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# Field goal dashes Cats' dreams

BY DAVE GOLDBERG  
 THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

HOUSTON — Houston, we have a champion. And once again, the New England Patriots have Adam Vinatieri's foot to thank for a Super Bowl victory.

Vinatieri gave New England its second NFL championship in three seasons with a 41-yard field goal with 4 seconds left for a thrilling 32-29 victory over the Carolina Panthers on Sunday night.

Vinatieri earlier missed a field goal and had another one blocked. But as he did in 2002 when he kicked the winning field goal to beat St. Louis on the final play of the Super Bowl, he proved he is perhaps the NFL's best clutch kicker.

For a contest that was scoreless for a record 27 minutes, this game was one of the all-time offensive shows between two of the NFL's best defenses.

There were 37 points scored in the fourth quarter alone and Tom Brady, who led New England on its winning drive, was 32-of-48 for 354 yards and three touchdowns.

Brady was voted the game's MVP for the second time in three seasons, although he did throw an interception that prevented New England from winning more easily.

"There have been some heart

attacks, but they've come out on top," said coach Bill Belichick, whose team won its 15th straight game.

Carolina had tied the game at 29 with its third fourth-quarter TD on a 12-yard pass from Jake Delhomme to Ricky Proehl. Then John Kasay kicked the ball out of bounds to give New England field position at its own 40.

Brady then moved the Patriots 37 yards in six plays, hitting Deion Branch to set up Vinatieri's winning kick.

"I looked up and it was going right down the middle," he said. The kick prevented the Super Bowl from going into overtime for the first time ever.

The Patriots led 14-10 at the half, and after a scoreless third quarter, they made it 21-10 on the second play of the fourth on a 2-yard run by Antowain Smith. It capped an eight-play, 71-yard drive featuring a 33-yard pass from Brady to tight end Daniel Graham.

Carolina wasn't about to give up, though, scoring on DeShaun Foster's 33-yard run on a six-play, 81-yard drive. But the 2-point conversion pass was behind Muhsin Muhammad and it was 21-16. The decision to go for 2 would come back to haunt coach John Fox.

