

MCKIE'S MARCH

Senior BJ McKie remains only 109 points behind Alex English as Carolina's all-time scoring leader. Stay tuned for McKie's march into the record books.

FOOTBALL

Melvin Paige, Philip Jones, and Kevin Rivers were named to the All-SEC Freshman team. Rivers was also selected to the *Football News* Freshman All-America team.

Gamecock Sports

SCHEDULE

January 12-16
Women's Swimming & Diving, Diving World Cup, Wellington, New Zealand
 January 13
Men's B-ball vs. Florida 7:30 p.m., Frank McGuire Arena

NATE SAYS...

Nate says BJ McKie was named as one of the top 30 candidates at the mid-season point for the John R. Wooden Award, recognizing the most outstanding collegiate player.

Monday, January 11, 1999

The Gamecock

Page 17

Men's, women's basketball struggle over break

• *Tennessee pounds Gamecocks 86-57, remain winless against SEC competition*

by David Cloninger
 Senior Writer

It wasn't such a happy holiday for the South Carolina men's basketball team, as they lost seven of nine games and plummeted to the cellar of the Southeastern Conference. The Gamecocks are the only SEC team with a losing record, and their streak of two straight 20-win seasons and NCAA tournament appearances may be in serious jeopardy.

USC 57, Tennessee 86

The Gamecocks (5-9, 0-3 SEC) headed to Knoxville, TN, Saturday, looking to snap a two-game losing skid, against the Tennessee Volunteers (10-4, 2-1 SEC). As USC stepped off the bus, the players were greeted by temperatures in the mid-20s. But if they thought that was cold, they should have waited to see their shooting percentage (32.7 percent) at the end of a game that saw them get destroyed, 86-57.

"This is depressing," said BJ McKie, who finished with a team-high 16 points. "This team has to play better, with more pride and heart than we played tonight. It's one thing to lose, but it's another to lay down and just really give up ... we might as well not even have come out in the second half."

For the most part of the first stanza, the game was close. Carolina led the first five minutes of the contest and trailed by only four with 1:53 left in the half. But then the Vols went on a 9-0 scoring tear, giving them a 13-point halftime lead and, more importantly, the game's momentum.

"I think it was a shock," said USC Coach Eddie Fogler. "[The players] got knocked in the jaw, pretty much got knocked out, and never recovered. And then we just pretty much scrambled around out there."

USC 61, Kentucky 68

The Gamecocks came into Frank McGuire Arena Tuesday night in front of a sellout crowd and a national ESPN television audience. The No. 6 Wildcats faced an intimidating atmosphere and various heckles from the audience but still managed to hold off a tough Carolina squad. The Wildcats were led by senior All-American Scott Padgett, who scored 19, and Michael Bradley with 14. The Gamecocks had no answer to the dominant inside game of Kentucky, but managed to hold their own with playmaker—senior BJ McKie, who scored a season-high 31 points on an almost flawless shooting night. McKie was 7-of-9 from the field, as well as 5-of-6 from the 3-point stripe. He also shot 12-of-14 on free throws, as well as dishing out assists to Aaron Lucas, who added 10 points. Kentucky was held back by fouls against its key players, but won going away to restore its confidence after consecutive losses to Duke and Louisville. The Gamecocks wound up their holiday break dropping six of seven games.

USC 60, Mississippi State 66

Carolina traveled to Starkville to face a surprising 11-2 Bulldog team in the first weekend of SEC action. The Gamecocks started out shooting a miserable 21 percent, and fell behind 16-2 before they finally started their real game. The Gamecocks were spurred on by senior center Bud Johnson, who had his third double-double this season with 16 points and 12 rebounds.

BJ McKie also came a bit closer to becoming USC's all-time scoring leader with 17 points, and was helped by Herbert Lee Davis's 11 points. The Bulldogs' super sophomore, forward Tang Hamilton, pumped in 20 points as the tallest man on the court. The Gamecocks whittled the lead to 57-54 with 2:47 left in the game when McKie ran into the lane, used his patented spin move, and seemed to be fouled while completing a layup.

However, the referee called McKie for traveling instead of putting him on the line for the potential game tying free throw. The Bulldogs then won on free throws, as Carolina was forced to foul to get the ball back. The Gamecocks dropped their conference opener and prepared to face defending national champion Kentucky.

