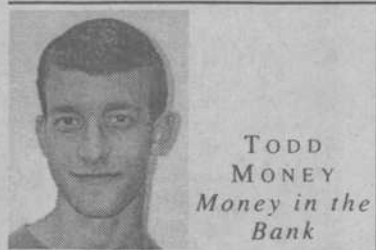


GAMECOCK SPORTS

Time again for alterna-uniforms



TODD MONEY
Money in the Bank

Ahh, spring. Birds chirping, pollen filling the air, 20-year-olds sunbathing on the Horseshoe. Ninety-degree Columbia days beckoning. It's a great time. And, with April upon us again, it's time for our veteran sports columnists to start discussing the most vital, exciting pastime America has to offer the world.

Yes, that's right. Baseball uniforms. What is it about seeing those tight-fitting Russell polyesters come out every year that's so exhilarating? Maybe it's because every year's another box of chocolates. Or caramels. Or nuts. Anyway, you never know what you're going to find. Case in point: the alterna-uniform craze. You know, the practice of teams wearing jerseys that differ from the traditional one-home-and-one-away wardrobe that teams such as, say, the Yankees, have

employed for billions of years. The alterna-garb has actually been around for several decades, but only for certain teams. And after seeing the teams that tried it, you'd think the people in charge would have learned their lesson.

In the late 1970s, in the franchise's relative heyday, the Pittsburgh Pirates modeled those awful gold and black outfits to go along with their other, more sensible unies.

Of course, that was the disco area, so anything's passable there. But anyone who followed the sport in the 1980s remembers the Baltimore Orioles' bright orange shirts, or the San Diego Padres' gold, brown and orange get-ups that disgraced the 1984 World Series. Uggghh. How do we tell our kids about those?

With the advent of seemingly everything else alternative in the late 1990s (music, food, "lifestyles," the NBA's marijuana debate), however, baseball has followed suit almost wholeheartedly. Unless your team's been around since the dawn of time, it has adopted two or three of these alterna-jerseys in the past few years. Even the tradition-rich Oakland Athletics have fallen in love with mostly-black

shirts this season, complete with easy-to-read dark-green lettering and that, uh, elephant on the sleeve.

Last Thursday, those fashion-conscious Padres wore camouflage uniforms. Apparently, they were honoring their city's military. Whatever. They should've stuck to dark-green fatigues. Add an M-60 and plenty of ammo tucked to the side for each player, and this year's San Diego team would surely have recaptured the glory of '84.

The San Francisco Giants have cream-colored home uniforms this year. (Isn't "cream-colored" funny to say three times fast?) What's the point of exchanging white for cream? As if today's baseball players have any trouble hustling and getting their uniforms a little dirty.

Cincinnati, Milwaukee and Houston have also altered their unies, with the Reds falling flat on their (red?) faces with black hats and long-sleeved shirts and Houston switching from navy blue and gold to navy and some kind of orangey-red. Of course, the Astros, Brewers and Tigers were all forced to make alterations to go along with their respective new stadiums. They're excused.

But, it's gotten to the point where gaudy is accepted. Black is everywhere, especially on Sundays, when at least 15 teams show their "reverent" sides by wearing dark-colored jerseys.

The most important question, then, is: Who makes these kinds of decisions, and why?

While there's no need to always revert to what's traditional, even popular fashion should have limits. There's no way you send a baseball team out in camouflage uniforms. And there's no way the proud A's should have to wear black shirts for anything. Rollie Fingers in black? Nope.

And who thought of cream as a good color for a shirt? Oh yeah, gray was already taken. What about fuchsia, or lime, or chartreuse?

These are the uniforms we baseball-watchers must endure for six months every year. That's a whole bunch of 2 a.m. "SportsCenters" and dry-as-a-frozen-waffle Kenny Mayne jokes. If the garb the players wear is such that we can't enjoy the actual games anymore, what else will there be to do?

Be concerned. Watch closely. It's your pastime.

SOFTBALL

from page 10

dy Gamecocks took advantage of three Tiger errors, scoring three unearned runs.

