

The Gamecock

CLONINGER CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

First of all, the fans placed Atlanta's Chipper Jones as starting third baseman for the game. Jones has had a fine year, with an above .300 average and 25 homers. Good, but not as good as the Cardinals' sensational rookie, Albert Pujols, who is batting .323 with 21 homers. (Of course, it probably doesn't help that Pujols was listed as an outfielder on the All-Star ballot.)

Fans were also responsible for placing Cincinnati's Ken Griffey Jr., who was fifth in outfield voting, despite being injured the first three months of the season. Do these people even care about who goes to the game and who doesn't?

Apparently not. First baseman Mark McGwire, hitting a blistering .182, came in fourth.

Switching over the junior circuit, I found Seattle first baseman John Olerud in the starting spot. Makes sense, I guess, until you realize Olerud's maybe the eighth-best first baseman in the league. Never mind the fact that A's first baseman Jason Giambi is batting .322 with 19 homers, besides being the reigning American League MVP.

The A.L. starting third baseman is the old reliable, Cal Ripken Jr. I deeply respect and admire Ripken for everything he's accomplished, but I don't agree with him getting the start because of what he's done in the past. The game is intended to showcase those who have performed the best during the first half of the season. That's why Angels third sacker Troy Glaus should have gotten the nod.

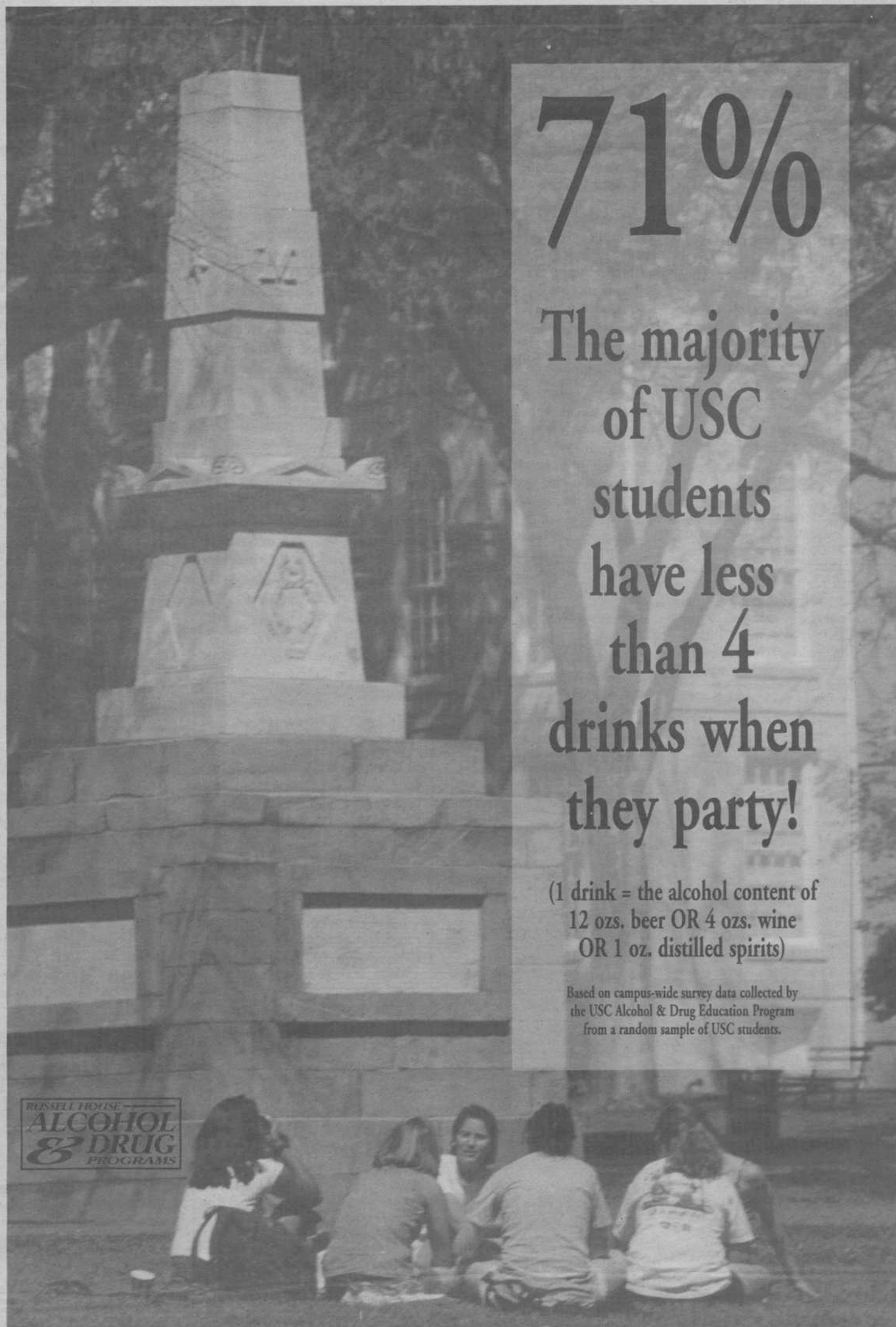
The pitching rotations, thank God, are not chosen by the fans, but by the managers of the two teams. Joe Torre finally showed a touch of class and elected Seattle's Jeff Nelson to the team, showing there's no hard feelings. (The seven Yankees he also selected as reserves probably don't mind either.)

You think nepotism only exists in the American League? Just look at the National League squad, "managed" by the Mets' Bobby Valentine. Valentine refused to name Marlins outfielder Cliff Floyd to the team after he allegedly promised he would, preferring Mets pitcher Rick Reed instead. (Valentine later added Floyd after media scrutiny and an injury to Reed surfaced.)

The All-Star game was a lot more fun when the players picked the squads instead of the fans. If we really want to see a pre-World Series clash between the best of both worlds, let the players decide themselves.

It's not labeled "All-Injured" or "All-Legend" for a reason. "All-Star" seems pretty self-explanatory to me.

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



71%

The majority
of USC
students
have less
than 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 campus-wide survey data collected by
the USC Alcohol & Drug Education Program
from a random sample of USC students.

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