

GAMECOCK SPORTS

# Want to win your office pool? Listen to this



DAVID CLONINGER  
*Who Else?*

Let the madness begin. At long last, the NCAA has announced the 64-team field for the 2000 NCAA Tournament, starting tomorrow and sending scores of office poolers (myself included) into fits of ecstasy. Although the Gamecocks just missed the Big Dance, fans were treated to a taste of what's to come next year as our boys played like John Wooden's fabled UCLA teams of the 1970s for three days in Atlanta. Despite their Herculean efforts, they were upended by Cliff the Stiff Ellis' Auburn Tigers and their star guard, Scott Pohlman. (Has anyone else noticed how Pohlman looks as if he has just gotten over a hookworm treatment?) Anyway, without further ado, here are the best picks for the upcoming tournament. If you can't trust me, who can you trust?

**Duke** – The Devils are loaded with talent, poise and enough heart from junior forward Shane Battier to knock off anyone in their path. However, playing on a neutral court sometimes hurts the

Blue Devils, as was shown in less-than-usual play in Charlotte last weekend. The Final Four is a lock, but a national title is up in the air.

**Florida** – Coach Billy Donovan has a young team loaded with talent, which all helped the Gators reach the Sweet 16 last year before losing to Gonzaga by a point. This year, the Gators are more talented, but less experienced. If they can get past the Blue Devils, Florida just might have enough to go all the way.

**Temple** – John Chaney pulled yet another surprise from his bag of tricks (not to be confused with the bags under his eyes) this year as the Owls cruised to a 26-5 record behind the trio of Pepe Sanchez, Quincy Wadley and Lynn Greer. The 3-point shooting by this club is almost unstoppable, and the defense gives teams an unexpected low-scoring game. Placed in the lower half of the East, the Owls will be flying to the Elite Eight pretty quickly.

**Oklahoma State** – Perhaps the most dangerous team in the Dance, the Cowboys will gun teams down if they are overlooked. Coach Eddie Sutton has taken OSU along with three other teams to the Final Four in his career, and with sharpshooters Desmond Mason and Joe Adkins at his disposal, is poised to make another run.

**Stanford and Arizona** – I had to put these two teams together because they have so much in common. Both are No. 1 seeds, both have big men who do a lot of scoring in Loren Woods and

Mark Madsen, both were ranked in the top five for most of the season and both rolled to the Dance with a cream-puff Pac-10 schedule. Both the Cardinals and the Wildcats will probably win two games, but with competition like Quin Snyder's Missouri Tigers and Jerry Tarkanian's Fresno State Bulldogs, they'll find out just how tough they really are in a hurry.

**Connecticut** – As the defending champs, the Huskies have received a lot of attention with their up-and-down play. They started the year at No. 1, but a loss in their first game knocked them down to earth and showed leader Khalid El-Amin just how hard it would be to duplicate their 1999 success. With Jake Voskuhl shooting well and Ricky Moore single-handedly supplying the defense, UConn can run to the Sweet 16. Where they go from there is another question.

**Ohio State** – Another Final Four team in 1999, the Buckeyes are led by Scoonie Penn and Michael Redd. However, inconsistent inside scoring, defense and rebounding has slowed them at times. For another run to happen, there will have to be some major upsets.

**Dick Vitale** – Don't ever listen to this chrome-domed, mouth-flapping idiot. If the tourney ran his way, it would last 52 weeks and have so many PTPers and diaper-dandies, and God knows how else it would make every college basketball fan wish for the good old days of not disciplining coach-

es. What I wouldn't give for Bob Knight to pick up that infamous chair and shatter it over Vitale's brainless skull.

**Cincinnati** – Poor, poor Bearcats. Arguably the nation's best team with the no-doubt-about-it nation's best player, the Bearcats stomped the competition all year behind center Kenyon Martin. When Martin went down last week with a broken leg, his career and the Bearcats' hopes might have gone with him. But Coach Bob (T) Huggins has Dermarr Johnson and Pete Mickael, which might be enough to give Cincy a boost. Just remember, Cincy has been a two or three seed for the past three seasons and has lost every time in the second round. (I think it's penance for never graduating a player under Huggins.)

**Michigan State** – My pick for the national champion, the Spartans are incredibly talented, with a smart coach and a tough season behind them. Tom Izzo has used his super duo of Mateen Cleaves and Morris Peterson to make State into an almost sure-bet to return to the Final Four. By surviving the Big Ten all season, the Spartans have become a battle-tested squad and are ready to fight for their place among the nation's elite. With a relatively easy bracket to escape from, this No. 1 seed should go ahead and make hotel reservations in Indianapolis.

