

Lady Gamecocks sweep Tarheels

BRYAN JOHNSTON Staff Writer

No matter what happened at the softball game Tuesday, Carolina was guaranteed a win. It was just a matter of which Carolina team was going to be the victor.

Tuesday was a day when the two Carolinas clashed at Lady Gamecock Field, and it was South Carolina who came away with the sweep.

Behind the superb pitching of Trinity Johnson and Sky Brown, and the timely hitting of Beth Collett, the Lady Gamecocks swept North Carolina 2-1 and 13-0 (five innings).

"The team did really well today," said first base player Beth Collett. "We came out a little slow in the first game, and we weren't getting our bats going, but in the second game we came out hard. Everyone was hitting and everyone played really well."

The first game belonged to Johnson. The junior All-American thoroughly dominated the Lady Tar Heel batters as she took a perfect game into the seventh and final inning. It was not until UNC shortstop Robyn Coombs tripled to lead off the seventh to break up the no-hitter. Despite losing the bid, Johnson still picked up the win (17-5) while striking out 14 batters.

The first four innings were fairly uneventful as both Johnson and UNC pitcher Megan Shelton shut down the offenses. But in the fifth inning, USC finally put some runs on the board. April Farr led off the inning with a single to right-center field. Chanda Lee then grounded the ball to second, but Farr was able to beat it out, and both runners were called safe. Center fielder Kim Pietro then stepped up to the plate to try to drive them in.

In the third inning, she struck out with runners on second and third to end the inning, but this time she came through in the clutch. She launched a shot high in the air that almost made it over the fence. Instead, it bounced off the right field fence for a double that allowed Farr and Lee to score.

Leading 2-0 going into the seventh, Johnson looked to finish off the perfect game. Instead, Coombs tripled to lead



TYSON PETTIGREW The Gamecock

Beth Collett, seen here earlier this season, led USC to two wins against UNC Tuesday on 4 for 6 hitting.

off the inning. She scored when shortstop Diane Heathcock misplayed a ball hit by Christine Kubin to make it 2-1. But Johnson kept her composure and struck out Jeanine Gunther to end the game. With the 14 strikeouts, Johnson now has an amazing 222 strikeouts in 143 innings pitched.

"In the first game, we didn't have to play a whole lot of defense. We had some chances with the sticks, and we probably didn't come out as quickly as we needed to. Sometimes we tend to do that if T.J. is pitching, and we become a little complacent," said head coach Joyce Compton.

The second game was a totally different story. Even though it was dominated by the USC pitcher, the bats were alive, and the runs came in

bunches.

With Brown on the mound, the Lady Gamecocks didn't have to worry about scoring too many runs. But they did anyway.

In the first inning, USC jumped all over the UNC pitching. Lee started things off with an infield single. She advanced to second on Kendra McCutcheon's single and to third when Tina Plew reached on an error by UNC shortstop Coombs. Lee scored when Pietro singled to left field, and McCutcheon scored on a fielding error by the catcher on a play at the plate. Carrie Lyons reached on an error by first baseman Lorin Slade, allowing Plew to score. Pietro scored on Collett's single to left, and Lyons crossed home plate after Kelly Dammer's single.

But the Lady Gamecocks weren't finished. In the second inning, they sent 11 batters to the plate and scored six runs to make it 11-0 after two innings.

Lee and McCutcheon reached on errors while Plew and Lyons reached on fielder's choices. Collett did some more damage at the plate when she collected her fourth hit in six at-bats on the day with a two-RBI double to right-center. Farr's single to left field drove in Lyons. The second time Lee came up in the inning, she beat out an infield ball to drive in Collett to finish off the scoring for the inning.

Meanwhile, Brown was cruising along on the mound. Through two innings, she had a no-hitter of her own going.

In the fourth inning, USC added two more runs when Jamie Williams and Lee scored after singling to make the score 13-0 going into the fifth.

The way Brown was pitching, most were counting on the game ending after five innings because of the "mercy rule." The only question left was if Brown could finish off her no-hitter. But that question was answered when Jennifer Klesaris doubled down the left field line. Brown then got the next two hitters to ground out as she picked up her 14th win of the season against one loss.

"In the second game, we came out in the first inning and pretty much put them down, and that's going to take any team out of the game," said Compton.

