

GAME SCHEDULE

WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL at Tennessee, 7 p.m.
MEN'S BASKETBALL vs. USC Aiken, 7:30 p.m. Thursday
FOOTBALL vs. Florida, 12:30 p.m. Saturday

Wednesday, Nov. 9, 2005

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Hoops to play host to USC Aiken

Josh Rabon
FOR THE GAMECOCK

Entering the season as one of only two Division I-A teams on a winning streak, the Gamecock men's basketball team will look to start the season with a strong exhibition against USC Aiken.

Returning four starters from last year's NIT championship team, the Gamecocks have strong hopes of building on their previous success. Although it's only an exhibition game, coach Dave Odom and company will look to Thursday's matchup to offer insight into the coming year.

USC can rely on strong play from returning guards Tre' Kelly, Tarence Kinsey and Rocky Trice, as well as forwards Antoine Tisby, Brandon Wallace and Renaldo Balkman. The returning Gamecocks all provided big minutes at the end of last season, but

won't be alone, as high hopes have been set for freshman forward Dominique Archie.

Under Odom, fans can expect more growth from this talented core, which will be on display Thursday.

Aiken might be a mere 45-minute drive away, but the Pacers expect to provide the Gamecocks with a challenge in this game. The team returns eight of 12 players from last year's squad, including three starters. New coach Vince Alexander makes his Pacer debut on Thursday, adding to the excitement for Aiken fans.

The Pacers' leading returning scorer is guard Richard Blocker, who

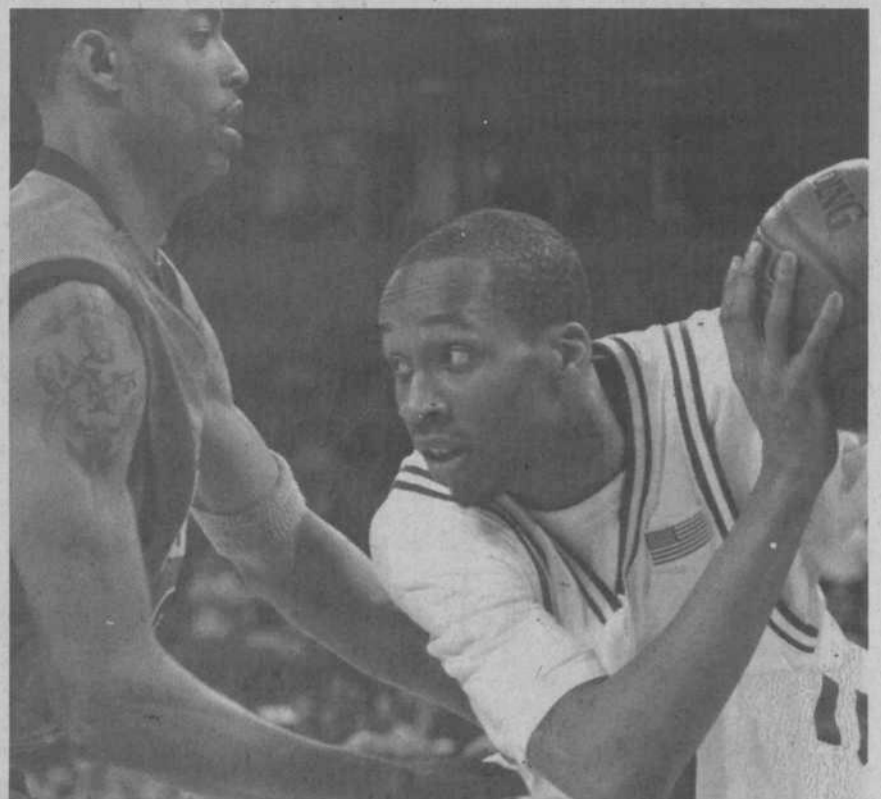
averaged 9.4 points-per-game last season. Guard Josh Poston, the Pacers' fourth-leading scorer a year ago, also returns. However, the Pacers did lose their top two scorers from the 2004-2005 season. The team finished with a record of 7-21 last season with a 2-14 record in the Peach Belt Conference. The Pacers were picked to finish 10th in the conference this season.

