



# SPORTS

**Game Schedule**
**MEN'S BASKETBALL** vs. Memphis, 12:30 p.m.

**MEN'S TENNIS** vs. Alabama, 2 p.m.

**WOMEN'S TENNIS** at Alabama, 4 p.m.

**BASEBALL** vs. LSU, 7 p.m.

**MEN'S AND WOMEN'S TRACK** at Weems Baskin Relays in Columbia

**Contact Us**

 Story ideas? Questions? Comments?  
 E-mail us at [gamecocksports@gwm.sc.edu](mailto:gamecocksports@gwm.sc.edu)

## Tournament gives Carolina new standard for basketball

**BY BRAD SENKIW**

THE GAMECOCK

The brackets have been filled; the farewells and "good lucks" outside the Colonial Center have passed; and the stage is set. The USC men's basketball team is ready today for its first game in the NCAA Tournament in six years.

Now, how does it make a remarkable run, starting with today's game against Memphis? It does the same thing every other team does: win.

There's no reason to break down the strengths and weaknesses of the Tigers or to argue over defensive match ups. It's time to go out and play. Throw out the game plans, and fire up the shots. That's the only way for USC to make a run.

If the Gamecocks can take any lessons from the past, they only have to look back at their last two tourney trips with losses to Coppin State and Richmond. Granted they are a 10-seed playing a seven seed this year, and that wouldn't be much of an upset; but if head coach Dave Odom knows what's best, he'll tell his team to just play.

And if Carolina gets past Memphis and Oklahoma State, a real powerhouse is looming around the corner. This is a team that could give USC fits with its mixture of physical play and tough defense. But let's not get ahead of ourselves.

Memphis is a team much like Carolina with the combination of experience and youth leading the way. Memphis head coach John Calipari is trying to do the same thing Odom came here for: to build consistency at a program that has seen very little over the years.

While winning an NCAA Championship this season is more than likely out of the question, the Gamecocks have a chance to work towards the future. Being on TV in the tourney will only help recruiting and let the nation see a team that's had very few televised games.

If Carolina has success and gets past Memphis and possibly Oklahoma State, just think how that would put Odom's bunch on the map.

Before the SEC Tournament, I heard some fans saying the NIT would be the best place for Carolina, because it would have a chance to win it. Yeah, it did a whole lot for the program the last time it made the lower level tourney. Making the Big Dance gives the team a chance to gain that so-called needed tournament experience. While that might be a little overrated in my book, it will allow a young core of players to get a taste of March Madness and hopefully make them hungrier to get back.

This is also a chance to set a new standard under Odom. With this team defying all the critics and making the tourney, Odom can burn into his players' minds that getting back is what's expected.

With all this said and the Gamecocks hoping to take out another Tiger team, let's all just sit back and be thankful. This time a year ago, baseball was already dominating the headlines, and USC fans only cared about their brackets. This season, there's just a little more on the line.

## MLB bans THG

**BY RONALD BLUM**

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

**NEW YORK** — Major league baseball players are now forbidden to use THG, the recently unmasked steroid at the center of the case against the Bay Area Laboratory Co-Operative.

"Testing for THG is an important step toward reaching our goal of zero tolerance," baseball commissioner Bud Selig said. "I am committed to that goal and advocate a more stringent and effective drug-testing program in the major leagues, similar to our program in the minor leagues."

The health policy advisory committee of management and the players' association unanimously determined last Thursday that THG builds muscle mass and should be added to baseball's list of banned substances.

The Food and Drug Administration ruled Oct. 28 that THG, which stands for tetrahydrogestrinone, is an illegal drug that lacks federal permission for sale in the United States.

Because baseball and other sports did not know about THG before last October, drug testing was unable to detect it.

"I don't care," Minnesota Twins outfielder Jacque Jones said. "I don't take any of that stuff, so it doesn't matter to me what they ban."

Barry Bonds' personal trainer, Greg Anderson, was among four men indicted last month on charges of illegally supplying performance-enhancing drugs from BALCO. All four pleaded innocent.

Bonds, Jason Giambi and Gary Sheffield were among the athletes called to testify before a grand jury. All have denied using illegal steroids.

Anabolic steroids are synthetic versions of the male hormone testosterone. Some are approved by FDA for prescription-only sale to treat certain diseases.

Selig told a Congressional committee last week that he hopes to have a tougher testing plan than

# USC to take on No. 1 LSU

**BY JOEL WALLACE**

THE GAMECOCK

The SEC Baseball Championship might be a few months away, but there's a good chance the series this weekend between No. 3 USC and top-ranked LSU (16-2) will be a sneak peek.