The Patriots seemed ready to put the game away when they got

♦ SUPER BOWL, SEE PAGE 11

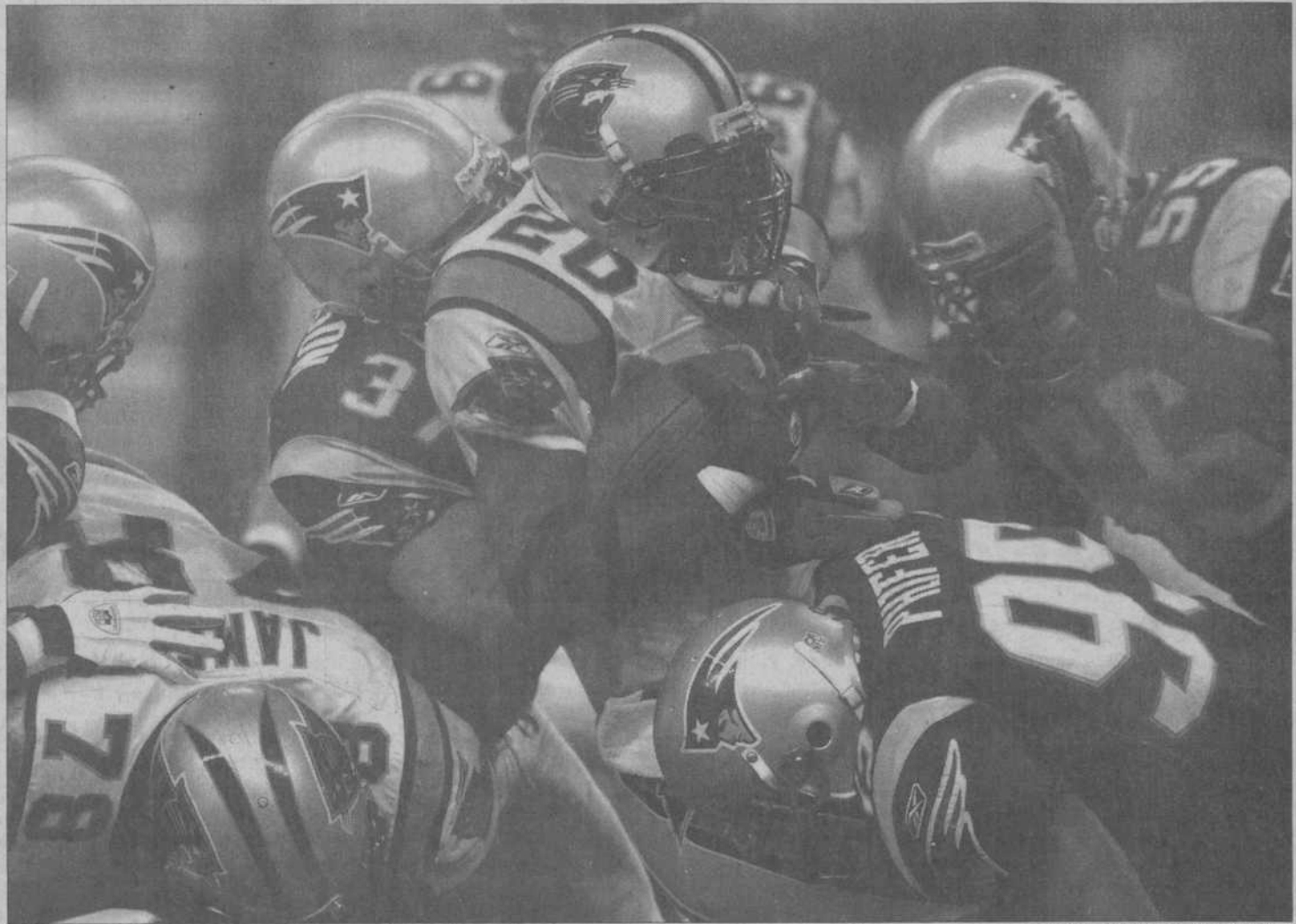


PHOTO SPECIAL TO THE GAMECOCK

Carolina running back DeShaun Foster (20) runs into New England's defensive line in the first half of Super Bowl XXXVIII.

## Rebels break down Carolina's defense in upset at Ole Miss

BY WES WOLFE  
 THE GAMECOCK

The USC men's basketball team (18-3, 5-2 SEC) lost its first SEC road game of the season at Ole Miss on Saturday, 79-68. The Rebels (11-7, 3-4) were able to upset the Gamecocks on an upset Saturday that witnessed nine other AP Top 25 teams lose.

"Our defense gave up high percentage shots and Ole Miss took advantage of that," USC head coach Dave Odom said. "Now, it's far more important to see how we react to this loss. We are not where we want to be, but we still have the opportunity to get there."

Carolina got out to an early lead in the game, but Ole Miss made a comeback, taking the lead with seconds left in the first half. It took a lay-up by guard Mike Boynton

to tie the game 30-30 at the half.

At the beginning of the second half, the Rebels got out in front early, taking a 37-30 lead, four of those points from forward Justin Reed. Reed went 10-of-19 from the field and hit all 11 free throw attempts. The senior also had 11 rebounds, two assists and one block to go along with his 32 points.

**"We are not where we want to be, but we still have the opportunity to get there."**

DAVE ODOM  
 USC MEN'S BASKETBALL HEAD COACH

"Justin Reed made us pay inside. He made us pay at the free-throw line and in general, he just had his way," Odom said.

"He was a key factor in everything they did."

Reed felt strongly about how he responded

"This was a statement game for us," Reed said. "I thought we weren't focused early. South

♦ BASKETBALL, SEE PAGE 11



PHOTO BY TRISHA SHADWELL/THE GAMECOCK

Center Rolando Howell drives the lane in Carolina's win against LSU. He had 10 points in the loss against Ole Miss.

## Football recruiting

# Offensive lineman commits to Carolina

BY JONATHAN HILLYARD  
 THE GAMECOCK

The offensive line was a chief concern for USC coming into the recruiting season, and the Gamecocks addressed that concern by receiving a commitment from offensive lineman Josh Winchell from Southaven, Miss.

Winchell opted to attend Carolina over very prestigious programs such as Michigan and Nebraska, and over some SEC rivals in Arkansas, Ole Miss and Mississippi State.

"I liked everything about my visit to South Carolina," Winchell said in a recent interview with Rivals.com. "I can't just pick a couple of things, because I liked everything. My host was Jeff Barnes. We hit it off pretty good and had a good time together."

Winchell is listed by Rivals.com as a three-star prospect and the 22nd overall offensive guard in the nation. He is also listed as the 10th-rated prospect in Mississippi. Winchell received all-state honors in his senior season as well as all-region in both his junior and senior sea-

sons. As a junior he recorded 40 pancake blocks, due mainly to his massive 6-foot-5-inch, 310-pound frame. Winchell is also a weight lifting champion, posting showings in which he lifted over 1,200 pounds, squat and dead lift combined. Most recently, he recorded a squat weight of 650 pounds to go along with the 395-pound bench press he posted.

Southaven head coach Lee Aldridge said he thought USC head coach Lou Holtz had a great deal to do with Winchell's commitment.

"Coach Holtz came here and sat down with Josh for about two-and-a-half hours with him, and at the end of the conversation, Josh told Coach Holtz he was ready to commit," Aldridge said in an interview with Rivals.com. "He's one of the most winning coaches in college football."

Winchell is one of five offensive linemen who have already committed to the Gamecocks. Winchell will be joined in his freshman class by three-star offensive lineman Justin Sorensen

♦ RECRUITING, SEE PAGE 11

## 3-point deficiency topples Gamecocks

BY MARY FOSTER  
 THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BATON ROUGE, LA. — Scholanda Hoston and Seimone Augustus each scored 17 points and No. 15 LSU beat South Carolina 82-62 on Sunday.