USC 74, S.C. State 60

Carolina, desperately needing a victory, finally got one at the hands of the Bulldogs, who brought Arthur Carlisle back to Columbia for the first time since he transferred following the 1996-97 season. The Gamecocks were led by Aaron Lucas, who had his first collegiate start and didn't disappoint, as he scored 17 and orchestrated a hot-shooting USC offense. BJ McKie had another strong game with 16, and sophomore Antonio Grant scored 13. S.C. State was led by Mike Wiatre with 23, and cut the Carolina lead from 18 to eight with five minutes left. The Bulldogs, who showed strong signs of a second consecutive MEAC championship, had warmed up against Duke and Maryland, and were hungry for a win over a depleted USC team.

However, the Gamecocks used strong free throw shooting over the stretch of the last minutes to get the win and get themselves back on track.

The Gamecocks had flashes of brilliance during the game, but seemed to be very inconsistent with shot selection. The answers had to be found before conference play started, but USC coach Eddie Fogler seemed to be very confident going into the new year.

USC 64, Purdue 80

The Gamecock men's basketball program might have faced its toughest test of the season on Tuesday, Dec. 22, at the Jimmy V Classic at the Meadowlands in New Jersey.

This test came in the presence of the eighth-ranked Purdue Boilermakers, who ultimately defeated USC, 80-64. At halftime, the Gamecocks appeared up to the challenge, trailing by only seven points.

However, any thoughts of an early Christmas present for USC fans were squashed when the grinch from Purdue began the second half with a 12-4 run, leaving the Gamecocks down 15 and feeling like the grandma who got run over by a reindeer. After this run, USC couldn't seem to get back into the game, only coming as close as nine points the rest of the way.

The leading scorer for the Gamecocks was BJ McKie, with 14. For Purdue, it was Jaraan Cornell with 20 points, including five 3-pointers. Despite the second half, USC Coach Eddie Fogler seemed somewhat pleased with his team's performance. "We played a little better tonight than we have been playing, particularly against East Carolina," he said. "We got better shots, and did some nice things. But we gave up way too many easy baskets, and we still can't seem to grab a rebound," Fogler said.

The Gamecocks suffered a demoralizing loss to a weak Pirates team, as they shot a horribly low 23.4 percent from the field and set records for fewest points ever scored at Frank McGuire Arena. The Gamecocks hit only four of 23 shots in the first half, watching the ball roll off the rim, bounce out of the basket, and generally do everything but fall through en route to a halftime total of 13. ECU's Brandon Hawkins scored 15 and drove into the lane throughout the game.

The Gamecocks improved a bit in the second half, but still only shot 29.2 percent, as only six Gamecocks even

WRAP-UP page 19

• *Lady Gamecocks fall to Mississippi State 69-66, yet to win in SEC contests*

by Charlie Wallace
 Assistant Sports Editor

The Carolina women's basketball team didn't get what it was hoping for from Santa Claus this Christmas Break, going 3-4 with losses to archrival Clemson, and SEC foes Auburn, Tennessee, and Mississippi State. However, there were a few bright spots for the Lady Gamecocks.

Lisa Williams and Nikki Miars both joined the elite 1,000 Point Club, becoming the 19th and 20th womens players at USC to ever score 1,000 points.

USC 66, Mississippi State 69

The Lady Gamecocks record sunk to 9-5 overall and 0-4 in SEC play with a 69-66 loss to Mississippi State. In a game marred by 64 turnovers and 57 fouls, it was, as

The Lady Vols (12-1, 3-0 Southeastern Conference) also got 18 points from Semeka Randall and 14 points from Kellie Jolly. South Carolina (9-4, 0-3) was led in scoring by Jocelyn Penn with 14 points.

Tennessee took control with a 10-0 run midway through the first half. Three steals by the Lady Vols led to three baskets — two by Holdsclaw — as Tennessee built a 20-6 lead with 9:00 left. South Carolina hit just four of its first 15 shots and went five minutes without scoring during the Lady Vols' first-half surge.

Randall sparked another Tennessee run late in the first half, hitting three consecutive baskets to give the Lady Vols a 34-15 lead with five minutes left. For the half, South Carolina had 15 turnovers and attempted just 24 shots, compared to 39 by Tennessee.

