

Howell suspended first 12 games of season

BY BRAD SENKIW
THE GAMECOCK

The USC Athletics Department handed Rolando Howell a 12-game suspension Friday that stems from his criminal domestic violence charge that came down on Oct. 9. Howell will be ineligible to play through the Charleston Southern game on Dec. 17, and the suspension includes two exhibition matches. Howell's expected return is Dec. 20 against N.C. State at the Colonial Center.

"I am relieved that Rolando's status has been established and that everyone, including Rolando, can now turn our attention to the future," head basketball coach Dave Odom said.

Howell is currently practicing with the team and participated in Midnight Madness, just hours after the decision was made by the Athletics Department.

"Our staff and team welcome Rolando back and will do everything in our power to help him as we all work together to improve our basketball team," Odom said.

Howell has been suspended from the team since Aug. 12 after he was charged for abusing his girlfriend at the their apartment. Howell was then sentenced on Oct. 9 to a \$50 fine and abuse counseling. If not completed, Howell will be forced to spend 30 days in jail.

Howell's presence is greatly needed this season, as the Gamecocks are lacking experience and size after losing four seniors last year. Odom is likely to use his younger and smaller players until the 6-foot-9-inch junior

returns. The Gamecocks opened practice at midnight Saturday and practiced twice during the day, once in the morning and once in the afternoon.

Odom was pleased with his team's performance Saturday.

"The pace was a lot quicker, a lot faster, a lot more organized than I've seen," Odom said. "I expected that and would have been disappointed otherwise. This is the best shape we have been in this early in the season. This practice was a very good start."

The team practiced twice on Sunday and will practice again today before getting Tuesday off.

The Gamecocks open up the season on Nov. 17 against Gardner-Webb in the Guardians Classic.

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Howell

USC basketball goes mad



PHOTO BY MARK SCHILLING/THE GAMECOCK

Tarence Kinsey takes flight in front of more than 1,500 fans at Midnight Madness last Saturday. The Gamecocks put on a show for the students with a 10-minute scrimmage.

Women's soccer defeats Kentucky on Senior Day

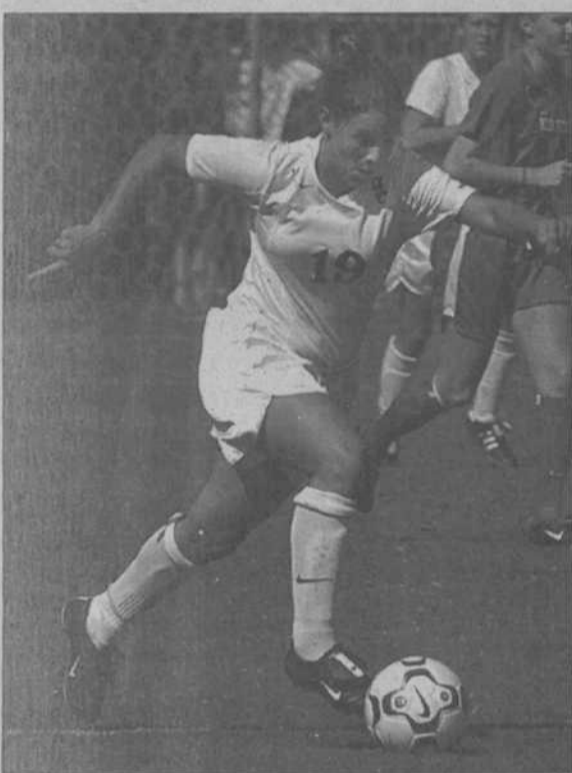


PHOTO BY JOHNNY HAYNES/THE GAMECOCK

Ashley Williams scored the first goal of the day.

	Kentucky (6-6-3, 4-1-2 SEC)	1
	USC (9-6-2, 2-3-1 SEC)	2

BY WES WOLFE
THE GAMECOCK

The USC women's soccer team (9-6-2, 2-3-1 SEC) gave its senior players a good send-off in the last home game of the season, defeating Kentucky (6-6-3, 4-1-2) Sunday afternoon by a score of 2-1. The Gamecocks were coming off a 1-0 loss to Vanderbilt (6-5-2, 2-3-1) on Friday, in which a Michelle Brunlett second-half goal was the deciding factor.

Sunday's game was Senior Day for Gamecock seniors Erica Bowie, Becca Epstein, Melissa Huston, Alison Jarrow and Elise Matthews.

"Their leadership is important and those five stepped it up for us and played well," said USC head coach Shelley Smith.

Kentucky was the favorite coming

into the game, since the Wildcats were unbeaten in conference play and at the top of the SEC East. Carolina, on the other hand, was languishing in the divisional cellar.

