

Finally...



NATIONAL CHAMPS!

Gamecocks take home title in final opportunity

FLORENCE — The celebration began perhaps just a little bit too early. JSU had taken a fourth-quarter lead on Pittsburg State and, despite only being ahead 17-13, appeared headed for victory.

But give Pittsburg State credit. The Gorillas came back strong, driving to the Gamecock 22-yard line after taking over at their own 21.

From there, on fourth down, quarterback Brian Hutchins' pass was tipped away by outside linebacker Eric King, one of only three seniors on defense. The pass seemed to linger in the air for an eternity, giving Gamecock fans a chance to think back to all the heartaches of previous years. While holding their collective breath, fans thought back to 1991, 1989 and for some, 1977.

Last year, JSU lost to these same Pittsburg State Gorillas 23-6. That bitter pill was a little easier to swallow than 1989's loss to Mississippi College. That one came in the snow and ice of Braly Stadium, a 3-0 heartbreaker. The Gamecocks had already defeated the Choctaws earlier that season. In 1977, JSU lost to Lehigh 33-0.

"The other two times we were up here it hit awfully hard," said JSU head coach Bill Burgess. "Being No. 2 in the nation is not that bad. We know how it feels. But this is the ultimate."

This was to be JSU's last chance at a Division II national title. The Gamecocks will begin a transition to the greener pastures of Division I-AA next year. They took full advantage of that chance.

The first key play of the game happened before the kickoff. That's

"I'm really happy for the players right now. I am very happy we won the championship. I'm awfully proud of our players."

--Bill Burgess

JSU head football coach

when linebackers Ja'Karl Barnett and Marty Bridges stood defiantly in front of the Gorillas as they warmed up near midfield. They seemed to be saying, "You will not deny us this time."

That proud stand seemed hollow after the opening kickoff. Pittsburg State's Ronald Moore took Slade Stinnett's offering and went 99 yards for a stunning opening score. "I did a great job," said Burgess. "We kicked off to Ronald and that was not real smart on my part. It's like playing Russian roulette with four shells."

Moore was voted the nation's top player in Division II the night before, garnering the Harlon Hill trophy. He was good enough to spawn the printing of T-shirts that read, "Mount Rush-Moore," depicting the senior breaking through the South Dakota landmark. In fact, the last team to hold Moore under 100 yards rushing was JSU in last season's championship game. History would repeat itself, despite Moore's early game heroics.

Moore gained but 83 yards on 20 carries against the Red Bandits. He did end the game with 198 all-purpose yards with the kickoff return -- JSU wisely didn't kick again to him -- and one pass for 16 yards. "They ran to the ball real well," said Moore. "They did a good job. Their defense was pretty good

because of their speed. They pursue really hard."

If Moore had been with JSU, he might well have gained his 100 yards. JSU had two 100-yard rushers and almost had a third. Quarterback Chuck Robinson gained 110 yards on 15 carries. Fullbacks Sean Richardson and Terence Bowens had 106 and 92 yards respectively. "Their ability to run then ball inside was the key to the game," said Pitt State head coach Chuck Broyles. "You have to give JSU credit for doing the things they had to do to win the ball game."

After Moore returned his kick, Pitt State tried what would prove to be a foolhardy play. The Gorillas attempted a two-point conversion via the "waterbucket" play, a toss wide to a back who attempts to run it in behind a wall of blockers. It didn't work, and the lead was 6-0 just 13 seconds into the game.

That's how the first quarter would end, but only because JSU kept shooting itself in the foot. On each of JSU's three first quarter possessions, the Gamecocks either had a penalty or a sack that killed a promising drive. The JSU defense didn't allow a first down the entire quarter. JSU outgained the Gorillas 51 to 29 and had the ball for nearly 11 of the first 15 minutes. It was a theme that would be repeated in the second quarter.

The Gamecocks did get on the

board with a Stinnett 38-yard field goal after a 10-play, 38-yard drive that spanned parts of both the first and second quarters. The 6-3 score wouldn't last long.

Stinnett, trying to squib kick it away from Moore on the ensuing kickoff, hit a lineman with his kick and it was recovered at the Pitt State 48-yard line by upback Tim Bradbury.

With the excellent field position, the Gorillas' offense finally got on track. Hutchins lofted a pass from the JSU 21-yard line that split end Ray Staten hauled end in spectacular fashion in the corner of the end zone. Jeff Wood's extra point gave Pittsburg State a 13-3 lead.

