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# SPORTS

**WOMEN'S SOCCER** vs. Charleston Southern, 7 p.m. Wednesday  
**MEN'S SOCCER** vs. Louisville at the Pro-rehab-Aces Classic in Evansville, Ind., 5 p.m. Friday  
**VOLLEYBALL** vs. Kentucky, 7 p.m. Friday  
**CROSS COUNTRY** at Winthrop Invitational, 9 a.m. Saturday  
**FOOTBALL** vs. Temple, 7 p.m. Saturday

## Mental lapses hurting Gamecocks

### Optimistic Holtz concerned about team's mistakes

BY JASON NOLL  
THE GAMECOCK

Head coach Lou Holtz remained optimistic Monday after his football team's tough defeat to Georgia on Saturday.

"I don't ever look on anything as make-or-break," Holtz said at his news conference about concerns that the Gamecocks (1-2, 0-1 SEC) have their backs to the wall

after the loss.

Holtz did voice his displeasure, however, about certain areas of his team's performance.

"We've had 12 turnovers in three games," Holtz said. "We had 15 all last year. Eleven of our 12 turnovers have been by seniors."

Holtz was concerned about his team's intelligence on the playing field.

"We've had very foolish penalties at critical times," he said.

Holtz said that he thought his team performed better in some areas during this year's game than in last year's game against Georgia, a 14-9 Carolina victory.

But while the Gamecocks improved offensively, with more rushing yards and first downs, their play declined at critical moments.

"We had over 50 yards in drops that were in our hands," Holtz said. "We gave up 52 yards on one pass; on third-and-10 from their 2, we gave up a 35 yard pass; and we gave up a 22-yard pass we didn't do last year."

Holtz was pleased with the im-

provement of his defense, which had been questionable in weeks past. The Bulldogs were only able to convert four out of 15 third-down chances.

In terms of what approach the team will take from this point, Holtz said that his team needs changes, but he is unsure of what they should be.

"You keep doing what you've always been doing, you get the same result," Holtz said. "We've had to look and examine everything."

"I can't tell you what direction we'll go, but you just can't keep doing these things."

Part of Holtz's confusion lies in his belief that, while his team is ultimately performing well, small lapses at critical moments are costing the team.

"When I look at it fundamentally and I take out eight or nine plays, I say 'that's a pretty good football team,'" Holtz said.

After another loss, the team's confidence is in question. Holtz acknowledged the confidence problem and admitted that he was worried about his own confidence as well.

"I don't think there's any doubt the football team's shaky," Holtz said. "If this football team ever

**"I don't think there's any doubt the football team's shaky. If this football team ever needed support from the fans, it's now."**

LOU HOLTZ  
USC FOOTBALL HEAD COACH

needed support from the fans, it's now."

Despite the team's setbacks and his own concerns, Holtz maintains that his team can turn things

♦ MISTAKES, SEE PAGE 11

## Gortman living out her WNBA dream

### Former Carolina guard talks about her first year playing professional basketball

BY MATT ROTHENBERG  
THE GAMECOCK

One of the biggest stories for USC this past year was the season that senior guard Shaunzinski Gortman was having for the women's basketball team. The Columbia native averaged 15.2 points and 6.1 rebounds per game, and she was named to the All-SEC Team.

Gortman, who finished her collegiate career with 1,367 points and 576 rebounds, also received an honorable mention for the Associated Press' All-America Team.

It was this outstanding 2001-02 season that led to Gortman being selected ninth overall in the WNBA Draft by the Charlotte Sting. And while she continues to adjust to the professional ranks, Gortman still has great memories of her time at USC.

"One of the great moments of last season was advancing to each round of play in the NCAA Tournament," Gortman said. "It was just a great team effort, and I miss [my teammates] a lot. Having a bond and chemistry with them and the coaches really helped."

"The coaching staff was fun, and that made a difference. Things were a lot easier than in the years before."

