

THE GAMECOCK

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IN OUR OPINION

S.C.'s greatest athletes should stay at home

In a stinging stranglehold of Sprewell-ian proportions, S.C.-boys-turned-Auburn-hitmen Travis Williams and Kenny Irons led a 48-7 splintering of our Steve Spurrier honeymoon phase last fall.

It was a reminder of who, exactly, we had neglected. That should've been us wiping the field with hapless Tigers — with Williams and Irons happily wearing garnet and black.

Recruiting season is winding down, and only five out of USC's 21 football commitments are South Carolinians.

We need to keep the Palmetto State's best athletes right where they are.

We need to keep the Palmetto State's best athletes right where they are, while still pooling whatever obvious talent we can from around the Southeast.

Let's not forget that Williams, a Columbia native and Spring Valley

High School graduate, was passed over by USC in 2001. Auburn was the only Division I-A school to come a-knockin', and we certainly felt his wrath at being overlooked by the state's flagship university.

Irons transferred from USC in 2003 after seemingly getting the brush-off for Demetris Summers.

With two touchdowns and a whole lot of karma on his side, we think Irons took it personal — as would any native son with a natural talent who was shunned by his university.

Of course the Spurriers, Odoms and Tanners know the science of recruiting, and if going outside the state will better USC's teams, so be it.

But for every in-state high-schooler we pick up, we lose someone to Georgia, Tennessee or a premature NFL Draft.

But in Spurrier we trust.

If we have any hope of getting and retaining in-state talent, it comes from the ol' ball coach's big-name status.

A 7-5 record, wins against Tennessee and Florida and an Independence Bowl appearance don't hurt, either.

USC must concentrate on not only recruiting in-state talent, but keeping it here for four years.



Courtesy KRT Campus

Parlez-vous francais? No, I speak English!

Foreign languages far more challenging than placement exam



CHASE STOUDENMIRE
Second-year history student

Toast. Fries. Kisses. What do they all have in common? In my opinion, they're significantly more enjoyable when they're French.

Reading. Writing. Speaking. What do these things all have in common? In my opinion, they're infinitely less enjoyable when they're in French.

As a student in the College of Arts & Sciences, I'm required to pass a foreign language through the 122 level. Gross.

I tried to ignore it as long as I could. Alas, after a four-year hiatus, I took the plunge this semester and dove back into the language of lovers.

This is where things start to go wrong. USC has this silly rule about placement tests. If you've studied a language in high school and choose to continue it in college, you have to take a test to determine what level course you belong in. Seems fair enough, at first.

I sauntered to the Humanities building last Thursday, hoping to score

well enough to be placed in a 121 level course where I belong.

Several things happened later that night — cows jumped over the moon, Hell froze over and I placed into French 122.

I'm telling you, that's just not possible.

I tried going to a 122 class, but words and phrases were flying over my head like SCUD missiles. But because of my score on the placement test, I can't get credit for any course below 122.

When it reaches the point where students are begging the administration for a lower level, something has gone seriously wrong.

Truth is, I didn't actually take the exam. My long-lost evil French twin Jean-Luc took it for me, just to piss me off.

Jean-Luc and I were separated at birth. I was born alive and well, naked and screaming like any standard newborn. No one was prepared for what happened next.

Out popped Jean-Luc, complete with a croissant in one hand, a bottle of Vittel in the other and a slick, black beret on his head. He was singing some sort of sick song about marching and how he wanted the blood of infidels spilled in his crib.

The nurses acted quickly rushing him to the nearest non-warring country. I hadn't spoken to him in years until this past week, right before he drugged me, threw me into a van and took my placement test.

What do you want me to say? Am I supposed to tell you that I made the whole thing up and in truth the language department's multiple-guess placement tests require no writing or speaking whatsoever, just do a miserable job of gauging a student's grasp of a foreign language?

I'm fluent in French and I didn't even know it! Allow me to impress you with my newfound skill:

J'ai juste avalé un grand enfant vert tout en jouant des contrôleurs avec une poupée déformée de Barbie! (That's French for "Thanks for reading, see you next week!")

Love melts in your mouth, not in your hand

Like milk chocolate, relationships make you hungry for more



AARON BRAZIER
Third-year philosophy student

Right now, my love life is like a candy mix.

