Sooners.

Browns on comeback trail, Falcons have rare victory



DAVID BOWDEN
Gridiron gripes

Ahh, football, the elixir of life. Well...sometimes. The fourth week of the NFL season has seen many near upsets and surprises, the most exciting being the high-scoring Cincinnati-Washington game.

The Redskins scored 17 unanswered points to make it 27-10 only to have the lowly Bengals storm back with their own scoring explosion. When the dust cleared, the 'Skins had won anyway, but it proves two things: 1. the Redskins are not invincible (QB Mark Rypien almost single-handedly let Cincinnati back into the game with some pitiful passing) and 2. the Bengals aren't as terrible as I wish they were.

Let me briefly sum up a few other observations from yesterday's action:

■ Credit new coach Bill Belichick, the Cleveland Browns are back. They showed some spirit in a loss to the Northern New Jersey Giants (considering they have nowhere near the Giants' talent). Browns QB Bernie Kosar is coming back from a terrible season this past year and is playing exceptional ball.

■ Jerry Glanville got his Christmas present a little early when his trash-talking Atlanta Falcons finally backed up their hot air with a win over the Raiders. This is largely due to the performance of the Raiders' quarterback (see below). The Falcons will probably be talking about this win for the rest of the season, especially since it might be their last. I'm exaggerating, but if the 1991 Falcons can come out on top in a division with the Niners, Saints and Rams, I'll eat a whole truckload of crow.

■ Jay Schroeder, the quarterback of the Los Angeles Raiders, is horrible, pathetic and lousy (fill in your own favorite derogative adjective). I haven't seen a guy

throw interceptions so consistently since Todd Ellis. Why this loser is starting in the NFL is a mystery. Maybe Schroeder has some pictures of coach Art Shell in a compromising position, but whatever the reason the Raiders are hurting because of Schroeder's incompetence.

■ Dick MacPherson has his hands full coaching the Patriots, but his hard work is paying off. Unbelievably, the Pats beat the red-hot Houston Oilers. They might not make the playoffs, but the Pats certainly aren't the Patsies anymore.

■ One final note: I apparently didn't give Giants fans enough credit. Some of them actually were able to read and comprehend my column and were apparently mad at my comments on their team in my last column. For not recognizing their level of literacy, I must apologize. However, if *The Gamecock* is too deep for you guys, I'll try to get us to add a Think-and-Do page.

BRAVES WATCH

National League West

	W	L	Pct	GB	L10
Los Angeles	87	64	.576	—	8-2
ATLANTA	85	65	.567	1 1/2	7-3

After taking the first of a three game set in Los Angeles, Atlanta lost the next two. Atlanta only managed four runs all weekend.

*MVP WATCH:	AB	H	AVE	HR	RBI
Terry Pendleton	537	168	.313	20	79

CY YOUNG WATCH:	W	L	E.R.A.	K
Tom Glavine	19	11	2.55	176

*stats through Saturday's game

Braves Notes

Tommy Glavine, pitching on three days rest instead of the usual four, lost his 11th game of the season Sunday in Los Angeles...Kent Merker, who was regularly scheduled to pitch the contest came on and pitched two shut-out innings of relief...Ramon Martinez, the starting pitcher for the Dodgers Sunday hit a double and a solo homerun in Sunday's 3-0 victory over the Braves...the San Francisco Giants, who end the season hosting L.A., announced they will sell the orange and black tomahawks fans in Atlanta have made famous.

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