

VIEWPOINTS



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USC VOICES

Do you think Sparky Woods should remain football coach?



"He needs to be evaluated on his decision making and on his record. When things are going well during a game, he makes bad decisions."

Aaron Dawkins
Media arts senior



"He should finish out his contract. He's done a good job recruiting. If we could get rid of the offensive line instead of him, we'd be doing all right."

Jennifer Webb
Sociology senior



"At the first sign of trouble, the fans scream for a coach replacement. It would be premature for the university to dive into this just because the fans say so."

Charles Renton
Government and international studies graduate



"He should be allowed to finish his contract, but if he's not doing better after that, then he should be fired."

Teesha Venning
Accounting freshman

Decisions

Sparky Woods' reluctance to take risks indication USC should find new coach

There comes a time in a person's life when he must make a decision and not think about the negative consequences that may come of it. Someone who must make such a decision in the near future is Athletics Director Mike McGee. He should make the decision to fire Coach Sparky Woods.

While the 4-7 record speaks volumes as to why Woods should be dismissed, it is not the only reason.

The play calling was downright pathetic at times. You cannot win games without taking a few chances. How many times did we see pitch to runningback Brandon Bennett right, pitch to Bennett left? We are not suggesting triple reverses on every down, but those kinds of plays keep opposing players and coaches guessing.

It does not seem like Woods has what it takes to motivate his players to the next level. In 1992, it seemed like the players were playing the final six games more for themselves and not because of Woods' coaching. How many times are we going to hear we lost because of injuries and a lack of maturity? It is up to the coach to get the players ready in case they have to step in and play.

Many people think Woods should stay because he is a nice guy who deserves another year. If that is the case, Mike Ditka would have been gone after his first game. Being nice does not win games.

The future of the football program depends on whether Woods stays. How many high school recruits will come to a school that is not looking to go anywhere but down? A new coach will bring in new blood and rejuvenate the program. McGee did a great job bringing in super basketball coach Eddie Fogler. Surely, he can do the same for football.

Woods is a great person, and we wish him the best in the future. However, it is time for a changing of the guard.

The choice is yours McGee. All you have to do is go out and do it.

Job search brings frustration, disappointment to grads

Frustration: How can you describe it? What, you may ask, am I frustrated about? My current gripe is one every college student can identify with sometimes: unemployment.

I am not talking about a casual, part-time, now-I-can-buy-more-beer kind of job, but a career. You know, the "c" word.

I have spent four years and thousands of dollars (OK, Mom and Dad spent thousands) at this university. Who knows how many hours I have spent studying, reading, researching and writing, and for what? A good education, a degree in journalism and a sense of accomplishment.

Yeah, yeah, I know all that, but ultimately, the purpose of college is to prepare us for the real world. If I have held up my end of the bargain, why don't I have a job, the happy ending to my years of work?

Everyone says the economy is rotten, all the good jobs are filled by materialistic, cutthroat

Tara Potzler

yuppies and the people of our generation are shafted.

Wonderful! Thanks for the good news. Give me encouragement and something to hope for.

Perhaps the problem is my chosen field. The arena of journalism is over-crowded and underpaid, subject to changing attitudes and demographics of our society. Forgive me for choosing something I liked, something that I could be happy doing.

Maybe I will never make a million dollars. I am not saying I want to. People tell me you cannot expect to graduate and step into a lofty posi-

tion. All I am looking for is a way to support myself with enough money for more than Oodles of Noodles and a cockroach infested rat-trap to live in.

What will I do after my graduation in December? Move home with Mom and Dad, most likely. Do not get me wrong, I love them. But I do not relish the idea of living off of them any longer than I have to.

I will keep looking for a job, writing to every newspaper, magazine and publishing company in North America. I will get their standard reply: "Thanks for your interest in our publication. Sorry, kid, we aren't hiring now. It's the economy."

There is always grad school.

Tara Potzler is production assistant for The Gamecock.

Spirit important part of Gamecock athletics

Spirit.

At USC football games, it is something that varies as much as the team's momentum. Spirit reaches its peak when the fog begins to billow and the last notes of "2001" are played and the football team bursts onto the field.

It reaches its low point when the team starts to lose in the fourth quarter and all of the fans start to leave.

In between, the amount of spirit comes and goes, depending on how good the plays are, if we are ahead or behind or the emotional level of the team.

In short, at USC, we are fair-weather fans as good as they come.

When the team is good, the fans are the best. They are decked out totally in garnet and black, cheering at the top of their lungs and attentive to every play.

When the team is losing, the fans are the worst. Silence falls across the stands, the fans become still and before long they start filing out of the stands.

When USC plays on television, it is embarrassing to us to have the camera scan the stadium when there are seven minutes left in the fourth quarter and the bleachers are half-empty.

