

Sports



USC defense looking for respect from opponents

Editor's Note: This is the first in a three-part series
By ANDREW BORGERT
 Staff Writer

Knowledgeable fans say defense is the key to a successful football, but how does USC's defense stack up against its new Southeastern Conference opponents?

When discussing defense and the SEC two names come to mind: Alabama and Auburn.

These two schools traditionally have terrifyingly strong and fast

defenses featuring excellent linebackers. Derrick Thomas, Cornelius Bennett, and the Rocker brothers, David and Tracey, are among the current NFL players who were stars at these schools.

Carolina features two linebackers, Ernest Dixon and Lawrence Mitchell, who have tremendous potential. Dixon, a junior, is touted in the Carolina Media Guide as "maybe the team's best all-around athlete."

If Mitchell's knee heals from the

injury which forced him onto the sidelines last season, his pairing with Dixon could be outstanding.

The inside linebacker position could be a problem, with only two experienced players back, Eric Brown and Mike Landry.

Brown was the team's leading tackler last season and also led with three interceptions. Landry also has three years experience, but beyond those two players, the defense has little experience.

The secondary has the most depth

of any area on the team. Starting cornerback Jerry Inman and strong safety Tony Watkins will be returning to the Gamecock lineup. Last year's other starter at cornerback, Toby Cates, has been moved to wide receiver. This makes Frank Adams the other starter.

Adams, a redshirt junior, has been highly regarded by the coaching staff. Head Coach Sparky Woods described him as the best one-on-one cover person on the squad. The defensive line will be

anchored by Cedric Bembery, the senior nose guard. He and Troy Duke are the only veterans up front. They will be joined by sophomore David Turnipseed, who has impressed observers at preseason workouts.

After starting poorly last fall, Marty Simpson showed promise at placekicker. His continued improvement, and the addition of freshman Jim Tarle for depth insurance, will solidify the kicking game for Carolina.

USC is not given much regard in the preseason polls, especially when they face a schedule with eight bowl teams and games on the road at Alabama and Florida.

The key to the Gamecocks season will be the three-game home stand to start the season. If they can pull an upset over Georgia, the season could become very exciting for fans in Columbia.

'Give blood, play rugby'

USC rugby club may do well in SEC competition

By NANCY SALOMONSKY
 Sports Editor

The hard-hitting, fast-paced sport of rugby is one of the most popular club teams at USC.

The USC rugby team is a club team which operates out of the office of campus recreation.

Rugby has the power and aggressiveness of football and the continuous flow of soccer. The mix of running and tackling makes for an intense sport.

"Our team has a good number of returners with the potential to start," said Greg Rollings, rugby club president.

Senior Wyatt Shepherd is a key player for the Gamecocks at the center and fullback positions.

"Wyatt is one of the most powerful, aggressive guys on our team. He is also a great tackle," Rollings said.

Another USC standout is senior Charles Moline. Moline, a wing forward, was named All-Palmetto in the South Carolina State Union league.

"Charles is in the Army Reserves; he is in excellent physical condition. He has great speed, and is a tough runner," Rollings said.

The Gamecocks will also look to transfer student Jay Monrad as the



Lea Clayton/The Gamecock

Wyatt Shepherd of the USC rugby club comes back from practice with a broken nose.

primary eight man. Monrad, a junior from Rockaway, N.J., rose last year and became a starter soon after joining.

"This season, we should be very competitive. Hopefully, we will be at our peak in the Southeastern Conference Tournament," Rollings said.

The Gamecock's toughest opposition should come from those teams in the SEC. USC has not played an SEC team in two years.

"Our biggest opponents come from the SEC, but our biggest rivals are Clemson and The Citadel. The Citadel was ranked in the Top 20 last year, and should be

really good this year," Rollings said.

"Rugby is not a scholarship sport like football. We are losing and gaining players all of the time," he said.

Contact club president Greg Rollings at 787-0812 for more information.



Lea Clayton/The Gamecock

Greg Rollings (l) practices with Shepherd before the nose incident.

