



BASEBALL vs. Gardner Webb, 7 p.m. Tuesday
 SOFTBALL vs. Virginia (DH), 3 p.m. Wednesday
 BASEBALL vs. Furman, 7 p.m. Wednesday
 MEN'S BASKETBALL at Alabama, 8 p.m. Wednesday
 WOMEN'S BASKETBALL vs. Ole Miss at SEC Tournament
 in North Little Rock, Ark., 6 p.m. Thursday

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USC splits with the Tigers

Clemson wins at Doug Kingsmore,
 Gamecocks victorious at Sarge Frye

BY BRAD SENKIW
 THE GAMECOCK

The 10th-ranked USC baseball team (9-2) split a two-game series with in-state rival Clemson (3-3) this weekend, losing the first battle 8-0 at Clemson before bouncing back at home to take the second game 6-4.

Clemson 8 — USC 0

It was a dismal, rainy Saturday at Doug Kingsmore Stadium and a dismal, dry day offensively for the Gamecock baseball team. Carolina managed only four hits as Clemson shut the team out 8-0.

The Tigers stifled USC with starting pitcher Tyler Lumsden (2-0), who pitched 7 1/3 scoreless innings and allowed four hits and one walk, while striking out 11 batters.

Matt Campbell (1-1) recorded the loss for the Gamecocks as he struggled early. Campbell made it through only 3 2/3 innings, giving up six runs on five hits. Steve Bondurant came in to pitch four innings in relief, and allowed two runs on three hits.

Clemson was led offensively by Russell Triplett, who went 2-for-2 with an RBI, and Kyle Frank, who was 1-for-2 with two RBIs.

Justin Harris, Kevin Melillo, Landon Powell and Brian Buscher, who extended his hitting streak to 10 games, had a hit apiece. It is the first time the Gamecocks have been shut out this season.

Clemson got it going early with four runs in the first inning. Brad McCann hit a sacrifice fly to center field that scored Garrick Evans before Roberto Valiente's single brought in Michael Johnson and Ryan Hub. Valiente then scored on a sacrifice fly by Triplett.

In the fourth inning, Frank and Hub both picked up RBIs to make it a 4-0 game, and the Tigers added another pair of runs in the eighth inning on an RBI single from Frank, who later scored on an error.

The Gamecocks went down in order in the ninth inning to end the game.

USC 6 — Clemson 4

As the sun came out on Sunday, so did USC's offense. Carolina scored six runs on seven hits and used a strong performance from Aaron Rawl (4-0) to get a 6-4 victory over the Tigers.

USC's hitting was timely as it put together one run in the fourth, three runs in the fifth and a run in both the seventh and eighth innings. Melillo was 2-for-2 with an RBI and a run scored, while freshmen Trey McDaniel and Michael Campbell hit solo home runs for Carolina. Buscher added a pair of RBIs in the win.

Rawl pitched the complete game, giving up four runs on six hits. The sophomore kept the Tigers scoreless through seven innings and gave up only two hits during that span. Rawl struck out eight batters but gave up two home runs.

