

Senior BJ McKie remains only 43 points behind Alex English as Carolina's all-time scoring leader.

Stay tuned for McKie's march into the record books.

For those of you who enjoy or despise Shawn Singleton's column, make sure you catch the author of "Singleton 3:16" on 840 AM at 3 p.m. today, as he makes a guest appearance on Maurice Stansfield's show.

•Men's basketball, 2 p.m. Jan. 24, at No. 20 Syracuse. Televised on CBS.

•Women's basketball vs. Arkansas, 2 p.m. Jan. 24, Frank McGuire Arena.

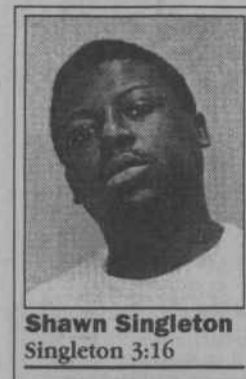
Nate says the men's track and field team is ranked third in the nation, according to the first poll of the year by *Trackwire*.

Racial diversity promoting King's dream

"Without struggle, there is no progress."

- Frederick Douglass
A few months ago, I got into a rather acrimonious conversation with someone I felt lacked the mental capacity to engage in a battle of wits with me, for she was Southern, and when one particular subject came about, she became infuriated, not that no one else knew about it. Nevertheless, she still became angry that I knew.

At first, I walked home through the rain, wondering why she became so angry with me at the subject of conversation. Then it hit me as hard as the rain that pelted the streets of Columbia.



Shawn Singleton
Singleton 3:16

It wasn't the subject matter that left her so perturbed as it was the race of the person who brought the point up, at least in my mind. At this point, I became incensed with more fury than that deadly Plymouth from "Christine" and stormed home.

Now, as the few readers out there (as well as my editors) wonder, "What the hell does this have to do with sports?" continue reading.

With the King holiday now past us and the farce known as African-American History Month quickly approaching, this week's latest diatribe is about the highs and lows of my race in the world of sports this century, which has been filled with triumph, tragedy and some exciting moments that will be indelibly etched inside the minds and hearts of every sports fan, regardless of age, gender or race.

Like a faraway galaxy, the black star has lined a path as bright as the eternal flame that sits atop Dr. King's resting place in every sport it touches.

However, unlike the idea that Marcus Garvey suggested, this black star has emblazoned its path right here in the United States, not back to Africa.

In 1947, baseball entered a new era when Jackie Robinson was called up from the Brooklyn Dodgers' minor league team in Montreal to play in the majors.

Despite countless racial slurs from fans and players such as Dixie (isn't this fitting) Walker, Robinson persevered to win Major League Baseball's first Rookie of the Year award, finish his 10-year career with a .311 batting average and receive a 1962 induction into Cooperstown.

In the coming years, baseball would add new African-American stars like Satchel Paige, Don Newcombe (the first Cy Young Award winner in 1956), Camden native Larry Doby and Monte Irvin.

African Americans in professional football date back to the 1920s, when Fritz Pollard was a player-coach. However, the color line was drawn around the end of that decade and they wouldn't return until after World War II. After the war, men such as Marion Motley, Bill Willis, Paul "Tank" Younger, Joe Perry and John Henry Johnson blazed trails African Americans could follow all the way until well into the next millennium with their Hall of Fame talents.

As time went by, players from predominately black colleges entered the league and provided speed unseen in the past. Charlie Joiner, Jerry Rice and Ben Coates are all black-college alumni.

However, it wasn't until the arrivals of men like James Harris, Willie Lanier and Dwight Stephenson that African Americans were allowed to play leadership positions, such as quarterback, middle linebacker and center, respectively. The basketball world was taken into a new era in the 1950s with the arrival of Wilt Chamberlain and Bill Russell.

Over the next three decades, the NBA would see such talents as Lew Alcindor, Julius Erving and Michael Jordan light up scoreboards across the league. However, in the college ranks, Kentucky and its resident Nazi with the fitting name, Adolph Rupp, made one of segregation's last stands. That is, until an all-African-American team from Texas Western (now known as UTEP) led by Don Haskins laid the smack down on Rupp's lily-white idea of perfection for the national title in 1966.

Today, the NBA is a bunch of overpaid African Americans who cry foul about race when they don't make enough money to buy themselves a new island in the Pacific. Alonzo Mourning's comments during the lockout were foul at best, but they provided a disturbing reality for me. This whole lockout wasn't about black or white, but green. To make this sad and sorry situation a racial issue disgusts me as a fan and says a great deal about the man who made those comments. While we're on the subject of people who have attempted to play the race card when it's not needed, how about Mahktar Ndiaye?

During UNC's Final Four loss to Utah last year, the Tar Heel center accused one of the Ute players of calling him the one name that spells death for any redneck who says it without permission, then retracted the accusation soon thereafter.

