



SPORTS

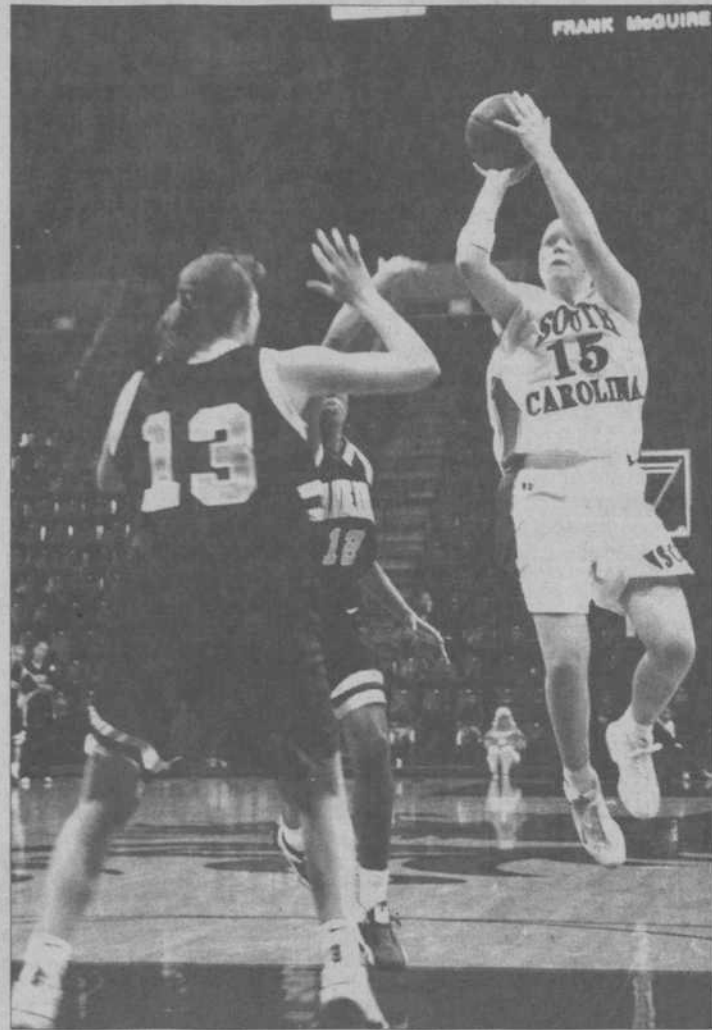
GAME SCHEDULE

MEN'S BASKETBALL at Arkansas, 8 p.m. Wednesday
WOMEN'S BASKETBALL vs. No. 2 Tennessee, 7 p.m. Thursday
SWIMMING AND DIVING at Cincinnati, Friday
TRACK AND FIELD at Virginia Tech, Saturday
MEN'S BASKETBALL vs. Vanderbilt, 7:30 p.m. Saturday

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USC faces huge SEC showdown



Christina Ciocan pulls up for a jumper in Carolina's 71-52 win over No. 6 Vanderbilt earlier this season. PHOTO BY ROBERT GRUEN.



No. 2 Tennessee at No. 8 USC

7 p.m., Thursday
 Carolina Coliseum

Lady Gamecocks will have crowd behind them in sold-out battle

BY COURTNEY KELLER
 THE GAMECOCK

The No. 8 USC's women's basketball team will look to improve its 12-game winning streak Thursday when No. 2 Tennessee visits the Carolina Coliseum for a 7 p.m. tip-off.

The Lady Gamecocks (16-1, 4-0 SEC) will have to put their hearts into this game to stop Tennessee (14-1, 3-0), a dynasty that has won six national championships in its history. But USC has its highest ranking since the 1981-82 season, when it was ranked No. 2 for three consecutive weeks.

This matchup will be one of the biggest SEC showdowns of the year. Carolina was defeated last year by Tennessee, but the Lady Gamecocks are looking forward to the challenge.

This game will be especially huge for senior Teresa Geter, who was a member of the Lady Vols before transferring to USC in 1999.

Carolina will not only try to beat Tennessee, but it will also try to break the attendance record for women's basketball at the Coliseum. The current record is 6,219, set Jan. 15, 1981 against UCLA. In an effort to break the record, all game tickets are being sold for \$1.

The Lady Gamecocks are coming off an outstanding victory against Arkansas on Sunday, when they defeated the Lady Razorbacks 91-66. Leading Carolina in scoring was Jocelyn Penn, who tied her career-high with 32 points.

"Jocelyn does a fantastic job for us," USC head coach Susan Walvius said.