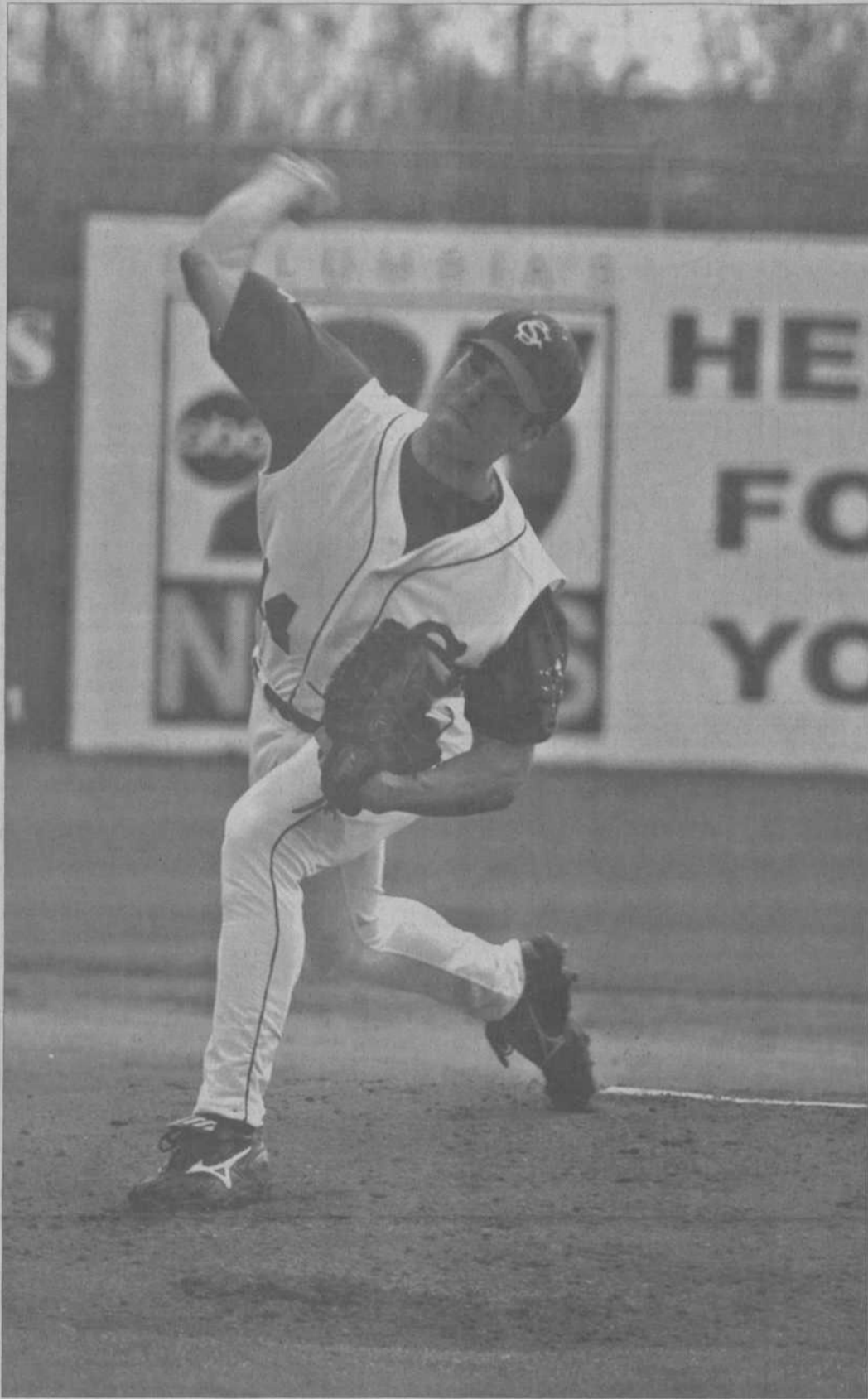
"Based on what happened yesterday, I wanted the toughest guy out there the whole day," USC head coach Ray Tanner said. "I don't like leaving guys out there that long, but that was his game. I wasn't going to take the ball away from him."

Jeff Hahn (1-2) recorded the loss for Clemson, going 4 1/3 innings and giving up four earned runs.

After three uneventful innings, Melillo led off the bottom half of the fourth with a single and was advanced to second on a sacrifice bunt by Bryan Triplett. With Buscher at the plate, Hahn was called for a balk as Buscher was hitting a grounder that would have given the Tigers two outs in the inning. Instead, Melillo advanced to third and Buscher's sacrifice fly to center scored Melillo and cost Clemson a run.

The big inning for USC came in the fifth, when Michael Campbell hit a solo home run off Hahn and

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Gamecock pitcher Aaron Rawl prepares to release the ball during USC's win over Clemson on Sunday. Rawl pitched a complete game, allowing six hits and striking out eight Tiger batters.

PHOTO BY JOHNNY HAYNES/THE GAMECOCK

Defiance of flag is not best for team



BRAD SENKIW
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Player's protest is taking precedence over game.

If you've watched "SportsCenter," or any other news program for that matter, you've probably seen it: a 21-year-old, standing on the court at her basketball game and turning her back away from the American flag during the national anthem.

This sounds like a patriotic tragedy that should force this young girl to leave the country, right? Is a young, Division III basketball player's defiance of America's involvement in the Middle East even worth noting? Why does Manhattanville College forward Toni Smith, a senior sociology student, even matter?

All of these questions ran through my head this week as I saw that small-college athlete defending herself and even receiving abuse from other fans. I began to ask myself the real question in this situation: Should Smith be allowed to demonstrate while being part of a basketball team?

