



Sports

GAMECOCK SPORTS SCHEDULE

- Men's tennis in Athens, Ga., Mon., All Day
- Volleyball at Georgia, Fri., 7 p.m.
- Women's soccer at Vanderbilt, Fri., 7 p.m.
- Men's golf in Dalton, Ga., Fri.-Sun.

Gamecocks lose first game of year

BY JARED KELOWITZ
THE GAMECOCK

The University of South Carolina football team provided a flashback from the past two seasons this Saturday as penalties, missed tackles, botched field goals and dropped passes prevented them from reaching the illustrious 5-0 mark. In their first road game of the season at Tuscaloosa, the Alabama Crimson Tide put a damper on Carolina's five-game winning streak with a 27-17 victory.

The Gamecocks (4-1, 2-1) opened up the game with a 5:28, 41-yard drive that resulted in a 49-yard Reid Bethea field goal. Bethea's only made field goal of the game gave USC a 3-0 lead.

On the first play of the ensuing Alabama drive, USC linebacker Shannon Wadley stepped in front of a Tyler Watts pass and returned it to the Alabama 17-yard line. Erik Kimrey then threw two passes to get Carolina inside the Alabama 11. On 4th down, Reid Bethea shanked a 28-yard field goal attempt. This was the first of three times that USC got inside the Crimson Tide 15-yard line and failed to score a point.

"One thing that really hurt us today was that we got inside their 15 (yard line) three times and came away empty handed each time," Coach Holtz said.

Alabama answered the USC missed field goal with a 53-yard drive that resulted in a game-tying 44-yard field goal by Neal Thomas.

The next USC drive was led by true freshman Dondrial Pinkins. On his first ever rushing attempt, Pinkins gained three yards and then turned the ball over to the Crimson Tide on a fumble at their own 24-yard line.

After a good defensive series by USC, the Gamecock offensive unit took over on their own 20. The drive was three in and three out for USC. Alabama then started to play. Quarterback Andrew Zow led the Tide down the field to the South Carolina 5-yard line, where freshman halfback Brandon Miree was able to punch it into the end-zone two plays later extending 'Bama's lead to 10-3.

The Gamecocks had one more chance before the half to tie the score. On the first play of the drive, Derek Watson delivered a perfect pass to James Adkisson, who let it slip through his fingers. USC got the ball all the way down to the Alabama 4-yard line. This set up a 21-yard field goal attempt, which Bethea also botched.

In the second half USC quarterback Phil Petty returned to action. On just his third play from

the line of scrimmage, Petty connected with senior wide receiver Jermale Kelly for a 19-yard touchdown. The extra point by Bethea cut the Tide lead to 13-10.

"When Phil Petty got in there he played his heart out. Petty, Kelly, Brian Scott and Derek Watson all played their hearts out," Holtz said.

Just when the momentum was switching, the Crimson Tide answered with a touchdown drive of their own. On a first down from the Alabama 38-yard line, Tide halfback Ahmaad Galloway broke a tackle at the line of scrimmage and one more in the secondary on his way to a 62-yard gallop and another score for the home team. The extra point extended 'Bama's lead back to 20-10.

"The long touchdown run by Galloway near the end of the third quarter was really a back breaker for us. They ended up taking advantage of just some poor tackling and some confusion on the defense's part," Holtz said.

South Carolina was held scoreless in the rest of the third quarter. They looked to be threatening the Alabama red-zone for a moment, but a fourth down pass by Petty under tremendous pressure resulted in another USC turnover, as Milo Lewis of Alabama picked off the pass at the Crimson Tide 13-yard line.

When it seemed as if hope was lost, Carolina cornerback Sheldon Brown came up with his second interception of the year.

