



USC SCHEDULE

- Men's soccer vs. The Citadel, 6 p.m.
- Women's soccer vs. Charleston So., 7 p.m.
- Volleyball vs. North Carolina A & T, 7 p.m.



David Cloninger
Who Else?

'99 Volleyball preview

USC's returning stars, incoming freshmen must jell in time for opener

BY JARED KELOWITZ
SPORTS EDITOR

The Lady Gamecocks' volleyball team will open its season at 7 p.m. tonight against North Carolina A & T, at 7:00 p.m., at the Volleyball Competition Center. Last year, the team finished with a 21-11 overall record and an 8-6 conference mark. These records were good enough to get USC into the NCAA tournament for the third time in the past four years.

This year should be no exception to this trend. Carolina has a solid corps of returners and a skilled recruiting class.

One of the returning Lady Gamecocks all USC opponents will be focused on is sophomore right-side hitter Cally Plummer. In her first season, Plummer was named to the All-SEC first team, becoming the only freshman ever to receive this honor.

Plummer led USC in kills (353) and aces (86), was second on the team in hitting percentage, and was third on the team in both digs and blocks.

This year's co-captain was also named MVP of the Chattanooga Invitational and named to the All-Tournament team at the Carolina Classic and the Adidas Oklahoma Invitational.

"Like any other year, our goal is to get to the NCAA tournament, but this year we want to make some noise when we get there," Plummer said.

"We have a good group of returners and some really talented freshmen, as well. So if we can jell as a team, we are going to be pretty hard to beat this season," Plummer said.

Another returner who will play a big part in the team's success this year is co-captain Crystal Moore.

Moore, a senior outside hitter who missed the greater part of the 1998 season with a torn ACL, was a large contributor when healthy last season.

Moore enters her senior season at eighth on the USC all-time career kills list and 10th on the attempts list. One of Moore's best performances last year came against in-

state rival Clemson.

Moore knocked down 16 kills, hit .361 and served up two aces, six digs and two blocks.

Other returners expected to play major roles are senior middle blocker Danika Taylor, sophomore outside hitter Milicia Perovic, junior outside hitter Mandy Quarterman and sophomore defensive specialist Liz Price.

Some big shoes the Lady Gamecocks will have to fill this year are those of Cindy "Big Red" Robarge and Ashley Edlund. Although Carolina has not yet filled the shoes of "Big Red" it might have found Edlund's successor.

Freshman setter Megan Hosp is already being compared with Edlund, and she has yet to play a game in garnet and black.

Hosp is a 5-foot-9 freshman setter from Pasadena, Calif. She was a four-year letter winner at Flintridge Sacred Heart Academy in LaCanada, Calif. During her high school career, Hosp helped her team finish as runner-up in the state finals her junior year, and to the CIF semifinals the following year.

