



GAMECOCK SPORTS SCHEDULE

- Baseball at Clemson, 7:15 p.m. Wednesday
- Softball at Coastal Carolina, 4 p.m. Wednesday
- Track and field at Pennsylvania (Penn Relays), Thursday-Saturday
- Baseball vs. Auburn, 7 p.m. Friday

Softball team clinches SEC East



Aaron Hark/The Gamecock

The Gamecock softball team won enough games this weekend to earn its first SEC East division title since 1999. USC clinched the crown with a 3-1 win over second-place Florida on Sunday.

USC downs Florida to win division crown

BY PRESTON BAINES
THE GAMECOCK

Megan Matthews' victories over the Florida Gators on Saturday and Sunday brought the SEC East title to Columbia for the third time in the past five years.

No. 20 USC (33-16-1, 16-7 SEC) lost the first game of a doubleheader 4-1 Saturday, but bounced back to win the second game 3-0 and Sunday's finale 3-1 to clinch the Eastern Division championship at Beckham Field.

In Sunday's game, the Gators (32-23, 12-14) struck in their first at-bat. UF third baseman Jennifer Mossadeghi led off with an infield hit and later scored on a double to deep center field by second baseman Prissie Walden.

The first inning, though, wasn't a sign of things to come. Matthews (17-11) would go on to retire the next 17 hitters.

"I felt really good, and they were coming out to get us, (but) I knew we were going to score, so I wasn't really worried about it," Matthews said.

The score remained the same until USC tied the game in the second on a two-out triple by sophomore Danielle Quinones that scored senior Adrienne Genovese.

The game remained scoreless until the bottom of the sixth, when the Gamecocks got runs on a peculiar play. Freshman Amber Curtis hit a one-out

single. The next batter, freshman Samantha Jennings, hit a run-scoring double, took third on a throw home and scored on the same play after Florida catcher Bree Berger couldn't handle the throw.

It appeared the Gamecocks might get more runs when Quinones singled and senior Joyce McMillin reached on an error by Florida shortstop Jackie Marchetta, but Amanda Moore relieved Gator starter Renise Landry (17-13) and got out of the inning without further damage.

In the seventh, Matthews allowed a one-out double to Walden for the first Gator hit since the first inning, but retired the next two for the final outs and a Gamecock victory.

On Saturday, the Gators capitalized on Gamecock errors in the first game of the series. In the top of the first, UF's Marino scored from first base on an errant throw by junior third baseman Adrianna Baggetta.

The second inning was more of the same. Marchetta led off with an infield single and advanced to second on a Curtis throw that landed in the dugout. Marchetta later scored on a Walden ground ball that sophomore Debralee Troesh couldn't handle. The Gamecocks would commit another error in the inning, but it wouldn't cost them.

Florida added single runs in the fourth and seventh innings. USC freshman Stacey Johnson suffered her fifth loss in game one. Johnson gave up four runs, two earned, in a complete game.

The second game was much like the third. The Gamecocks got all they needed when they scored two runs in the second after putting together a two-out rally.

McMillin singled in both runs after three straight singles with two outs loaded the bases.

The Gamecocks would score one more run in the bottom of the sixth, but Matthews would hit a rough spot in the seventh inning. With the tying run at the plate for the Gators, left fielder Mylin Prieto hit a ball to left, but Megan Donohoo made a diving catch to secure the victory for the Gamecocks.

Gators coach Karen Johns, a former Gamecock, gave credit where she saw it was due.

"Credit Megan [Donohoo]," Johns said. "She's the type of player who will make those plays. I'm proud, though, that down to the last at-bat, we didn't give up."

USC head coach Joyce Compton wasn't surprised with Matthews' strong performances this weekend.

"[Matthews] is a gamer, and she is going to compete out there," Compton said. "I thought she did a great job after a tough game [Saturday]."

Compton cites senior leadership as one of the biggest components of the team's success.

"I think all of our seniors have really come through," she said. "A great example is this weekend. Donohoo has a great catch (Saturday) to end the game, and in the top of the sixth (Sunday), she makes a diving catch on their slapper (Marchetta), who could create havoc. We came in and used that to our advantage and scored off of it."