**Maryland** – This team has a lot going for it. A fire-breathing coach, Gary Williams, two underrated players, Lonny Baxter and Juan Dixon, one

of the nation's best players, Terrence Morris, and a win over the current No. 1 team in the country, Duke. Although the Terps lost the ACC tourney final, they are ready and frustrated enough to finally show they can win the big game. The only drawback to putting the Terps in the Four — they have to beat Michigan State to get there.

**Oklahoma** – Eduardo Najera can do it all for the Sooners, and he definitely will. They have enough talent to bust up the party for St. John's, and the best is yet to come. Coach Kelvin Sampson has one ace-in-the-hole that makes his team better than any other in the West — he hasn't had to rely on Najera as his offense during the past few weeks. J.R. Raymond and Hollis Price have turned into go-to players and definitely will step up this week.

**Texas** – As much as I hate to admit it, coach Rick Barnes makes his kids into winners. Ever since his days at Providence, people have turned heads to look at Barnes' squads, who always surprise the other teams en route to a great season. (Who can forget Clemson taking eventual Final Four team Minnesota into double overtime in 1997?) This year is no different, as Chris Mihm and Gabe Muoneke supply both points and defense for Texas. The Longhorns just might slip up and hook Arizona, sending Barnes' boys into the Elite Eight.

For you lucky souls who follow this advice, see you on April 2 at the pay window.

SOFTBALL

tro singled to center. McMillin helped her own cause with a two-run single to center.

In game three, USC stopped the Bulls of USF 9-1 in five innings. Carolina defeated USF by the same score in Tampa on Feb. 25.

The Lady Gamecocks were leading 2-0 when they exploded for seven runs in the third inning. In the third, Fitro and Adrianna Baggetta each had two-run singles and Hall added an RBI.

Matthews got her second win of the day, a no-hitter, with USF's only baserunners reaching because of errors. The no-hitter was Matthews' second of the season and USC's third overall in 2000.

## Gamecock Sports Roundup

**Equestrian**  
The USC equestrian team finished out of the ribbons in the Western Tournament of Champions held at New Mexico State University in Las Cruces, N.M., on Saturday.

Junior Mundy Burns was the only Gamecock to place. She finished sixth in Open Horsemanship.

"I can't say we got bad draws," coach Boo Major said. "We made several mental errors and were outridden. The caliber of Western riding is much higher in the west as opposed to our region and

zone. We have our work cut out for us for Nationals."

The equestrian team's last season competition is at the University of Georgia on March 25. Oklahoma State won the tournament.

**Men's golf**  
The No. 13 South Carolina men's golf team carded a 6-over 294 Sunday and finished in 14th place in the prestigious Las Vegas Intercollegiate at the Desert Inn Country Club.

For the second straight day, South Carolina had just one player shoot below par as senior All-American Eric Ecker posted a 1-under 71 for a three-day total of 220. Ecker finished in 46th place overall. Kyle Thompson, who fired a 2-over 74 Sunday, led the Gamecocks in 14th place with a three-day total of 217.

Can you read?  
Can you write?  
Can you walk?

Then get up to Russell House 333, we need you to write for Gamecock Sports!

the power of the fans

USCCOCKS.COM

rivals.com

home of "The Claw"

## Behold! Milk Mustache Contest Grand Prize Winners Gifted with 15 promised minutes of fame and a Got Milk? T-Shirt!



Elise Tyndall & Bobby Brittain



Staff Winner: David O. Pittman

Other winners captured by our calcium camera...

1st runners up- Got Milk? Baseball hat  
Michelle James and Erica Maloney

2nd runners up- Got Milk? Notebook prize pack  
Amit Hajani and Charaka Cook

Honorable Mootions- Got Milk? poster  
Michelle White • Paul Spahos • Gigi Douglas • Paul Mashack • Monica Robinson  
Regina Wragg • Natasha Gadson • Mark Hartney • Sean DeLuna • Dr. Roger Sargent

SC Osteoporosis Coalition Grant  
Health & Wellness Programs • 777-8248 • <http://www.sa.sc.edu/wellness/>

# 71%

MOST USC STUDENTS HAVE

# 0 TO 4

DRINKS WHEN THEY PARTY

(1 drink = the alcohol content of 12 ozs. beer OR 4 ozs. wine OR 1 oz. distilled spirits)

Based on survey data collected by the USC Office of Alcohol & Drug Programs from a random sample of USC students in November, 1998.  
Funding by SC DAODAS Enforcing Underage Drinking Laws Project.