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SPORTS

WOMEN'S SOCCER vs. Florida in SEC Tournament in Oxford, Miss., 3 p.m. Thursday
MEN'S BASKETBALL vs. Team Nike (exhibition), 7:30 p.m. Thursday
MEN'S TENNIS at ITA National Indoors in Dallas, Thursday-Friday
WOMEN'S BASKETBALL vs. Athletes in Action (exhibition), 7 p.m. Friday

USC recovering from loss

BY KYLE ALMOND
THE GAMECOCK

USC head coach Lou Holtz didn't spend his entire time Tuesday giving his team lessons in the passing game.

He was giving them civics lessons instead.

"We passed out ballots and had our players vote for governor and senator," Holtz said. "I talked to them about the obligation they had to vote and the importance of aligning themselves with people who had the same core values as they did."

"It's discouraging when you hear that voter turnout is low. People have a responsibility to elect their leaders and take an active role in supporting their government."

After voting, it was back to business for the Gamecocks, who are preparing for this Saturday's game against Arkansas.

Team meetings started at noon, and USC had an extensive practice under wet conditions at the practice fields.

There, it was back to the passing game, which is in shambles after last Saturday's loss to Tennessee. Carolina only completed five passes in the game, for 45 yards, and key injuries can take some of the blame for that.

Ryan Brewer, who plays tailback, wide receiver and punt returner, is still out with a sprained ankle, and he is joined on the injury list by receivers Andrea Gause (ankle) and Michael Ages (shoulder).

With a decimated receiving corps, Holtz has moved Matthew Thomas back on offense. Thomas started the season at wide receiver and was shifted over to cornerback after struggling to hold on to the ball.

"Matthew had been playing well at corner, but with Ryan, Michael Ages and Andrea Gause

"The dentist called today and asked me how my bone was because they had to rip off part of it, but it didn't hurt half as much as the (Tennessee) game."

LOU HOLTZ
USC FOOTBALL HEAD COACH

out, we are running out of people at wide receiver," Holtz said.

"We knew we were facing some problems at cornerback at the beginning of the year, and that's why we moved Matthew Thomas over there to begin with. Now, the wide receiver position has been decimated, so we need some immediate help there."

USC's injury troubles have clearly frustrated Holtz.

"I don't think I've ever had a team where we've had to plug holes like

we've had to with this one," he said. "Some years, nothing seems to fit."

The Tennessee loss was a blow to USC's postseason hopes. Carolina (5-4, 3-3 SEC) still need one more win to be bowl-eligible.

"It was a difficult loss," Holtz said. "Any time you want to win something so bad ... and you don't, it

is very tough." "Yesterday, I went to the dentist and had three teeth capped and one pulled. It was a 4-hour ordeal. The dentist called today and asked me how my bone was because they had to rip off part of it, but it didn't hurt half as much as the game."