"I'm proud of the effort from our team," Smith said. "Our players know that if we come out and play our game, we can compete with any team."



Lentz

front of the goal and into the net. Lentz finished the game with one shot and one goal. The game-winning shot was Lentz's second goal of the season. Both goals have been game-winners, the other one coming in Carolina's win over

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SHELLEY SMITH
USC HEAD COACH

The winning goal of the game came with just over nine minutes left in the game, when defender Sarah Lentz hit the ball past a crowd of players in

Georgia Southern on Sept. 26.

The first half of the contest between the Gamecocks and the Wildcats was relatively tame, with USC out-shooting Kentucky 3-2, but neither team managed to hit the net. Kentucky had a one-on-one shot chance before the end of the first half, though the shot never materialized because the Wildcats were called for off sides. The teams ended up going into halftime tied up at 0-0.

Kentucky got the second half started by going on the attack. UK forward Ashley Schillig had a shot early in the second half, lining the ball just over the crossbar. Soon thereafter, forward Ashley Williams knocked in a goal from outside the box and into the right side of the Kentucky net. The goal was Williams' second goal of the season and marked the first time Kentucky trailed in a game since a Sept. 21 match against Arizona State.

In the 61st minute, Kentucky forward Elizabeth Ramsey slid into Lentz's ankles and earned the only yellow card of the match.

Eighteen minutes later, Wildcat forward Elizabeth Jones sent the ball past usually-stingy goalkeeper Matthews to score

Kentucky's only goal of the day.

Nine minutes later, Lentz put in the game-winning goal to give Carolina a 2-1 lead, which the Gamecocks held on to until the end.

Forward M.A. Foster had a chance to give USC a two-goal lead just after Lentz's goal, but her shot missed slightly to the right.

Carolina travels to Mississippi this week with a Friday game at Ole Miss at 8 p.m. and a match against Mississippi State on Sunday at 3:30 p.m.

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Volleyball struggles in losses to Arkansas, LSU

BY BRAD SENKIW
THE GAMECOCK

The USC volleyball team hit rock bottom this weekend after being outplayed twice at home, losing to Arkansas 3-0 on Friday and LSU 3-1 on Sunday. Carolina (10-10, 4-4 SEC) has lost three straight games this season.

Arkansas 3, USC 0

It couldn't have been worse for USC head coach Kim Hudson Christopher and the Gamecocks as Arkansas (15-4, 8-0) brought its 11-game winning streak into Columbia and kept it going with ease. Carolina didn't put up much of a fight against the top team in the SEC West as Arkansas won the three games 30-28, 30-24 and 30-25. Lauren Ford was the only Gamecock to put up double digits in kills with 10. Iris Santos and Sarah Morgan finished with seven digs each.

"We're just in a situation where we're young and our leadership is suspect," Christopher said. "If we don't

make the decision to get better, then we're going to continue to play this way."

The Gamecocks never led the first game as Arkansas jumped out to an early 5-1 lead. The Lady 'Backs let Carolina get within two at 27-29, but finished USC off to take the first game.

In the second game, Carolina grabbed the lead, but Arkansas went up 6-5 and never looked back, winning 30-24 with a .353 hitting percentage.

The final game wasn't much different as the Gamecocks showed little enthusiasm and lost 30-25. USC tied it at 21, but could only muster four more points as Arkansas showed its dominance. The Gamecocks finished game three with a .188 hitting percentage compared to Arkansas' .364.

Christopher said she was not pleased with her team's performance and played

with several different line-ups, hoping to find a competitive combination.

"We're going to make mistakes but I'm going to have six people who care and compete. We're not going to play in front of all these people and not at least put on a show that we can all be proud of," she said.

LSU 3, USC 1

The Gamecocks were just as successful against the Tigers (9-12, 4-5) in volleyball as they were in football after winning the first game and losing the last three. It was the first time the Gamecocks have lost to LSU since 1995.

"We didn't have our rhythm in this match," Christopher said. "We are not passing well, and in the last three matches, we have just not played well. We are going to have to come together as a team and figure out a way to come out and play our true game."

Ford once again led USC in kills with 15 and three other players finished in double digits. Carolina had trouble

getting the ball past the LSU defense as the Tigers recorded 12 team blocks and added a .304 hitting percentage in the win.

The first game finally went the Gamecocks way after winning 30-18 behind Niece Curry's seven kills and the team hitting .581.

It didn't last long as the Tigers came back in game two to win 30-22. Carolina got behind early and never caught up after hitting only .151 in the game.