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

Genovese leading by example

BY CHRIS FOY
THE GAMECOCK

Adrienne Genovese, the starting catcher for the USC softball team, has spent this season just as she did her previous three — as a relatively silent leader who does her work exceptionally and enjoys herself in the process.

Almost overlooked this season with the strong performances of USC pitchers Megan Matthews and Stacey Johnson, the senior from Corona, Calif. has been an underrated and integral part of the No. 20 Gamecocks, becoming one of the team's leading hitters.

Genovese has remained among the top of the team this season in offensive statistics, including hits and batting average.

She said she's pleased with the way her team has been playing in 2001.

"[I think] we've started really well," she said. "We've beaten some tough teams, and we've won a lot of games. I think all in all, it's going really well."

Genovese attributes her batting skills to hard work, particularly over this past summer. She refused to take time off and spent the summer working on her patience.

"I used to hit at anything that came across the plate," Genovese said. "This season, I've narrowed it down to hitting my pitch. Being

patient and returning to the basics, I think, has improved my play a lot."

USC head coach Joyce Compton thinks Genovese has emerged since the clavicle injury she suffered her freshman year.

"As a catcher, she has grown tremendously," Compton said. "She does a great job handling pitchers. Although she's a small kid, she's got a big heart, and we know we're getting everything she's got."

Genovese feels she has had an opportunity like few others by catching for pitchers of the caliber of Matthews and Johnson, who have garnered much of the attention for the team's road to the SEC East title, which it clinched Sunday.

Johnson, a freshman, thinks it's actually herself who has had the great opportunity in playing with Genovese, who helped ease her into the college game.

"[Earlier in the season], she would notice that I was a little nervous and would come out to the mound and joke around with me to help me loosen up," Johnson said. "She's helped me out a lot with the adjustment to college ball. She's not only a great player on the field, but a great person off the field as well."

Genovese says her role as a leader is twofold. As the catcher, she is already in charge on

the field, calling bases and dictating play. But what she says is just as essential is making sure the team's chemistry is strong, and as a senior, Genovese feels she has a duty to keep the team focused.

"I think it's important to make sure we all have the same goal and all head in the same direction, making sure we have great chemistry on and off the field," she said.

Compton is impressed with the way Genovese leads the team by example.

"She has fun," Compton said. "She shows the other girls that it's most important to get out there and simply enjoy yourself."

After this season, Genovese will have one semester left to complete her degree in political science and education. She would like to teach in high school and possibly coach softball.

As far as her Carolina experience goes, Genovese said she wouldn't change a thing.

"There is nothing I would change about my career here," she said. "I've made some great friends. My playing has improved each year, and that's exactly what I wanted — to always be stepping forward. It's been an awesome experience."

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Aaron Hark/The Gamecock

USC starting catcher Adrienne Genovese has been a steady force this season for the SEC East champion Gamecocks.

Baseball wins game, but loses fourth straight series

Bell tosses complete-game shutout to avoid three-game sweep

BY JOSEPH WHEELER
THE GAMECOCK

After last Wednesday's emphatic win over rival Clemson, USC's baseball team got a morale boost and a momentum swing heading into a crucial three-game SEC series at Georgia over the weekend.

Carolina had lost its past three SEC sets coming into the weekend and was hoping to reverse the trend and move up in the SEC East standings against the Bulldogs. However, it wasn't to be, as Georgia took two of three games from the No. 16 Gamecocks.

The Georgia pitching was too strong for USC (31-13, 10-11 SEC) in Friday's game, and Saturday's game ended in ninth-inning heartbreak for Carolina, but Sunday would be a different story as red-hot pitcher Gary Bell kept the Bulldogs 26-

15, 12-9) off the board and avoided a sweep.

USC's bats, which had struggled in the series' first two contests, returned to life Sunday. The Gamecocks pounded out 10 hits in the 6-0 victory.

But hitting wasn't the main story in the game. Bell (8-4), fresh off Wednesday's impressive victory over Clemson, continued his mastery on the mound for USC on Sunday. The junior college transfer went the distance, battling all nine innings to record the first complete game by a Gamecock pitcher this season. Scattering five hits and mixing in four strikeouts, Bell had everything working as he helped the Gamecocks avoid the sweep in Athens.

