



### CAROLINA-CLEMSON SERIES 2-2

*Armstrong gave masterful skill, tireless dedication to cycling world*

■ Road warrior will bid adieu to Tour de France after six titles, battling cancer

While much of the world was busy watching a chimney in Rome and debating the differences between black and white smoke, the man who is arguably America's greatest athlete in a generation quietly announced that as of July 24 he will give up the sport to spend more time with his family. Lance Armstrong is a man known as much for his efforts to support cancer research and dating pop icon Sheryl Crow as much as his unprecedented six consecutive Tour de France victories, a footnote in the sports culture of the country in which he was raised. Every July since 1999, though, he has managed to score a minor coup d'etat for his chosen profession of international-level road cycling as far as American media interest is concerned, as his lean figure is splashed across newspaper pages from Austin to Anchorage.



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Saying Lance is a bike rider is like saying Jordan could play hoops or Ali won a fight or two. Understanding the man means understanding the sport, because in many ways he is the epitome of the craft he worked so tirelessly to perfect. Armstrong trains literally year-round for those 21 days in July comprising Le Tour, taking off at the most four or so consecutive days a year. A regimen of weight-lifting, eight-hour days on the bike and a diet that would make an anorexic blanch comprises Lance's year, with dozens of supporting staff monitoring his every heartbeat and calorie with the intent of delivering him healthy and hungry for victory to the starting line in France with the frightening consistency of a metronome. His rivals have called him a machine; even at the top of their form, there always seems to be a sizable difference between them and Lance, the so-called "patron" of the Tour. Clearly, this monk-like attention to detail during the year pays off when the race finishes on Paris' Champs-Elysees.

More intangible than the religious-like fervor with which he avoids ice cream and sleeping less than nine hours a night is his aura on the bike; watching him stand and seemingly dance on the pedals to climb a French col or take the wind out of opponents' attacks by bringing them back effortlessly is art in motion. Critics are fond of dismissing cycling as a fringe or an Olympic sport, but this ignores the cruel realities of Europe's third-favorite pastime (trailing only soccer and Formula One). A single stage of the Tour's daily 21 requires up to 10,000 calories, the output equivalent of running 2 1-2 back-to-back marathons. Riders deal with heat and cold, rain and snow, mangled equipment and violent crashes that break bones and bloody bodies. Lance's teammate Fabio Casartelli died in 1995 during that year's Tour after plummeting to his death off a cliff on narrow Alpine roads. Danger is ever present, even from the fans that line the roadsides so close they can touch their heroes.

It is said that to ride a single Tour takes

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NICK ESARES/THE GAMECOCK

Clemson sophomore Tyler Colvin connects with a pitch in the final game of the USC series. Colvin hit 2-of-5 with two RBIs and one run scored.

■ *Harvey's late blast evens in-state series for yet another season*

By **ALEX RILEY**  
STAFF WRITER

All Clemson wanted in the top of ninth was to tie the game. Clemson coach Jack Leggett set his team to move the runners and sent the game into the bottom of the ninth. Instead, Carolina allowed the Tigers to sneak out of Columbia on Wednesday with a 7-5 win, ending the season in a 2-2 deadlock.

USC fell behind early, as the Tigers posted one run in each of the first three frames. Clemson scored its first run on a two-out RBI double by sophomore Tyler Colvin and added another run on a RBI single in the second inning, resulting in the removal of Carolina senior starting pitcher Cliff Donald.

The third inning brought Colvin back to the plate to face newly inserted Gamecock hurler senior Zac McCamie, and the trip turned into one of the most exciting plays in series history.

Colvin cranked a ball to right field close to the foul line. Senior right fielder Brendan Winn went into full sprint to catch the ball, and it is unclear whether the ball hit his glove or the wall before bouncing to the ground. Winn hit the ground, and after getting up slipped once more, allowing Colvin to score on an inside-the-park home run and increase the Tiger lead to 3-0.

Clemson squandered a scoring opportunity in the fourth, as a triple off the wall by freshman shortstop Stan Widmann went by the wayside.

The Gamecocks remained scoreless the first five innings, but it was the pitching of new reliever sophomore Jeff Jeffords that sparked a Carolina rally. Jeffords recorded Carolina's only 3-up-

3-down inning, as he struck out the first two Clemson batters and forced the third to pop out.

That was the start of a USC comeback, as senior Steve Pearce led the inning with a double. Junior outfielder Michael Campbell was walked, and the ball was lost by Clemson redshirt junior catcher Adrian Casanova, allowing Pearce to advance to third. Sophomore catcher Ryan Mahoney hit a hard single to score Pearce, and junior infielder Chris Brown advanced runners to second and third on a sacrifice bunt.

Junior outfielder Mark Stanley then got his turn. Stanley came into the game for Winn after his collision with the wall in the third. Stanley ripped a two-run double down the third baseline, knotting the game at 3-3, and advanced to third on the relay throw. After an Ian Paxton pop-up, junior infielder Joey Friddle brought Stanley in on a double, giving USC a 4-3 advantage.

Clemson attempted a small rally the next inning, putting runners on with a single and a walk, but a Carolina double play voided the effort. The Tigers' next scoring chance came in the eighth, as back-to-back singles put two on and only one out for Clemson. Jeffords recorded another pop-up and junior pitcher Brent Marsh came on to strikeout the final out.