JSU would threaten to score twice more in the half, but could manage only one score. The Gamecocks drove 78 yards in 15 plays to close the gap to 13-10. Halfback Danny Lee scored from eight yards out on an option pitch from backup quarterback Corky Gordon.

Gordon had replaced Robinson, who had reinjured his leg early in the drive. Gordon's execution on the drive was a key to the Gamecock victory. Gordon was the starting signal-caller at the beginning of the season.

Robinson returned on the next drive, but was picked off in the end zone after leading the Gamecocks to the Gorillas' 33-yard line. JSU

dominated the first half, but still trailed 13-10. JSU led in total yards 177-127, first downs 13-6 and time of possession 20:41 to 9:19.

Credit must be given to the Gamecock offensive line. Being described by center Matt Hollis earlier this season as "the red-headed step-child of the team," this group totally dominated the larger Gorillas' defense. Their names deserve mentioning. Hollis, guards Keith Maple and Andre Allen, tackles John Ingram, Ray Crump and Banyon Allison and tight ends Brandt Dooley and Scott Peavey inflicted severe damage on the Pitt State front. Of those, only Dooley is a senior.

JSU got the ball back on the first possession of the second half and promptly drove behind that line for the go-ahead and eventual game-winning score. Richardson carried on six of the eight plays, eventually bowling over from the five-yard line.

Pitt State drove to the JSU 34-yard line but was stopped on downs. It would be the Gorillas' last threat until their final possession of the game.

The Gamecock defense was led by Barnett and Bridges with 15 and 12 tackles, respectively. Bridges seemed to be in the Pittsburg State huddle, repeatedly disrupting plays in the backfield when he wasn't making the tackles.

The victory is one Burgess feels should be savored. "I'm really happy for the players right now," said Burgess. "I am very happy we won the championship. I'm awfully proud of our players."

*--Tim Hathcock
Sports Editor*

Burgess gets two national 'Coach of the Year' trophies

JSU head coach Bill Burgess has been tabbed national coach of the year by two different organizations.

On Jan. 6, Burgess received the 1992 Kodak College Division II "Coach of the Year" award at the American Football Coaches Association awards banquet. Alabama's Gene Stallings won the Division I-A award. The Citadel's Charlie Taaffe won the Division I-AA title and the Division III coach of the year is John Luckhart of Washington and Jefferson.

"If there ever was a team award, this is it," said Burgess. "There's no way one person is solely responsible for us winning the national title. If we could divide this trophy into 1,000 pieces, it wouldn't be enough.

"We're very fortunate at JSU to have an administration that believes in college athletics. We've got the finest group of assistant coaches around and our players have done everything we've asked them to do to get to this level. This is their trophy, their award, not mine."

Burgess was also named Chevrolet National Coach of the Year. This award came with more than just a trophy. A \$2,500 check will be given to the University for use in the general scholarship fund. A representative from Chevrolet will make a formal presentation to Burgess and JSU at a later date.

Burgess has a career record of 69-22-4 at JSU

--From staff reports

The Burgess File

Career record: 69-22-4

Wife: Gaynelle

Children: Rick, Greg and Angie

Grandchildren: Brandi, Blake and Taylor

Education: Jones Valley High School, Auburn University '63, B.S. degree in Education

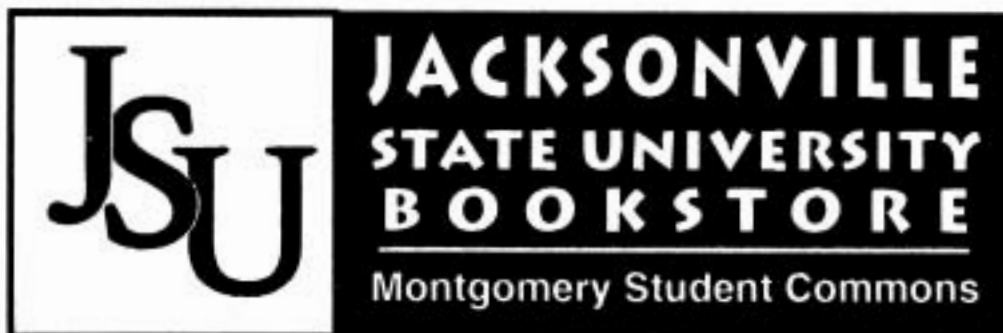
Honors: 1992 National Coach of the Year; GSC Coach of the Year: 1989, 1990 and 1991

Previous experience: 1963-65, Banks High School Assistant Coach; 1966-70, Woodlawn High School Head Coach; 1971-84, Oxford High School Head Coach

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the nation. That's what happened at Florence's Braly Stadium on a cool, clear day in December.