Wendlyn Jones had 14 points and Hanna Biernacka added 10 for the Tigers (17-3, 5-1 SEC), who were coming off a loss at Georgia a week ago that snapped their 15-

game winning streak.

Olga Gritsaeva had 16 points for South Carolina (9-10, 0-6), while Sarah Burgess added 12 and Kelly Morrone 10.

South Carolina, usually a Top 25 team, has struggled this season with eight freshmen on the roster and three in the starting lineup. The Gamecocks, who broke an eight-game losing streak Wednesday with a non-conference victory over the College of

Charleston, are the only team in the SEC without a league victory.

The Gamecocks led four times, and there were four ties before the Tigers took a 36-35 halftime lead.

USC made 5-of-8 3-point attempts in the first half but went cold from the perimeter in the second half and finished with 5-of-12 from beyond the arc.

Still the Gamecocks whittled LSU's lead to 50-47 midway

through the second half. LSU quickly moved back ahead on consecutive baskets by Augustus and Temeka Johnson.

The Tigers shot 69.2 percent from the field in the second half and 57.9 percent for the game. LSU outrebounded USC 33-26.

LSU coach Sue Gunter was not at the game as she continues to recover from bronchitis and a viral infection that kept her away from four games in early January.

## Swimming teams turn back the Tide

BY TRISHA SHADWELL  
 THE GAMECOCK

The USC men's and women's swimming and diving teams defeated Alabama on Friday, 127-115. The win gives the teams the confidence they will need heading to the SEC Championships.

"This is probably the best meet we have had this year," USC swimming and diving head coach Don Gibb said. "It's great to have this on our way to the SEC Championships."

The women's swim team held strong, winning five of its events. The team drew strength from both experienced and new team members. Senior Jennifer Van Assen swam the 200-yard freestyle in 1:49.51, which was fast enough to give her first place. Freshman Aunya Nance swam the 200-yard breaststroke in 2:23.15, giving her a first-place finish.

The men's team also won five

♦ SWIMMING, SEE PAGE 11

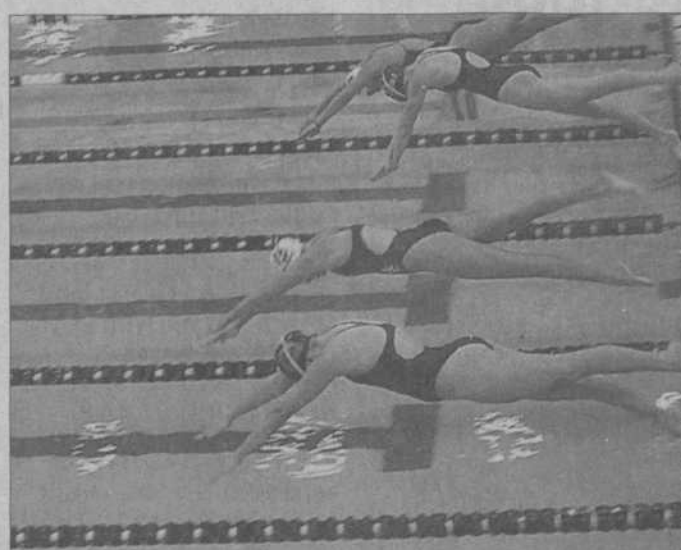


PHOTO BY TRISHA SHADWELL/THE GAMECOCK

The women's swimming team won five of its events in Friday's meet against Alabama. Its last home meet is Feb. 7.

## International play for the NFL not worth the trouble

Carolina Panthers at the Frankfurt Galaxy?

Starting at 4 a.m. Eastern Standard Time?

In NFL Commissioner Paul Tagliabue's state of the league address this past weekend,

Tagliabue all but assured that the National Football League would one day go international. Tagliabue reassured fans like me by claiming this would occur by the time he is "six feet under."

I just hope I am six feet under as well by the time we start letting the Switzerland Fighting Alps into the NFL.

My best friend tried to warn me that this type of nonsense was in

the works, but I just blew it off as my best friend being vulnerable enough to fall for anything. After all, there is enough teams in the NFL as it is. Besides the fact that games in Europe would start before the end of your Saturday night in Five Points, there are plenty of other logical and good reasons to keep the NFL in the good old USA.

First, this would take away more chances to see your team in person. With free agency you almost have to pull for two teams these days, because one team is never going to be good for very long. I can see one of my teams play in Charlotte, Atlanta, Nashville, Tampa, Miami, Jacksonville or Washington, D.C. For someone who has driven to Green Bay to see the Falcons compete in a playoff game, these are reasonable drives for a regular season game. However, I am never

♦ SINCLAIR, SEE PAGE 11



BEN SINCLAIR  
 Fourth-year print journalism student