This is the hardest of all the questions I came up with. It is difficult to condemn or condone what she is doing. Smith said in a statement released this week that "the government's priorities are not on bettering the quality of life for all of its people, but rather on expanding its own power; I cannot, in good conscience, salute the flag."

Here, we have a college athlete demonstrating her constitutional rights at a sporting event. No longer are we reading about these acts in history books or seeing them on ESPN's "SportsCentury." We are living in a day when celebrities and athletes are making stands against our nation. It is time for students of America to realize that war affects sports and schools.

Toni Smith is doing something that is best for her. I will not demoralize her for feeling the way she does. I do not agree with her stance, but for me to say she is wrong would be the just like the government telling me I can't have this whole column printed. It is a right and a privilege and, is the entire reason the United States was created.

If Smith wants to show she is displeased, let her. I am not convinced I would let her do it on a basketball court if I were her coach. Surprisingly, her coach and even her school have backed her up 100 percent. Many other coaches around the country have not had that sentiment.

University of Connecticut women's basketball head coach Geno Auriemma was totally against Smith's even being on the team.

"Anybody who does (what Smith has done), they have the right to do it, but to me, it's disrespectful and, as a coach, I would have that right not to have that person on the team," Auriemma said.

Even USC's women's head coach Susan Walvius made a statement much like Auriemma's.

"I think I would have certain expectations of my players, and either they were willing to follow the rules of our team and the expectations of the university or they wouldn't be part of the team," she said.

As far as athletics go, this is the major issue. I think it should be up to coaches and other teammates to decide whether another player can



Smith

Powell leads Gamecocks to win

USC forward sets three career highs on Saturday

BY CHRIS FOY
 THE GAMECOCK

The USC men's basketball team had not swept any of its three series so far this season as it went into Saturday's match-up with Vanderbilt. Nonetheless, the Gamecocks (12-13, 5-9 SEC) got their first series sweep of the season and crept one step closer to .500 as they took the game away from the Commodores (10-15, 3-11), 76-64.

The game was tightly contested until a 12-0 run in the second half gave way to the Gamecock victory. Afterward, USC head coach Dave Odom said he was proud of the effort his team put up to pull away.

"There are no easy games at this time of year," Odom said. "It has been a tough year, but our team is very resilient."

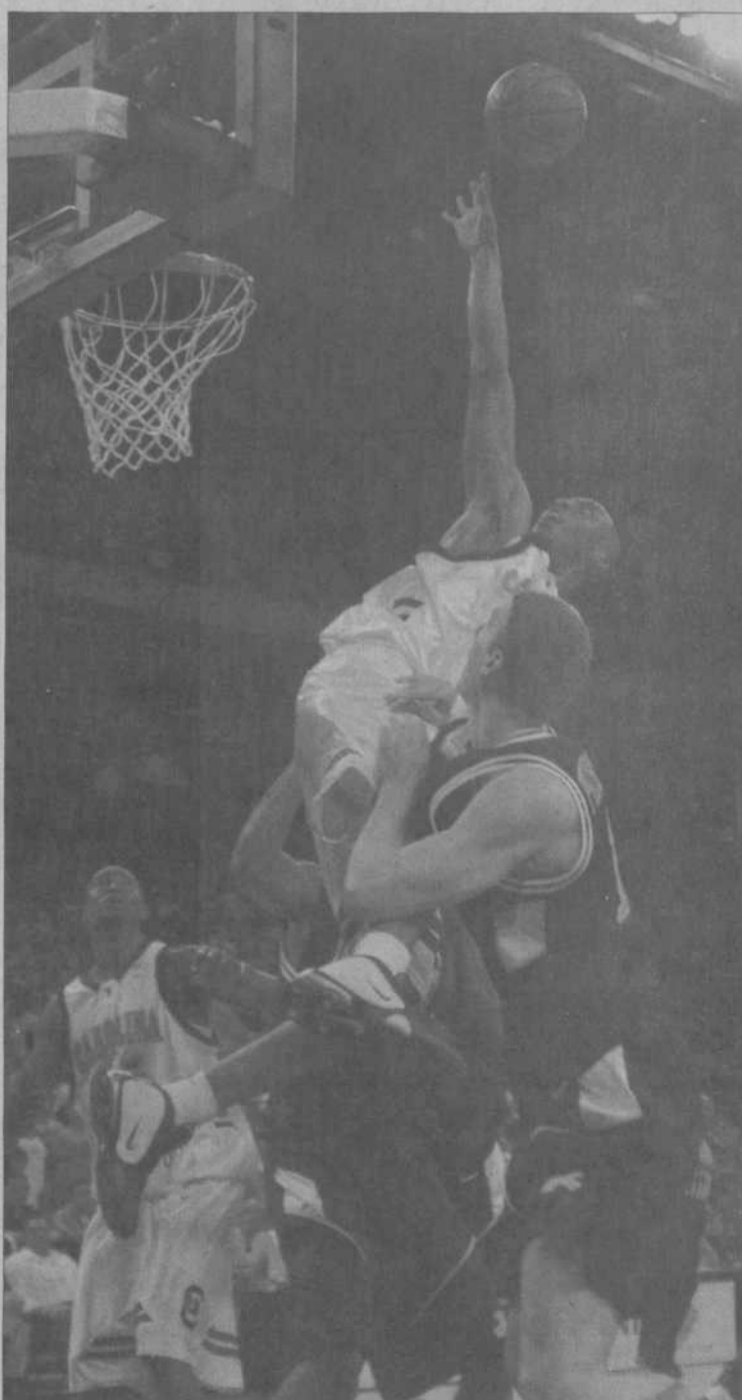
The first half featured several back-to-back buckets, and neither team got a lead more secure than four points. Rolando Howell put up eight of his 13 points in the first half to lead the scoring for the Gamecocks. Matt Freije led the Commodores with 12 points. USC failed to convert on their last possession of the half, leaving the halftime score 30-28 in favor of Carolina.

