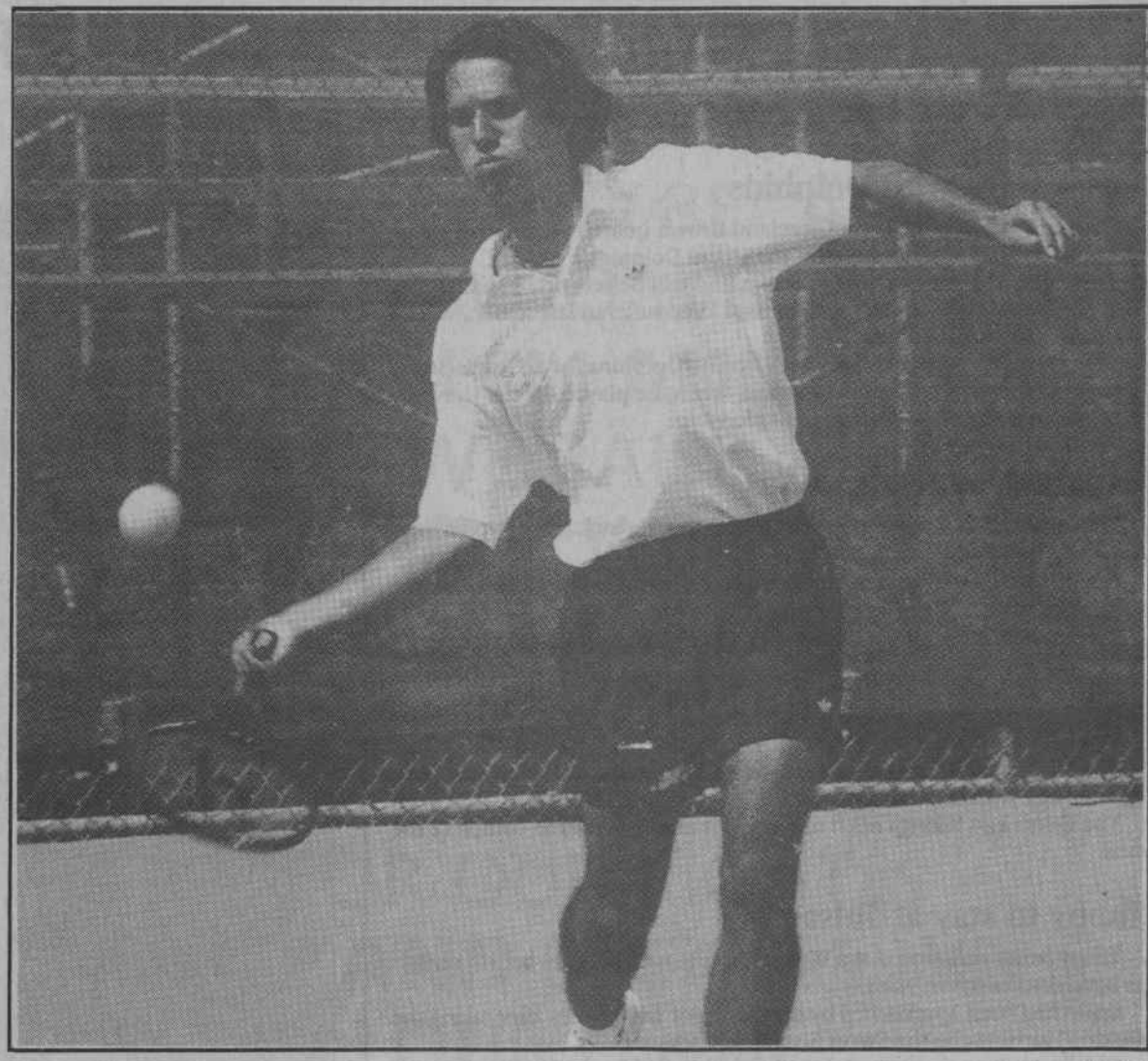


Men's tennis tames Tigers, 5-2

By TONY SANTORI
Sports Editor

The 14th-ranked men's tennis team defeated Clemson 5-2 Wednesday behind the strength of three three-set singles wins, clinching their fourth Region II championship in six years. Sophomore Maxxy Jimenez, senior Johan Sandberg and freshman Jorge Esqueda all captured crucial three-set victories in leading USC to an undefeated 11-0 region record. The Gamecocks (17-4) uncharacteristically lost all three doubles matches and subsequently the doubles point. Jimenez and Jim Panagopoulos fell to Clemson's Cris Robinson and Bas Wild. Jimenez and Panagopoulos entered the match ranked 32nd in the nation, but lost to the Tiger duo 8-6. Clemson's (20-8) Bryan Twente and