Alongside the basketball competition, a canned-food drive will also take place at Thursday's game in an attempt to out-raise rival Clemson.

Admittance into the game is free, but

HOOPS ● 14

MEN'S BASKETBALL
CAROLINA VS USC-AIKEN
 Exhibition
 WHO: CAROLINA vs USC-AIKEN
 WHEN: Nov. 10, 2005 7:30 p.m.
 WHERE: Colonial Center Columbia, S.C.



Katie Kirkland / THE GAMECOCK

Senior forward Tarence Kinsey and USC's men's basketball team will play host to USC Aiken in an exhibition game Thursday night at the Colonial Center.

STILL 'ONE GAME AT A TIME'

Spurrier keeps cool preparing for Gators, his former team

Michael Aguilar
FOR THE GAMECOCK

The Gamecock football team is gearing up for arguably one of its biggest games as the Florida Gators come to town this weekend, but former Florida coach Steve Spurrier really isn't taking this game differently.

"As coaches we prepare the same for Vanderbilt or Troy or Clemson or Florida, or whoever the team is that week," Spurrier said. "We try to prepare our guys the best we can and give them a game plan."

Many are surprised by Spurrier's nonchalance before the Florida game. Spurrier's history with the Gators goes back a long way and has many stories of success, championships and glory. As a player, Spurrier won the coveted Heisman Trophy in 1966, signifying that he was the most outstanding college football player of his class.

As if being a legendary player for the Gators wasn't enough, Spurrier returned to UF to coach in 1990 and during the next 12 years helped make the team's way straight into college football record books. At UF, Spurrier's Gators had nine wins in each of his 12 seasons, they won six SEC titles and a national championship, and one of his

quarterbacks followed in his footsteps and took the Heisman Trophy home.

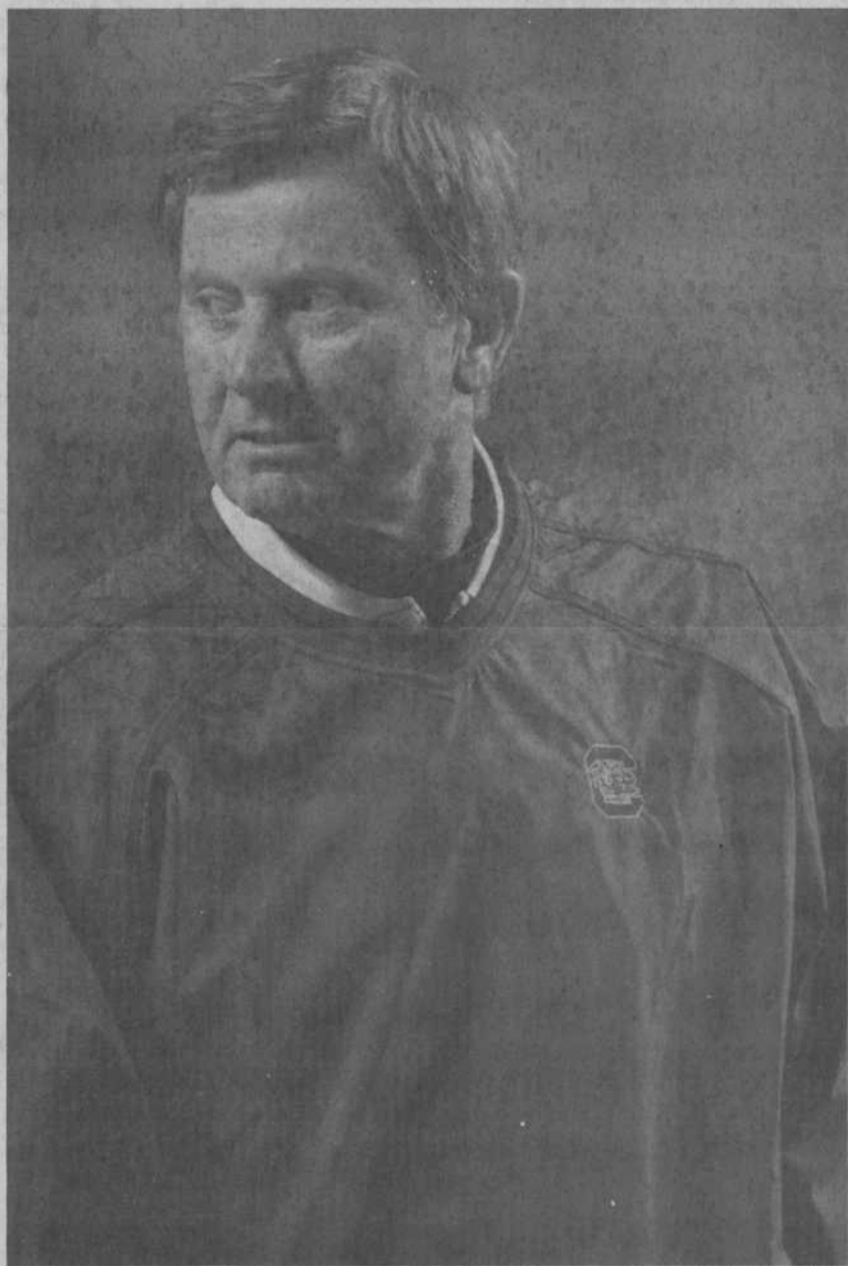
All of this being said, one would think Spurrier must be looking forward to this game, whether it be to beat his old team or only to see how they have progressed without him.

