

SEC Tournament next stop for Gamecock volleyball team



AMY GOULDING THE GAMECOCK

Two USC volleyball players prepare to receive a spike against Mississippi State. The Gamecocks will try to continue their winning season this weekend when they travel to Gainesville for the SEC Tournament.

BY KYLE ALMOND
THE GAMECOCK

The USC volleyball team travels to Gainesville, Fla. this weekend to take part in the Southeastern Conference Tournament, and for head coach Kim Christopher, the slate is wiped clean.

"We are in a whole new season with the SEC Tournament," Christopher said. "We are in a situation where if you lose, you are out."

USC, who earned the third seed in the tournament behind division champions Florida and Alabama, will face Georgia in the first round today.

The Gamecocks (21-5, 12-2 SEC) finished the regular season with its best-ever record in the conference, but failed in its attempt to win the SEC East. Florida defeated USC 3-0 in Columbia last Sunday to clinch the division title.

Carolina has an opportunity for redemption, providing they get by Georgia on Friday and win Saturday against the winner of LSU-Alabama.

USC is 2-0 against Georgia (14-13, 5-9) this season. The Gamecocks won 3-1 in Athens on Oct. 6, and 3-0 last Friday.

But Georgia head coach Mary Buczek says she is ready to fight against a possible third USC win.

"I like our chances against South Carolina," the first-year coach said. "Though they defeated us twice during the regular season, I don't feel that we played up to our capability in either of the matches."

Despite being the third seed in the SEC, Carolina is first in hitting percentage (.267) and first in opponents' hitting percentage (.134). It has also won 17 of its last 19 matches.

However, Christopher knows her team can't take Georgia lightly.

"Georgia's always played us tough," she said. "They are always prepared so we will have to play well."

Gamecocks named to All-SEC team

Three USC sophomores were

named to the All-SEC first team Thursday, and another made the second team.

Right-side blocker Cally Plummer, middle blocker Berna Dwyer and setter Megan Hosp earned All-SEC first team honors for their outstanding seasons.

Plummer came back from season-ending shoulder surgery to make the team for the second straight year. Dwyer is currently 14th in the nation in hitting percentage and first on the team in kills. Hosp was the only setter named to the first team.

Making the second team for the Gamecocks was middle blocker Sam Alban.

Alban leads the Gamecocks in blocks and is second in hitting percentage.

Florida's Nicole McCray was named SEC Player of the Year, and was one of five Gators named to the all-conference team.

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

FOOTBALL

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tremendous speed up front, which could be cause for concern for the USC running game.

The Gamecocks may catch a break, however, as Adams suffered a concussion in practice this week. His status for Saturday's game is questionable.

Carolina's defense will be aided by the return of linebacker Kenny Harney from injury. Harney has missed most of the season because of a broken fibula suffered in the Mississippi State game.

Harney and the defense will look to rebound after giving up over 500 yards to the Gators last week, but Clemson's offense won't make it easy.

Tiger quarterback Woodrow Dantzler has been a Heisman candidate for much of the season and is a threat on the ground as well as the air. The redshirt junior has 23 touchdowns on the season, with 13 of them coming on runs.

Dantzler has been slowed in recent games, however, as he has an ankle injury that will require off-season surgery.

Sophomore Willie Simmons, who led the Tigers to a come-from-behind victory over North Carolina, could see a good deal of playing time Saturday if Dantzler goes down.

Clemson tailback Travis Zachary is 72 yards shy of 1,000 yards rushing on the season. Wide receiver Rod Gardner is the Tigers' go-to-guy through the air, with 47 catches for 849 yards and six touchdowns.

Like Zachary, the Gamecocks'

Derek Watson will be shooting for 1,000. He is just 84 yards shy of that mark.

The Gamecocks will also try to get their receivers more involved in this game as Clemson's pass defense has plummeted to 95th in the country the last few weeks. With one more reception, Jermale Kelly will set the record for the most touchdown catches in Gamecock history.

Both squads' special teams have been inconsistent at best this year. Clemson's main problem has been missed extra points, while Carolina's Achilles heel has been field goals.

Holtz said kicker Jason Corse has been impressive in practice and will get the start for USC on Saturday.

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SOCCER

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contain to be successful. Curtis has 14 goals and nine assists on the season for Duke.

Freshman forward Jordan Cila teams up with Curtis to make a formidable front line that could give the USC defense problems. Cila has 13 goals and nine assists this season.

Senior goalkeeper Jeff Haywood should get the start for Duke. Haywood is 13-4 on the year and has a goals

against average of 1.23. He also has six shutouts and 56 saves this year.

Lockwood, one of two seniors on Carolina along with goalkeeper Henry Ring, is determined to make sure this isn't his last game.

"It's do or die," he said. "You have to be careful not to make mistakes, or you'll be sitting at home."

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Gamecock Sports Challenge



Jared Kelowitz	Kyle Almond	Brock Vergakis	Todd Money	Guest of the Week
Sports Editor (35-20)	Sports Editor (37-18)	Editor in Chief (35-20)	Defending Champion (35-20)	Jonathan Dunagin (32-23)
USC-Clemson	USC	Clemson	USC	Clemson
Florida-Florida St.	Florida	Florida St.	Florida	Florida St.
Auburn-Alabama	Auburn	Auburn	Alabama	Auburn
Oregon-Oregon St.	Oregon	Oregon	Oregon	Oregon
Michigan-Ohio St.	Michigan	Ohio St.	Michigan	Ohio St.

In Today's Edition

The Gamecock Sports Extra

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Top Ten

Clemson jokes to tell this Saturday

10. Sign in the Bates West bathrooms: Flush twice: It's a long way to Clemson.
9. Forrest Gump chose Alabama over Clemson because he wanted an academic challenge.
8. What do you call an attractive Clemson co-ed? A visitor.
7. Ah, Clemson! Where men are men and sheep are very nervous.
6. Keith Adams is the only linebacker in the NCAA who has a gang affiliation on his student ID.
5. Tommy Bowden asked Woodrow Dantzler what he wants to be after graduation. Woody said, "40."
4. They had to shut down the Clemson library. Someone checked out the book. The real tragedy is, when it was returned, all the pictures were colored in.
3. They once tried to mate Clemson cheerleaders with pigs, but there are some things even a pig won't do.

G TIGERS

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