

Solich

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and that Steve (Pederson) would be contacting us," Cotton told the Lincoln Journal Star.

Solich took over after Osborne retired after the 1997 season. The Cornhuskers won at least a share of the national title in three of Osborne's final four seasons.

Solich was 42-9 in his first four seasons. He was Big 12 coach of the year in 1999 and 2001, won the '99 conference title and his team played for the national championship after the '01 season.

But Solich's success was downplayed because critics said

he won with players recruited by Osborne.

The Cornhuskers went 7-7 in 2002 — the team's worst season since 1961 — and struggled against quality opponents this season.

Their three losses all were by more than 17 points, capped by a 38-9 loss to Kansas State — Nebraska's worst at home since 1958 — in the final home game of the season.

The last Nebraska head football coach to be fired was Bill Jennings, who was removed and replaced by Bob Devaney in 1962.

Solich played fullback for Nebraska from 1963-65. He was assistant to Osborne for 19 years beginning in 1979.

McNabb overcomes errors at Carolina

BY JENNA FRYER
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CHARLOTTE, N.C.— Donovan McNabb was an easy target to blame for Philadelphia's 0-2 start. Now that the Eagles have rallied for a share of the NFC's best record, he wants little of the credit.

McNabb overcame an interception on the first play — his first in six games — to throw for a touchdown and 182 yards, hitting nine receivers while leading the Eagles to their seventh consecutive victory, 25-16 over the Carolina Panthers on Sunday.

The win kept the Eagles (9-3) tied atop the conference with St. Louis and stalled Carolina's (8-4) attempt to wrap up the NFC South.

What the Eagles had to do was play mistake-free football and get better production out of McNabb. They did, going four consecutive games without a turnover while McNabb went 127 attempts without an interception.

That ended on the first play when McNabb looked left, then right, and tossed the ball straight into Mike Rucker's hands.

It took McNabb all of two minutes to forget about it.

"You can't harp on mistakes," he said. "The guys want to see how you adjust to mistakes."

The Eagles made several against Carolina — Brian Westbrook also fumbled away a punt and they failed on a 2-point conversion — but the Panthers made more.

John Kasay, who came into the game 24-of-27 on field goals this season, missed three — and an extra point. The 10 points he failed to put on the board was the difference in the Panthers not ensuring their first winning season since 1996.

"I just missed the kicks and it's my fault," said Kasay. "Usually when something like this happens you're not doing this anymore — you've moved on to another career. So hopefully I'll keep this to a minimum."

The Panthers refused to place all the blame on Kasay, the only player left from Carolina's inaugural 1995 team. He made a 20-yarder after Rucker's interception but missed on attempts of 32, 38 and 49 yards.

"John is a guy who has been very reliable for us, and for whatever reason didn't get it done today," coach John Fox said. "I don't think that is the entire reason we lost."

Although Philadelphia continued its turnaround from an 0-2 start — its seven straight victories represent its best single-season streak since 1980 — the Eagles did it without any flash and needed David Akers' four field goals and a 2-yard touchdown run by Duce Staley for the win.

Akers, who made field goals of 35, 48, 38 and 29 yards, empathized with Kasay after the game. The two battled in 1999 for a spot on Carolina's roster.

"Nobody taught me more than John Kasay," he said. "I would have taken him over any kicker in the league coming into today."

Sweep

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ten team, we need to be a better defensive team," Walvius said.

Florida A&M 66, USC 96

The USC offense poured it on again Nov. 29 against Florida A&M. The last time the two teams met in December 2001, Carolina won 82-29. The Gamecocks didn't mirror that exceptional performance on Friday but still dominated the Rattlers. Ciocan had a standout performance against A&M by breaking the school record in assists with 18. The previous record of 14 assists was shared by Ciocan and three other players.

Guard Lauren Simms led the Gamecocks with 19 points, but the entire USC team was seemingly able to contribute. Every starter and forward Larissa Kulscar scored in double figures. The only Gamecock on the court that didn't score was guard

Shannel Harris and she still got on the stat sheet with a rebound. The team also continued its improvement from the free throw line, hitting 84 percent from the charity stripe and having four players hit every shot. A&M couldn't stop USC from underneath the basket with the Gamecocks outscoring the Rattlers by 20 points in the paint.

"We felt that we could run down and take advantage of our post speed," Walvius said. "Our transition game looked very good. The penetration was there and I thought our team did a good job."

A&M wasn't able to halt the shots from outside the paint either, with Carolina making an amazing 73 percent from the field in the second half, hitting 22-of-30 shots.

USC goes on the road against the Stetson Hatters at 7 p.m. on Tuesday night before heading to play in the Southwest Airlines Lobo Shootout at Albuquerque, N.M., on Friday.

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BRIEFLY

Volleyball ends year with loss to Tar Heels

The USC volleyball team (12-18, 6-10 SEC) dropped its final match of the season with a 3-0 loss to North Carolina, 30-19, 30-16 and 30-24. The Tar Heels (20-12, 10-6 ACC) had lost to USC by a score of 3-1 on Sept. 7.

Outside hitter Shonda Cole led USC with 14 kills and a .273 hitting average. Middle blocker Lauren Ford was second on the team in kills with 11 and hit for 250 on the match.

The Gamecocks had a good shot at winning the first game, cutting the lead to one, 20-19, before UNC scored 10 straight points to win.

Game two wasn't as close, with the Tar Heels hitting 19 kills and only two errors to win by 14.

The loss ends the Gamecocks' first losing season in 10 years and the first season without 20 wins since 1999.

Softball announces 2004 signing class

The USC softball team has announced the signing of seven new players who will enroll at Carolina in fall 2004.

Two players, outfielder Whitney Wierzbicki and pitcher Kate Pouliot, are from South Carolina.

Wierzbicki played for Battery Creek High School in Beaufort and was All-Region Player of the Year for 2003.

Pouliot, who played for Hillcrest High School, was 2003 All-Region Player of the Year and 4A All-State Player of the Year.

The five other players joining the team are Jessica Barnes of Denver; Stefanie Norman of Fayetteville, Ga.; Becky Martinez of Weston, Fla.; Jessica Josker of San Jacinto, Calif.; and Lisa Longo of Valley Stream, N.Y.

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