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COLLEGE WORLD SERIES

Cocks send Nebraska packing

CAROLINA WINS FIRST GAME IN OMAHA SINCE 1981

BY BRAD SENKIW
 THE GAMECOCK

The USC baseball team discovered the highs and lows of the College World Series this weekend in their first trip to Omaha since 1985.

After playing one of their worst games of the year, an 11-0 loss to Georgia Tech, the Gamecocks (54-17) bounced back in the elimination game versus Nebraska with a 10-8 victory.

Friday: Georgia Tech 11, USC 0

South Carolina ran into a wall on Friday by the name of Kyle Bakker. The 6-foot-9-inch lefty baffled the Gamecock hitters as he recorded nine strikeouts in eight innings pitched.

Bakker (13-3) allowed only six hits and one walk to USC, who was kept scoreless for the first time this season. Bakker combined with reliever Brian Burks to hurl the first CWS shutout since 1985.

Carolina starter Gary Bell (10-3) lasted only four innings as he gave

up five earned runs on nine hits. The Gamecocks used four more pitchers in an attempt to shut down the Yellow Jackets' hitting.

Georgia Tech jumped on Carolina in the first with two runs, coming with an RBI triple by Victor Menocal, who went 4 for 6 for the day, and an RBI single from Jeremy Slayden.

The Gamecocks answered with putting two runners on with one out after a Yaron Peters single. Bakker then forced Brian Buscher to pop out and struck out Garris Gonca to the end the inning.

The back-breaker came in the fifth inning when the Yellow Jackets added five runs in which Wes Rynders and Matthew Boggs hit doubles that scored two runs each.

USC's only other threat to score came after Kevin Melillo's leadoff double in the seventh inning, Carolina's only extra-base hit of the afternoon.

Melillo was left on base, as the Gamecock hitters were stifled once again.

Georgia Tech added two more runs in the eighth and Burks pitched the ninth inning to secure



PHOTO BY ROBERT GREUN/THE GAMECOCK

Carolina Pitcher Blake Taylor(42) leads the cheers after the baseball team's Super-Regional victory over Miami.

the shutout and put the Gamecocks one loss away from elimination.

Sunday: USC 10, Nebraska 8

USC fought back after being down early to Nebraska (47-21) to stay alive with a 10-8 win. Peters, 1-for-3, was the hero of the day when he knocked a two-run homerun in the top of the ninth while reliever

John Wesley (2-0) held on to get the win for the Gamecocks.

It looked like another early blowout, but the Carolina bats came alive to make Nebraska the first team eliminated from this year's CWS. USC trailed 4-0 after three innings.

Gonca had a 3-for-5 day with an

♦ **RECAP, SEE PAGE 11**

Peters' patience rewarded

BY J. KEITH ALLEN
 THE GAMECOCK

In a game described by USC baseball coach Ray Tanner as a "heavyweight fight," Yaron Peters connected on the knock-out punch. He just had to bide his time before he could deliver.

The Nebraska staff stayed away from the SEC Player of the Year all afternoon, electing to walk him three times instead. They tried to stay away again in the ninth inning with Drew Meyer on second and first base open, but the plan didn't work. Peters knocked a 2-2 pitch over the leftfield wall to give Carolina a 10-8 lead.

"I finally got something to hit," Peters said of the home run. "He made a mistake and I took advantage of it."

Peters continued, "My eyes just blew up when I saw something over the plate."

If you want to win ...

Don't hit it to Tim-Seaton. He has turned into something of a ♦ **SERIES, SEE PAGE 11**

Robinson runs away with title

STAFF REPORTS

USC's Marci Robinson led from start to finish, firing a 3-over 74 in Thursday's final round in capturing the Columbia Women's City Golf Championship by 6 strokes at The University Club in Blythewood.

The Lady Gamecock veteran improved on her second-place finish last year where she finished 1 stroke back in the field.

Robinson, a rising junior, posted a first-round 68, led by 5 strokes after both 18 and 36 holes and ran away with the title with teammate and rising senior Kacy Thompson finishing second. Robinson had a three-day 215 team total, 6 strokes ahead of Thompson's 221.

Thompson, a native of Irmo, had three birdies on the back nine Thursday to move from fourth to second place with a 1-under 70 to give the USC women's golf team a 1-2 sweep.

The course played 5,277 yards and a par 71, some 600 yards shorter than the 5,900-yard, par 72 layout the Lady Gamecocks practice on and play in hosting the annual Lady Gamecock Classic. Robinson had a 3-over 38 on the front side, but saw her lead grow to 7 strokes and was not challenged throughout.

"This is a tournament that's a lot

♦ **GOLF, SEE PAGE 11**



PHOTO SPECIAL TO THE GAMECOCK
Marci Robinson's 3 over 74 won the Columbia Women's title.

Athletes capture new academic records

STAFF REPORTS

As USC continues to have a banner year athletically, Gamecock student-athletes have also turned in their best academic performance ever, as USC released its athletic department academic report for the recently completed spring semester.

The overall grade point average for USC student-athletes for the 2002 spring semester was 2.894, the highest on record. This performance tops the previous standard of 2.88, set a year ago in the spring of 2001.

Additionally, the Gamecock

football squad posted its highest GPA ever with a 2.561, which better the previous best of 2.511 last fall semester.

The men's basketball GPA was also up to 2.553, an improvement from last spring's 2.002.

Two other teams, women's soccer (3.303) and men's swimming (3.272), recorded their highest GPAs over the past six years.

From a total of 417 student-athletes, a record 24 individuals earned a perfect 4.0 GPA this past ♦ **ACADEMIC REPORT, SEE PAGE 11**