

SPORTS

Columbia woos one of new AA teams

By MATTHEW VALLEE
Staff Writer

Columbia is competing with 13 other cities for one of two new AA baseball teams.

The teams will be affiliated with the new Major League expansion teams, the Colorado Rockies or the Florida Marlins.

"We feel very good about the application we made," said Columbia Mayor Bob Coble. "As we understand it, of the cities, we are the only one to have a double-A stadium."

Coble said the city's primary role is to provide a stadium for the new team and make sure it meets all double-A requirements.

Capital City Stadium was remodeled during the winter of '90-'91 to meet the requirements.

City government is awaiting a report from the AA Selection Committee Inspection Team on the stadium, which the city spent \$1.5 million to renovate.

"The city pays for the stadium, the Mets pay for promotions and everything else," Coble said.

If Columbia does get the AA team, the Mets franchise will have to move.

Bill Shanahan, the Columbia Mets general manager, said it is too early to tell where the Mets will transfer to.

"The transfer wouldn't happen until 1994," he said, because Columbia will not know about getting the AA team until then.

"Columbia has a 50-50 shot at getting the double-A team," Shanahan said. "Things are going real well. Chances of getting the team are better than they have been."

"We are committed to getting double-A in some form. Columbia is on the move. It is a city of the right size that it should have double-A baseball."

Bob Coble
Mayor of Columbia

Shanahan indicated some pluses that will draw the attention of the AA Selection Committee to Columbia, including increased attendance at the stadium, which is up to 100 percent at Mets games.

Another attention getter is the South Atlantic League All-Star game played at the Capital City Stadium Monday night.

"If we don't get one of the double-A teams, we will seek to buy the Charlotte Knights which is double-A. Charlotte is moving to triple-A," Coble said.

"So we are committed to getting double-A in some form," he said.

"Columbia is on the move. It is a city of the right size that it should have double-A baseball," Coble said.

Coble said AA baseball will play a vital role in expanding Columbia as a sports town, especially with USC in the Southeastern Conference.

The name of the AA team, if Columbia gets it, will be the Bombers. The name comes from the Doolittle Raiders who trained in Columbia for a bombing mission over Japan during World War II.



Jeff Mabon/The Gamecock

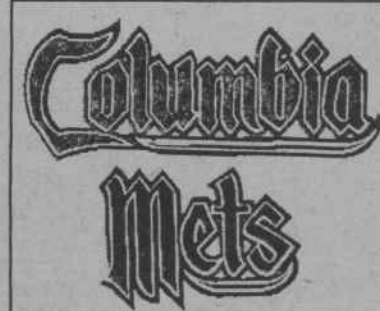
Mayor Bob Coble is pushing hard for the Columbia Bombers.

North wins All-Star game

By JACK DUNN
Sports Editor

Columbia's All-Star first baseman Omar Garcia knocked in the winning run on a one-out single in the ninth inning to lift the Northern Division Stars to a 4-3 win in the 33rd Annual South Atlantic League All-Star game Monday at Capital City Stadium.

Garcia, who led the Mets with a .302 average and 37 RBI in the season's first half, hit off eventual loser Ian Doyle and knocked in MVP Gary Mota to down the Southern Division in front of a stadium record 5,798 fans (the stadium holds 6,000). Mota, who got three hits, received Howe



Sportsdata's Star of Stars SAL Bat Award in a post-game presentation.

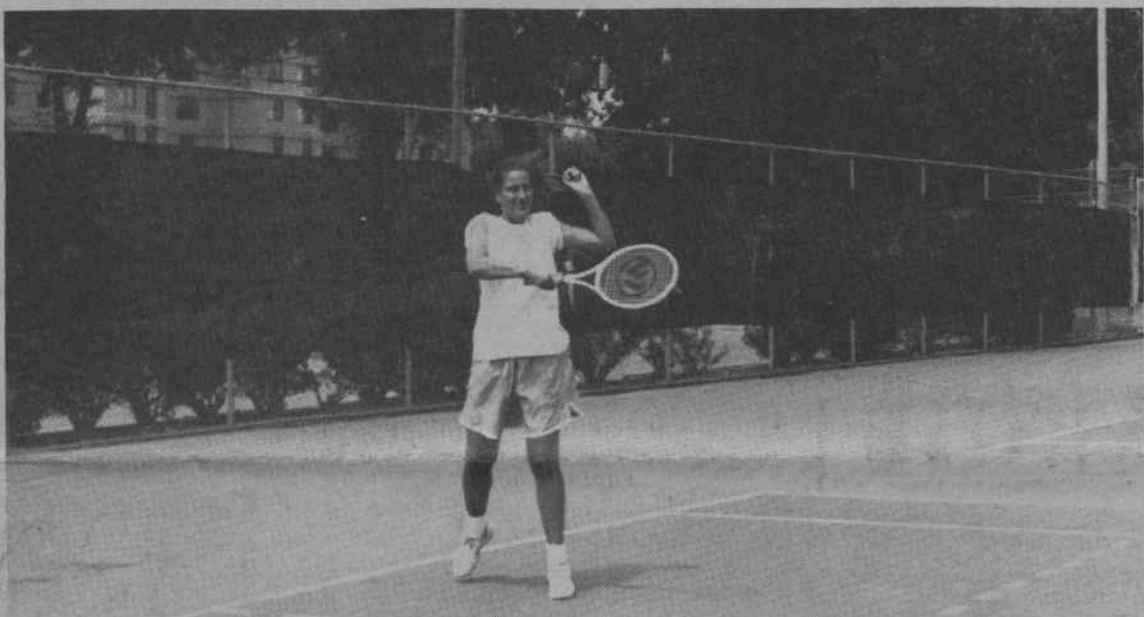
Mets General Manager Bill Shanahan was impressed by the turnout and the prospect of bringing an AA expansion team to Columbia.