Now I know this is Utah, and the Mormons haven't had the most sparkling history of racial tolerance (just ask Dennis Rodman), but come on, Mahktar.

Racism exists in all walks of life, but it should never be used as an excuse for any personal difficulties, especially a loss.

Then, just last week, Eddie Fogler rationalized the basketball team's rock-bottom GPA as the result of the "disadvantaged" backgrounds of his players.

I wasn't born with a silver spoon in my mouth, either, but this is a total cop-out by our "esteemed" head coach. Is being disadvantaged a reason not to attend class? This was an offensive comment to me and should have been to any people who have pulled themselves from this "disadvantaged" rut.

African-Americans have changed the face of sports over the latter half of this century.

With their arrival, these pioneers changed the face of society in general, for they forced other venues of society to stand up and take notice, especially in the turbulent 1960s. With the dawn of a new millennium, the black star is no longer a supernova.

No longer is the montage of Dr. King's dream a deferred one, but a reality at long last.

"No longer is the montage of Dr. King's dream a deferred one, but a reality at long last."

Taking charge ...

by Charlie Wallace
Assistant Sports Editor

At first sight, he looks like an ordinary college basketball player. But "ordinary" wouldn't be the word that best describes USC freshman guard Jamel Bradley.

He comes off the bench and does what he is asked to do — contribute. Because he's just a freshman, Bradley's primary job, until he gains the experience, is to relieve the starters and score at the same time.

He fills that role quite nicely. Often labeled Carolina's best pure shooter, Bradley has a shot that is as smooth as silk. But "smooth" or "reliable" wouldn't be the best words to describe the Beckley, W.V., native, either. The perfect word for Bradley would be "smart." He exemplifies the word whether on the court, with his family, or in life in general.

Most people familiar with the USC men's basketball team know the main story on Bradley. He's deaf. Most people are wrong. It's true Bradley lost his hearing at a young age and has had to wear hearing aids most of his life, but he laughs in the face of a disability that would make most people's lives difficult and trying.

There's no doubt his hearing disabilities have given him problems, but through that struggle, Bradley has become a better person as well as a better basketball player.

Growing up with a hearing disability was not the easiest thing to conquer. Many kids have enough trouble with life's usual growing pains, not to mention extra obstacles.

"It was frustrating," Bradley admits. "When I was growing up, I had no one who could relate to where I was coming from and I was not able to create friends because people didn't know if I was able to speak, or hear, or things like that."

Bradley was the kid everybody ignored growing up. Children can be harsh because they're often scared and uncomfortable about different situations; imagine having a classmate who talks strangely and can't hear well.

Consequently, no one, no matter how strong, can make it through tough times like those without help from friends or family. Bradley credits his family as having a big impact on his life. Even when he got older, he faced the same struggles, only then, he had a skill he could beat everyone with: basketball.

"When people see me just shooting around, they look at the hearing aids, and they think, 'I don't think this guy is going to be able to play. He's deaf.' And then they may back down."

As the season has gone on, Bradley has gotten better. Just recently, in a loss at Tennessee, Bradley came into his own, scoring 9 points.

He was 2-for-4 from 3-point range, had an assist, made a steal and took two charges. What was truly amazing is that he did all that in nine minutes. In the next game, against Florida, in only eight minutes of playing time, Bradley made another 3-pointer and had a transition layup he created by stealing the ball from an unsuspecting UF player.

"Once I get out on the court and [players] see some of the things I can do, then the head games become a non-factor, and they know I'm just another player," Bradley explained.

His best game to date, however, came Saturday at Alabama. In 10 minutes, Bradley was 4-for-8 from the floor, including 3-of-7 from 3-point range, had two rebounds and added an assist.

He finished in double figures for the first time in his career, scoring 11 points, and was USC's second-leading scorer in the game. To quote "Return of the Jedi," "Impressive, most impressive." He's not a Jedi knight yet. However, with statistics like those, anyone can see Bradley has the potential to be dangerous.

So what makes Bradley the player as well as the person he is today?

"I think my mom has been a big factor in my life," he said. "Because I had this disability, I just wanted to sit in the house and not go out, not go to movies and things."

"But she kind of pushed me. The more she pushed me, the more I realized that I could achieve something in life, and basketball was something I could do really good." Fellow SEC teams can thank Bradley's mom for their future frustrations.

Ironically, though, the one thing that seemed to have the potential to hold Bradley back has actually helped him. Because he's not a huge guy, and because his hearing, even with the help of aids, isn't 100 percent, Bradley uses something else players sometimes forget about: his mind. "My strength is how I think



Sean Rayford Photo Editor

Freshman Jamel Bradley takes control of Carolina's offense in USC's game against Tennessee. Bradley has overcome partial deafness to play for the Gamecocks.

the game," he said. "A lot of these guys are big and physical, and that's what they use, but I just use my thinking ability when I'm out on the court. I just use my common sense."