The Gamecocks (18-0) enter the contest boasting some impressive numbers. USC pitchers have 214 strikeouts in 161 innings and have walked only 19 batters all season. The offense for Carolina has been equally prolific, as the Gamecocks have hit 40 home runs in 18 games while running up a team batting average of .361 through the first 17 games.

With its unblemished record, USC has a chance to push its winning streak to 21 with a sweep this weekend, just one win shy of tying the school record set in 2000.

"We've gotten off to a great start," USC head coach Ray Tanner said. "We've had a great deal of consistency on offense and defense and from our pitching staff. Our newcomers that have stepped in have done a tremendous job. We have a long way to go yet, but we got out of the blocks."

Despite such consistency, or perhaps because of it, Tanner says he is still unsure as to what USC's pitching rotation will be heading into the SEC schedule. With that said, whoever gets the call this weekend will have his hands full with the Tigers (16-2).

"The thing that I don't expect to be different with LSU is that they'll be good like they are every year," Tanner said. "There's tremendous talent, and they're arguably the best team in the country. You're not

going to win against LSU unless you're playing the best baseball you've played all year."

So far this season, only Central Florida and Houston have been fortunate enough to accomplish that. LSU enters the game on a five-game winning streak after whipping New Orleans 14-0 Tuesday.

"We're playing what I would feel OK; we still haven't gotten the consistency that I'd like to see throughout the lineup," LSU head coach Smoke Laval said. "We're still trying to find one dominant guy that can win on Friday night. We do play the game hard, and we seem to have fun. It's a semi-veteran type club, and they get along real good."

As the defending SEC Champions, LSU represents the toughest challenge the Gamecocks will face in their bid for this year's SEC title. The Gamecocks can look forward to the fact that there is no better opponent to prepare them for the rest of their SEC schedule.

"Our guys are going to be tested; we know that," Tanner said. "But they're going to be tested all season. There are no easy weekends in this league."

Laval agrees with Tanner. The SEC had a 237-96-1 record against non-conference foes in 2003, a 71.1 winning percentage.

"To me, it's the toughest conference in the country," Laval said. "Any given weekend the best, the worst, could fall or sweep. Throughout the country in the NCAA, parity is really setting in now."

Friday's game starts at 7 p.m., while Saturday's match is set for 4 p.m. The Sunday contest will begin at 1:30 p.m.

Comments on this story? E-mail [gamecocksports@gwm.sc.edu](mailto:gamecocksports@gwm.sc.edu)