The years of hard work paid off in April, when the Sting selected Gortman.

"I was really excited to be drafted; it was a dream come true," she

said. "The whole time, you just want to know where you're going to, and when they call your name, it's a big relief."

Gortman was traded to the Minnesota Lynx the same day she was drafted, but despite the trade, which placed her far away from home, Gortman maintains a positive outlook.

"Charlotte would have been a great place to play, but there's a reason for everything," Gortman said. "I'm just blessed to be here and to be playing in the WNBA. I have to look at it in a positive aspect — I'm doing something I love."

Most athletes who make the step to the professional level are sure to notice some differences in their new surroundings. Being thrust into a new system is among those adjustments.

"One difference is, in college, it's just being used to your teammates. It's more relaxed and more fun," Gortman said. "Here, you have new players come in every year, and you can get traded at any time. There's just a different chemistry and system."

Gortman remains hopeful that the Gamecocks can build upon last year's remarkable run to the Elite Eight, despite losing five seniors who had big roles in the team's success.

### Gortman at USC Career Statistics

12.9 points per game  
5.5 rebounds per game  
3.0 assists per game  
41.4% field-goal percentage  
33% 3-point percentage

"I think they have the players and experience to be able to have another great season," she said. "Jocelyn Penn's a great player and a leader on the court. Kelly Morrone has the experience and provides a lot of leadership. Cristina (Ciocan) is a great point guard, and she'll help lead them."

"Last year was a great experience for me. To have that great year was the best experience I've had in a long time. [My teammates and I] bonded real well, and you just start to miss them after a while."

In her first season of pro basketball, Gortman averaged 3.1 points and 2.1 rebounds in 29 contests. She was among team leaders with a .778 free-throw percentage.

If people across the country missed her this past season, they can catch this rising star when the Lynx come to town in the future — a future that could be bright with Gortman on the court.

Comments on this story? E-mail [gamecocksports@hotmail.com](mailto:gamecocksports@hotmail.com)



PHOTO BY ROBERT GRUEN/THE GAMECOCK

USC's Shaun Gortman rises for a layup against Tennessee last season. Gortman, who led Carolina to the Elite Eight of the NCAA Tournament, now plays the WNBA's Minnesota Lynx.

## Any more heartbreak, and I'll need help



KYLE ALMOND  
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I hope I never have to endure another heartbreaker like this past weekend. If I ever have to go through something like that again, I won't be able to get out of bed for a month.

Luckily for me, I was able to find the inner strength to get over Anna Kournikova's defeat in the Shanghai Open final. I hope you were able to as well.

Hey, I feel your pain. It was tough to see our beloved Anna fall yet again in a final of an ATP tournament. But time heals all wounds, and she'll be back to fight another day. So don't fret.

That USC football game was pretty tough to stomach, too. Two yards away from glory, only to come up short — it was painful to see. After we had been standing in the rain for what seemed like an eternity, it was cruel to have to go home soaked, tired and winless.

I moped all the way back to campus, and it was one sad sight. I'm sure I looked pretty pathetic, grieving over a sporting event, but this one hurt.

You know what really sucks about seeing the Gamecocks lose a game like that? Forget seeing the travesty live and in person. The ride home is much worse, because you're sitting in traffic, not moving, and all you can do is replay the game over and over in your head.

Really sadistic Carolina fans (myself included) will even listen to the postgame on the radio, plunging the knife deeper into their broken hearts.

Seriously, that final fumble wrecked my entire weekend. I was inconsolable. And that probably is cause for some concern.

Why is losing a football game such an emotional ordeal? Why does it feel like a matter of life and death? I have to find the answer, because this can't be healthy. I mean, I'm not even the one playing the game. I'm not the one actually losing. And it still hurts like hell.

I can't even begin to imagine how the players feel about a loss like that. I can't fathom the emotions that Andrew Pinnoch must be feeling.