The second half started dry for the Gamecocks as its first points came nearly five minutes into the period. Vanderbilt opened the half on a 9-3 run led by Freije, who in the stretch had a jumper, a 3-pointer and a dunk. But it was Chris Warren's 3-pointer that started USC's big run.

After Freije hit a 3-pointer in the Commodores' run, the Gamecocks put up 12 unanswered points. Warren hit a second consecutive 3-pointer, followed by a jumper by Chuck Eidson, a layup by Howell and a 3-pointer by Eidson; a Carlos Powell dunk capped off the run. Vanderbilt would only be able to get as close as five points during the remainder of the game.

Powell had an all-around career day as he posted career highs with 21 points (21), 11-for-11 free-throw shooting and 7 assists. Eidson was second in points with 18 and notched in four steals in the outing. Warren had 11 points, four rebounds, and three assists. It was the first time since the Clemson game in early February that USC had four players score in double digits in a game.

Forward Kerbrell Brown started the game but saw only limited minutes before retiring to the bench. After the game, Odom said that not letting Brown



Rolando Howell, center, jumps over two Vanderbilt defenders during USC's 76-64 win on Saturday. Howell scored 13 points and added six rebounds in the Gamecocks' victory.

PHOTO BY CANDI HAUGLUM/THE GAMECOCK

Odom praises Boynton for giving leadership

BY MATT ROTHENBERG
 THE GAMECOCK

As Vanderbilt started the second half of Saturday's basketball game with eight straight points, it appeared that the Commodores would take firm control over the Gamecocks. Then, USC head coach Dave Odom looked at his bench and put in two players who would help lead the Gamecocks to victory.

Mike Boynton and Carlos Powell played major roles as USC held off the surging Vanderbilt Commodores in the second half. Each one gave the Gamecocks what they needed to boost Carolina just at the right time.

Boynton, a 6-foot-2-inch guard from Brooklyn, N.Y., played sparingly over the last several games, but quickly made his time against the Commodores a time to shine. Boynton didn't play at all during the first half, but Odom decided to insert him to bring some patience and calm to the Gamecocks on the court.

Although he finished with two points, two assists and two steals, Odom thought Boynton brought more to the table than the statistics might suggest.

"I certainly want to give Mike Boynton the big commendation — a big salute. I didn't particularly come into this game thinking that this would be Mike Boynton's day, but the thing — in the second half — that I thought we needed was some veteran leadership," Odom said. "I think he's been there before, and I was just hopeful that he would just stand up and give us the kind of leadership against the zone and the calming influence that we needed, and he did."

"Again, the thing that we thought we needed at that point when we got down was some senior leadership. Somebody to relax us and give us some poise and composure and some know-how on the court. Michael is limited in a lot of ways, but not intellectually — he's not limited in any way intellectually. He's very smart, he knows what everybody supposed to do on every play and, the kind of coach that I am, I appreciate that," Odom said.

Teammate Chuck Eidson agreed with Odom's compliments, noting that Boynton's

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