Not that Bill Burgess needed this game to know he is a winner. Not that JSU's achievements of the past would be lessened had the scoreboard not read JSU 17, PSU 13.

But still, a football championship was the only thing JSU had left to achieve in Division II. Perennially the best team in the Gulf South Conference, JSU now has done something no other Division II program in the country can boast of. The Gamecocks have won national championships in football, basketball and baseball. The three biggies, all in the bag.

Now JSU can make that move to Division I without looking back, without having to say "What if...?"

JSU had been this way before, as is now well documented. In 1977, JSU lost to Lehigh 33-0. In 1989, Mississippi College broke our hearts with a 3-0 win over JSU that was tainted by three inches of snow and ice on the turf of Braly Stadium. In 1991, Nickey Edmondson led a surprising JSU squad to the finals before succumbing to Pittsburg State 23-6 when Edmondson went down with a sprained ankle.

So, JSU headed back to Florence for one last trip, one last chance at a national crown. To get

Two named All-Americans

Two Gamecocks, defensive end Wendell Kelley and return man Danny Lee were named to the Associated Press Little All-America team.

Kelley was named to the second team, while Lee was named to the third team.

Kelley, a senior, had 127 tackles this season, caused five fumbles and recovered two, had five tackles for losses and 24 quarterback pressures.

He led JSU with eight quarterback sacks. He finished his career with 315 tackles and 19.5 sacks. Kelley was named to the preseason College Football Preview All-America team.

He was named to the All-Gulf South Conference team.

it JSU would have to once again face Pittsburg State. For the second year in a row, the Gorillas had the Harlon Hill trophy winner, this time in the form of running back Ronald Moore.

It wouldn't come easily, but then, many things worthwhile are achieved by overcoming long odds. JSU believed it could win.

If there is one quality that can be attributed to this team above all else, it is they believed they couldn't be beaten. It's what salvaged a tie on the road against Mississippi College after falling behind by two touchdowns. It's what nearly got them a win against Division I-AA powerhouse Georgia Southern. The week of that game, several players had told me privately they felt they would win that game. It wasn't idle boasting, either. It was obvious they truly felt they would win.

This may not have been the most talented team in JSU history — that title usually goes to the 1989 team — but it did accomplish something no other could, a national title.

Athletic director Jerry Cole put into perspective what the win means for JSU at a victory celebration at halftime of a recent basketball game.

"We waited 17 years for this," said Cole. "I think about the boys from the '77 team. This is one for all of them. It belongs to every player, coach, student and supporter we've ever had."

Lee made the third team for the second straight year. The senior halfback led the nation in Division II in kickoff returns with a 39.4 average, which set a national record. He amassed more than 1,700 all-purpose yards and scored 15 touchdowns, 10 of them from beyond 35 yards.

He had 3,714 all-purpose yards in his career. He had the longest pass reception for a touchdown in school history (90 yards) and the longest punt return in school history (82 yards) — both against New Haven in this year's playoffs.

He scored 24 touchdowns in his career. Lee was also named to the All-GSC team as first-team returner and second-team running back.

--From staff reports

BUSTED

Mississippi College no longer '89 champs

JSU won its first football national championship in 1992, but it could well have been the second.

Back in 1989, Mississippi College defeated JSU 3-0 in three inches of snow and ice. The loss was doubly tough to handle due to the fact JSU had earlier beaten the Choctaws at their home field 23-3 in the regular season.

Now comes the revelation Mississippi College had, according to the NCAA, a "tremendous competitive advantage" because it awarded twice the allowed number of scholarships.

Division II schools are allowed 40 full scholarships. Mississippi College awarded 80.2 scholarships that championship season. The Choctaws will be placed on four years of probation and stripped of its national championship by the NCAA.

The title will be vacated, although all records from

the game will remain intact. It is not a forfeit, but that could change at a later date. JSU will still be listed as the runner-up. No champion will be listed for that year.

JSU head coach Bill Burgess would not comment on the situation, other than to say, "I hate like heck that it happened."