The third and fourth games continued to go the Tigers way after Carolina jumped out to a 19-9 lead in game three to watch LSU come back and win 30-26. LSU took an early lead in the final game and never looked back, winning 30-17 and tying the season series with the Gamecocks.

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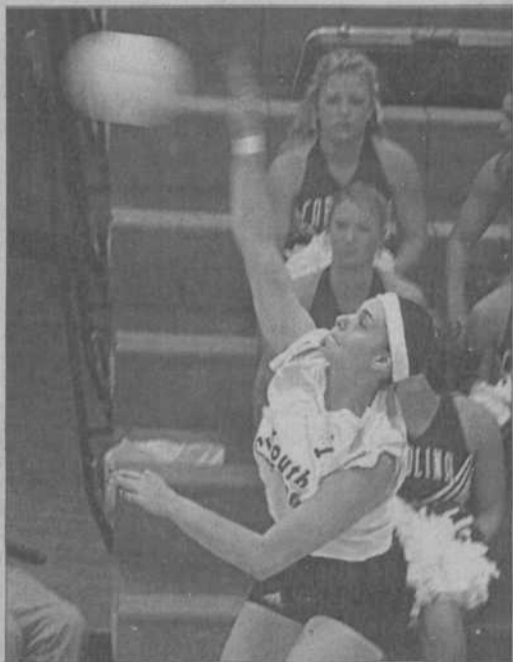


PHOTO BY MARK SCHILLING/THE GAMECOCK

Mariana Branquinho smacks a shot across the net in the 3-1 loss to LSU on Sunday.

BRIEFLY

Men's soccer team ties Furman on road

The USC men's soccer team (8-5-1) battled to a 0-0 tie in a defensive contest at Furman (3-6-4) on Sunday afternoon. Carolina out-shot the Paladins 10-9 but could not get the ball past Furman goalkeeper Alex Maslow. Gamecock goalkeeper Brad Guzon had two saves on the day, earning the shutout.

Midfielder Jack Cummings and forward Ryan Deter each had three shots on the day, with Cummings getting one shot-on-goal and Deter earning two shots-on-goal. Defender Josh Acala also had two shots-on-goal against the Paladins.

"It was a very hard-fought game," said USC head coach Mark Berson.

The Gamecocks return home to play host to Davidson on Halloween, Oct. 31.

Lake wins South Carolina Collegiate

The USC cross country team took its position as the best team in the state by winning the South Carolina Collegiate Championship at the Clemson Invitational in Clemson on Saturday. Carolina won the championship by beating Clemson, Charleston Southern and South Carolina State.

Junior Jenny Lake was the overall meet champion for the second year in a row, winning by 12 seconds. Freshman Karen Wigal finished 15th, freshman Tristan Rackow was right behind at 16th, freshman Nicki Breves ended at 27th, and junior Mary Claire Utsey was at 31st.

Seven other runners also competed for Carolina. USC's next action will come at the SEC Championships on Nov. 3 in Athens, Ga.



PHOTO BY JOHNNY HAYNES/THE GAMECOCK

Matthew Thomas had four receptions for 104 yards.

Football

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

quarter as USC quarterback Dondrial Pinkins found a streaking Matthew Thomas for a 77-yard touchdown catch that was the second-longest completion of Pinkins' career and put USC on the board, cutting the lead to 12. After forcing the Tigers to punt, Pinkins was sacked by LSU's Kirston Pittman, which forced a fumble that was picked up by LSU's Jason LeDoux and returned 15 yards for a touchdown, putting LSU up 26-7.

"After the fumble, we couldn't get back into the game," Pinkins said. "It just seemed like after that, things fell apart."

Finally, with 6:56 left in the fourth quarter, Vincent scored again on a one-yard run, giving LSU a 33-7 lead.

While Carolina was unsuccessful on the ground, Pinkins passed for a career-high 254 passing yards in the loss, despite getting hit hard several times by the LSU defense.

"I thought Dondrial did a nice

job," Holtz said. "We've got to be able to control the line of scrimmage. We protected the passer well, except for the blind side sack. Dondrial was excellent."

Holtz was nearly speechless after the game and said he didn't have any answers for the loss and that he would know more by Monday after watching game film.

"We are in the SEC. We give scholarships. We have a training table. There is no reason this," Holtz said.

The players were equally confused and embarrassed after the game.

"Everyone on the team was embarrassed," USC cornerback Dunta Robinson said. "If you weren't embarrassed tonight then you don't care and I know we do."

The Gamecocks will have to bounce back quickly as Vanderbilt comes to town next week in the annual homecoming game Saturday at Williams-Brice Stadium.

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