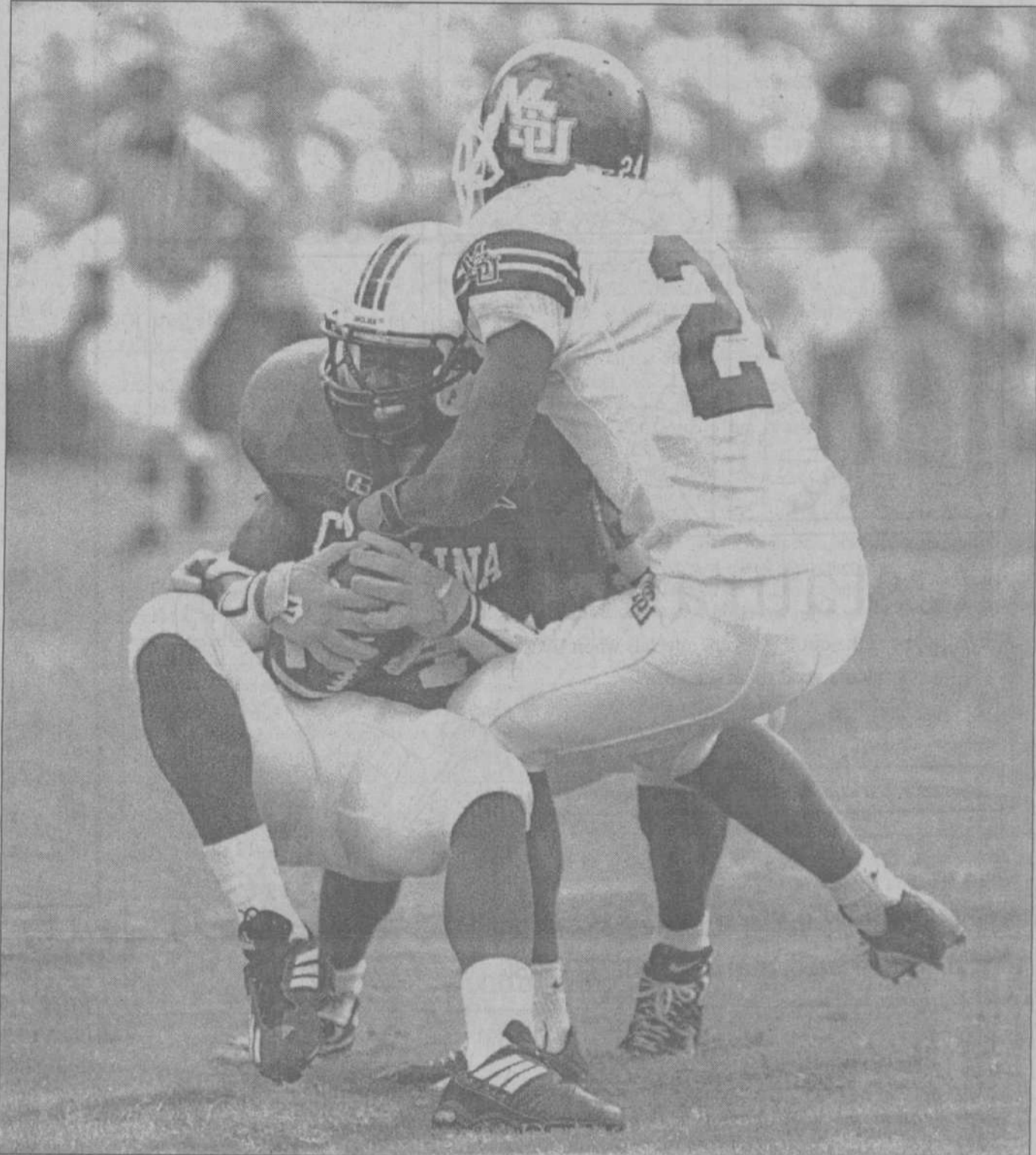
A 28-yard pass to Jermale Kelly gave the combo their second hook-up for a TD of the game, cutting the Alabama lead to 20-17.

With renewed hope the Gamecock defense took the field and forced Alabama to punt. But Carolina failed to move the ball on their next possession.

On the next Alabama drive, quarterback Andrew Zow led the Tide 41 yards for another score. This drive was punctuated by Zow himself when a broken play resulted in an 8-yard touchdown scamper. This gave 'Bama their final touchdown of the afternoon, and a 27-17 lead.

On the last Carolina drive of the game, the offense was unable to get anything going as the 'Bama defense kept good pressure on Petty and sacked him for a nine-yard loss on fourth-and-ten.

The Gamecocks will look to regain their poise next Saturday when they travel to Lexington, Ky. to face the Kentucky Wildcats.