Not to go Chase Stoudenmire on you, but I read my fellow columnist's talk about love. A lot.

He's funny and all, but I doubt you'll see him write about Creationism or something. Sappy love is on the brain. It's like water but involves more roses and chocolate.

Apparently, love is some New Age attitude where you commit yourself with compassion and respect. Or at least that's what I get from objective sources.

How many of us whine that we haven't found "the One," or that there are no good guys or girls out there? Too bloody many of us. We all drift by one another to class and back into our own worlds.

Then you have another problem where every person you meet seems to be "the One." A remotely interesting, attractive person suddenly becomes your entire life.

Love does not sound like something easy to find.

So, I stood up and made a decision that hurt people. But, in my defense, the choice of candy was 3 Musketeers — a soft nougat, not a chocolate and

peanutbutter hybrid of malevolence and spite.

Nobody mixes American football with Heidegger, so don't mix peanut butter with chocolate. Damn it, people!

However, that's the chocolate world we live in. It's full of different shapes, sizes and fillings. Sometimes we feel like toffee, other times we feel like caramel.

On the other hand, deep down we always hold affection for one or two types. It's just a little too much. It makes you sick.

The new candy mix might be so wonderful that nothing else can compare to it. It might be awkward when you combine the two pieces of candy and get some evil concoction — like peanut butter and chocolate.

But let's face it — we're young. I love German and Swiss chocolate and even a bit of Belgian on occasion. Usually, it's British. Tastes change, new experiences happen, and the candy-mix world becomes a confusing and worrying place.

Eating too much candy makes you want to go running across the

country. And by the time you've reached a handy city — some place such as Philadelphia, perhaps — the stomach demands resolution by ejecting its contents. Exciting proposition.

The world becomes gray and bland without enough chocolate. It looks like a nightmarish example of a city torn apart in the midst of civil war.

Nothing could ever seem bright again until you open a shiny wrapper and bite into the goodness contained inside.

Finally, there's the power of a diet. It's the love equivalent of taking a break. If the diet works, you learn self-control and about yourself. If the diet doesn't work, you just end up in an even worse place than before.

You know, maybe this love thing isn't too complicated after all. Talking about these things in reference to chocolate makes so much sense.

I've saved everybody a whole semester's worth of articles about love. Haven't I been good to you?

But, I'm going to tell you to keep reading The Gamecock.

Don't let anyone fool you into thinking love is easy. Chocolate makes a lot of sense, but love is a unique feeling that can't be boxed.

IN YOUR OPINION

Intramural referees receive proper training

I am writing in response to Stephen Fastenau's article "Have fun despite crummy rules, refs." Mr. Fastenau repeatedly bashes the officials and our school's whole intramural program and his comments could not be more off-base. Working for USC's intramural program is the best job on campus. He comments on how poorly trained the officials are, but all our officials receive a week of training before the season begins.

They are also evaluated after every game that they officiate. In the past two years, USC has had three All-State officials and has sent officials to regional and AAU tournaments and even into high school officiating.

Mr. Fastenau ends his article by saying, "Your opponents are, after all, fellow students." I am confused to why the same courtesy is not taken with the officials. Our officiating staff is comprised entirely of students and is open to all students who desire to work.

I am not here to say that our officials will be perfect. We are human and will make mistakes. However, without the time and effort that is put forth by these student officials and our excellent staff, USC would have no intramural program for you, the students, to participate in. I have been to other schools in the region for tournaments and clinics and I am confident in saying that our staff is the best that I have come in contact with.

The writer's complaint about officials being allowed to play is uncalled for. I can assure you that no officials on our staff are simple-minded enough to hold vendettas and ref in favor of one team over another. It simply would not be tolerated. Besides, why should these students be denied the opportunity to play like every other student?

I would like to conclude my letter by offering Mr. Fastenau the chance to become an intramural official. We are always looking for new officials who have a passion and a knowledge of the game, as Stephen seems to have. I would just like for you to see the game from the other side and hopefully you will gain a new perspective of our wonderful intramural program here at USC.

RIP RIPLEY

Third-year sport and entertainment management student

Submission policy

Letters to the editor should be less than 300 words and include name, phone number, professional title or year and major, if a student. E-mail letters to gamecockopinions@gwm.sc.edu. Letters will be edited. Anonymous letters will not be published. Call the newsroom at 777-7726 for more information.

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