Genovese led off the inning with a single down the left field line. She was sacrificed to second by Adrianna Baggetta. Schultze singled to center field to score Genovese, and both players would advance a base on an error by center fielder Stacey Newton to give USC a 1-0 lead.

The next batter, Danielle Quinones, singled to center field, scoring Schultze and stretching USC's lead to 2-0. Jodi Fittro got USC's fourth hit of the game with a single to left field. After a throwing error by catcher Jennifer Scheulke to advance Fittro and score Quinones, McCutcheon walked. A double steal would give USC its fourth run of the inning, with Fittro crossing the plate and McCutcheon going to second.

USC carried the 4-0 lead into the top of the sixth, when Stacey Newton opened the inning with a walk. Newton went to second on a groundout and advanced to third on a wild pitch. Newton made the game 4-1 when she scored on a wild pitch.

Carolina came roaring back in the bottom of the sixth, scoring two to put

the game out of reach.

Quinones got her second hit of the game with a double to left field. Fellow freshman Fittro walked, putting runners on first and second. Heather Culver came in to pinch hit for McCutcheon and delivered a double to deep center field, scoring both freshmen.

The Tigers scored one run in the seventh, but Matthews would get out of the inning to earn her team-leading 19th win of the season. Matthews allowed eight hits in seven innings, striking out six.

LSU 6, USC 0 (Game 2 Friday)

The Tigers broke out early in Game 2, scoring single runs in the first and third innings. Ashley Ducote drove in a run to give LSU the 1-0 lead in the first. In the third, Asbill walked with two outs. Asbill was initially called out trying to steal, but after an umpires' conference, she was called safe. Ducote tripled to score Asbill.

LSU added two in the fifth and two in the sixth, led by Ducote's seventh and eighth home runs of the season.

Carolina returns to Beckham Field at 5 p.m. Tuesday to face Coastal Carolina. USC will then take to the road for its final SEC series of the season with a pair of doubleheaders against Eastern Division rival Georgia Friday and Saturday in Athens, Ga.

BASEBALL

from page 10

Geshke led off with a double, his third hit of the game, and scored on Freeman's single.

Vanderbilt's other hits were singles by Luellwitz in the fourth inning and a seventh-inning single by Cabrera, who took a wide turn rounding first base and was picked off by Gamecock center fielder McBeth. South Carolina's only hits over the first eight innings were a third-inning infield hit by McHenry and a fourth-inning single by Kelly. **USC 14, Vanderbilt 5 (Friday)**

Peter Bauer pitched eight innings to improve his record to 7-0 Friday night and Rios hit a pair of doubles, one with the bases loaded, as USC defeated the Commodores 14-5 in the first game of the series. USC stretched its overall record to 34-4, equaling the best record in Gamecock history after 38 games.

The 1975 team lost its 38th game to go 34-4, but didn't lose another game until the College World Series when South Carolina finished second to national champion Texas and had a final record of 51-6-1.

Reigning SEC Player of the Week Nonemaker hit two home runs for Van-

derbilt to increase his season total to seven. Nonemaker had three of Vanderbilt's nine hits and drove in four runs. His two-run homer in the first inning staked Vanderbilt to a 2-0 lead, but Carolina scored three in the top of the second.

Vanderbilt quickly tied it with one in the bottom of the inning. The Gamecocks took the lead for good with two runs in the fifth inning and added three each in the sixth, seventh and eighth.

Vanderbilt scored on Nonemaker's solo homer in the sixth inning and added its final run in the eighth. Six Gamecocks had two hits apiece with Rios contributing two doubles. His bases-loaded two-bagger in the seventh drove in three runs.

Notes: USC's bullpen received more bad news when John Wesley and Clint Collins received injuries and will be lost for two weeks. The bullpen has already lost Lee Gronkiewicz for the season and is still waiting for Chris Spigner to recover from elbow soreness ... Senior Shane Nelson will be out of action for at least one more week with a knee injury ... The USC schedule was recently ranked by the RPI as the toughest in the nation. USC still has 16 regular-season games remaining.

Gamecock Sports Roundup

Men's tennis

The USC men's tennis team defeated Vanderbilt 5-2 Friday in its last home match of the 2000 spring season. Two of the four seniors participated in the competition, and both went out with successful performances in their last home appearances as Gamecocks.

