

GAMECOCK  
ATHLETICSBaseball @ Clemson  
Wednesday, 7 p.m.  
Tiger FieldSoftball vs. East Carolina  
Today, 3 p.m. (doubleheader)  
Lady Gamecock FieldWomen's Golf @ SEC Championships  
All Weekend, The University Club

## SPORTS

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

April 14  
Cindy "Big Red" Robarge,  
volleyball playerApril 16  
Leanna Troesh,  
softball player  
Bryan Johnston,  
Gamecock sports editorApril 17  
Kelly Dammer,  
softball player

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The Gamecock

Wednesday, April 16, 1997

## Mastering The Possibilities

Columbia was invaded by professional golfers, musicians, and basketball coaches for the Third Annual Monday After The Masters Pro-Am at The University Club. Money raised from the event benefits the South Carolina Junior Golf Association.

story by achim hunt, sports editor  
photos by bryan johnston, sports editor



ESPN SportsCenter anchor Dan Patrick tees off of the first hole. Fellow ESPN anchor Mike Tirico also played in the tournament.

In the sporting world, Sunday belonged to Tiger Woods and his record-breaking performance at The Masters. But Monday belonged to pop-rock sensation and Columbia native, Darius Rucker.

Rucker, lead singer of USC's own Hootie and the Blowfish, along with fellow band members Dean Felber, Jim Sonefeld and Mark Bryan hosted

the Third Annual Monday After The Masters Pro-Am on Monday to benefit the South Carolina Junior Golf Association.

The star-studded field brought together some of the world's greatest athletes, musicians and cheeseburger sellers for a round of golf at The University Club in Blythewood. The day started with a long drive

competition on the first hole. With professional golfer turned CBS golf commentator Gary McCord entertaining the crowd, Hootie and the Blowfish's own Mark Bryan won the contest with his drive of 275 yards.

Dean Felber came in a close second with a drive of 272 yards. The competition featured NFL stars Dan Marino, Bryan Cox and Kerry Collins. Alice Cooper and Darius Rucker joined in the field that offered the fans a look at some really good and a lot of really bad golf shots.

Rucker seemed to be pleased and excited about the turnout of the crowds and the celebrities to the golf tournament.

"It's all right—it's fun," Rucker said. "We want it to get better every year. This year was better than last year. We got more people to come out. Since we have gotten involved in [the golf tournament] I can't believe how much it has grown."

Rock-n-roll legend Alice Cooper made his first appearance at the Monday After The Masters Pro-Am and said he knew most of the players.

"You know that I have met all of these guys, and I have either won or lost money from all of them," Cooper said.

Cooper is known for bringing snakes out onto the stage during his concerts and was asked if he brought them out onto the golf course as well.

"No, No, No. Well actually I did, and I put them in Marino's bags—that's the only advantage I have over him," Cooper said.

The beauty of this event is the variety of celebrities. Where else would Sergeant Slaughter of WWF fame hang out with men's basketball coach Eddie Fogler?

Just on the other side of Cooper was Gov. David Beasley. Beasley said he came to the event to show his support for Hootie and the Blowfish, whom he considers to be great ambassadors for South Carolina.

"This is a super event," Beasley said. "This is helping young people all across this state. This is what's good. Hootie and the Blowfish have done a remarkable job in promoting South Carolina, and trying to get young people to turn to the good things and not the bad things, and that is why we are out here trying to promote this cause."

ESPN broadcaster Mike Tirico got to know the band when he and several other ESPN personalities

appeared in Hootie's video to the song "Only Wanna Be With You." After getting to know the band members while shooting the video, Tirico was invited to participate in the golf tournament.

"I met these guys when we did the video for 'Only Wanna Be With You', and we hung out with them and had a great time," Tirico said. "So this year I worked The Masters, so I came over right afterwards."

Fellow ESPN personality Dan Patrick, also in the video, played in the tournament, but just could not come up with the reason exactly why he is playing on Monday.

