

Opportunity knocking hard for Gamecocks

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Staff Writer

The hot South Carolina football team (4-3-1, 2-3-1) will try to ride the shoulders of star senior quarterback Steve Taneyhill Saturday against the always tough Tennessee Volunteers (6-1, 4-1).

The game will be played in Neyland Stadium at Knoxville this Saturday in front of 95,000 fans. About 10,000 Gamecock faithful are expected to make the trip.

This game features a couple of interesting matchups that should be fun to watch. The most prominent match up will be Steve Taneyhill versus Peyton Manning.

Taneyhill has thrown 25 touchdowns and 5 interceptions including no interceptions thrown in his last 141 pass attempts. In addition to his efforts in the Vanderbilt game, Taneyhill was voted the SEC Player of the Week.

Manning has been impressive also with 13 touchdowns and 3 interceptions. He was tabbed by the SEC as their player of the week after Tennessee defeated Arkansas on Oct. 7.

Taneyhill has been mentioned as a bonafide All-SEC quarterback and even has an outside shot at winning the Heisman. A big win over Tennessee becomes very important now as the win would make the media look at Carolina as a good team, and thus Taneyhill would have the opportunity to impress the na-

tionwide media and increase his Heisman chances.

Another great matchup will be Duce Staley versus Jay Graham, the starting tailbacks for both teams. Staley in eight games has rushed for 555 yards and seven touchdowns, not to mention being the new craze at Williams-Brice whenever he runs the ball as the fans shout "DUUCE."

Jay Graham has likewise been impressive on the ground for Tennessee, rushing for 886 yards and scoring eight touchdowns. The Vols have compiled a 6-0 record when Graham has rushed for over 100 yards in a game.

Another interesting matchup is in the receiving corps with Zola Davis battling Joey Kent. Davis has caught 49 passes for 764 yards and nine touchdowns. Davis is a serious candidate for the SEC Freshman of the Year and has been one of the most impressive freshman that Carolina football has seen in a number of years.

Kent has been quite impressive as well this year, catching 43 passes for 666 yards and 5 touchdowns. Two weeks ago, Kent had a career high 80-yard long TD pass on the game's first play against Alabama. Kent also tied the Tennessee single game reception record with 13 receptions.

The offensive skill positions are quite similar but the defenses are total opposites. Carolina has struggled against the rush, giving up 175.6 rushing yards per game and allowing 27 rushing touchdowns on the year. The Gamecocks have

allowed only five passing touchdowns this year.

While Carolina has suffered against the rush, Tennessee has struggled against the pass. They have given up 14 passing touchdowns this year and are ranked 73rd; yes, that is 73rd in the nation in passing defense. Tennessee has allowed only 112.5 rushing yards this season and only seven rushing touchdowns.

This game appears to be a shoot-out, with the Gamecocks passing at will and the Vols rushing while being able to mix in the pass on Saturday.

Tennessee's front four don't have to blitz to put pressure on the quarterback so Taneyhill will have to release the ball quickly to one of his talented receivers.

The Vols will try to establish a running game early and will work in some play action passing to keep the Carolina secondary honest. Carolina needs to have a big game from the linebackers to stop the run so they can attempt to stop the potent passing attack of the Volunteers.

Taneyhill and Manning will put up great numbers and the game will come down to time of possession and turnovers. Can Carolina keep the ball away from Tennessee and force a few turnovers? It will be tough to do but a bowl trip is riding on this game.

I believe Brad Scott will get his troops ready and use some razzle-dazzle trick plays to pull the upset over Tennessee. Prediction: USC, 51-49. You heard it here first.



Quarterback Steve Taneyhill, ranked first in the SEC in passing efficiency, will lead the Gamecocks into Neyland Stadium to battle the Volunteers. The Vols have the 73rd rated passing defense in the nation.

SEC Player of the Week Fortman, Gamecocks bite hated Tigers, 3-0

Staff Reports

Led by the SEC Player of the Week, freshman Dee Dee Fortman, the University of South Carolina volleyball team dominated Clemson from start to finish Tuesday, winning 3-0.

"This was a great situation for us and this might be the game that turns the corner for this team," said coach Kim Hudson. "We had something to prove after last year. I was really proud of the way everyone played."

Carolina was led by Fortman, who had 14 kills — hitting a blistering .647 on the night. She also added three block assists in the game. Also playing outstanding for Carolina was senior Kori Ermigarat, who had 12 kills and 20 digs.

Freshman Ashley Edlund had 48 assists — pushing her to 1040 for the year. Edlund is the conference leader in assists.

In game one, Carolina went up 5-1, but fell behind 5-7 at one point, behind the strong serving of Clemson. Fortman stepped up to serve an ace to tie the match at 7-7 and Carolina never looked

back, taking the game 15-7. Fortman and Ermigarat both added four kills in the game.

In game two, Carolina dominated from the start, jumping out to a 6-1 lead, then going up 10-4 with the service ace of junior Lyndy Stevens. Clemson attempted a comeback at 14-5, serving two straight points, but it was too little too late as Carolina capitalized again and won game two, 15-7. Ermigarat and freshman Cindy Robarge both added five kills.

In game three, Carolina came out a bit sluggish as the Tigers went up 4-2. The Gamecocks were again able to tie it up at 4-4 on an ace from sophomore Shani Abshier and again took control. Carolina went up 10-5 and ended up winning the match, 15-6.

The volleyball team travels to No. 3 Florida Sunday to take on the Gators. Game time is 2 p.m.

Team Notes:

Freshman Dee Dee Fortman, a native of Kansas City, Miss., was named

Southeastern Conference Volleyball Player of the Week as announced by the SEC Tuesday. Fortman is only the second volleyball player from Carolina to receive this honor since they joined the SEC.

This past weekend, Fortman had 11 blocks, with three block solos and nine block assists against Kentucky, adding 14 kills in the in the 3-0 victory. The 11 blocks were the most by a Carolina player this year. In the 3-1 victory against Tennessee, Fortman had 15 kills, 14 digs and 10 block assists.

"This is a real testament to the kind of weekend Dee Dee had. She really stepped up her play and blocked well," Hudson said. "From the very beginning, Dee Dee has improved with each match. She is not only athletic, but she is an intelligent player."

Fortman, who will run track and field for the Gamecocks in the spring, has the second best block average in the SEC this year, at 1.52, and total blocks at 50.0.

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GAMECOCKS

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