Senior Jerome Jourdon had an easy day at the No. 3 position, where he defeated his opponent, Bill McGugin, 6-1, 6-1. Jourdon's fellow senior, Olof Akesson, also won his match in straight sets over Brad Hambrick, 6-2, 7-5.

Other Carolina singles winners included Seth Rose, who kept his winning streak alive at seven. David Nelson also won at the No. 6 spot, where he filled in for injured senior Juan Gamboa. Jeff Bergman, the co-captain along with Jourdon, was the fourth senior on the team.

In doubles, the Gamecocks swept through the Commodores to win the

point. In the process, the doubles team of Guillaume Legat/Rose defeated No. 48 Andrew Nisker/Hambrick in a close match, 9-7.

Women's tennis

The No. 20 USC women's tennis team lost 5-1 Sunday to visiting Tennessee in the Gamecocks' regular season finale at the Maxcy Gregg Tennis Center on the USC campus.

Carolina (14-10, 6-5 SEC) next travels to Ole Miss for the 2000 SEC Tournament on Thursday. Pairings for the tournament will be announced today.

The singles winner for USC against Tennessee was junior Leigh Eichelberger, who downed Vilmarie Castelvici 3-6, 6-4, 6-2 at No. 3 singles.

Kathy Boyanovich, playing at No. 5 singles, pushed Candy Reid to three sets before falling 4-6, 6-2, 6-0.

UT moved to 15-10, 7-4 SEC with the win.

The Lady Gamecocks also lost 6-3 Friday night to visiting No. 10 Vanderbilt. Singles winners for USC were No. 20 Katarina Markovski (6-7, 7-6, 6-2 over Julie Ditty) and Tamara Sutton (2-6, 6-3, 6-3 over Kate Burson).

In doubles play, the team of Boyanovich and Jennifer Radman beat Dit-

ty and Sarah Riske, 9-7.

Track & field

In the third day of the Sea Ray Relays Saturday, junior Terrence Trammell and sophomore Miki Barber both made their 2000 outdoor debuts in their signature events and senior Jimmie Hackley broke the USC record in the 400m.

Barber won the 400m at 51.97, an NCAA automatic time. Barber, the NCAA indoor runner-up, took over the No. 1 spot on the NCAA list with the time.

Trammell continued his unbeaten streak against former Tennessee hurdler Dawane Wallace (now with adidas) and won the 110m hurdles with a time of 13.34. The time, the fastest time in the NCAA this year, also broke the Sea Ray Relays record.

Hackley was second in the 400m at 45.82, breaking his own school record. Hackley's time is the sixth-fastest in the NCAA in 2000. Greenville's Gerald Pressley was ninth at 47.32.

Junior Jackie Madison and senior Ellakisha Williamson finished 1-2 respectively in the 100m hurdles. Madison posted a time of 13.18, while Williamson ran 13.30.

Demetria Washington was fifth in the 200m at 24.09, an NCAA provisional time, while freshman pole vaulter Chris Steddum vaulted a personal best, 16' 10" to finish fifth.

Mechelle Lewis was fifth in the 100m at 11.54, also an NCAA provisional mark.

Competing in rain and 48-degree temperatures, USC sophomore Tacita Bass finished second in the heptathlon with a personal best 5,278 points at the Sea Ray Relays. Junior CJ Anderson scored a personal best 6,817 points to finish third in the decathlon.

Bass' score, just four points behind winner Nakeshia Jackson of UAB, provisionally qualifies her for the NCAA Championships. Bass jumped 18' 11" in the long jump, threw the javelin 110' 2" and ran the 800m at 2:22.09. Bass' time Friday in the 200m set a Sea Ray Relays record.

Anderson ran the 110m hurdles in 14.50, threw the discus 117' 3", pole vaulted 12', threw the javelin 138' 4" and ran the 1500m in 5:17.67.

Anderson was bested only by Phil McMullen (Asics) and Kamau Sullivan (Indiana Invaders), who finished 1-2.

The team will next be in action Saturday at the Virginia Tech Invite.

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Failure to renew by this date will result in the loss of your space. If you already made payment, please disregard this notice.

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