

Wallace

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have also already accomplished the impossible. That same season, USC came out of the losers' bracket, beating Clemson twice in a row to face Texas for the national championship.

Second, USC has the most pitching depth of any team in the CWS. The Gamecocks face Miami with confidence, knowing they can bring in second-round draft pick Billy Buckner, hard-throwing lefty Arik Hempy or the stalwart Zac McCamie, whereas Miami's cupboard is bare after already using up their top two starters.

Although Buckner has appeared to take a while to recover his strength after a bout with mono, he should be well rested, as he hasn't pitched since the Regional over two weeks ago.

Third, the Gamecocks are due. Head coach Ray Tanner has

worked long and hard to build the Gamecocks into a national powerhouse. When was the last time that could be said of the USC basketball team, or the football team? Year in and year out, Tanner brings in some of the finest student-athletes in the country to play baseball right here in Columbia.

Finally, what's the reason I have so much confidence in USC? Call it a hunch. I've just had a feeling about this team all year. It could be the law of averages finally tipping in our favor, it could be something I ate or it could just be the blind faith exhibited by all Carolina fans clouding my judgment once again.

For whatever reason, I think after all the pies in the face over the years, USC fans will finally come out of this one with a national title to celebrate. If I'm wrong, what's the worst that could happen? Just another year standing hip-deep in pie.

Omaha

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three runs on 11 hits.

The Gamecocks picked up a run in the first inning and trailed 3-1 after four innings. USC scored six runs in the sixth inning, highlighted by a play at the plate involving Melillo running over LSU catcher Matt Liuzza after a Gardiner single. Melillo was ejected by home plate umpire Bob Homolka but was allowed back in the game after the umpires ruled it an incorrect call.

In the eighth inning, Carolina

once again scored six runs and added another pair of runs in the ninth inning.

USC 15, Miami 11

Hot bats from the LSU game carried over in the elimination game against Miami as the Gamecocks lived to see another day with a 15-11 victory over the Hurricanes. Winn tied a CWS record by scoring four runs on the day and added a three-run home run. Tolleson and Steve Pearce also blasted home runs for the Gamecocks' first homers at Rosenblatt Stadium.

Billy Buckner (7-2) got the win

for Carolina in his first start in two weeks, striking out 10 Hurricane batters while giving up four runs on five hits.

The Gamecocks scored four runs in the first two innings and led by as much as 12-0. Miami rallied in the top of the ninth to put a scare in the Gamecocks, but the Hurricanes fell just short of a comeback.

USC's road gets even harder as the Gamecocks must beat Cal State Fullerton tomorrow at 7 p.m. and Thursday to advance to the championship series.

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Georgia

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Richard Mercado. John Hardy doubled in Nick Hundley but was stranded at third.

The Bulldogs got that run back in the eighth. Szabo led off with a triple over center fielder Trevor

Crowe's head and scored on Bobby Felmy's two-out single.

Arizona got only one base runner past second base the first six innings.

"My whole game plan today was what it has been all year, and that's to go out and throw strikes, force contact and let the infielders and outfielders work for me and

get outs," Hyle said.

Startup retired five in a row, striking out three, to end the game.

The All-Southeastern Conference closer has allowed four hits and one run in six innings of CWS work, and he said he's ready to pitch some more on short rest.

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