Mike Williams upset USC's 29th-ranked tandem of Sandberg and Jose Frontera 8-5. The Gamecocks' Mark Bommelje and John Steers lost at No. 3 doubles to Frank Salazar and Mitch Sprengelmeyer 8-2. However, USC rallied big in singles play. Jimenez, ranked 47th nationally, won the first set against Clemson's Salazar 6-4, but lost the second set by the same score. Jimenez captured his fifth consecutive win at No. 1 singles by winning the third set by flipping the score again, winning 6-4. Sandberg split the first two sets with the Tigers' Wild 6-3, 5-7. The Falsterboro, Sweden, native took the third set and the match 6-2. Sandberg had been out with an 11-day bout of the flu. Esqueda won the first set at No. 4 singles in a tie-breaker 7-6. Clemson's Sprengelmeyer bounced back and took the second set 7-5. Esqueda, a Guadalajara, Mexico, native, pulled out a third set victory 6-4. Bommelje won his seventh consecutive match, this time in straight-set fashion. Bommelje downed the Tigers' Williams 6-4, 6-3. USC junior Ben Cook won at No. 6 singles by defeating Clemson's Charly Rasheed 6-3, 6-2. The victory was the Gamecocks' fifth over their upstate rivals in six years, and USC has now won eight of their last nine matches this season. The Gamecocks travel to Lexington, Ky., Saturday to tangle with a different type of cat. USC and the 11th-ranked Wildcats battle at 12 noon at the Downing Tennis Complex.



Mark Bommelje won his seventh consecutive singles match Wednesday in USC's 5-2 victory against Clemson. File photo

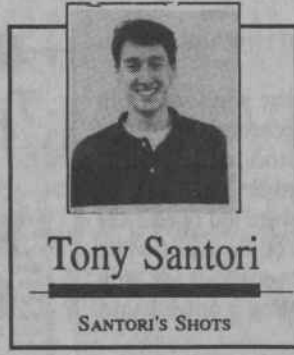
Tennis

TOP 20 MEN'S TENNIS TEAMS

1. Southern Cal.	11. Kentucky
2. Stanford	T12. UCLA
3. Texas	T12. Tennessee
4. Mississippi State	T14. South Carolina
5. TCU	T14. Ole Miss
6. Pepperdine	T14. Notre Dame
7. Duke	17. Auburn
8. Georgia	18. North Carolina
9. Miami	19. California
10. Florida	20. South Alabama

Peeping Tom, Hillary Clinton, juiced baseballs hot topics

Tiger Ragland
For those of you who may have missed it, Clemson basketball player Rayfield Ragland Jr. was arrested earlier this week on the state Peeping Tom/Eavesdropping statute. Mr. Ragland apparently was caught by campus police as he was peering into the window of a female student's apartment. Ragland bent the blinds so he could see whatever it



was that was going on inside the apartment. There are three possible scenarios to this situation:
A: Ragland was high/drunk.
B: Ragland was simply interested in the movie on HBO inside.
C: Ragland is a pervert. Figuring that Ragland IS a Clemson student/athlete, well, athlete, well, OK, enrolled at the university, I choose "D" — all of the above.

And now a response...
Loyal readers of The Gamecock editorial page may have noticed the letters to the editor this week that concerned my reference last week to Mrs. Hillary Rodham Clinton as a "bitch." I also received letters addressed to me, personally, which questioned the size of my genitalia and subsequent manhood. Some readers took offense to my reference, but perhaps they misunderstood. I was, in NO WAY, referring to ALL women as "bitches." I have a lot of respect for many women. And I am not afraid of females in power positions as one letter writer thought.

(I, in fact, voted for Amy Bigham as SG vice president.)
I won't retract what I said, because it was my opinion. As a writer/editor, I sometimes write columns. These columns contain, surprise, opinions.
And while I am still writing/editing, I will continue to write my columns. Think of me like the Buffalo Bills: They/I keep coming back and, you will just have to deal with them/me. ■ It's gotta be the ball
There seems to be an alarming amount of baseballs flying out of major league parks so far this season. Not just in Colorado either.

Everybody everywhere seems to be hitting monster home runs. ESPN's "SportsCenter" is slowly becoming nothing but highlights of dinger after dinger. I mean, sure, it's fun to hear Dan Patrick say "gone" 64 times a night. This barrage of balls in orbit will undoubtedly bring about the old debate, "Is the ball juiced?"
I'm not going to jump on that theory just yet, but remember in 1987 when contact hitters such as Wade Boggs were hitting 20-plus home runs? Those are the type of stats that make you wonder. If something of the such occurs again, then I'll consider it.

BUCKLE UP!

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