Sean Rayford THE GAMECOCK

USC's Jermale Kelly hauls in a pass against Mississippi State last Saturday. Kelly and the Gamecocks came up short, losing 27-17 to Alabama in Tuscaloosa.

The sports desk can be reached at gamecocksports@hotmail.com.

Errors prove costly in Carolina loss

BY KYLE ALMOND
THE GAMECOCK

Andrew Zow, Ahmaad Galloway and the rest of the Alabama Crimson Tide had a lot to do with South Carolina's first loss of the season on Saturday, but much of the damage done to the Gamecocks was self-inflicted.

Penalties, turnovers, dropped passes and missed field goals plagued USC throughout its 27-17 defeat to last year's SEC champions.

"I'm upset because we are better than that," South Carolina head coach Lou Holtz said. "I think we're a pretty competitive SEC team, but you can't make stupid mistakes."

Penalties might have been the stupidest of Carolina's mistakes. The Game-

cocks tallied six penalties in all, and what really hurt was that all six were in the second half of play.

Down 20-17 with 9:07 remaining, the Gamecocks were driving down the field in search of a winning score, or at least a tying field goal. A 10-yard run by Ryan Brewer gave USC a first down on the Alabama 42-yard line.

But on first-and-10, Carolina was called for an illegal block penalty that put them back 18 yards. The penalty proved to be costly, as Phil Petty threw an interception on first-and-28 to Milo Lewis, who returned the ball deep into South Carolina territory. Derek Watson's late hit on Lewis after the return made things even worse for the Gamecocks, as Watson was called for a 15-yard personal foul penalty.

Zow and the Alabama offense took advantage of the great field position and scored the final points of the game, putting the game out of USC's reach.

"[Alabama] capitalized on our mistakes," Watson said. "Those were the turning points in the game."

There was just as much misfortune for the Gamecocks in the first half as there was in the second.

At the Alabama 10-yard line and threatening to cut into the Tide's 10-3 lead in the first half, starting quarterback Erik Kimrey threw the first of three Gamecock interceptions of the day. On third and one, Kimrey rolled out of the pocket and tossed a soft pass right into the outstretched hands of Alabama's Marcus Spencer at the 4-yard line.

"I tried to 'dink' it over [Spencer] and it just came out of my hand wrong," Kimrey said. "Just a poor decision."

For the game, USC had a total of four turnovers. In addition to three interceptions, one by Kimrey and two by Petty, there was also a lost fumble by freshman quarterback Dondrial Pinkins, who was playing in his first game of his Gamecock career.

As halftime drew closer, South Carolina made another attempt at cutting into Alabama's 10-3 lead.

On first down from the Alabama 46, Watson ran a toss sweep to the left. But instead of running with the ball, Watson surprisingly cocked back and fired a deep pass to wide receiver James Adkisson, who didn't have an Alabama defender within at least five yards from him. As the ball neared its intended target, it looked as if it would be a sure touchdown, given Adkisson caught the ball.

But he didn't catch the ball. And because of the drop, USC missed a perfect chance to tie the game up before the end of the first half.

On the same drive, Carolina advanced all the way to the Alabama 4-yard line before being stopped on third down. That would bring on place-kicker Reid Bethea, who would attempt a 21-yard field goal to cut the deficit to four with only three seconds remaining in the half.

Bethea's kick glanced off the left crossbar, and USC had nothing to show for their efforts.

Bethea had also missed a 28-yard try earlier in the first quarter, which had sailed wide left.

Men's soccer beats No. 2 PSU

BY KYLE ALMOND
THE GAMECOCK

The South Carolina men's soccer team defeated a higher ranked team once again when they knocked off No. 2 Penn State on Sunday, 1-0, at Jeffrey Field in University Park, Pa.

Jordan Quinn scored the lone goal of the game for the Gamecocks (8-1-1), who haven't lost in their last eight contests.

The Nittany Lions, who were undefeated as of last week, have dropped their last three matches and now have a record of 8-3.

Despite the loss, PSU was in control for most of the game, out-shooting Carolina 16-3 and holding a significant advantage in corner kicks, 12-3. But the only statistic that matters is goals scored, and USC came out on top in that one.

