

# GS

## Gamecock Sports

### New stars emerge as football season starts

**ROBBIE MEEK**  
Columnist

It's now August and classes will begin on Thursday, that can only mean one thing to the college football fan, football season is right around the corner. The men in garnet and black have strapped on the pads and are getting ready for the season opener against SEC rival Georgia, on Sept. 2 in Athens.

So far reports from practice indicate what everyone has suspected from the beginning. The team's enthusiasm is high and there are a lot of positions left undecided due to out going seniors and incoming freshman.

I caught my first look at the 1995 Gamecock team last Wednesday night. I was very impressed but I also worry about a few positions. The team looks good and experienced at some positions and very suspect and thin at others.

The Gamecocks lost three out of the four starting defensive linemen off of last year's Carquest Bowl team. We have now found out in the last few weeks, Er-

ic Sullivan, the lone returner on the defensive line might not play this season because of a recently diagnosed heart condition. Sullivan, who had a outstanding spring, is a two year starter and All-SEC candidate.

Sullivan's condition is still being evaluated, if he is unable to play, the Gamecock defensive line will be left with very little starting experience and not much depth. Senior Mike Washington was listed as Sullivan's back-up at the the end of the spring, but came back from the summer overweight. The coaching staff held Mike out of practice until he could lose some weight and get down to a playable weight. Mike practiced in both the morning and afternoon sessions on Friday.

Henry Taylor was listed at the other starting tackle. The sophomore played in 10 games last season and started 2 games. James Flowers was listed as Taylor's backup after the spring. Flowers saw action in all 12 games last fall.

Maynard Caldwell and Robert Smith are expected to start at the end positions. Caldwell was the number one back-up to Chris Rumph and Stacy Evans last season. Smith sat out last season due to injuries. Junior college transfers

Melvin Houston and Michael Maddox may also see some playing time on the line.

I believe this position could possibly make or break the season. With or without Eric Sullivan I believe we have a pretty good starting four. The depth at this position will be the key. An injury here or there could hurt very bad.

In the secondary, I have a lot of confidence in Ben Washington, he is going to have a great career. The other safety spot bothers me just a little because freshman Arturo Freeman, who was listed as the starter, has no experience although I think he has a lot of potential.

The major concern on offense is at the tight end position where starter Boomer Foster graduated. James Cummings and Jason Lawson return at this position, but depth was a problem last season after some key injuries. High school All-America Rodney Brown may see some playing time as may former high school All-American J.J. Brown.

My only other concern with the offense is at runningback. This is not a concern of depth or talent I believe we will have plenty of both. This is a concern with the positioning of Doak Walker Award candidate Stanley Pritchett.

Pritchett was a standout at fullback last season and is a All-America caliber back who was moved to tailback during the spring to make-up for the loss of Brandon Bennett.

I understand the reasoning of the coaching staff but feel with former high school and JUCO standout Duce Staley now also at tailback the two in the backfield together would make for a more explosive offense. Therefore I believe Pritchett should be moved back to fullback where he could still get his yardage along with Staley.

The receivers, I believe will be the strength of the offense. The depth at this position is unbelievable. This could very possibly be one of the best receiving corps in the nation.

Wednesday's practiced ended with the receivers and defensive backs in a one on one drill. I was impressed to say the least. Both units were very competitive and really looked good.

This competitive spirit really excites me about the prospects of the upcoming season. This team I believe has the most potential since the Joe Morrison era. I want to end by wishing the team the best of luck. Go Cocks!

#### Just for kicks



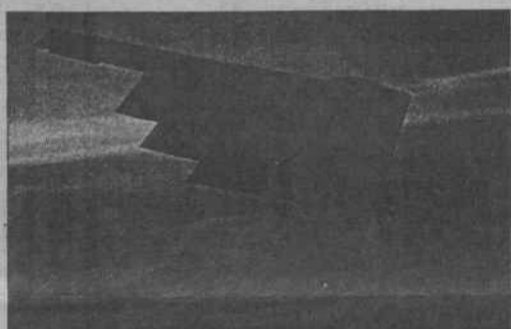
**JAMIE CLARK** The Gamecock Punter Derwin Jeffcoat practices during spring drills. The Gamecocks season opener will be Sept. 2 at University of Georgia in Athens.

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