Shaunzinski Gortman also contributed a personal season-high seven assists against Arkansas, and Petra Ujhelyi grabbed 13 rebounds, also a personal season-high. During the game, Carolina shot a season-high 56 percent, making 34 of 61 field goals. They also shot 67 percent from three-

point range.

The Lady Volunteers are also coming off a win in which they beat the LSU Lady Tigers 79-67. Tennessee was led in scoring by Kara Lawson with 17 points and Michelle Snow with 14.

It has been 20 years since the Lady Gamecocks have been ranked in the Top 10 by both the Associated Press and the coaches. USC is also ranked third in RPI and 15th nationally in strength of schedule.

As the ladies continue to move up, Walvius can't understand how her team is still stuck behind two higher-ranked teams that they've beaten this year, No. 6 Duke and No. 7 Vanderbilt.

"I'm a little surprised," Walvius said. "We beat Vanderbilt and Duke; I don't understand why we're not above them. We've proved ourselves."

Carolina trails Duke by 25 points in the AP ranking, and Vanderbilt by six.

"We talk about still having something to prove," Walvius said. "The team sees our ranking, that we're steadily moving up. But, obviously, people still don't respect us."

Comments on this story? Write gamecocksports@hotmail.com

SPORTS BRIEFS

Track and field team starts season strong

The USC track and field teams kicked off the 2002 indoor season by winning five events on the women's side and three events on the men's side while collecting three NCAA provisional marks on the women's side. The Gamecocks will compete at the Virginia Tech Invitational next weekend.

Senior Lisa Barber won the 60-meter dash with an NCAA provisional time of 7.37 seconds. Barber was trailed by a trio of Gamecocks - Aleen Bailey (7.46), Mechelle Lewis (7.55) and Khaliyah Carpenter (7.58).

Senior Demetria Washington won the 400 meters with an NCAA provisional time of 53.96. Washington also ran the anchor leg for the 4x400-meter relay team that won the event with a time of 3 minutes, 9.30 seconds. Washington was joined on the relay by Tacita Bass, Lashinda Demus and Shevon Stoddart.

On the men's side, Otis Harris won the 400 at 48.71. Like Washington, Harris ran the anchor leg for the 4x400 relay team that won the event at 8:15.71. James Law, Shamus Singletary and Jon Fortenberry joined Harris on the relay.

Also for the Gamecocks, Otukile Lekote won the 800 at 1:52.89. Tiffany Ross won her first collegiate race in the 60-meter hurdles with a time of 8.48 - just .04 seconds off an NCAA provisional mark. Chelsea Hammond won the high jump at 5 feet, 7 3/4 inches - just a quarter-inch off the school record.

1,500 student seats left for UT game

USC's bid to break its attendance record for women's basketball appears to be successful, as this Thursday's game between the No. 8 Lady Gamecocks and No. 2 Tennessee is sold out. USC ticket office officials made the announcement Tuesday afternoon.

All tickets available to the general public, which were sold at \$1 each, have been sold.

There are 1,500 student tickets, however, that can be picked up Thursday at the Carolina Coliseum ticket office. The office will start giving out tickets to those with a student ID starting at 5 p.m.

USC baseball team returns to diamond

The USC baseball team will hold its first official team practice of the season Jan. 17. The team is coming off a 49-20 record and a final No. 12 ranking after coming up one game shy of a College World Series berth.

Preseason All-American Drew Meyer returns for his junior season after batting .303 with seven home runs and 37 RBIs in 2001.

This season's schedule features 31 games against teams that participated in the 2001 NCAA Tournament. Carolina will again play a 30-game SEC schedule, meeting all members of the conference three times with the exception of Auburn. Among other NCAA Tournament teams, the Gamecocks will again meet in-state rival Clemson four times, Seton Hall three times, The Citadel twice and VCU, Georgia Tech and Coastal Carolina once at the Baseball at the Beach Tournament in Myrtle Beach from Feb. 22-24.

USC opens the 2002 season Feb. 8 at 3 p.m. against Charleston Southern at Sarge Frye Field.

Rugby club team looking for players

The USC rugby club team has started practice and is looking for players. The team practices Tuesday and Thursday nights on the band practice field from 7-9 p.m. The squad is seeking all position players, and no experience is necessary.

Gamecocks still looking for first SEC win



USC at Arkansas

8 p.m., Wednesday
 Bud Walton Arena
 Fayetteville, Ark.

