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59 yards on 16 carries, with that total including four quarterback sacks for 24 yards in losses.

Coming out of high school, Culpeper was one of the top-rated prospects in the Southeast but didn't have the grades to sign with a Division I school. That is why most casual fans have never heard of him. But don't think that just because he plays at a small school, that he doesn't have talent.

"He's a horse," said USC center Paul Beckwith, who's from Florida and played in high school against Culpeper. Beckwith describes his arm as "a cannon."

Defensively, the strong suit of the Knights is at linebacker where three starters return. Kendrick Thomas (6-3, 240) possesses an NFL body and skills to match. He had 13 tackles last week, including two for losses and a sack. One senior and two juniors will anchor the defensive line with senior cornerback Daryl Latimore (seven tackles last week) leading the returnees in the secondary. He had three interceptions and 42 solo tackles last year.

In their opener, the defense gave up 418 yards of total offense, including 318 through the air on just 12 Indian completions. William and Mary had touchdown passes of 14, 40 and 70 yards against UCF.

The Gamecocks don't want to make the same mistake they did in 1994 when East Carolina came into town for what USC fans thought would be a laughter for Homecoming. They had a talented, yet unknown quarterback also in Marcus Crandell. The result: ECU 56, USC 42.

"That was a big shock," said senior Maynard Caldwell. "We took them lightly and they beat our butts."

If the Gamecocks take them lightly the same thing could happen again.

"When I saw them on the schedule, I thought it might be an easy game," said Caldwell. After watching them on television last Saturday, "I know it'll be different."

The bottom line is that this game has the potential to be a high-scoring shootout. The Knight defense is weak and should be good practice for Anthony Wright and his receivers. On the other hand, with an unproven defense, the Gamecocks could give up quite a few points to Culpeper and company.

Prediction: USC 48, UCF 20

So fans, the day you've been waiting for since the Clemson game last year is only one day away. Although it is not scheduled to be a sell-out, a record crowd is expected. Kick-off is set for 7 p.m. Don't let that hurricane frighten you off, a little rain never hurt anyone. So come out and be loud because Gamecock football is here.

Gamecock Football: From A to Z

DWAYNE MCLEMORE
Asst. Sports Editor

"Anthony Wright sends the ball down field to a wide open Zola Davis. He's got it at the 15, the ten, the five. **TOUCHDOWN GAMECOCKS!**"

This is a scene USC coaches and fans are hoping to, and likely will, see during the upcoming football season, as sophomore quarterback Anthony Wright and sophomore wide receiver Zola Davis promise to be a lethal combination in Carolina's passing game. Wright will be taking over for Steve Taneyhill, whose record-setting career ended last fall. He won the starting role after a strong spring practice that included winning the Joe Morrison Award for offense. He also had an impressive Spring Game, in which he threw 14 of 23 passes for 156 yards and a game-winning touchdown.

"Anthony showed leadership abili-

ty during the spring," Offensive Coordinator John Eason said.

Wright appeared in nine games last season in a reserve role behind Taneyhill, completing 17 of 27 passes for 207 yards and two touchdowns. The North Carolina native is an excellent athlete with the ability to scramble out of the pocket.

Davis enters the season with a load of expectations and accolades. Last season, he set USC freshman records for receptions (58), yardage (911), and touchdowns (nine). His accomplishments broke Green Bay Packers' Robert Brooks' previous marks, established in 1988.

In addition, his totals for receptions and yardage were first on the team, while his touchdowns were second. 1995 postseason awards included Most Improved Offensive Player for the team, nomination to the SEC's All-Freshman team and runner-up for

SEC Rookie of the Year.

Davis continued to delight coaches with an impressive effort during spring training. He caught four passes for 40 yards during the Spring Game.

"Zola's work ethic has improved tremendously since last season," Eason said. "He has displayed the ability to catch the football and run with the ball after the catch."

The sophomore was also named to the preseason All-SEC team, and received the team's Most Outstanding Wide Receiver award for the spring practice. Look for Davis to be a big factor in the Carolina offense, as he should be one of the league's premier pass catchers.

Both Wright and Davis were highly recruited as high school players. They were standouts at West Craven in Vanceboro, N.C. and Burke in Charleston, S.C., respectively.

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