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High 68
Low 56

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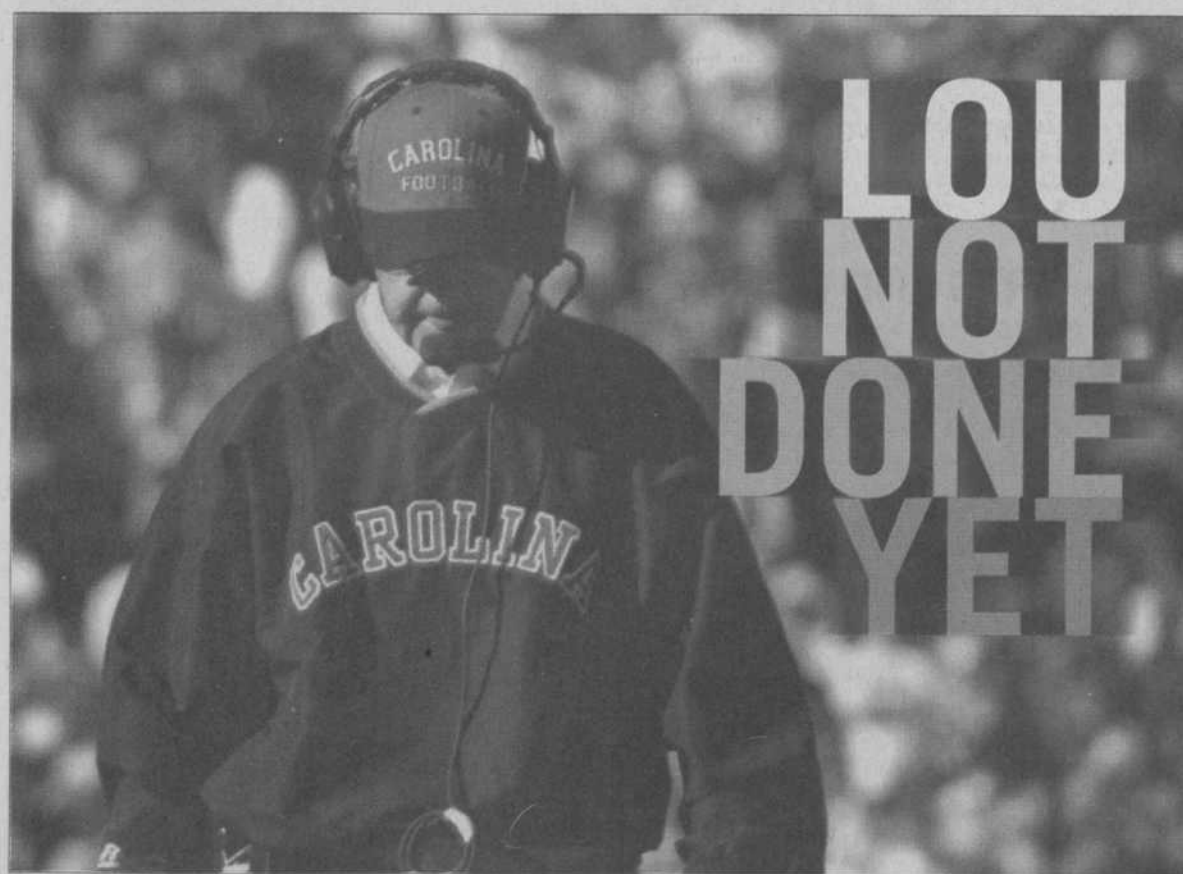


High 66
Low 40

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FILE PHOTO/THE GAMECOCK

Coach Lou Holtz stalks the sidelines during the Arkansas game last week. Holtz on Thursday denied a rumor that he told his coaching staff he would retire after this season. USC faces Florida in Gainesville on Saturday.

Holtz dismisses retirement rumors, but fans talk up Spurrier

By JONATHAN HILLIARD
SPORTS EDITOR

The past few weeks have been littered

with speculation about the possible retirement of USC head football coach Lou Holtz, and rumors continue to swirl that none other than ex-Florida head coach Steve Spurrier would replace him.

An Olive Branch, Miss., radio show reported Thursday on its Web site that Holtz met with his assistant coaches to tell them he would not return next season.

"That (report) is absolutely untrue,"

Holtz said Thursday night. "I haven't even addressed it with our football team. All I want to do is focus this football team on the University of Florida. You have to understand what this game is all about. It's about players, and they ought to have the chance to go through this experience one time in their life."

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'It was a practical joke'

"This thing should just be spinning like crazy." Second-year international studies student Ben Springer is joking about the myth of the ball on top of the Wayne Franklin monument on the Horseshoe.

Legend has it that the ball will spin whenever a virgin walks by.

It won't be spinning tonight however, because on this night of Oct. 9, the ball will be taken, securing Springer and his friends into lore as one of the most famous college pranks in USC history.

It was 2 a.m. and the three students were not exactly sober.

"When I first got on campus, probably the first time I saw it, it just immediately struck me as, 'This ball should come down,'" Springer said. "We were over at a friend's party one night and just as a spur of the moment we decided to do it."

No one knew what was going to happen when they climbed the monument. How heavy was this ball? Was it even possible to remove it? Would they get caught red handed?

Alcohol was there to assure them, and with the skyscrapers of downtown Columbia shining behind them, the students mounted the Maxcy monument with a hammer and a pair of pliers and took down the brass ball. At 2:30 a.m., the night before USC would lose to Ole Miss, and with only the 100-year-old trees as their silent witnesses, Springer and his friends had no idea of the impact they were about to have on their university.