Sloppy defensive play in their own penalty box was responsible for the Nittany Lions' third straight defeat.

Penn State turned the ball over to USC deep in their own zone and Quinn was there to capitalize, burying a shot into the net for his team-leading ninth goal of the season. The goal, which came in the 31st minute, was scored on Eric Earnhardt, a freshman goalkeeper making his first start of his career.

Penn State continued to attack at will against USC, des-

perately looking for an equalizing goal, but it never came. PSU's Chris Stout, a starting defender, was moved to striker and created countless scoring chances, but to no avail.

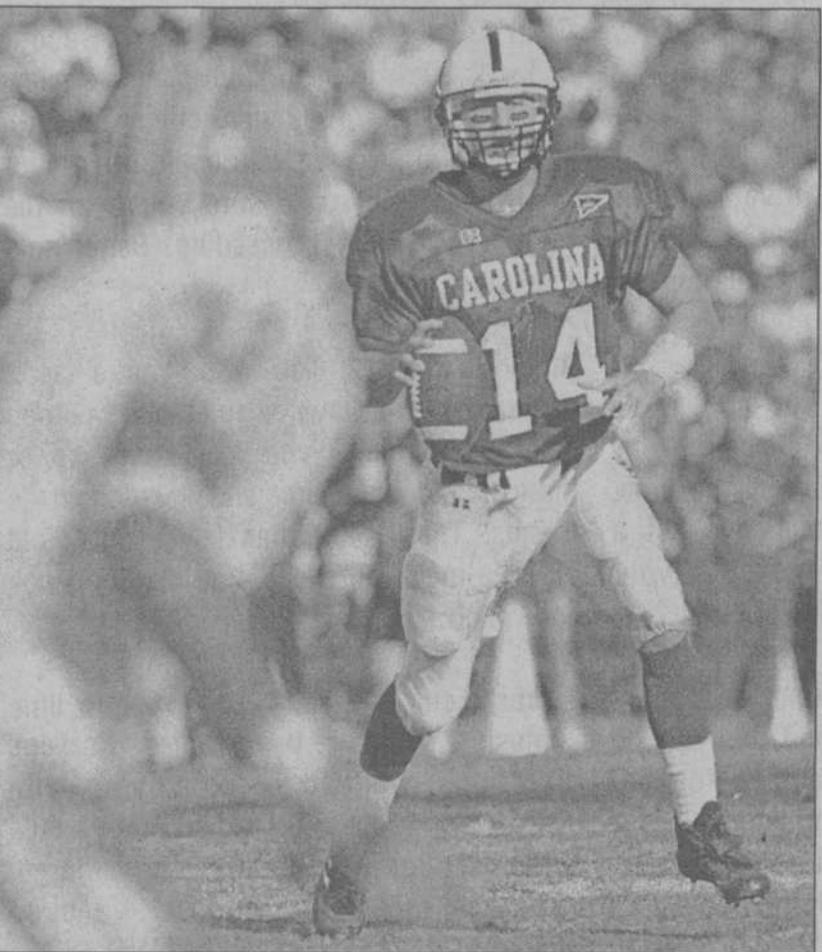
Goalkeeper Henry Ring recorded his fourth shutout for the Gamecocks, and his second shutout in as many games. The redshirt senior also added three saves in the game.

With the win, South Carolina avenged its loss from this past year to the Nittany Lions, who beat them 2-1 with a goal in the waning seconds of the contest. Penn State went on to finish 19-4-1 and advance all the way to the Elite Eight of the NCAA Tournament.

The win was just another in a long line of upsets for the Gamecocks this season. Earlier in the year, USC defeated Virginia, who was ranked No. 1 at the time, and No. 8 Maryland. Now with a win over the No. 2 team in the nation, the Gamecocks will most likely move up in the NSCAA rankings.

After finishing a four-game road trip with a 3-0-1 record, South Carolina will return to Columbia next Sunday to take on the Clemson Tigers. Last season, USC lost to its rivals 1-0 at Clemson.

The sports desk can be reached at gamecocksports@hotmail.com.



SEAN RAYFORD THE GAMECOCK

Phil Petty, looking here for an open receiver against Georgia, had two interceptions in the Gamecocks' loss to Alabama this weekend.

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