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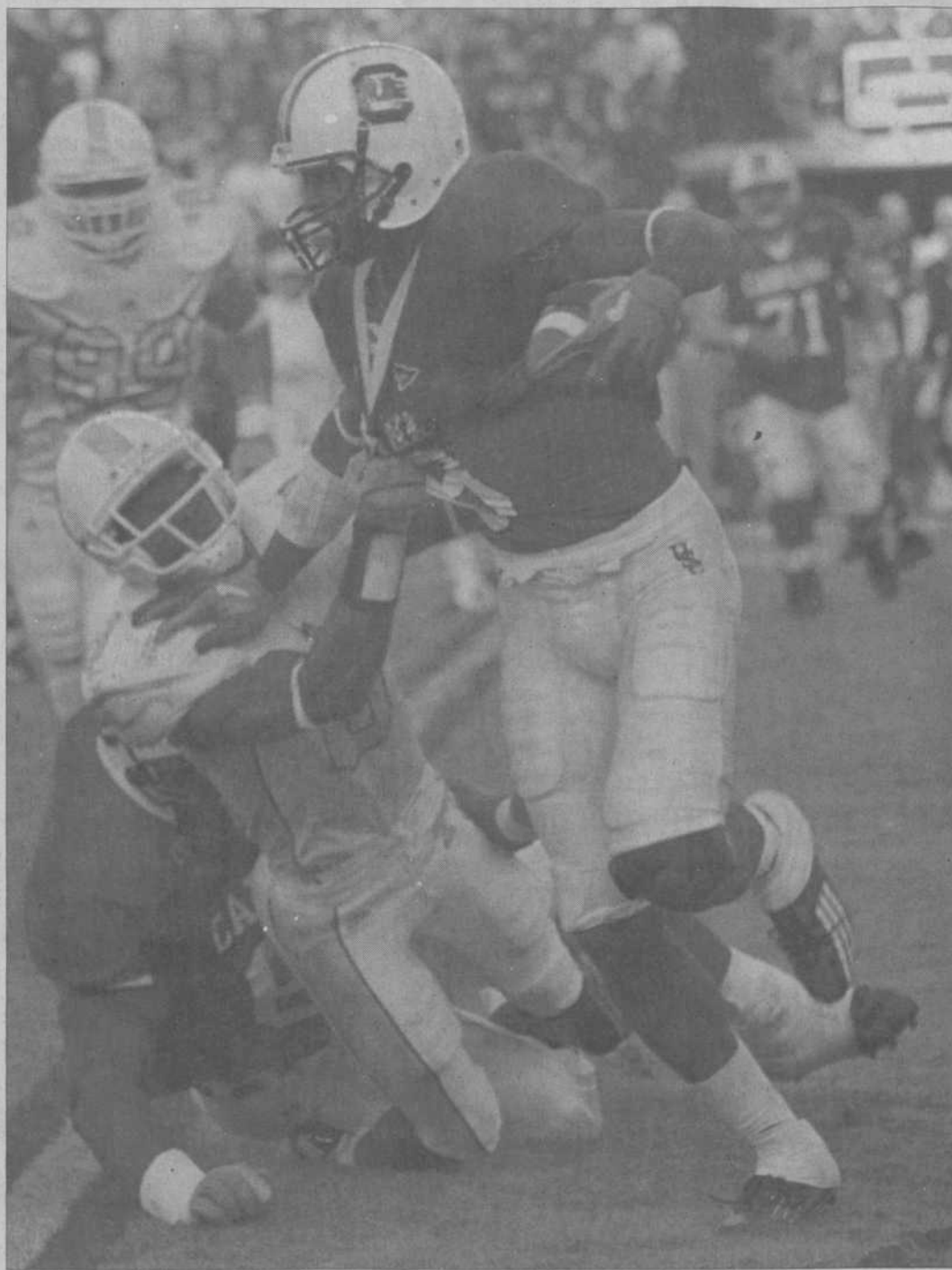


PHOTO BY TRAVIS LYNN/THE GAMECOCK

James Adkisson is one of the few Carolina receivers that is healthy now. Ryan Brewer, Michael Ages and Andrea Gause have all suffered injuries over the past two weeks, and it has translated into problems in the passing game.

Kilborn talk show epitome of weak



KYLE ALMOND
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Gamecock tribute was one big disappointment.

What a waste of my time.

That's what I was saying after I stayed up last week to watch Craig Kilborn's late-night talk show.

"The Late, Late Show" was supposed to promote CBS' college football coverage by giving tribute to USC, the host team of the station's SEC game of the week. Instead, it just made everyone fall asleep—or turn the channel to Brooke Burke.

Now I know it sounds a little ungrateful to knock a national show that pays even the slightest attention to us. But with that lame excuse for publicity, I wish Kilborn and Co. hadn't bothered.

For starters, there was absolutely no emotion out of Kilborn whenever he plugged the Gamecocks. Maybe he's peeved that CBS makes him plug a team every week; I don't know. But his lack of interest clearly showed by his monotone voice and "who cares?" demeanor.

And the show itself didn't make us look special, either. Kilborn had a Gamecock mug that you wouldn't be able to recognize unless you went to USC. There was a Kenny Irons (Derek Watson?) jersey hanging on a far wall, out of the camera's view and shown once during the broadcast. They showed an autographed picture of Cockey for two seconds. And when they came back from commercial, they showed a clip of Irons' meaningless touchdown scamper against Mississippi State.

Shove in one bad joke about our degrees coming with Wendy's coupons (good one, Craig) and random, wasteful clips from sisters wanting to get an early jump on political campaigning, and it added up to a disappointing portrayal of USC.