I find it hard to get excited about the rest of the season, especially Temple next week. But these guys have to pick up the pieces and play hard for at least eight more weeks. It's a challenging task.

After Saturday's game, I said that I'd rather be robbed at gunpoint than to see the Gamecocks lose a game like that. It got a cou-

ple of laughs, but I was serious. As long as my body stays bullet-free, I would be happy to hand over my money in return for a USC victory. Now that I think about it, I'd even consider taking a gory flesh wound.

Does anyone else feel this way? Or do I just need to get a life? I'm willing to hear some suggestions, because my health could be at risk. After Rod Gardner's pushoff at Clemson my sophomore year, and after this narrow defeat, I might have to be put in a strait-jacket before I graduate.

### Weekly Awards

**Pimp Daddy of the Week:**  
Drew Bledsoe

Bledsoe's presence in Buffalo has revitalized the Bills. The former Washington State quarterback was 35-of-49 for 463 yards and three touchdowns on Sunday. His last touchdown pass to Peerless Price in overtime, gave the Bills their first victory of the young season.

A lot of other quarterbacks had good outings on Sunday, but Bledsoe gets the nod as Pimp Daddy because of how well he handled the offseason move from New England. He was replaced last season by Super Bowl MVP Tom Brady, but he didn't

sulk. He was a team player throughout the process — a classy move — and now he's enjoying the benefits of good karma. It's hard not to root for the guy.

**Toolbox of the Week:**  
The Downtown Athletic Club

Is anything sacred anymore? The Heisman Trophy will now be sponsored by the Suzuki Motor Corp. Be expecting plenty of plugs when it's time to present Texas' Chris Simms with the coveted award. Yeah, that's right. Chris Simms.

### Quote of the Week:

"I'm a bad man." — boxer Roy Jones Jr., after pummeling over-matched Clifton Woods in their light heavyweight title fight Saturday

He stole the quote from Muhammad Ali, but I don't remember Ali rapping with six dancing girls like Jones did Saturday when he entered the ring.

Apollo Creed did his little show before fighting Ivan Drago in "Rocky IV," but he didn't live to brag about it. Jones had a laugh after toying with Woods, whom he stopped in the sixth round without breaking much of a sweat.

Almond is a fourth-year print journalism student. His column appears every Wednesday in *Gamecock Sports*.

## Smith encouraged by team's progress since Clemson loss



**Charleston Southern at USC**  
7 p.m. Wednesday  
The Graveyard

BY JOEL DODSON  
THE GAMECOCK

After easily defeating the College of Charleston 3-1 last Saturday, USC women's soccer head coach Shelley Smith feels confident about her team's play right now.

"To come out and score that many goals against a solid team after the defeat against Clemson was a very uplifting feeling," Smith said. "It was good for our team to get our confidence back and know that we can go out and dominate an opponent."

Carolina (4-2) looks to continue its winning ways against Charleston Southern on Wednesday night. The Buccaneers (1-3-1) are coming off consecutive losses to Tennessee

Tech and Georgia State.

Despite losing to Clemson a week ago, Smith sees much improvement in her team since the start of the season.

"The organization of our play has certainly gotten better," she said. "In addition, we are continuing to raise our level of physical play and outwork teams. Once we get our organization down, I feel like we will be able to finish goals a lot easier."

Senior Morgan McIntyre leads the way for the Gamecocks with a team-high five goals. One of those goals proved to be the game-winner against Charleston. Fellow senior Jessica Julin is dishing out the assists, with four to lead the team.

Defender Melinda Carter has also been solid, chipping in three goals from the back line.

In goal, junior Elise Matthews has been efficient. The senior is fifth among SEC goalkeepers with a 0.75 goals-against-average.

However, Smith still feels that some work and preparation needs to be done before the SEC opener on Sept. 29 against a nationally ranked Florida squad.

♦ SOCCER, SEE PAGE 11