He has maintained the same policy all year. Even before the Kentucky game when his team was on a three-game conference losing streak and coming home from Auburn after one of the worst whippings he has ever taken, Spurrier maintained that he was moving "one game at a time." His coolness under the pressure this season amazes not only some onlookers, but his players as well.

"I really don't know, I look at the Clemson game and as much as I dislike Clemson, it seems like I would get more jacked up for that game than for Vanderbilt or Troy," senior wide receiver Kris Clark said. "I don't know how he does it. It's amazing that he can consider every game that big."

Spurrier's calmness has translated into wins for his team this year, including the last three games, during which the Gamecocks have yet to lead at halftime. The change USC has seen in its football program is nothing new for Spurrier. Duke football is synonymous with bad football, but when Spurrier started his college-coaching career there in 1987, he took the program from perennial losers to ACC co-champions in only three years.

It is this history of success that



Juan Blas / THE GAMECOCK

USC coach Steve Spurrier will face off with his alma mater and former team Saturday when USC plays host to Florida at Williams-Brice Stadium.

brings a strange confidence and the clichéd UF "swagger" to the Gamecocks this year.

"You see what he has done in the past and the numbers that he's put and the championships and bowls that he's been to," Clark said. "We

have a lot of respect for him, and the respect we have makes us go out there and play a lot harder for him."

Although players and coaches won't admit it, history says this is a

SPURRIER ● 14

Television shuns USC-Clemson, proves stupidity to rest of country

National networks look past annual rivalry, drop ball on Spurrier's reunion with UF

When Steve Spurrier arrived in Columbia, we all knew exactly what was going to happen. If Carolina was having a decent season and Florida was in contention for the SEC eastern division crown, GameDay would be back. I mean, come on, Steve Spurrier versus the team he led to the national championship and six SEC titles? The same team he played for when he won the Heisman Trophy? What bigger storyline is there than that in college football?

Apparently, there is a bigger story out there.

Sure Alabama-LSU is the biggest game in the SEC. This one has BCS implications on the line. CBS made a brilliant move scooping this one up.

Then, there's ESPN. After Auburn coach Tommy Tuberville threw a hissy fit at the ESPN analyst crew for having too much power in the championship formula, the national TV audience shifted from Columbia to Athens so we could watch the Georgia Bulldogs take on the Auburn Tigers.

Don't get me wrong, this is a game deserving of a big time audience. But come on? It's Steve — the ol' ball coach — Spurrier versus Florida! Allow me to repeat that — Florida!



Alex Riley
Second-year print journalism student

RILEY ● 15

USC takes No. 2 seed into conference tourney

Men's soccer ends season on 4-game conference winning streak

Matt Moore
FOR THE GAMECOCK

USC's men's soccer team will take its No. 24 ranking and a 7-1-1 conference record to Dallas to face the No. 7 seed Kentucky Wildcats.