I guess I was expecting too much. Wasn't Kilborn's desk supposed to be covered from top to bottom with USC stuff? Wasn't there supposed to be a video of Chuck Eidson and Ro Howell giving a tour of the Carolina Center? Now that would have been priceless.

If CBS really wanted to promote the game within Kilborn's show, they should have tried a little harder. Make Kilborn wear the Irons jersey. Fly in Lou Holtz or Cockey to do the monologue. Show "The Fade." Bring in President Sorensen for a Q&A. Just do something cool.

I should have been able to guess that the show was going to be weak just by looking at the guests on the show — Frankie Muniz, aka the annoying little bastard from "Malcolm in the Middle," and "comedian" Graham Elwood. How much do you want to bet that Florida and Alabama would have had better guests than that?

By the way, did anyone laugh at Elwood's routine? I swear that was the worst comedic performance I've ever seen. I felt bad for the guy as I watched his career tumble right in front of my eyes, and I cringed at each punchline like it was a Dondrial Pinkins interception.

All in all, it was just a boring show — there's no other way to put it. Kilborn's trademark throughout his talk-show career has been his "5 Questions" segment, where he puts his top guest on the spot and asks them random trivia.

Well, I wish I could take over for Kilborn and give him my own "5 Questions."

1. Couldn't you have found some-

◆ ALMOND, SEE PAGE 13

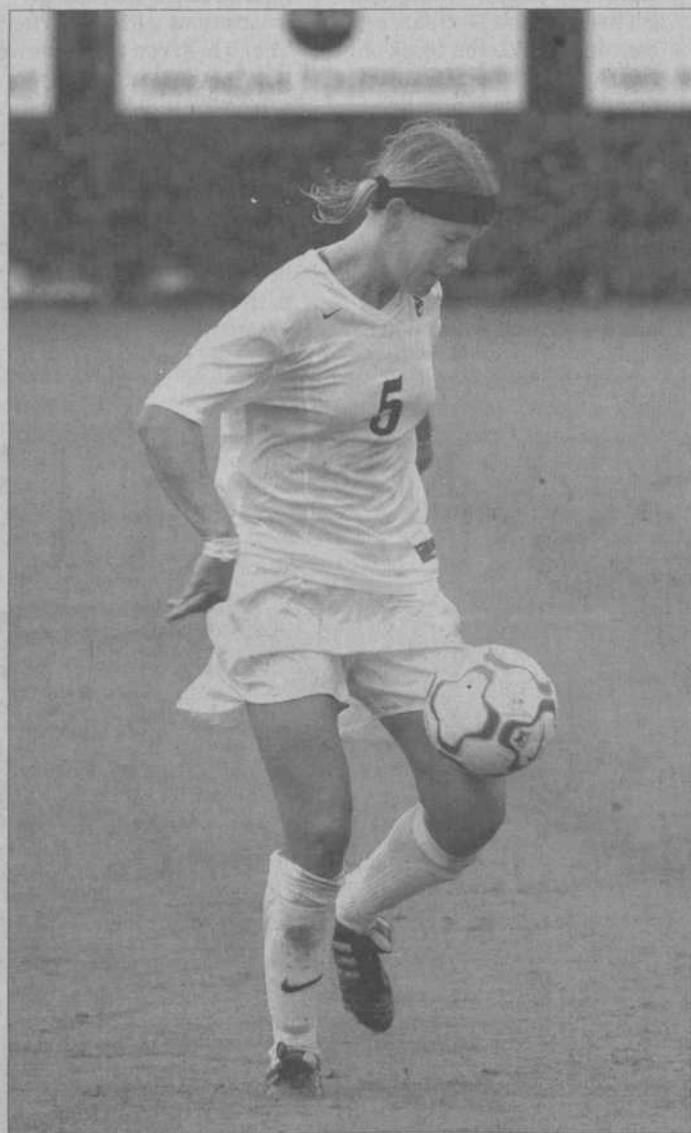


PHOTO BY KIM TRUETT/UNIVERSITY PUBLICATIONS

Jess Julin, a senior midfielder for USC, is also captain of Finland's national team. The Gamecocks open SEC Tournament play Thursday in Oxford, Miss., against Florida.