Although the game was the main attraction of the day, another event was celebrated. Tuesday's games marked the last home dates of the season. And with every ending of a season, there are usually seniors graduating. This year the seniors, Collett, Farr, Jen Davis and Kim Sheridan, were honored in a pregame ceremony.

"(The seniors) have been here for four years, and they know what it takes as far as the work ethic and the pride that is needed to play the top competition," Compton said. "They've been excellent leaders, and they are four kids who'll definitely be missed."

"It's been four good, long years. It's a great program, and I've enjoyed every inning of every game that I ever played here," Collett said.

With exactly one month until the NCAA regionals begin, the Lady Gamecocks stand at 34-8. This weekend they will travel to Chattanooga, Tenn., to participate in the Frost Cutlery Invitational. After that, they will take a week off before closing out the regular season in a three-game series at Florida State on May 5 (a double-header) and 6. With a strong finish, USC will likely host a regional bracket for the third consecutive year.

Sports Briefs

Associated Press

BASKETBALL

INDIANAPOLIS — Reggie Miller, progressing well a day after reconstructive surgery on his right eye socket, was released from St. Vincent Hospital.

The Indiana Pacers will be without Miller at least three weeks, well into the start of the NBA playoffs. It could be longer if his double vision has not cleared completely.

Miller was injured in a collision with Detroit's Otis Thorpe and Allan Houston on Saturday night. Miller, averaging 21.1 points a game, also sustained a mild concussion and neck sprain.

BASEBALL

NEW YORK — Pitcher Hideo Nomo of the Los Angeles Dodgers and outfielder Brady Anderson of the Baltimore Orioles were honored as NL and AL players of the week.

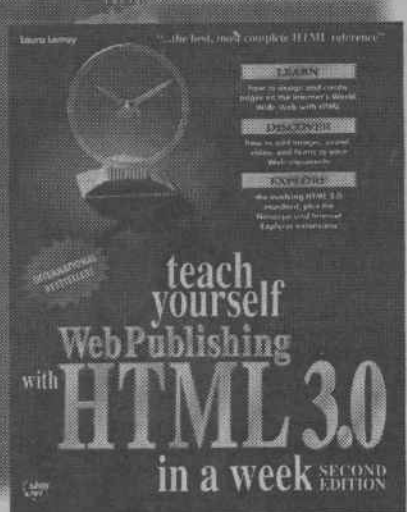
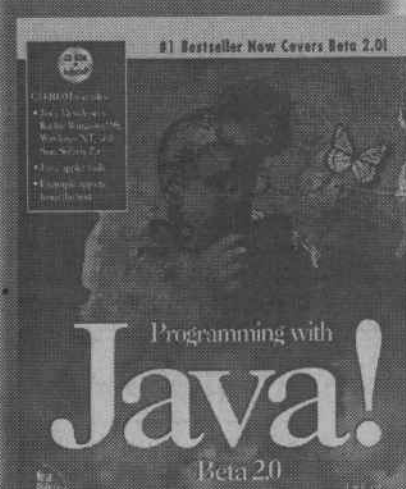
Nomo pitched two three-hitters last week, allowing one earned run and striking out 23 batters. Anderson batted .500 (9-for-18) and scored six runs with three homers, two doubles and a slugging percentage of 1.111.

COLLEGE

CORAL GABLES, Fla. — University of Miami football player Marlin Barnes and a woman were beaten to death with a blunt instrument, police investigating the pair's slayings said.

Barnes, a 6-foot, 210-pound reserve linebacker, was found dead in his campus apartment Saturday. Timwanika Lumpkins, also 22, died on the way to a hospital. Both were bashed severely about the head and upper torso. No murder weapon was found.

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FOR 1996 AWAY GAMES

| GAMES | DATE | COST | TIME |
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| Kentucky | October 12 | \$20.00 | 2 p.m. CDT |
| Vanderbilt | October 26 | \$20.00 | 2 p.m. CDT |
| Florida | November 16 | \$20.00 | 1 p.m. |

Clemson will be by Lottery

Procedures will be published in the Fall

A limited number of away football tickets will be made available to the University of South Carolina Student Body. The tickets will be limited to one (1) per student. Orders will be taken on April 18, 1996. The price is as listed above, cash only, and all tickets must be paid for on this date. Students must come to the athletic ticket office on Rosewood Drive between 8:30 and 5 p.m. to purchase away game tickets. The tickets may be claimed in the fall by coming to the ticket office and presenting a current Fall 1996 full-time ID card.