JSU sports information director Mike Galloway has no desire to be a *defacto* champion. "The title will be vacated," said Galloway.

"There will be no national champion. We don't want the trophy. The first time we played them at their place we beat them 23-3. That's satisfaction enough. But I sure wish we would have known what the story was then so we wouldn't have had to freeze to death."

--From staff reports

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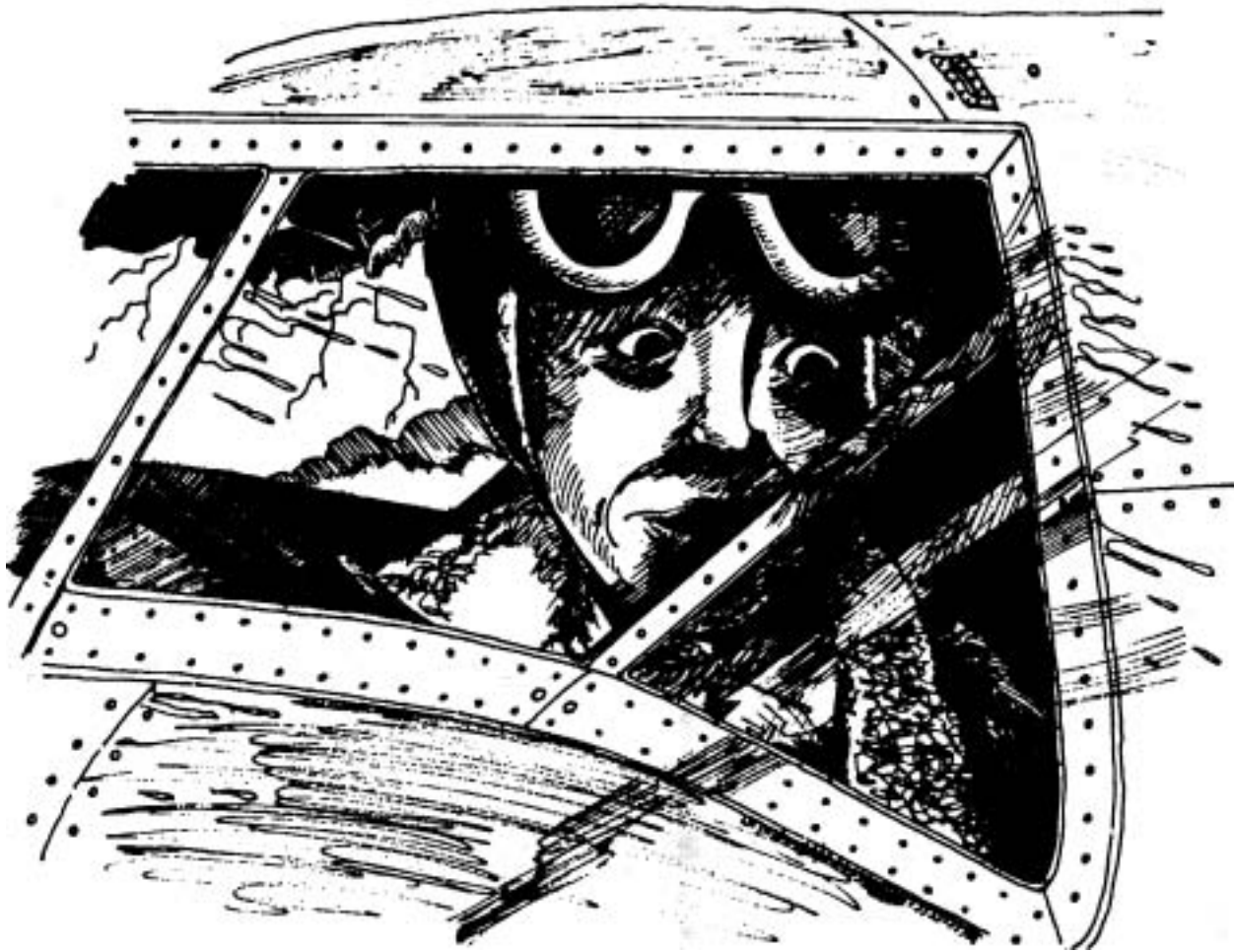
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--Matt Hollis
Center/junior
October 1, 1992

LOO NUMBER

The site of two national championships over the years at the stadium, this time again the Gamecocks had already beaten UNA once before. "We finally snap the stadium's jinx by slipping (Alabama) A&M," head coach [unclear] connected to our program that



Chris Capps

JSU rolled over, around and through the Delta State Statesmen in a 38-10 victory at home on Oct. 10, 1992. Defensive tackles Curtis McDaniel (95) and Bennie Lewis (92) played an important part in that victory, as well as in JSU's championship season. The Gamecock defensive line, which was decimated by losses after the 1991 year, was bolstered by Lewis and McDaniel's outstanding play.