Setting the example

Senior leaders steady the women's soccer team



USC vs. Florida
SEC Tournament First Round
3 p.m. Thursday
Oxford, Miss.

BY HOLLI ARMSTRONG
THE GAMECOCK

As a group, they have been through a lot.

Most of them were members of a successful 14-6 campaign, and all experienced the horrific 4-16 slump that ensued. Then the coach that recruited them was out, and a new coach with a new philosophy entered the mix.

That is the past.

Tomorrow, touting a 13-5-2 record, Gamecock seniors Jess Julin, Becky Leeper, Melinda "Bullet" Carter and Morgan McIntyre will lead the USC women's soccer team out of the SEC cellar and into its first tournament berth since 1999.

"This season has been very important to our seniors, and they have made sure everyone

has stayed on track," head coach Shelley Smith said. "The entire team has followed them and done the work they needed to win games."

All four seniors set the standard.

Take Julin, who is Carolina's most consistent and stable midfielder performer, as well as captain of the Finland women's national team. The All-SEC performer can be counted on to run the entire 90 minutes, and more if necessary. She is a fitness machine.

"The day before a game, we have to make sure she doesn't run too much," Carter said.

Julin's actions spurred the whole team to pound the pavement between workouts and practices.

Leeper believes that Julin's work ethic created an environment in which "everyone started taking pride in themselves by trying to get better."

As co-captains, Carter and Leeper sought to unite the team. But the pair credits the entire senior class with keeping the team together.

Leeper, a central defender, admits that her leadership role was difficult at first. But Smith

"They have made sure everyone has stayed on track. The entire team has followed them and done the work they needed to win games."

SHELLEY SMITH
USC WOMEN'S SOCCER HEAD COACH, ON HER SENIORS

knew the players would feel comfortable turning to Leeper for advice.

"She leads by example," Smith said. "Becky has been the one that has kept the defense together, and she gives a complete effort every game."

Leeper devotes that same effort to her studies, with a 3.89 grade-point average in chemical engineering and demonstrating that it is possible to succeed on the field and in the classroom.

"It is tough balancing the chemical engineering, which is difficult, while playing a collegiate sport at the same time," Leeper said. "It's a lot of work and not a lot of sleep."

But sleep is something the entire team has sacrificed. In

◆ SOCCER, SEE PAGE 13

BRIEFLY

Cross country team 11th at SEC meet

The USC cross country team came home with an 11th-place finish in Monday's SEC Championships in Gainesville, Fla.

Arkansas ran away with its fifth straight title, placing all seven runners in the top 17. Razorback Christin Wurth won the 6-kilometer race with a time of 21 minutes, 4 seconds.

USC sophomore Jenny Lake was the top finisher for Carolina, placing 24th with a

time of 22:43.

Gamecock senior Kinsey Eschenburg placed 61st with a time of 24:36. Freshmen Shay Shelton and Lauren Paige came in 71st and 73rd.

USC will head back into action Nov. 16 to compete in the NCAA Southeast Regional in Greenville.

Golfers finish third in Hawaii tourney

Led by freshman Eirik Johansen, the USC men's golf team finished third at the

Turtle Bay Intercollegiate in Kahuku, Hawaii, on Tuesday.

The Gamecocks fired a three-round score of 863. UNLV won the team title with a 7-under 857.

Johansen, who helped USC post its highest finish of the fall, shot a 1-under-par 215 (72-72-71) to tie for fourth place overall.

Carolina's Michael Maness struggled in the first round but recorded two 70s after that to

tie for 10th.

West Streib and Alex Hamilton shot 220, tying for 16th. Sophomore Martin Rominger rounded out the five-man squad in 22nd place after shooting 221 (71-73-77).

The tournament was the last fall event for the Gamecocks, who will resume play Feb. 10.

Hufford leads way for equestrian team

The USC equestrian team traveled to Marion, Ala., this past weekend for two Western

competitions at Judson College, and it finished fourth on Saturday and third on Sunday.

Junior Kyra Hufford led the team with wins both days in Intermediate Horsemanship.

On Sunday, the team won five classes. Sophomore Kerrie Reeves and freshman Courtney Borton both won their sections of Open Horsemanship. Along with Hufford in Intermediate, freshman Ashleigh Collins won her section as well. Senior Margy Myers won Beginner Horsemanship.



Johansen