Bradley not only uses his common sense on the court, but in life as well. What happens if basketball doesn't work out?

Although his major is undeclared, he promises to focus on getting his degree. That alone is enough to make parents proud.

"I'm just going to keep pushing myself in the classroom, and then I may be a spokesperson for people that are deaf and help them do things," he said.

Yes, "smart" is the word that best describes Bradley. However, if he keeps helping out his team, and his community, maybe the word "helpful" could be added. If all things go according to plan, it should fit just right.

Lady Gamecocks win first game in '99

Sports Roundup
Compiled from Staff and AP Reports

The South Carolina Lady Gamecocks jumped back into the winning column Wednesday night with a 73-70 victory at George Mason. Carolina was led by four players who scored in double figures, with Annie Lester's 23 points being a team high. George Mason was paced by junior guard Jen Surlas, who had a career-high 28 points.

George Mason grabbed the opening tip of the game and immediately let USC know it was in for a battle.

The two teams swapped leads early until midway through the first half, when George Mason took the lead on a Surlas layup.

The Patriots continued their hot shooting and built a five-point lead going into intermission. Led by Surlas' 18 points, the Patriots shot 51.5 percent in the first 20 minutes and outrebounded the Lady Gamecocks 22-17. South Carolina connected on 44.4 percent of its first-half shots.

In the second half, South Carolina rallied to get back into the game behind the play of freshman Shaunzinski Gortman and two 3-point plays by Jocelyn Penn. The two teams took turns at holding the lead until a jumper by Annie Lester with

just 5:25 remaining gave USC the lead, 58-57, and the Lady Gamecock led the rest of the contest. George Mason made a run in the last two minutes of the game, but clutch free-throw shooting by Nikki Miars and Crishna Hill sealed the victory for South Carolina. A last-second 3-point attempt to tie the game by the Patriots' Surlas rolled off the rim.

With the victory, South Carolina improved its overall record to 10-7, while George Mason dropped to 6-9.

On Sunday, the Lady Gamecocks host the Arkansas Lady Razorbacks at the Carolina Coliseum. Game time is 2 p.m.

Men's basketball

The Gamecocks remained winless in conference play with a 77-66 loss to Vanderbilt Wednesday night.

Vanderbilt's Dan Langhi scored 20 points and pulled down 13 rebounds to lead the Commodores (11-6, 2-3 Southeastern Conference) and keep South Carolina (5-12, 0-6) winless in the SEC.

"The whole team's been working really hard, and we're trying to put some wins together," Langhi said. "I think we got some confidence back. We had some sloppy mistakes, but collectively we're playing a lot better."

Vanderbilt led 38-29 going into the second half and never looked back.

South Carolina, plagued by 20 turnovers, went on a 9-2 run and cut the lead to 62-55 with 6:29 left on a free throw by BJ McKie, but the Gamecocks would get no closer. The Commodores built a 73-57 lead with 1:50 left on a Langhi layup.

"They came out way ahead of us with their press," South Carolina coach Eddie Fogler said. "When you're pressed, you need to make them pay at the other end by getting baskets. We just didn't do that tonight."

Sam Howard, who averages 8.9 points a game, came off the bench to help the Commodores in the first half. He was 3-of-4 from 3-point range and finished the game with 16 points.

Atiba Prater added 12 points for Vanderbilt. South Carolina was led by McKie's game-high 22 points. Aaron Lucas added 10.

College football

Gary Barnett, who led a turnaround of the Northwestern football program that included an appearance in the Rose Bowl, was hired as coach at Colorado.

Barnett, 52, returning to the school where he was an assistant for eight seasons under Bill McCartney, replaces Rick Neuheisel, who left Colorado Jan. 9 to coach at Washington. Northwestern

moved quickly to replace Barnett, hiring Miami of Ohio coach Randy Walker.

Colorado Athletic Director Dick Tharp said Barnett's hiring is subject to the approval of the university's board of regents.

Pro football

The San Francisco 49ers reached into their past for stability and direction by hiring Bill Walsh as general manager.

Walsh, 57, the Hall of Fame coach who laid the groundwork for the 49ers' long-running success, signed a four-year contract. He coached the 49ers to three Super Bowl victories in the 1980s and had an uncomfortable year-long stint under former coach George Seifert as a consultant in 1996.

Joining Walsh in the front office will be Terry Donahue, 54. The former UCLA coach and TV broadcaster was hired as player personnel director.

Olympics

The bribery scandal surrounding the 2002 Olympics has prompted a fifth investigation, this one by Utah's attorney general.

Jan Graham, attorney general of Utah, said her inquiry won't begin until the Salt Lake Organizing Committee's ethics panel and the International Olympic Committee release their reports.