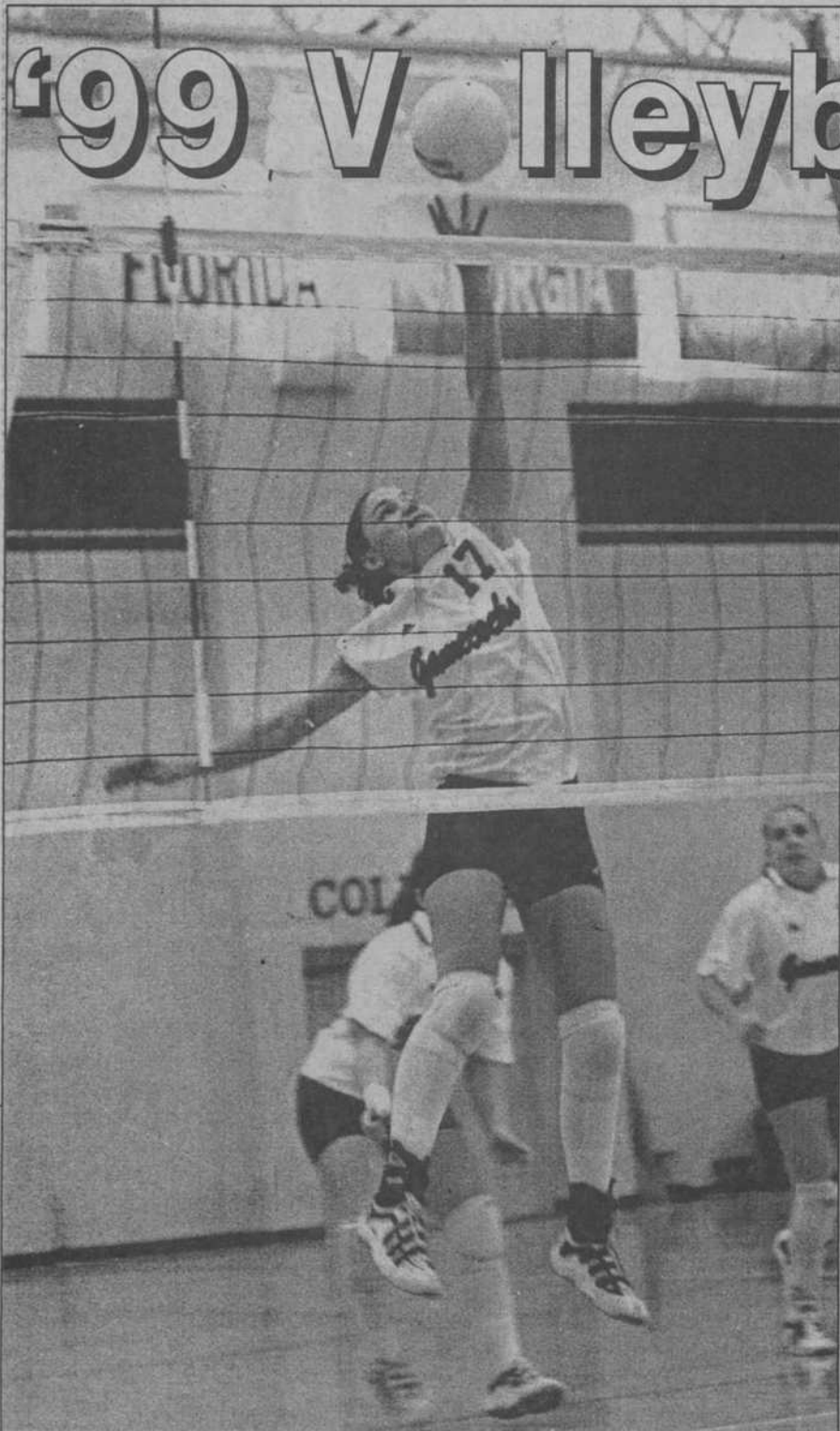
For her outstanding play during her senior season, Hosp was named 1998 Player of the Year by the *Pasadena Star News* and the *Glendale Newspress*.

Some other honors Hosp received were a three-time first-team member of the Mission League and CIF State Division IV, athlete of the week twice in 1998 and 1997, the all-area team as chosen by four major publications, and team MVP and Best Defensive Player in both 1996 and 1997.

With these credentials as a testament to her play, it's no wonder that she is already mentioned in the same breath with Edlund.

"We believe that Megan is showing a great deal of potential in the preseason," coach Kim Christopher said. "Her style of play and attitude remind us all of Ashley Edlund when she came here."

Edlund was chosen as USC's Female Athlete of the Year for the 1998-99 sports season.



SEAN RAYFORD PHOTO EDITOR

Sophomore right-side hitter Cally Plummer and the Gamecocks try to rise to the top of collegiate volleyball. They start their quest at 7 p.m. tonight when USC plays host to North Carolina A & T.

Well, another week in the world of sports, and I'm pretty happy. My Braves recently went on a 10-game winning streak in anticipation of their eighth division title. Also, USC will finally start its football season Saturday in Raleigh, N.C., and yours truly will be there to cheer on the beginning of a new era in Carolina coaching.

Now, to address an issue that has gotten a lot of press in the past few days. I read in the paper this week that all the baseball umpires who are holding out for more money are going to get fired after one more three-game series. Rather than sit around and cry about this devastating event, though, I think I'll celebrate by instead writing a personal letter of congratulations to MLB Commissioner Bud Selig, who's finally showing some semblance of a rational mind, not to mention a backbone.

In case you dear readers out there aren't familiar with the case, let your ole Uncle Dave refresh your memory. At the beginning of the year, umpires held their annual meeting, probably at some exotic location like Pocatello, Idaho, in order to do whatever umpires do when they get together. (I have a sneaking suspicion that it involves ice cubes and a nine-iron, but that's as far as I'm going.)

The umps, banded together in their own union, decided to ask for more money and benefits for the 1999 season. Of course, this action would call for a strike if MLB brass didn't comply.

Let's stop and analyze this for a minute. Everybody, or at least all true baseball fans, remember how heart-broken we all were when players decided to strike in 1994, depriving us of what could've been a really great post-season and, what's worse, making that season the first one in 90 years without a World Series.

When players finally decided to end the strike right after the 1995 sea-

VOLLEYBALL SEE PAGE 19

CLONINGER SEE PAGE 21

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