Despite a sluggish second-half performance, the Lady Vols were able to maintain their advantage with good defense. South Carolina had another dry spell eight minutes into the second half, and Holdsclaw and Randall led a spurt that was capped by Jolly's 3-point basket.

The shot gave Tennessee a 71-43 lead. The Lady Gamecocks cut the gap to 20 late in the game but could get no closer. Tennessee, which shot 53 percent from the field in the game, also out-rebounded South Carolina 46-37.

USC 50, Auburn 62

The Auburn Tigers scored 44 points in the second half to overwhelm the Lady Gamecocks, 62-50. USC started strong and had a 25-18 halftime advantage, but, led by Tasha Hamilton's 16 points, Auburn took the lead soon after and held on.

"We may have let up on defense a little in the second half," explained Lady Gamecock freshman guard Shaunzinski Gortman. After this contest, USC dropped to 9-3 overall and 0-2 in the SEC.

USC 89, Wisconsin-Milwaukee 63**USC 109, Texas Pan-American 71**

South Carolina defeated the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 89-63, and the University of Texas-Pan American, 109-71, on Dec. 28 and Dec. 29 to capture the 12th FAU New Year's Classic Tournament in Boca Raton, Fla.

Junior Annie Lester and freshman Shaunzinski Gortman of USC were named to the All-Tournament team with senior Lisa Williams winning the tournament's Most Valuable Player award.

In the game against UWM, Williams scored 18 points

to lead the Lady Gamecocks to victory. Lester recorded her fifth consecutive game in double figures and paced the team in rebounds with seven. USC shot a season-high 59.3 percent from the field and forced 22 Lady Panther turnovers. In the championship game, Lester led South Carolina to victory with 24 points and 10 rebounds. It was her 46th double-double performance of the season and her sixth straight game in double figures. Williams contributed 14 points in the win. Juniors Shanta Jeffcoat and Cassie Key and freshman Shannon Segres all set new personal highs in scoring with 15, 10 and 16 point performances, respectively. Six South Carolina players scored in double figures for the first time this season.

USC 98, S.C. State 61
 South Carolina's Jocelyn Penn forced 11 steals and scored a game-high 24 points as the Lady Gamecocks blew past S.C. State, 98-61. Penn, a reserve forward, hit on 10-of-11 shots in sparking USC to the victory.

The Lady Gamecocks were never seriously threatened by State, holding leads of 8-0 and 25-9 before cruising into halftime up 43-21.

In the second half, USC continued to overmatch the Lady Bulldogs with their size and resilient defense. S.C. State was forced into 44 turnovers for the game and also lost the battle for second-chance points, 35-13.

The smaller Lady Bulldogs played the game without Twana Wright, their leading scorer and rebounder.

USC 67, Clemson 84
 The Clemson Tiger defense proved too much for USC to handle, as they defeated the Lady Gamecocks 84-67. "Clemson played great defense. Defense wins basketball games," said Carolina coach Susan Walvius. The Tiger defense created 23 turnovers and seemed to frustrate Carolina the whole game.

"It's team defense," said CU coach Jim Davis. "We aren't very good one-on-one defenders, but our team concept is what gets it done for us." Behind Amy Geren, who led the team with 26 points, and Natasha Anderson, who added