"I'm not sure why I came to play in this tournament," Patrick said. "I still keep wondering why I'm back, I wondered it last year, and then I saw the guys in the band and then I still wonder why I come down here."

"Actually I think it's ... no, it's not that. No, it's, you know what, no, it's not that ... I don't know, do you have any suggestions to why I came down here? I am not sure. I am still wondering why."

Bryan Johnston, Gamecock Sports Editor, said Patrick came down here to see head coach Eddie Fogler. That seemed to please Patrick fine enough.

"Yeh, yeh that's it, that is why I came down here to see coach," Patrick said. "Yeh, I still have a year of eligibility left, and I thought that he could use me."

Tournament play had few highlights, but USC assistant basketball coach John Cooper, after complaining about not playing well, launched a huge drive straight down the middle on the first hole of the course.

The tournament ended in a four-way tie, but in the tiebreaker David Duval's group won. That group included former South Carolina governor Carol Campbell.

After the tournament, the celebrities and pro golfers gave the course and the people of Columbia credit for a great time and a great cause.

"It's great to raise money have fun at the same time," Hootie guitarist Dean Felber said. "Without these guys it would not be possible."

Dan Patrick also complimented the way the tournament was run by Hootie and the Blowfish and the way the people in Columbia supported the event.

"It got a lot better in every way, shape and form as far as the whole event," Patrick said. "I was amazed at how many people came out this year, and you just felt like it was an



Carolina Panthers' quarterback Kerry Collins was a crowd favorite among autograph seekers at the Monday After The Masters.

event down here. They had a rough road coming back from Australia, and I think it says a lot for them,

and how they made this such an important event for them. And it certainly showed. That is the great part of it. Sorry, I didn't mean to get emotional there."

Miami Dolphins quarterback Dan Marino pointed out the most obvious difference between last year's tournament held at the Fort Jackson Golf Club and this year's venue, The University Club.

"This course has grass on it," Marino said.

Another NFL quarterback, the Carolina Panthers' Kerry Collins, also said he had a

great time at the tournament, and used a little bit of cheating to make his team's score a little better than it should have been.

"I really enjoyed it today," Collins

said. "I got to play with Jay Don Blake, and you know that we are only supposed to use two drives a piece, but we used like ten of his. I can say that because we didn't win."

Pittsburgh Steelers cornerback Rod Woodson said he played in the Monday After The Masters because it raised money for a great cause, the South Carolina Junior Golf Association.

"I think what they are doing for urban communities, and bringing golf to different areas is really good. It is very rare to see so many athletes together," Woodson said. "It is a great deal and a great time."

Professional golfer Peter Jacobsen brought up an interesting point about the quarterback of the World Champion Green Bay Packers, Brett Favre and his style of play on the golf course.

"I had a chance to watch Brett Favre play today, and I was just wondering if there is any correlation between the number that he wears (No. 4) and the scream (fore) after every tee-shot," Jacobsen said.

After the tournament, the celebrities and fans joined Hootie and the Blowfish for a night of music at the Township Auditorium.

Hootie played some old songs like "Hold My Hand," "Time," and "Only Wanna Be With You." They also played several cuts from Fairweather Johnson, including "Sad Caper" and "Old Man and Me."

Hootie was joined on stage for the entire evening by former REM band member Peter Dinklage, who played everything from the drums to a ukulele.

Mike Mills of REM preformed some songs with the band as did Edwin McCain.

Rucker announced that the band will take some time off from touring this summer and fall.

All the day's proceeds go to the S.C. Junior Golfers Association.



Music legend Alice Cooper kept the crowd roaring with his great golf shots.



Hootie and the Blowfish lead singer Darius Rucker played with Miami Dolphins quarterback Dan Marino at the tournament.



From left to right, Dan Marino of the Miami Dolphins, Bryan Cox of the Chicago Bears, and Mark Bryan of Hootie and the Blowfish answer questions after competing in the Monday After The Masters.