USC Rugby Tentative Schedule

Date	Team	Place	Time
Sept. 6	Olde Grey	AC Flora	1:00 pm
Sept. 12	Carolina Olde Boys	Home	12:00 pm
Sept. 20	Citadel	Away	2:00 pm
Oct. 3	Clemson	Home	1:00 pm
Oct. 16	St. Andrews	Home	7:00 pm
Oct. 24-25	State Tournament	AC Flora	TBA
Nov. 7-8	Southeastern Conference Tournament	UGA Athens, Georgia	TBA
Nov. 14	Univ. of Florida	Away	TBA

Greg Rollings/Rugby Club President

Kristin Buehler/The Gamecock

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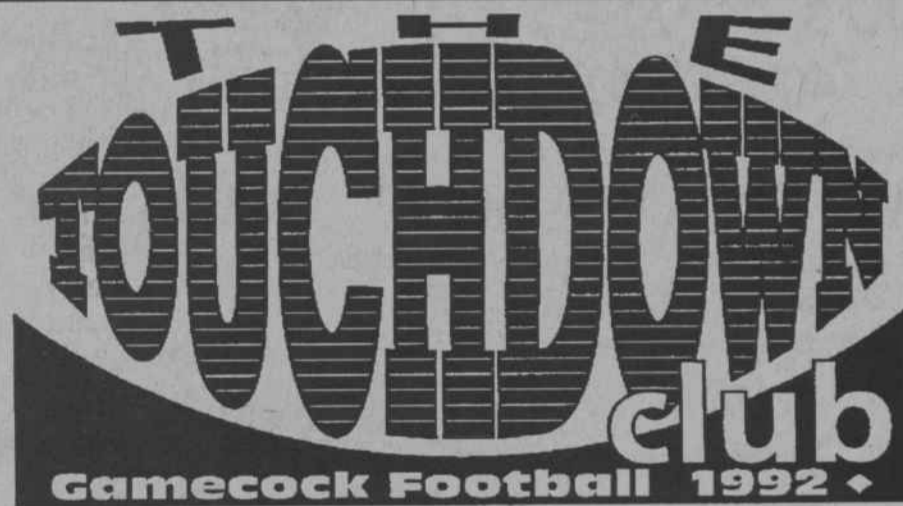
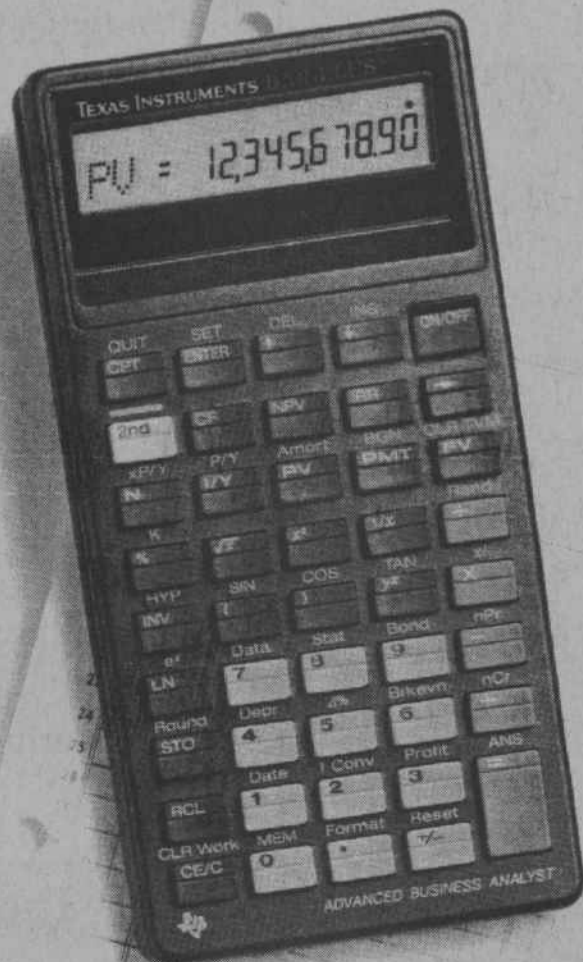
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