USC could be 0-3 in conference with loss to Razorbacks

BY MATT ROTHENBERG
 THE GAMECOCK

Coming off a heartbreaking 51-50 home loss at the hands of Kentucky on Saturday, the USC men's basketball team looks to regroup tonight at Bud Walton Arena in Arkansas against the Razorbacks.

Carolina (10-5, 0-2 SEC) comes into the game hoping to snap a two-game losing streak, while Arkansas (10-5, 2-1) would also like to get back into the win column after its 75-69 defeat against LSU on Sunday.

USC's starting guards, Aaron Lucas and Jamel Bradley, should have their hands full facing Arkansas, a veteran squad that knows how to win.

Razorback senior guards Jannero Pargo and Brandon Dean lead the team in scoring with 16.4 and 14.3 points per game, respectively. Another senior guard, Teddy Gipson, is playing quality minutes off the bench and is among team leaders in field goal and three-point field goal percentages. Adding a touch of youth among the veterans is freshman J.J. Sullinger, a Nike All-American and the state of Ohio's Co-Player of the Year, who is third on the team in scoring with 11.7 points per game.

While it's hard to tell how the Gamecock guards will fare against Arkansas, the frontcourt might have it a little easier. For only the third time this season, the Razorbacks outrebounded their opponent, grabbing 34 boards on Sunday compared with LSU's 27.

Carolina will have a small height advantage inside, but Arkansas has plenty of power in the middle. Senior Dionesio Gomez leads the team in rebounding and field goal percentage while averaging seven points per game.

♦ BASKETBALL, SEE PAGE 10



Chuck Eidson shot a combined 3-for-16 in SEC games against Florida and Kentucky. He'll need to be more accurate for the Gamecocks to survive in Arkansas. PHOTO BY ROBERT GRUEN

SPURRIER PLEDGES TO PUT A WINNER IN NATION'S CAPITAL

Snyder makes yet another bad decision



CHRIS FOY

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Coaches with no NFL experience shouldn't be highest paid in league.

So far this year, six NFL head coaches have received their pink slips. Some were deserved. Some weren't. But what made this year so particularly interesting for owners with freshly vacated coaching jobs was the fact that Steve Spurrier was on the market. Many have this

delusion that he will automatically demonstrate success at the next level. But they're supposed to be running businesses, not football teams. I found the way Spurrier landed the job of coaching the Washington Redskins unbelievable.

It all starts with the owner. We all knew Daniel Snyder was an idiot; you can't keep firing people in such short periods if they fall short of perfection. As Rome wasn't built in a day, neither was any decent football team, especially one as salary-cap strapped as the 'Skins.

But Snyder did away with Norv Turner and Terry Robiskie before hiring Marty Schottenheimer. Snyder also didn't make his former coaches' jobs any easier by signing all of his favorite players from the market. Many have this

Spurrier to leave decision-making to owner

BY JOSEPH WHITE
 AP SPORTS WRITER

WASHINGTON (AP) - Steve Spurrier took over the Washington Redskins and immediately pledged to return the team to the greatness it enjoyed under coach Joe Gibbs.

The former Florida coach also made it clear Tuesday who was in charge, saying he was "in complete agreement with the way Dan Snyder wants to run this team."

If there's a disagreement with the yet-to-be-hired general manager, Spurrier said he would look to the owner, Snyder, to resolve it.

Spurrier, the originator of the "Fun 'N Gun" offense at Florida, said he would run the offense and that "hopefully we'll get an excellent defensive coordinator in here."

"That's why I left college -- to see if my style of coaching can work in the NFL," Spurrier said. He said his role model would be Gibbs, whose Redskins won

three Super Bowls in a dozen seasons.

"I don't know if I can come close to what he did, but certainly what he achieved here in his 12 years certainly was excellent," Spurrier said.

Spurrier said one of his goals would be to present a game ball to Snyder when the Redskins beat the archrival Dallas Cowboys.

Snyder replaced coach Marty Schottenheimer on Monday, giving Spurrier a record 5-year, \$25 million deal even though he's never coached an NFL game.

Schottenheimer will get \$10 million for his one 8-8 season, in which the Redskins became the first NFL team to go from 0-5 to 5-5. He'll receive the \$7.5 million remaining on the 4-year, \$10 million contract he signed a year ago, with the Redskins picking up the difference in contracts if Schottenheimer signs with another team.

Snyder said he didn't have a beef with Schottenheimer as a coach. Instead, the two parted



Steve Spurrier talks at his news conference Thursday.

PHOTO COURTESY OF KRT CAMPUS

ways because Snyder wanted to regain the final authority over the makeup of the roster, a bit of power he relinquished to

♦ SPURRIER, SEE PAGE 10