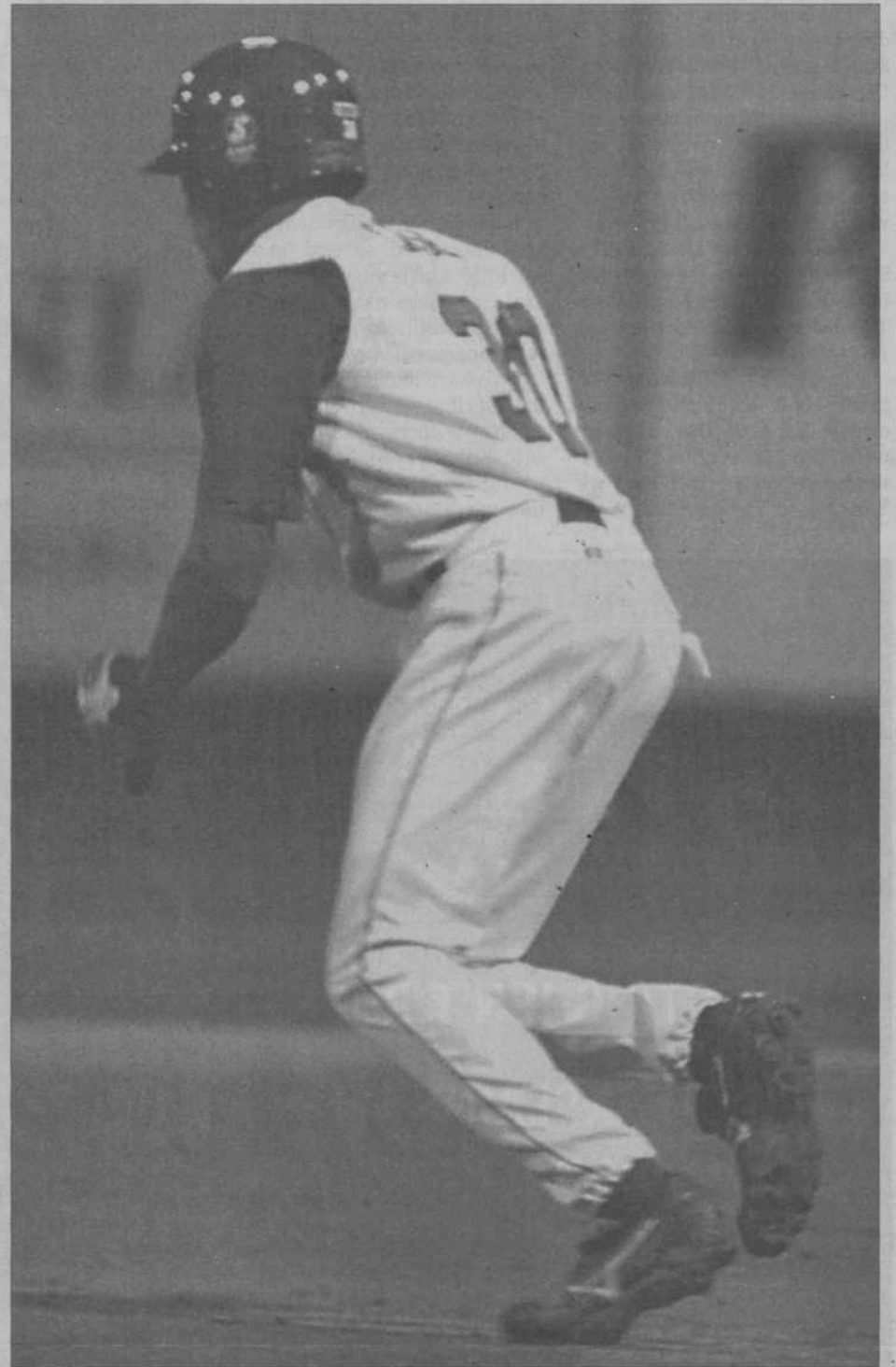


PHOTO BY JOHNNY HAYNES/THE GAMECOCK

David Cash breaks for the steal in the second inning of the Davidson game.

## Men's golf captures Palmetto Intercollegiate

**BY JONATHAN HILLIARD**

THE GAMECOCK

After winning two of its previous three tournaments, the USC men's golf team returned to the top this week, winning the Palmetto Intercollegiate Tournament.

Shining for Carolina individually was sophomore Eirik Johansen, who claimed his first individual title of his career in Aiken.

The Gamecocks jumped all over the field on the first day, claiming a 12-stroke lead after the first 36 holes of play.

Rounds of 278 and 281 brought Carolina to nine-under-par for the first two rounds, with Coastal Carolina trailing distantly. Johansen shot rounds of 67 and 68 in the first two rounds, making him the 36-hole leader at seven-under-par.

Johansen would continue the best tournament of his career in the final round. His 69 brought his tournament total to nine under, good enough for a first-place finish. His great play along with a four-over-par 288 by the team sealed the win and held off a late charge by USC-Aiken.

Also shining individually for Carolina was junior Martin Rominger, who finished fourth with a tournament total of four-under-par. Rominger posted the low round of the tournament with a 66 in the second round of competition.

Next in line for USC individually was junior Jake Thompson whose tournament score of 218 placed him in a four-way tie for 23rd place. Rounding out the field for the Gamecocks was Alex Hamilton who tied for 27th, Robert Svensson who tied for 33rd

place and Matt Robinson who tied for 39th.

Completing the top five in team play were USC-Aiken in second, Coastal Carolina in third, Virginia Tech in fourth and Memphis in fifth. In the individual competition, Coastal Carolina's Moises Cobo finished in a tie for second with Furman's Buddy Davis, and Virginia Tech's Joel Kraner finished fifth.

The Gamecocks now have victories in the UH Turtle Bay Intercollegiate, the Mercedes Benz Collegiate and the Palmetto Collegiate. With the victory, USC matches the 1981 and 1991 teams with three victories, the single-season school high. This comes with three more tournaments before the team competes in the SEC Championships.

Heading into next weekend's com-

petition, Johansen is the team's leader in scoring average at 72.14, his low round a 65 in the Carpet Capital Collegiate. Johansen leads the team with four top-five finishes this season. Rominger follows with a scoring average of 72.27, and his fourth place finish last week matched his second best of the season. He has four top 10s and six top-20 finishes this season.

The team will hit the course again on March 20 in the Schenkel EZ-Go Invitational. The tournament will be played in Statesboro, Ga. Thirteen of the 15 teams in the field are ranked in the top 50. Teams in the field include No. 1 Florida, No. 2 Clemson, No. 3 Georgia and No. 12 Southern California.