Tim Sudduth, a Jacksonville native, celebrates JSU's national championship on the podium at midfield with a throng of JSU players, coaches and fans. Sudduth, a free safety, teamed up with the rest of the Red Bandit defense to hold Harlon Hill trophy winner Ronald Moore to 83 yards on 20 carries in JSU's final game as a Division II football team.



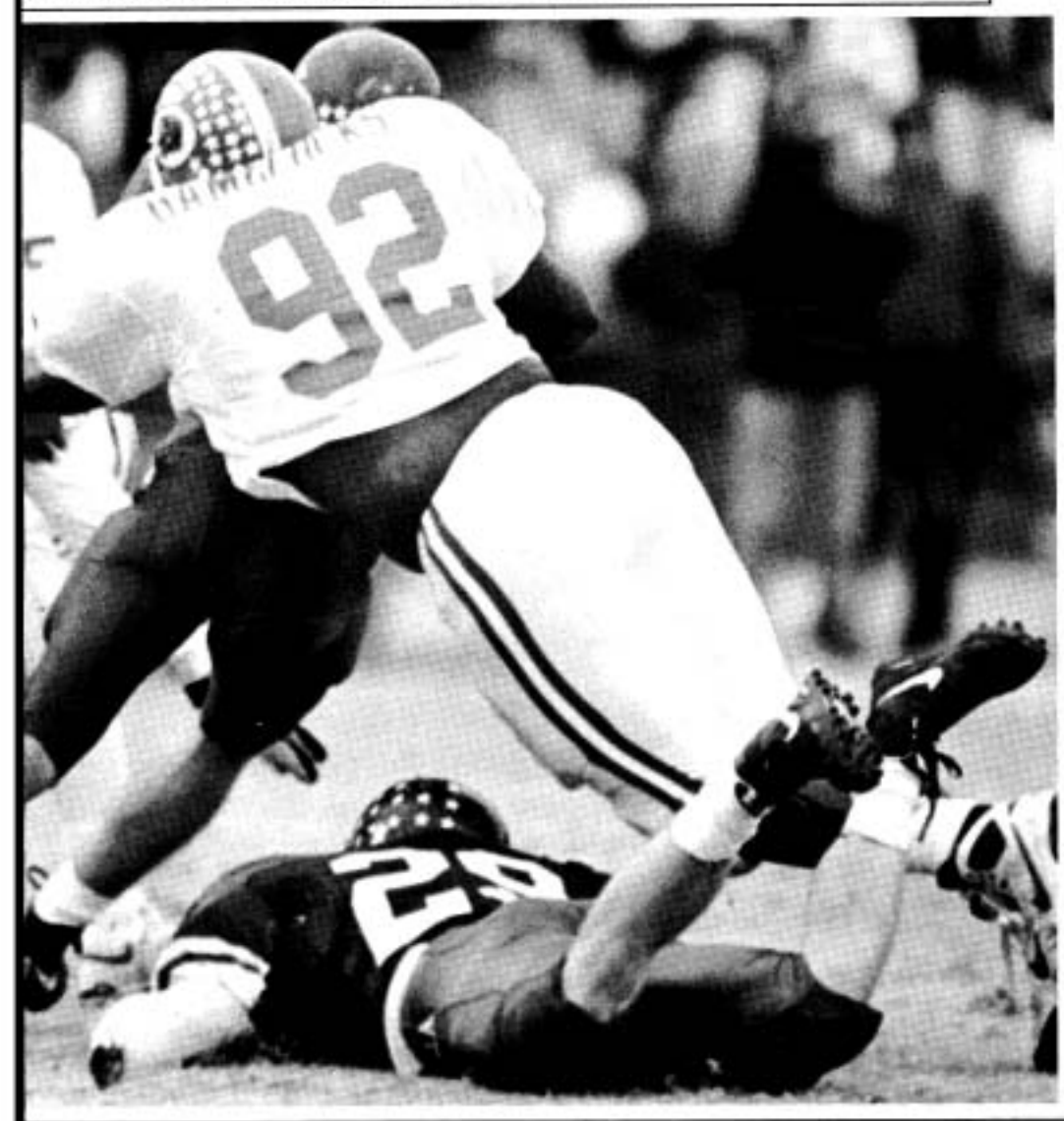
Chris Capps

KING FOR ROONE

“ From a defensive standpoint, we never doubted ourselves. We feel like we can shut anybody out. ”