The return of Garris Gonc and Brandon Dees from injuries also paid dividends for the Gamecocks on Sunday. Gonc and Dees were both 2-for-4 on the afternoon. Dees scored one run and drove in two others, while Gonc scored two runs and drove in another. The ten Carolina hits matched its total of the

previous two games at Foley Field.

Georgia's Kris Edge was the hero for the Bulldogs on Saturday. His two-out double to the left-field gap in the bottom of the ninth gave the Bulldogs a 5-4 win.

The Gamecocks were ahead 4-3 going into the bottom of the last inning because of a bases-loaded wild pitch by Bulldog reliever Bill Sharpton, but they couldn't hold off the late rally.

The win marked the eighth time this season that Georgia won on its last at-bat of the game.

USC starter Kip Bouknight was solid through six innings, giving up one run on six hits, but the bullpen was shaky. Closer Lee Gronkiewicz (1-1) was responsible for four runs on five hits in relief of Bouknight.

On Friday, Georgia's Jeremy Brown pitched his second straight complete game, and coach Ron Polk got his 1,100th career victory as Georgia won 9-4.

The Gamecocks were the first to score in the game. Drew Meyer's double in the first inning scored one, and he was

driven in on an RBI groundout by Tim Whittaker.

The Bulldogs were swift to answer. They put up five runs on three hits in the bottom half of the inning to take a lead they would never relinquish.

Gamecock starter Chris Spigner (6-3) pitched six innings in the loss. He gave up six runs on five hits and also gave up five of the Gamecock's nine walks. On the other side, Brown (5-2) surrendered four runs on five hits and struck out seven Gamecock batters.

Four bullpen walks and two more Gamecock errors in the eighth accounted for the final difference.

The Gamecocks will try to pick themselves up Wednesday after dropping farther in the SEC standings. Carolina will face Clemson for the fourth and final time this season at Doug Kingsmore Stadium. USC has won two of the three meetings with the Tigers this season.

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SEC STANDINGS

EASTERN DIVISION

	SEC	All
Tennessee	13-8	33-10
Georgia	12-9	26-15
USC	10-11	31-13
Florida	10-11	26-20
Vanderbilt	7-14	20-23
Kentucky	5-15	18-24

WESTERN DIVISION

	SEC	All
LSU	14-7	30-13
Ole Miss	14-7	30-13
Miss. St.	13-7	25-15
Auburn	11-10	29-12
Alabama	10-11	25-19
Arkansas	6-15	21-24

SPORTS BRIEFS

Men's golf comes in seventh at SECs

The USC men's golf team finished seventh at the 2001 SEC Championships in Sea Island, Ga.

USC shot a three-round score of 880, well off the pace of the tournament winners, defending SEC champion and No. 1 ranked Georgia. Georgia shot a final-round 282 to finish with a three-day total of 841 to win.

The Bulldogs' score was 16 shots better than second-place Florida, which finished with a three-day total of 857. Auburn shot a 287 on Sunday to finish third with a total of 861.

Leading the way for the Gamecocks was junior transfer Ernie Rose, who fired 214, finishing sixth overall.

All-American Kyle Thompson finished second on the team with a score of 216, tying him for ninth overall. The tournament marks the final SEC Championship of his collegiate career.

The Bulldogs' Bryant Odom won the SEC individualist title after blasting 207. Florida teammates Bubba Dickerson and Camilo Villegas both shot 211 to tie for second.

The Gamecocks resume action May 13-14 at the Cavalier Classic in Charlottesville, Va.

Vols take down Carolina in SEC men's tennis tournament

Despite the continued dominance of Gamecock senior Guillaume Legat at the No. 1 singles position, USC fell to second-seeded Tennessee on Friday afternoon in quarterfinal action of the SEC men's tennis tournament.

Legat took his No. 5 national ranking against the Vols' top player, 30th-ranked Mark Parsons and won for the 11th time in 12 SEC matches this season, pounding Parsons 6-2, 6-0.

Tennessee swept the No. 2, 3 and 4 singles positions in straight sets to clinch the 4-1 victory. The No. 5 and 6 singles matches weren't played.

The loss ends the Gamecocks' regular season, with Carolina now awaiting a berth in the NCAA Men's Tennis Championships next month.