

■ TRACK

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personal best 51.54.

Carolina's nine individuals and two relay teams will compete for the national championship in Sacramento, Calif. The event is scheduled for June 8-11.

Ross-Williams and coach Frye received recognition on the national scale by the United States Track Coaches Association (USTCA). A redshirt junior from Miami who sat out the 2004 season for personal reasons, Ross-Williams' strong All-American year earned her 2005 Mondo District Athlete of the Year honors for the Southeast.

"Tiffany Ross-Williams got the recognition that you should get when you overcome obstacles," Frye said. "She is the product of a great support system that includes her grandmother,

mother, husband and beautiful daughter. It could not happen for a more deserving young lady."

Frye's third SEC Outdoor Championship in six years and first NCAA East Regional title were more than enough for the USTCA to name him 2005 Mondo District Coach of the Year. Frye credits his athletes and staff for the recognitions.

"It's a team award," Frye said. "I'm a part of a great staff and any time a head coach gets recognition, it's credited to the entire staff. We have the best staff in the SEC."

The recognition is not new to Frye, who has received numerous awards throughout his career. He has been named National Coach of the Year on four occasions (1997, 1999 men and women, 2002) since arriving at USC. It is his second time being named Regional Coach.

Comments on this story? E-mail gamecocksports@gwm.sc.edu



CHARLIE DAVENPORT/THE GAMECOCK

USC fell to Tennessee in the SEC Tournament last week 4-1 in a 13-strikeout game. The Gamecocks will face No. 3 Michigan in the opening game of the NCAA Regionals in Atlanta at noon Friday.

■ BASEBALL

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there," USC coach Ray Tanner said. In 2003, USC blasted its way out of Atlanta after Georgia Tech went 0-2 at home.

This time around, things might not be so easy for the Gamecocks, as the Yellow Jackets come in as the No. 2 seed nationally after winning the ACC Tournament. The Michigan Wolverines took care of business in the Big Ten regular season, while Furman won the SoCon Tournament to make the field of 64. The Paladins also claim a regular-season sweep of the Gamecocks.

"But this is NCAA time. You're

going to play good people no matter where you go," Tanner said.

Hope and optimism spring eternal from the dugout, as the Gamecocks are ready to face whatever comes their way.

"The way it stands right now, we're 1-0 at that place," senior Aaron Rawl said about Atlanta. "We've got to play (Georgia Tech) sooner or later. If we knock them off here, it'll make the road easier later on."

USC starts its run back to Omaha at noon Friday against Michigan.

Weekend passes start at \$84 and \$70, while single-game seats start at \$12 and \$10. To buy tickets, visit www.ramblinwreck.com or call 1-888-TechTix.

Postseason honors

USC players received noteworthy honors before the conference tournament began, as junior shortstop Steven Tolleson was named to the All-SEC First Team, and senior first baseman Steve Pearce was a second-team member. Tolleson is one of three Gamecock captains this year, producing a .293 batting average with six home runs and 11 doubles. Pearce leads the team in the triple-crown category, leading the Gamecocks in batting average (.345), home runs (18) and RBIs (54). He is also on the Golden Spikes and Dick Howser watch lists.

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Baseball lets down fans

I'd like to take this opportunity to quote a line from the movie "The Sandlot": "YOU'RE KILLIN' ME SMALLS!"



ALEX RILEY

Second-year print journalism student

That's right, coach Tanner. You've let me down. I was expected to make the trip to the Midwest this

summer, but unless the baseball gods intervene, it looks like I'm not leaving the Midlands.

After three consecutive runs to Omaha, the Gamecock baseball team has finally hit a stumbling block. USC has managed minimal activity at the plate, which has taken great pitching performances by the Gamecock staff and tarnished them.

USC hasn't been really badly beaten all season, but every loss seems to be by no more than four

runs. The problem is, there are a lot of those single-digit losses.

Just like every athletic team that USC has ever fielded, this year's baseball team started off with huge potential. With key returnees and new additions, USC looked poised for a return to Omaha.

There were times during the year when someone could be led to believe a turnaround was coming.

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