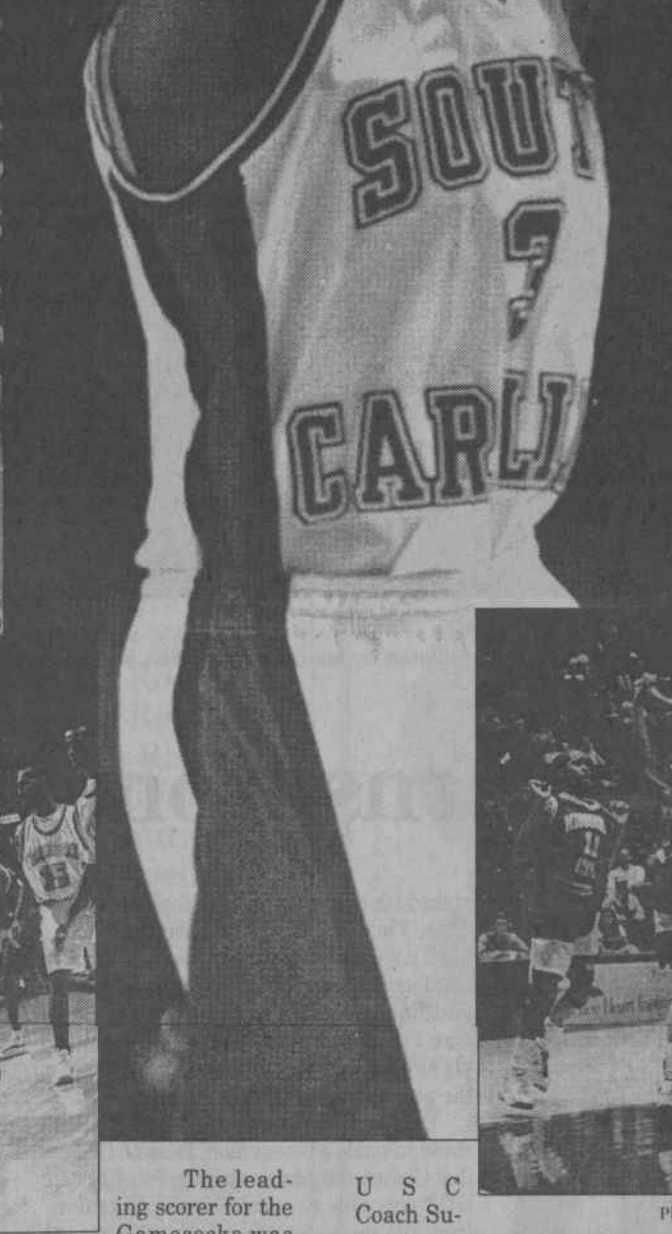
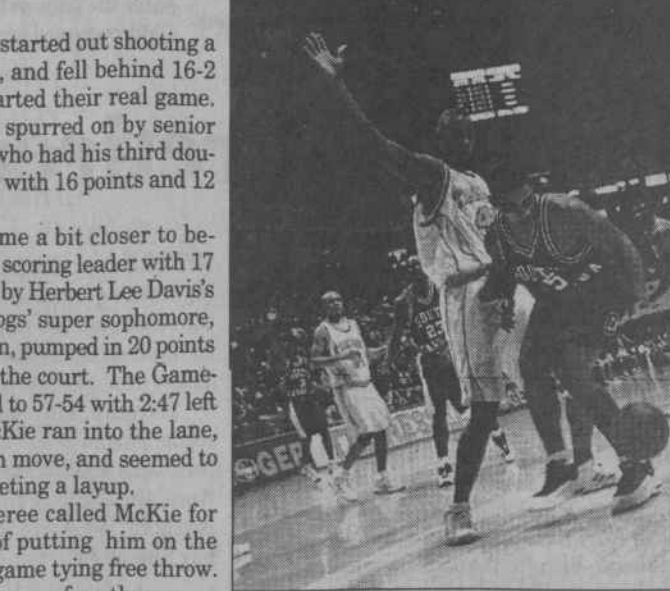
WRAP-UP page 19

USC 58, Tennessee 87
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WRAP-UP page 19



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USC Coach Susan

Walvius said, "one of the ugliest SEC games you'll ever see." Shannon Segres and Nikki Miars dominated the scoring for USC with a combined total of 42 points.

"This is a serious wake up call to the rest of our team. Depth is the only solution in a case like this," Walvius said. USC had their chances to win in the final minute but blew each opportunity as it came to them.

Down by two with 32 seconds left Lisa Williams threw up a brick from beyond the three point line.

Williams had the opportunity to redeem herself with seven seconds remaining when she was fouled while taking a 3-point shot.

With three free throws, she could have tied the game but only hit one.

Surprisingly, Walvius didn't want to take the bevy of 3-point shots that ensued in the final minute. "We weren't playing as a team tonight and that really hurt us," said Miars.

USC 58, Tennessee 87

Chamique Holdsclaw scored 22 points and grabbed six rebounds to lead No. 2 Tennessee to an 87-58 victory over South Carolina on Thursday night.

WALVIEBALL page 19