We only had one dramatic last-minute win this season; that was in the first game against Georgia. Because our team has a tendency to lose steam in the second half is no reason to leave the minute we start to lose.

I understand about how heavy traffic can be and how crowded it is trying to walk out of the stadium. For those fans who have small children or who are elderly, leaving early may be a

good idea.

But for those people who just want to get back to the car to eat the tailgating leftovers or who give up on the team whenever it gets down by a field goal or a touchdown, there is no excuse for leaving early.

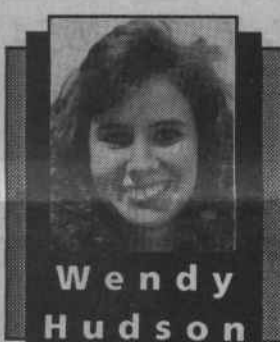
We need team spirit. To get that, we need to start with school spirit. Loyalty is an important part of building that spirit. It has been said that true USC fans are the most loyal in the country. We all need to develop that type of loyalty.

With Eddie Fogler coming to take over the Gamecock basketball team, we have the chance of becoming a competitive team. But the coach and the team can only do so much.

It is up to us, both as students and as fans, to provide some emotional support and momentum for the team. We need to be at the games, cheering at the top of our lungs. We need to be supportive of team efforts even if the team does not win every game.

This basketball season is the perfect opportunity for us to redeem ourselves for our fair-weather football behavior. We can start over as fans and start a tradition of loyalty and support.

Wendy Hudson is a staff writer for The Gamecock.



Sports fans join team bandwagons

To the editor:

One definition of bandwagon is to shift one's support to the winning side. I am not sure if this phenomenon can be aptly displayed in any area more than sports. Whichever team seems to be on top, there is always a surge of support behind it.

So-called fans of winning teams come out of the woodworks to show their undying support and loyalty. I am sure these winning teams really appreciate the support but would have appreciated it more when they were losing.

We have all witnessed the recent resuscitation of the Atlanta Braves. I have noticed a growing amount of supporters. Where have all these diehard fans been all these years? I commend the true Braves fans, faithful through thick and thin.

The bandwagon rolls through the football season as much as it does in baseball. I have my favorite teams for each sport. I have been an avid supporter of each of my teams, win or lose. Apparently, many are not as loyal as I am.

Riding the bandwagon is nothing new. There is always going to be a distinction between true fans and others with fickle connections to whomever is winning.

Eric Holcombe
Journalism junior

U.S. death penalty racist, expensive

To the editor:

As the co-coordinator of the Amnesty International group at USC, I am concerned with the misconceptions displayed in the most recent Carolina Spectator. Our group is not racist; the death penalty in the United States is.

Of the 223 American citizens put to death by their own government since 1976, only one white defendant was judged guilty of killing a black man. Blacks make up 40 percent of the 2,785 people on death row in this country.

We think this says that the death penalty is racist, but there are many other reasons that the death penalty is wrong. It costs more than life imprisonment. That is, \$3.2 million per execution, or enough money to keep an inmate in prison for 240

years. And remember, the alternative to the death penalty in a capital case is life imprisonment. That means no parole. There is an alternative, and it is cheaper.

The United States is the last Western democracy that still uses the death penalty both on its own citizens and on minors.

We do not only advocate for the offenders' lives. We care deeply for the victims, but the killing of citizens by governments for retribution is despicable. We think preventing violent crime in our communities is very important, also.

So, what have you done to prevent violent crime? The death penalty does nothing to deter it.

Please join us in the fight to abolish the death penalty everywhere.

Paul Cantrell
Sociology sophomore

SGA gives funds to exclusive groups

To the editor:

I have a question concerning the SGA senate's debate upon a funding bill for Greek organizations. It is written on the books in the

Student Treasurers Manual that "Each student organization that has been registered for 12 full months may apply for funds unless the organization is a social fraternity or sorority, a political organization, a religious group or a residence hall government."

I guess any other group that excludes members based on race, religion, wealth or creed may apply for public funds as well. Maybe we ought to give the College Republicans money to have a public function that will get support for the next presidential election. Or we could give money to the Baptist Student Union the next time it sponsors a soup kitchen at a homeless shelter. Or maybe next Halloween, we could give Preston money to help promote its haunted house.

Oops! I forgot. All those organizations do not promote activities open to the student body. Maybe certain codes were meant to be broken for certain organizations, while other organizations are denied anything from the SGA.

Jennifer Dougherty
Political science senior

LETTERS POLICY

The Gamecock will try to print all letters received. Letters should be 200-250 words and must include full name, professional title or year and major if a student. Letters must be personally delivered by the author to The Gamecock newsroom in Russell House room 321.

The Gamecock reserves the right to edit all letters for style, possible libel or space limitations. Names will not be withheld under any circumstances.



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HAPPY TURKEY'S DAY, FOLKS!