

Sports

Cocks looking to stop Gator streak

By TONY SANTORI
Staff Writer

The Gamecock football team goes for their fifth victory in a row on Saturday as they travel to Gainesville, Fla., to take on the University of Florida Gators.

It will be no small task if USC is to keep their bowl hopes alive because the Gators are currently ranked 11th in the nation and possess one of the country's top offenses.

Florida's "Fun-and-Gun" offense is the brainchild of Head Coach Steve Spurrier (who incidentally won the Heisman trophy while he was a quarterback at U F in 1966), and is averaging close to 400 yards per game.

The aerial attack is led by two-time SEC "Player of the Year" Shane Matthews. The senior quarterback is closing in on the all-time SEC yardage record and has thrown for 2,142 yards on 183 completions this year with 15 touchdowns. Matthews is attempting to become only the second player in history to win "Player of the Year" three times; the first player was Herschel Walker.

The Gator ground game is mostly a one-man gang as Junior Errict (no typo) Rhett is the only Florida runningback averaging more than 25 yards per contest. The 6-foot, 211 pounder has 672 yards on the season (84 yards per game) on 173 carries and has accumulated 2,643 yards for his career.

Florida's defense has been suspect at times this year and is allowing almost 325 yards per game. The squad is anchored by senior inside linebacker Carlton Miles, who has led the team in tackles last year and this season thus far.

The Gamecocks are in consideration for a minor bowl bid should Sparky Woods' team pull two more upsets. "Do-or-die" time starts on Saturday.

Freshman quarterback Steve Taneyhill is still the talk of South Carolina and will be nationally as well when he is featured on ESPN's "Gameday" on Saturday morning.

Taneyhill did struggle last week vs. Louisiana Tech, however, completing just 7 out of 20 attempts, and will need to bounce back if USC is to be victorious against the

Gators. "The Thrill" is currently 48 for 99 this year, for 736 yards and 5 touchdowns passing.

Last week, the Gamecock defense stepped forward to play their best game of the year. The "D" was headed by the backfield, specifically cornerback Frank Adams.

Adams, a 5-foot-8, 175-pound junior, nabbed "Honorable Mention" for SEC Player of the Week based on his six tackle-one interception-one kickoff return for a touchdown performance.

This week, the spotlight once again shines on the defensive backfield, for the Gamecocks are sure to see many flying "pigskins" against the Gators.

USC and Florida will be meeting for the 13th time on Saturday, but it will be the first contest since 1964. Florida leads in the all-time series with 6 wins, 3 losses and 3 ties against the Gamecocks.

Kickoff is scheduled for 12:40 p.m. at Florida Field.

The game will be televised as the SEC Game of the Week, USC's third such game this season.



Stephanie Newlin/The Gamecocks

The Gamecock defense is looking to elevate its performance for eleventh ranked Florida Gators.

Newton investigation continues

By ROB RODUSKY
Assistant Sports Editor

USC's men's basketball coach Steve Newton was hoping for big things this upcoming season. Little did he know these big things would be coming from the school's compliance officer.

USC's NCAA Compliance Officer David Didion said he is looking into possible NCAA rules violations by Newton. The investigation is revolving around USC recruit Cortez Barnes.

Barnes, who is not enrolled at USC, is believed to have been living at The Roost and receiving workout gear from school representatives.

Both of these actions, if true, would constitute major violations, according to Didion. Such penalties could include probation, ineligibility for championship events, exclusion from television games and recruiting restrictions.

Barnes, a 6-foot-7-inch, 205-pound forward, who played at Hutchinson Junior College in Kansas this past year, signed with USC but was not accepted academically because of a 'D' earned on his transcript in a math course.

Barnes' overall grade point average met the NCAA qualifications to transfer to Division I school, but USC would not accept the 'D'.

Didion made a preliminary report on his investigation to USC President John Palms this past week and hopes to wrap up his investigation today. The full report will be presented to Palms and forwarded to the SEC and the NCAA.

Newton, in his second season, said he could not comment on the allegations.

"I understand there is some concern, some investigation, into that possibility."

Asked if he be coaching the team the rest of the season, Newton

said, "I'm the coach at the University of South Carolina."

Junior Emmett Hall told The State that Barnes had spent more time living at The Roost than at his own apartment.

"Right now, I'm just trying to focus on basketball and having a really good season, maintaining classes and everything," he said.

Junior forward Jamie Watson is upbeat about Newton. "Coach Newton has assured us that he's on top of everything. He just tells us to practice hard, play hard, play together and try to get some things done before we open."

Newton and assistant coach James Holland remained optimistic on how the allegations will affect the early signing period which began Wednesday.

Holland, USC's recruiting coordinator, said he hoped to sign several prospects during the early period.

Thank you for your generosity

SPORTIN' FOOL
TIM THORSEN



Thank you, thank you, thank you. To all of you who donated your hard earned wages, I would like you to be the first to know that our hard work has paid off, literally.

As of today, Alonzo Mourning has agreed to terms with the Charlotte Hornets. This officially ends the nastiest separation this side of Woody and Mia.

