

DEFENSE ● CONTINUED FROM 10

season, Mitchell found redshirt freshman Sidney Rice in the end zone. The 7-yard touchdown reception put Carolina up 7-0 with 7:33 left in the first quarter.

Dick and the Razorbacks countered with their own touchdown drive in the second quarter. Arkansas started out on its own 32-yard line and

engineered an 11-play, 68-yard scoring push that culminated in a 4-yard toss to tight end Peyton Hillis.

After senior Josh Brown missed a field goal attempt on the next drive, Arkansas took over and again marched down the field. The Hogs had a first and goal from the Carolina 2-yard line, but were forced to settle for a field goal when the Gamecock defense denied

Arkansas the touchdown on three consecutive plays.

"Bottom line, you keep them out of the end zone, you've got a chance," said Nix.

Lambert and the defense again created chances in the second half with Carolina trailing 10-7. Near the end of the third quarter, Dick was picked off by Lambert at the Arkansas 42-yard line. Mitchell wasted no time

converting his opportunity, finding freshman receiver Kenny McKinley deep over the middle on the first play from scrimmage. The 42-yard touchdown reception was the first of McKinley's career and the final play of the third quarter.

"I said, 'We've got to go out here and do something because the defense has been stopping them all day.' (Spurrier) called

the right play, I got behind my man and Blake threw the ball on-point," McKinley said.

Arkansas threatened again with a little more than two minutes left in the game, but again the Carolina defense denied the Hogs. The Razorbacks faced fourth and 4 when Dick threw over the middle to leading receiver Marcus Monk. Monk was in position to make the catch, but

pulled up when sophomore rover Ko Simpson bore down, resulting in an incomplete pass and Arkansas' final possession of the game.

"This was a fun win," Spurrier said. "It was just as much fun as last week, and even more fun than winning by four or five touchdowns"

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BROOM ● CONTINUED FROM 10

they normally wouldn't do. Whether it's going for it on fourth down on your own side of the 50-yard line or starting a true freshman quarterback for

the first time in his career, other coaches are looking at Spurrier on the other sideline and thinking they have to do things they normally wouldn't do to win.

At first it made me cringe

every time I heard an overzealous student or unrealistic alumni barking about how, with Spurrier, we'd instantly turn into contenders for the SEC Eastern Division title or a bid to a New Year's

Day bowl game.

I thought this was just another case of Carolina fans setting themselves up for disappointment by starting with expectations that were way too high.

But, as it turned out, they weren't overzealous or unrealistic at all.

They were right.

And on the 23rd of November, 2004, then-athletics director Mike McGee

said, "Let there be Spurrier." And there was.

And it was even better than I expected.

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until USC got a break from defensive lineman Orus Lambert, who picked off a screen pass with less than 10 seconds remaining in the third quarter.

That's when Mitchell hooked up with freshmen wideout Kenny McKinley for a 42-yard touchdown pass as time expired in the third period.

That would be just enough offense to secure USC's fourth-straight SEC win and fourth-straight victory when tied or trailing at the half.

"It goes to show we can win close games," Mitchell said.

While Mitchell's passing came through in the clutch, freshman running back Mike Davis put up his most impressive performance of the year, rushing for a season-high 89 yards on 16 carries, including a 37-yard breakaway.

"It feels great to take these seniors to a bowl. They have worked real hard and it feels great to go to a bowl my freshman year," Davis said. "(The running game) is really coming along. I'm starting to get a real good feel out there. I took today as a challenge."

The win puts USC at 6-3 on the season with the season's final two games coming at home against Florida and Clemson. The game with the Gators has the implication of a finish as high as second in the SEC East. But with six wins, the Gamecocks are assured of a bowl berth.

"We set a goal of winning at least six so we are ready to accomplish another goal of winning more than six," Spurrier said. "God has been smiling on the Gamecocks."

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8:00 pm - 10:30 pm: Pajama Jam - watch Higher Learning, Capstone Campus Room
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7 pm: Ethics & the Law Forum in Law School Auditorium
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Wednesday: The Interpreter
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