



Photo courtesy of the University of Auburn

Carolina will play Saturday at Auburn's Jordan-Hare Stadium — which holds 87,451 — where USC has never won.

## Gamecocks look to snap road skid

*Three-game road losing streak on line when USC travels to Auburn*

**Matt Moore**  
FOR THE GAMECOCK

If USC's football team didn't have enough things to worry about, then throw in 87,451 more.

The Gamecock football team has defeated the Auburn Tigers only once since it started playing the game. That was in 1933. To trump that, the Gamecocks have never won in Auburn.

USC coach Steve Spurrier has fared a little better than his new team. Spurrier has beaten the Tigers in 10 of the 13 times he has faced them, including a 4-2 record as the away team's coach.

This is a good sign for the

Gamecocks, because playing outside Williams-Brice Stadium has proven tough in recent history. USC has a three-game losing streak on the road dating back to last year's game at Florida. Last season, Carolina had a 3-2 record on the road with wins against Vanderbilt, Kentucky and Alabama. In 2003, USC did not win a single game on the road, and the Gamecocks are 8-12 while playing as the visitor in the past five years.

However, the recent slide does not have the Gamecock players worried.

"I think when you go on the road, you have less distraction," junior long snapper Ike Crofoot said. "You have their fans cheering for them, and all we've got is ourselves."

It is not quite that easy playing SEC road games. Playing in the conference with one of the largest fan bases in all of college football, sometimes coaches prepare players in different ways.

"Sometimes we go in the stadium

and listen to crowd noise," Crofoot said. "When we play Tennessee, we listen to the Rocky Top song blaring in the stadium so loud that we can't even hear each other talk. We do whatever it takes to get used to it."

Neyland Stadium in Tennessee is the largest stadium the Gamecocks will play in this season at a capacity of 104,079. The one road game they have already played was in front of a crowd approaching 92,000 in a close 17-15 loss at Georgia. Auburn's Jordan-Hare Stadium comes in with 87,451, and Arkansas' Donald W. Reynolds Razorback Stadium can hold 71,000.

Before facing a hostile crowd like the one the Gamecocks will face at Auburn, coaches try to keep things routine all throughout the week and on game day. Unfortunately this will not be the case because of an injury to sophomore quarterback Blake

LOSING STREAK ● B3

## Carolina offensive line shuffles personnel again

*Revolving door turns as big uglies struggle to establish run game*

**AJ Bemby**  
STAFF WRITER

USC's football team has found itself in quite the quandary four games into this early season: What is the best way to mix and match a bevy of offensive line candidates into one effective, cohesive unit?

Well, for coach Steve Spurrier and the rest of USC's coaching staff, the answers are slow in coming, and the results are downright frustrating. The statistics speak for themselves, as Carolina's offensive line has been largely unable to establish any kind of dominance at the line of scrimmage, resulting in a meager running game and poor time of possession.

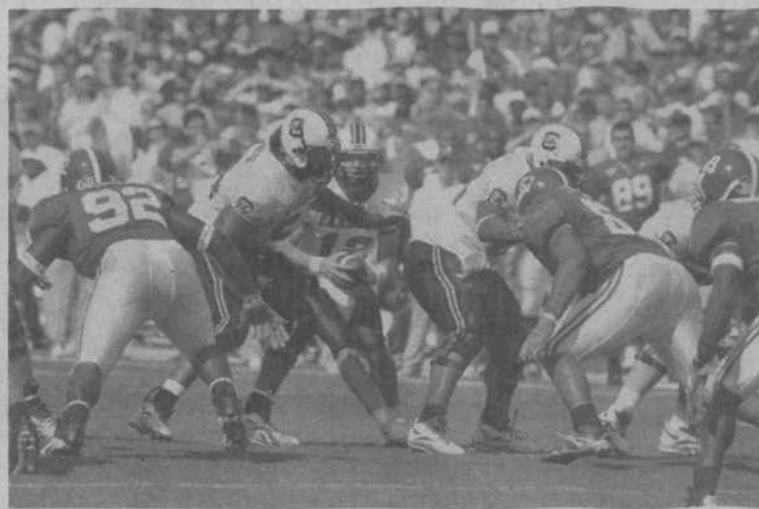
Through four games, USC has gained 19 first downs on the

ground, while the opposition has accumulated 45. The discrepancies get even worse, as the Gamecocks have racked up only 262 yards of positive rushing, while allowing opponents 796 yards. USC averages 2.4 yards per carry, but has also lost 152 yards and has only three rushing touchdowns.

While these paltry numbers aren't encouraging, Spurrier has said his teams never typically worry too much about ball control and time of possession.

"I used to not worry about (time of possession) that much, because we were, hopefully, a quick-scoring team. It's important to us now because our defense is not as strong as we hope it's going to be some day," Spurrier said. "We are giving up a ton of yards rushing and we are not making many rushing, so our time of possession is not going to be very good. It would be helpful if the offense could stay out there awhile and give the defense some

SHUFFLE ● B7



Katie Kirkland / THE GAMECOCK

USC's offensive line has struggled so far, causing frequent changes.

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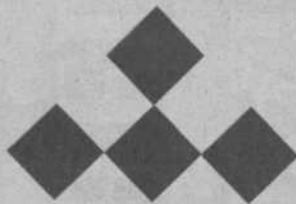
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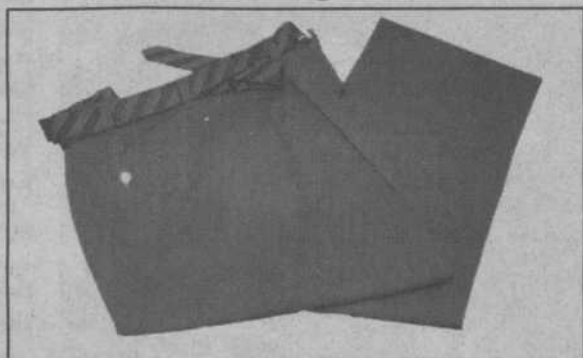


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