-Ja'Karl Barnett
Linebacker/junior
November 12, 1992

championship losses for JSU, Braly Stadium in Florence had not been friendly to the ars. On Nov. 28, 1992, JSU had to make yet another post-season appearance at the t home-team North Alabama in the quarterfinals of the playoffs. The Gamecocks during the regular season and, putting the old ghosts behind them, managed to ng by the Lions 14-12. "When our football team started play in September against Bill Burgess said, "I don't think anyone but our football team and the people closely ght we would have an opportunity to be in the third round of the national playoffs."



Ed Hill



Jay Kneib

The Delta State game, which capped Parents' Day activities, marked the biggest offensive output of the season to that date. Quarterback Chuck Robinson gained 98 yards on the ground on 10 attempts, while completing four of nine passes for 69 yards. The game showed early signs of the Gamecocks' late-season offensive explosion, which included a total of 176 points in the final three regular-season games.

JSU head coach Bill Burgess talks with ESPN sideline reporter Adrian Karsten following the championship game. Burgess was named NCAA Division II national coach of the year.



Chris Cappe



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SCOREBOARD

JSU 17,
 Pittsburg State 13

Score by quarters	1	2	3	4	Final
Pittsburg State	6	7	0	0	13
JSU	0	10	7	0	17

Pitt State -- Ronald Moore 99-yard kickoff return (two-point try failed); 14:47 1st
 JSU -- Slade Stinnett 42-yard field goal; 12:35 2nd
 Pitt State -- Brian Hutchins 21-yard pass to Ray Staten (Wood kick); 9:14 2nd
 JSU -- Danny Lee 8-yard run (Stinnett kick); 2:23 2nd
 JSU -- Sean Richardson 5-yard run (Stinnett kick); 11:13 3rd

JSU		Pittsburg State
24	First downs	14
390	Rushing yards	156
5	Passing yards	98
395	Total yards	254
4	Passes att.	15
2	Passes comp.	7
1	Passes int.	1
0-0	Fumbles-lost	0-0
3-35.3	Punts-ave.	4-32.2
5-35	Penalties-yds.	2-20
38:17	Possession time	21:43

• 1992 JSU Football •

DATE	OPONENT	SITE	TIME
Sept. 5	Alabama A&M	WIN	7-6
Sept. 19	West Georgia •	WIN	17-10
Sept. 26	Valdosta State •	WIN	20-6
Oct. 3	Mississippi Coll. •	TIE	14-14
Oct. 10	Delta State •	WIN	38-10
Oct. 17	North Alabama •	WIN	10-6
Oct. 24	Georgia Southern	LOSS	0-10
Oct. 31	Alcorn State	WIN	59-45
Nov. 7	Livingston •	WIN	54-27
Nov. 14	Kentucky State	WIN	63-21
Nov. 21	Savannah State	WIN	41-16
Nov. 28	North Alabama	WIN	14-12
Dec. 5	New Haven	WIN	46-35
Dec. 12	Pittsburg State	WIN	17-13

• - GULF SOUTH CONFERENCE GAME

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92J welcomes team home with live celebration

December 12th, 1992 is a day most JSU fans will not forget. Jacksonville State University brought home its first football national championship after numerous attempts at the prize

With little more than an hour until the convoy of buses, cars and a police escort would roll into Jacksonville, the players dreamed of the celebration that would last far into the night. That was until they heard the radio. Much to the football team's surprise, WLJS was waiting with a band of faithful Gamecock fans

"For a whole year, the team got out there and worked hard, so the least we could do was to get out there and show them our support," says Calvin Wilburn, program director for JSU's student radio station. Wilburn, who waited patiently for the national champions to return to their campus home, was responsible for spurring a few hundred Gamecock

supporters in greeting the team on their arrival. "I went to the fieldhouse and set up my remote and started broadcasting after the championship game."