Riding high with a four-game win streak, the Gamecocks finished 2 points behind top-seeded SMU, host of this year's Conference USA Tournament. USC handed Southern Methodist its only conference loss, but a tie with Memphis kept the Gamecocks barely out of reach of the top spot.

"By beating Tulsa, SMU and Central Florida, we sent a strong message that

we are a force to be reckoned with in this conference," USC coach Mark Berson said.

Memphis and Kentucky both had 11 points in conference play, but Memphis won its head-to-head match, clinching the No. 6 seed. Instead of facing No. 3 seed UAB, Kentucky will get a surging Gamecock team in its first-round matchup.

Earlier in the season, USC defeated Kentucky 1-0 on a goal by senior forward Josh Alcalá in the 68th minute of play. The win extended Carolina's unbeaten streak to seven games and bumped their all-time record against the Wildcats to 3-0.

That shutout and a 3-0 victory against then-No. 9 SMU helped USC lead Conference USA with a 0.98 goals-against average in league play.

If Carolina's excellent defensive play and 4-0-1 road record isn't enough of an advantage as they travel to Texas, the

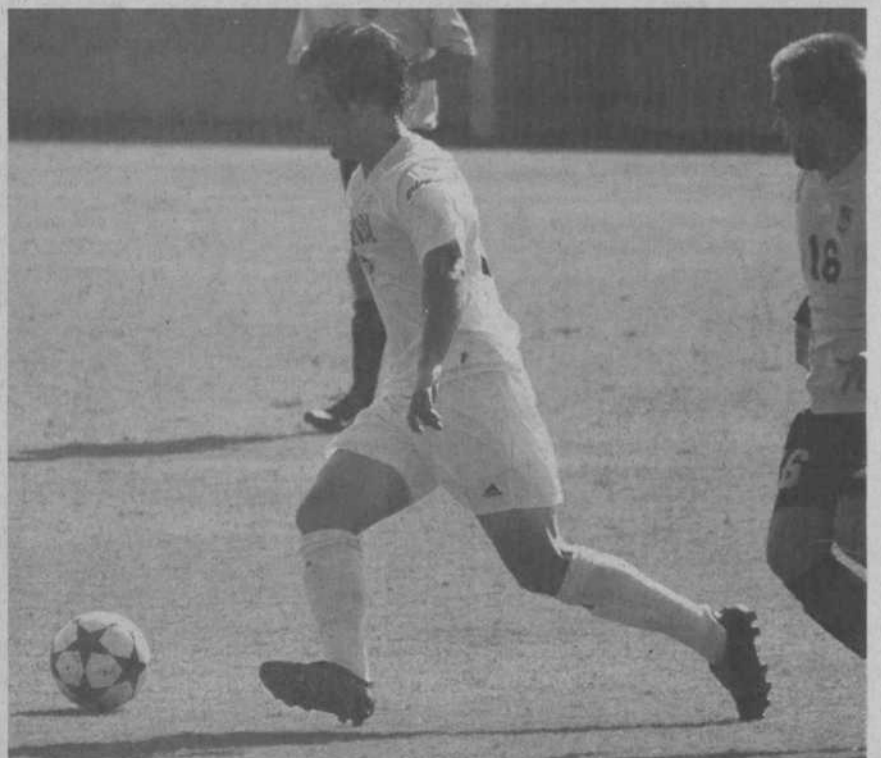
fact that they will be in Texas should be. The Gamecocks have eight native Texans on the team, including seniors Eric Szeszycki and Josh Alcalá; juniors Mike Sambursky, Stephen Sprague and Ryan Leeton; sophomore Daniel Upchurch; and freshmen David Smith and Kevan Hawkins.

"We have more players from Texas than any other state," Berson said. "It is a nice homecoming. They're pretty happy to be home and playing in front of their parents."

The Gamecocks ended the season with road wins at Florida International on Nov. 4 and at Central Florida on Sunday. With the tournament starting today and ending Sunday, USC could play five matches in 10 days.

The last week of play also proved to be a good week for individuals to show up. Junior forward Mike Sambursky was

SOCCER ● 14



Juan Blas / THE GAMECOCK

USC's men's soccer team earned the No. 2 seed in the Conference USA Tournament, which will be held in Dallas. USC first faces Kentucky.