After a 31-28 loss to Ole Miss, USC spent the following day in a dismal hangover, a feeling one can only understand after having lived in Columbia and seeing the empty

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Student hit by car on campus

Officials say woman suffered minor injuries

By IRA M. KLEIN
THE GAMECOCK

A car struck a USC student as she crossed a street in front of the Carolina Coliseum Thursday morning, and the woman was transported to Richland Memorial Hospital with minor injuries.

Columbia police responded to a call at about 11 a.m. that a pedestrian had been injured in the vicinity of Devine and Park streets. Columbia Police Department



WINDSOR COWART/THE GAMECOCK

spokesperson Skot Garrick said medical workers and Columbia police arrived on the scene to discover that a woman had been

◆ Please see ACCIDENT, page 3

Heavy, wreckless traffic was responsible for Thursday morning's accident at Park and Blossom streets.

Plenty of flu vaccine left

◆ 350 of original 500 injections remain

By TAYLOR SMITH
STAFF WRITER

Despite a nationwide flu shot shortage, approximately 350 injectable doses remain on reserve for high-risk students at the Thomson Student Health Center.

The health center began distributing a 500-dose shipment of the vaccine on Monday, which was only available to students who have health problems such as asthma or kidney conditions. But because of a lack of distribution, the center offered the shots to faculty members and staff members on Wednesday. "We would like to see more students show up," said Bill Hill, Thomson Student Health Center director. "I am sure that there are more people who need it than those 50 students that have already come for the vaccine."

Hill said students who are not high risk have the option of getting an intranasal flu mist, which helps to treat, but not prevent, the occasionally deadly virus.

"Sometimes people usually get scared, and it might matter for the minute, but when it comes down to it, it doesn't matter in the long run and they blow it off," said

Nohemi Torres, a third-year Russian student. "I am not concerned because I usually do get symptoms this time of year, but usually they are usually minor and nothing to see a doctor about."

Hill said he encourages high-risk students to get a shot and for low-risk students to use the flu-mist.

"The flu-mist is more expensive at \$30 a pop, and we have about 60 remaining," Hill said.

Since the health center opened the distribution to faculty and staff members, Hill said it had seen more of the faculty members than students.

"I am a little surprised, because of the shortage," he said. "After it, we said that we were going to do our best to get the vaccine but were hoping that students were going to be more affirmative."

With the first case of flu reported in South Carolina on Wednesday, he said the state is at the "front door of flu season" and students should take every precaution.

"Students tend to get involved with exams and things and aren't worried about the future," Hill said. "We really encourage them to come

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Officials to examine security of mailboxes

Students take issue with possible weakness in system

By JON TURNER
ASST. NEWS EDITOR

Two years after a string of mailbox break-ins, students are raising more questions about the security of their mail at the USC Post Office.

Third-year electronic journalism student Evan Walsh said he cracks the lock to his mailbox when he forgets his combination.

"I always know you can start left, and then right, and then left," he said. "It's just a matter of taking your dial very slowly, and just making sure it's real quiet and listening and feeling for the clicks."

That's all there is to it.

"They're very evident when they do occur. You can hear them, and you just work that way until you hear the third click, and then you turn it back, and 98 percent of the time it opens," Walsh said.

He said the technique came pretty naturally to him.

"As I did my combination, I realized, 'Wow, this is a lot of noise,' and I just use it to remember whenever I forget my combination,"

he said. There has been at least one reported theft at the USC Post Office this year, and Walsh said it wouldn't be too difficult for someone to break into other boxes using his method.

"Just by the ease I've had with mine, without knowing my number, I'm sure that if all the mailboxes are rigged the same that it would be quite easy," he said. "Not that I would, but it would probably be pretty easy to open almost anybody's mailbox."

Fourth-year computer engineering student Krystal Washington said she doubted the locks would be so easy to break, but she had other concerns.

"You have to get the first number right before the second clicks, but if somebody's standing next to you, of course, when you open a box you can see the numbers right inside," she said. "I'm not too concerned about it. I'm more concerned about the people working here."

USC Business Affairs Director Helen Zeigler said she had heard nothing about security problems with mailboxes.

"If that's the case, we need to replace those boxes," she said.

Zeigler said she spoke to USC mail system manager William Copeland.

"He seemed genuinely surprised,"

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A cappella ensemble to compete in N.C.

By JUSTIN CHAPURA
THE GAMECOCK

Cocktails, USC's female cappella group, will head to Raleigh, N.C., for the SoJam A Cappella festival's collegiate competition Friday.

Evelyn Wong, a second-year art studio student, sings bass for the group. She said that among many things, competition is stressful.

"We go through weeks getting the vocal parts right, doing choreography, and just working on the songs. When we get on stage, we put our all into it," Wong said.

Second-year pharmacy student and alto Tammy Kim said the group practices three times a week. The group goes into the event with a boost of confidence picked up from their third place finish last week in the divisional competition of the International Championship of Collegiate A Cappella, held at Clemson University.

Cocktails will advance to the regional semi-finals to be held at the College of William & Mary in April.

"We were incredibly surprised that we placed third at ICCA, let alone be allowed to compete," Wong said. She explained that in order to compete, groups must send in audition tapes of their performance.

Cocktails will compete with Tigeroar and Take Note, two cappella groups from Clemson that did not compete last week. Both Clemson groups have existed since the mid-1990s and have put out at least three CDs each. Tigeroar went on a fall tour through California this year while Take Note has performed at several locations in New York City, with a planned visit to London in December.

Despite Cocktails' relative infancy, the women say they are confident in a

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