Now that the Hornets have agreed with Mourning and his pencil-necked geek, I mean agent, David Falk, there remains one tiny problem. Charlotte doesn't have the money. That's right, Charlotte wrote a check their bank couldn't cash. One can only hope Alonzo dribbles as well as the Hornets' checks.

■ And now for a new Fool category, the Fool Stat of the Week. This

weeks Fool Stat of the Week comes from Wednesday night's NBA game between the Houston Rockets and the Atlanta Hawks.

The Rockets pounded the Hawks 101-82, but the Fool Stat came from Hawks' forward Jon Koncak. In three minutes, Koncak garnered no points, no assists and, you guessed it, no rebounds. In addition, he made no field goals or free throws, as you know by his big zero in the points column.

String those numbers together and you get Koncak's salary, \$3,000,000. He becomes the first person ever to statistically shoot his salary. He almost didn't accomplish the feat, not because he almost scored or did anything any human with a pulse could do, but because he almost didn't play that third minute.

Way to go, Roulston, oops, Koncak.

■ Fool condolences go out to

Patriots coach Dick MacPherson. No, not because he has the unfortunate job of trying to coach the worst football team since the Renaissance, that being the Patriots.

No, he gets condolences because he is in the hospital with a serious intestinal disorder. Of course, what can you expect from someone who had to stand on the sidelines every week and watch Patriot games up close. Geez, the guy is lucky just to be alive.

In related matters, the sidelines have been roped off for this week's Patriots/Colts game. MacPherson's doctors, and law enforcement officers, fear that anyone on the sidelines is in serious danger. All local hospitals will be on special alert, and there will be dozens of ambulances at the stadium. Fans are also urged to stay away, like they won't anyway.

■ And how about the whole AFC. As far as their Super Bowl representative is concerned, it's a crapshoot.

■ Well, take out the shoot.

'Canes new number one, but can they hold it?

ANDREW BORGERT
COLLEGE FOOTBALL PREVIEW



The mighty Washington Huskies have fallen and now the Miami Hurricanes are sitting alone atop the college football world.

These next three weeks will settle the question of who will be their biggest challenge for the national title.

This weekend sees Miami playing a highly mediocre Temple team. It's probably not the type of game that strikes the fear of God into the 'Canes. The last hurdle in their title defense is Syracuse, a team that can score with anybody but has a suspect defense.

Miami, barring a great upset, will be choosing between the Cotton and Sugar Bowls. Gut instinct says the Texas A&M Aggies will play host to them in the Cotton Bowl.

Alabama, the second-ranked team in the nation, has two tough games left against Mississippi State and the SEC title game opponent.

Auburn won't be a big challenge for the Tide, but look for at least one close game, which would drop Alabama out of the number two spot.

This scenario would leave Michigan and Texas A&M undefeated. With Michigan going to the Rose Bowl, A&M and Miami will be playing for the top spot on Jan. 1.

■ As earlier stated, Alabama plays Mississippi State in Starkville, Miss. The Bulldogs looked like world-beaters when they defeated Florida earlier this season. On the other hand, they looked poor against the Gamecocks.

Defense will be the key for both squads. Alabama has the best

defensive unit in college football and Mississippi State is no slouch either. Alabama has more talent on offense than Mississippi State, which could be the deciding factor.