Sophomore infielder Tommy King, who replaced Brown at second, nailed a first pitch for a double and was moved to third on a Stanley sacrifice bunt. But another strikeout by Paxton and a pop-up by Friddle ended the threat and sent USC into the ninth with a 4-3 advantage.

Marsh came in looking for the final three outs and almost had the first on junior batter Ben Hall, as an infield ball was fielded by King, who made a spectacular mid-air throw only to miss

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NICK ESARES/THE GAMECOCK

Junior pitcher Cliff Donald fires a pitch in Wednesday's loss to Clemson. The Gamecocks will look to rebound during this weekend's series against Alabama.

## Baseball eyes end to recent slump

By **MICHAEL FINNEGAN**  
FOR THE GAMECOCK

The No. 8 Carolina baseball team travels west to Tuscaloosa, Ala., today for a SEC showdown with the No. 15 team in the country, the Alabama Crimson Tide. USC will look to regain its winning ways, as the Gamecocks have lost four of their last five.

This is a key series for both teams as they both try to get position momentum for the last month of conference play. Carolina is second in the SEC East, one game behind Florida, while the Crimson Tide sit atop the SEC West with a 9-6

conference record. Carolina's record in conference play is also 9-6.

Today's matchup will be a pitchers' duel, as both teams send their aces to the hill. Carolina will send senior leader Aaron Rawl to the mound. Rawl has compiled a 7-2 record on the year with a 2.90 ERA. Alabama will send junior T.J. Large to the mound. He has a 5-3 record on the year and 2.16 ERA.

The Gamecocks' other prospects are two more senior starters, Jason Fletcher and Zac McCamie. The final two games' starters are undetermined. Bama counters with two

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## Speedy receiver Williamson's draft stock on the rise

By **PETE IACOBELLI**  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Right before NFL scouts and coaches broke for the day at USC's indoor practice facility last month, they cleared the field and called for one more speed drill from Troy Williamson.

The one-time track prospect smiled and obliged.

Williamson hadn't even thought much about football until his junior year at Silver Bluff High School. But in five seasons, he has turned himself to one of the best receiving prospects in Saturday's NFL draft.

It's Williamson's speed — he was clocked at 4.38 seconds in the 40-yard dash — and work ethic that moved him up to a likely high selection and the first player with South Carolina ties expected to go.

"I've got to be ready to play and do my

part," said Williamson, the Gamecocks receiver who is giving up his final season and the chance to catch passes for new USC coach Steve Spurrier.

The decision looks better every day. Some mock drafts have Williamson going as high as No. 12 to San Diego. Most have him locked into the first round as the next receiver after Michigan's Braylon Edwards and Southern Cal's Mike Williams.

One NFL general manager, St. Louis' Charley Arney, called Williamson the best player in the draft. "Nobody can cover him," he said this week.

All this for someone who caught only 91 passes and 13 touchdowns in college. Still, Williamson has shown enough to interest NFL teams, several who have flown him in for pre-draft visits.

"The thing right here, you've got to pace yourself and then prepare for draft day to come," Williamson said. "Because

when draft day comes, it's time to get back to work."

Williamson has never been afraid of hard work to achieve his goals.

He was a speedy star at Silver Bluff High near Aiken where he won two state track championships apiece in the 100 and 200 meters. Once convinced to try football, Williamson became an all-state player at running back and receiver. He chose to stay in the Palmetto State — and turn down offers from Clemson and Tennessee — despite the more conservative attack of coach Lou Holtz.

Williamson led the Gamecocks in receptions and touchdown catches his final two years. Although those totals of 71 receptions for 1,263 yards and nine touchdowns might not have matched what he could've gotten this coming season with Spurrier in control.

"Of course, that's something you

consider," Williamson said. "But you've got to look at yourself and your goals and the stuff you want to accomplish."

There were moments where Williamson's talent and smarts shone through. Two seasons ago, Williamson cut past two Virginia defenders after catching a quick slant and took it 99 yards for a touchdown, the longest pass reception in USC history.

This year, Williamson caught late, game-winning touchdowns at Kentucky and against Arkansas to help the Gamecocks qualify for the postseason, although the bowl chance disappeared because of a massive fight in the season-end at Clemson last November.

That was it for Williamson. He had thought about the NFL since his first college season and was ready to move.

Williamson's former high school coach, Al Lown, said along with the receiver's

speed comes a toughness to succeed. "I think the NFL recognizes that," he said.

Williamson's agent, Florida-based David Canter, compares the wideout to Baltimore Ravens' Travis Taylor, whose stock rose leading up to the 2000 draft where he was selected 10th overall.

Williamson already has gotten a dose of the NFL life. He has trained in Miami with fellow USC players Rod Wilson, Andrea Gause and Jason Capers. "Those people are there pushing me," Williamson says, "making me the kind of person I am now."

Miami, with its flashy nightlife and throngs of people, was vastly different for Williamson than Jackson, the small town of fewer than 1,700 where he's from.

"More traffic, a lot of different stuff," Williamson said. But since he's likely to wind up in a larger city once he's drafted, "you got to get used to it," he said.