"We think this is the turning point for AA expansion in Columbia," Shanahan said. "With the turnout at Monday night's game, we have a solid push for a Double-A team by '94."

"We're proud to be a part of this community effort to do the best we can to impress the expansion committee. Hopefully, they can look at this as a sign that Columbia is on the move," Shanahan said.

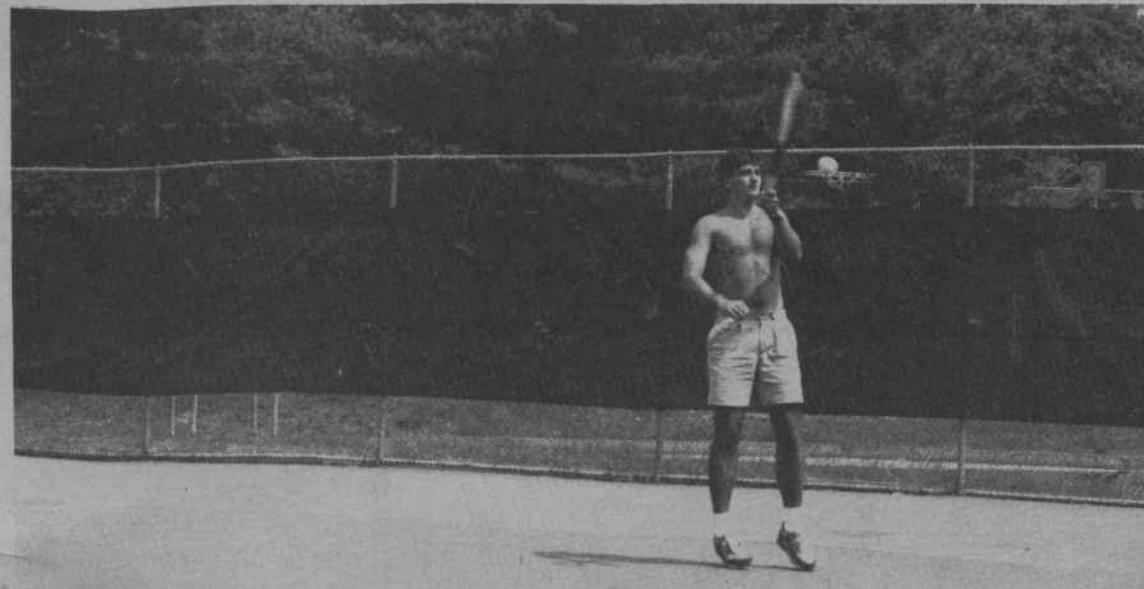
Tonight is "Discount Beverage Night!" at Capital City Stadium as the Columbia Mets take on cross-state rivals, the Spartanburg Phillies to kick off the second half of the season. Game time is 7:05 p.m. All beverages cost only 50 cents when purchased before 8 p.m.

Wimbledon hopefuls



Janet Smith, journalism senior, practices her stroke at Sol Blatt P.E. Center, while. . .

Jeff Mabon/The Gamecock



Rodney Foushee, also a journalism senior, works on his game.

Chang falls in first round

By the Associated Press

Michael Chang became the first major upset victim of this year's Wimbledon tournament, losing in straight sets today to Briton Jeremy Bates.

The seventh-seeded Chang sprayed shots off the court in all directions in a 6-4, 6-3, 6-3 loss to Bates, ranked 113th in the world.

Chang was the first seed to lose in the tournament. Twenty other seeds had advanced without difficulty Monday and Tuesday.

No British man has won a singles title at Wimbledon since 1936, and Bates, as his country's top male player for the past few years, has often been used as an example of what is wrong with the country's tennis programs.

But all was forgiven today. Crowds dangled from staircases overlooking Court 14 to see the match, and a Union Jack fluttered in triumph in the crowd after Bates' victory.

Three women's seeds advanced to the second round Tuesday, though not all with the same ease.

Defending women's champion Steffi Graf and seventh seed Mary Joe Fernandez hardly broke a sweat while winning. Jennifer Capriati needed to work a little harder.

Graf, the second seed this year, swept to a 6-1, 6-0 victory over Noelle Van Lottum on Centre Court and Fernandez won by the same score against Sarah Bentley.

Capriati, the sixth seed, was on her way to a similar victory over Chanda Rubin, but lost four straight games near the end of the match before finishing off a 6-0, 7-5 victory.

"There was not a lot of rhythm out there," Capriati said of the battle of 16-year-old Americans. "I was leading, and I just should've put it away."

All 16 seeds who played Monday — 11 men and five women — also won with relative ease. The only big loser Monday was crowd favorite Jimmy Connors.

The magic missing from his game and the enthusiasm drained from his heart, Connors left his 20th and probably final Wimbledon as a pained loser.

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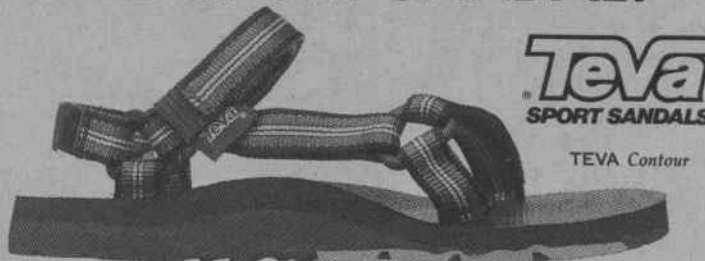
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