Comments on this story? E-mail [gamecockfeatures@gwm.sc.edu](mailto:gamecockfeatures@gwm.sc.edu)

## Success eludes SEC in early postseason play

**BY WES WOLFE**

THE GAMECOCK

As the USC men's basketball team readied itself to take on Memphis and its three-point threat, other SEC teams found a tough road in the postseason, with four out of five conference teams losing in either the first round of the NCAA Tournament or the NIT in action Wednesday and Thursday.

In the NCAA Tournament, No. 8 seed Alabama, the only team with a victory out of the five SEC teams in the past two days, beat No. 9 seed Southern Illinois with a lay-up in the paint by guard Antoine Pettway. Pettway hit the shot with five seconds left in the game. The basket was one of few for Pettway, who ended the game with only six points.

"When you look at it, the only reason people expected us to win the game is because we play in the SEC, and they play in the Missouri Valley," Alabama head coach Mark Gottfried said to the Associated Press. "They're an excellent basketball team."

victim to the upset bug, however, becoming the first team with a six seed or higher to lose in the tournament when the Gators lost to No. 12 seed Manhattan (25-5) yesterday. The loss was especially bad for UF, which hasn't advanced past the first weekend in the tourney in the past four years after making it to the championship game in 2000.

The Jaspers dominated the game, winning by 15, to secure its first NCAA Tournament win in nine years. Manhattan guard Luis Flores led the way for his team, personally outscoring Florida 8-0 at one point in the second half.

Flores ended the game with a game-high 26 points, along with three rebounds and one steal. However, Flores was only 8-of-23 from the field. The high number of shots missed could mean that Flores could cause even more trouble for No. 4 seed Wake Forest in the second round if he could sink more baskets.

The SEC was completely shut out of the NIT, going 0-for-3 on Wednesday. Tennessee got things going, dropping a 58-55 decision to Colonial Athletic

Mason (22-9). The Volunteers (15-14) had a chance to redeem their SEC Tournament-opening-round blowout loss to Alabama, but didn't get enough good bounces as the game drew to a close.

UT star guard Scooter McFadgon was ice-cold from the field, only hitting two out of 13 shots and was 0-for-6 from beyond the arc. McFadgon did go 5-of-5 from the free-throw line, though, which gave him nine points for the game.

Guard Tony Skinn was spotted for the Patriots, netting 16 points and going 6-of-8 from the field, including two three-pointers.

Events didn't get any better for SEC East team Georgia (16-14), which lost to Iowa State, 82-74. The Cyclones (18-12) had two players hit over 20 points and shot a school record 74.4 percent from the field.

The Bulldogs kept the game close until with less than five minutes left, Iowa State laid an 11-0 run on UGA to seal the victory. Georgia senior Damien Wilkins kept the Bulldogs in the

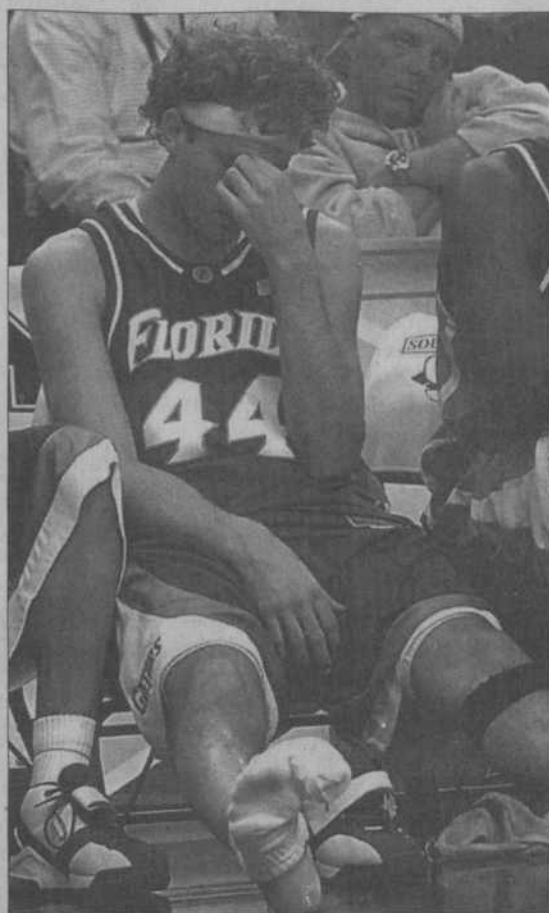


PHOTO BY JOHNNY HAYNES/THE GAMECOCK