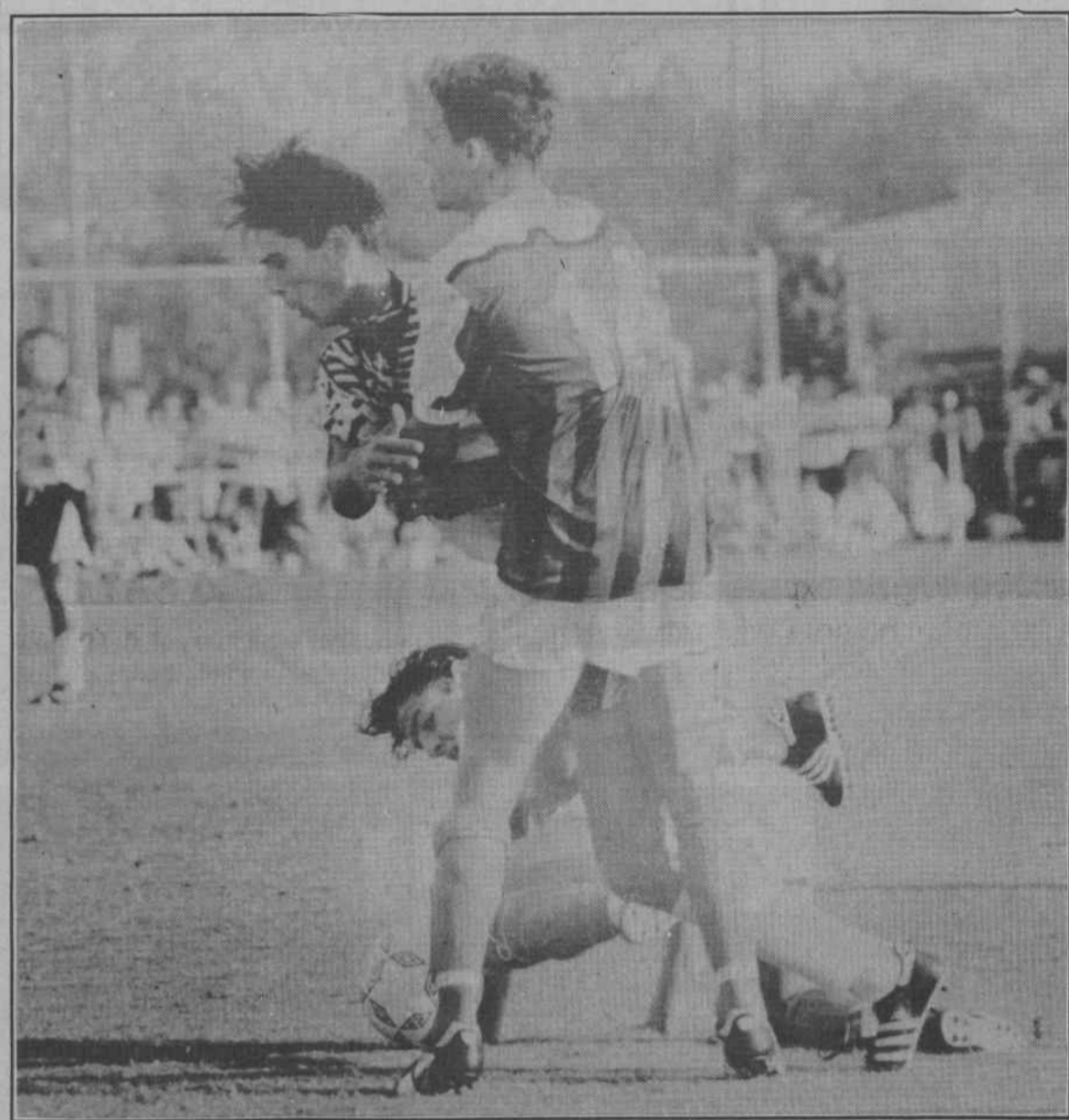
If Tide specialist David Palmer is able to break loose, it could be a long day for the Bulldogs.

■ Auburn plays host to Georgia. This is the first game for Georgia since they were beaten by Florida.

Runningback Garrison Hearst, the best player in the country in my humble opinion, needs a big game to re-establish himself as a Heisman candidate. Auburn has the ninth-rated defense in the country against the run, so there's no guarantee he will have his way.

If Hearst is contained, the pressure would be placed on the shoulders of Georgia quarterback Eric Zier, the top-rated quarterback in the SEC.

For Georgia to win the SEC Eastern Division, they need to win the rest of its SEC games. Bulldogs will roll on.



Pete Rogers/The Gamecock

Sophomore forward Chris Faklaris should help lead the Gamecocks to victory over Coastal Carolina on Sunday in first round NCAA Tournament action.

Soccer team prepares for Coastal

By NANCY SALOMONSKY
Sports Editor

When the USC soccer team began practicing in August, they had one goal in mind: to earn a spot in the NCAA Division I Soccer Tournament.

"It is a great thrill for our team to be back in the NCAA Tournament," Head Coach Mark Berson said. "I am proud for the players and staff. The guys have worked real hard all season."

The first opposition for the Gamecocks in the tournament is Coastal Carolina.

"Coastal is a strong and fast team," Assistant Coach Doug Allison said. "This is their first time in the NCAA's. We are going to have to be on the top of our game to beat them."

Carolina will be playing with the help of senior co-captain Ruben Tufino because of previous yellow card violations. Tufino, a midfielder from Santa Cruz, Bolivia, is the Gamecocks' second leading scorer with six goals on the season and 18 career goals.

Other than the loss of Tufino, the Gamecocks should be keeping the same lineup.

"We got into the playoffs playing our style of soccer we have developed and improved, so our lineup and style should remain the same, very intense and similar to the Clemson game," Berson said.

The Gamecocks must win the Coastal game on Sunday in order to progress in the tournament.

"It all comes down to a 90-minute season for us," Berson said. "The loser packs their bags.

We have no focus in the Tournament except for Coastal Carolina."

The NCAA Tournament pairs the best teams in the nation against one another. Division I NCAA soccer contains 194 teams, and only 28 teams advance into the NCAA Tournament.

"When our guys step onto the field they are proud to represent The University of South Carolina, students and faculty," Berson said.

USC plays Sunday at 1 p.m. Because of NCAA regulations, there is a \$4 charge with a student I.D.

"The home field advantage is a huge plus for us," Berson said. "I hope we have the support of as many students and fans as possible."

BEAT THIS! Gamecock Sports Staff Predictions

COLLEGE

USC vs. Florida	USC	24-20
Notre Dame vs. Penn State	Notre Dame	37-17
Georgia vs. Auburn	Georgia	31-13
Clemson vs. Maryland	Maryland	14-13
Georgia Tech vs. Wake Forest	Georgia Tech	28-20

NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE

Kansas City vs. Washington	Washington	13-10
Minnesota vs. Houston	Minnesota	20-13
San Francisco vs. New Orleans	New Orleans	20-17