The football team, which was just north of Gadsden, picked up Wilburn's message on one of the team buses. Within minutes, the whole convoy tuned in, and it was then that the team realized what was waiting

The supporting crowd, estimated to be between 200 and 300, cheered wildly as the convoy finally arrived at the fieldhouse. The group which waited for the return was described by Wilburn as "surprisingly varied." College students, families of the team and coaching staff, older couples and giddy girlfriends all stood in support of their local champions

"We wanted the people who were and were not at the game to feel the excitement that the University felt."

The station, which can be picked up on radio all over Calhoun County, as well as other surrounding areas, drew a crowd to the campus from as far away as Gadsden and Oxford. One personal reward Wilburn received was being the first to interview head coach Bill Burgess as he stepped off the bus. "Burgess came straight to me and expressed his appreciation to the fans and radio station for creating such a warm homecoming," he says

Immediately following the positive response of the live remote, Wilburn recorded Gamecock fan's reactions to the victory and pieced together a three minute victory promotion which will be played frequently on the air. The 92J studios are on the first floor of Self Hall and the station is accepting applications for volunteer employment

--Jamey Graydon
Staff writer

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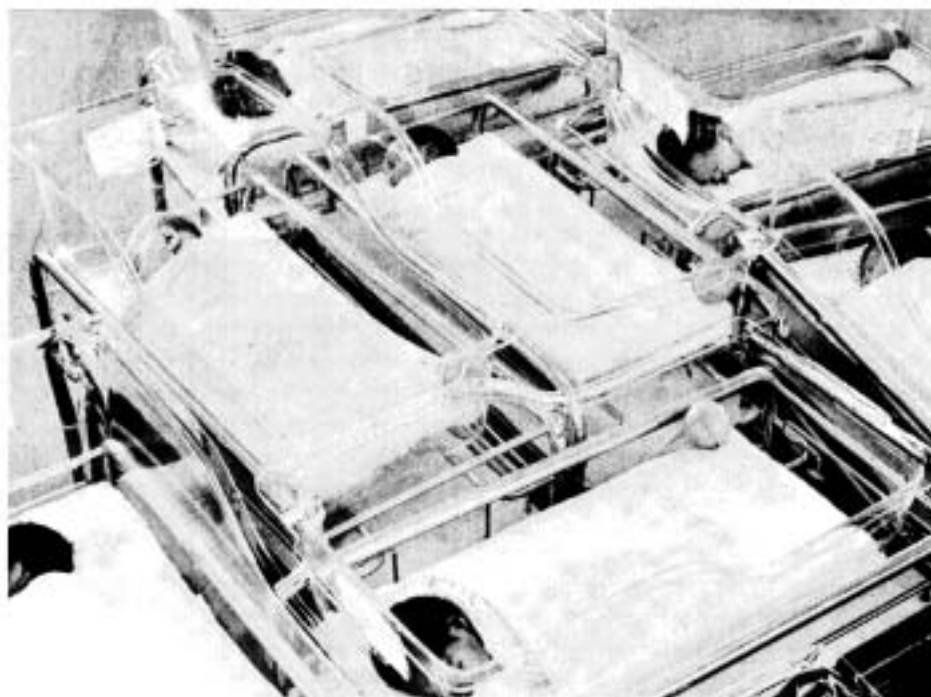


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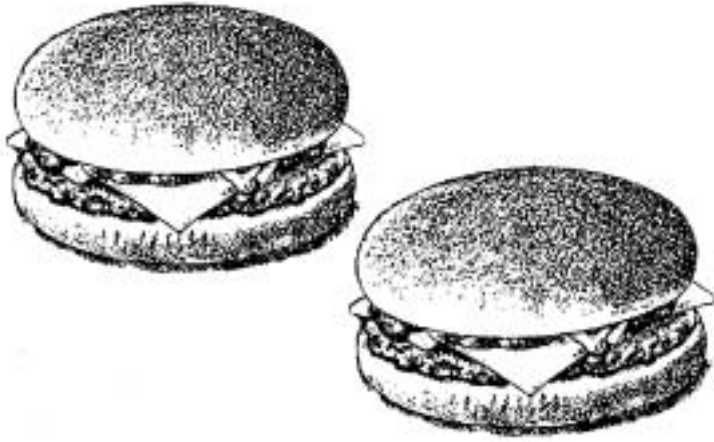


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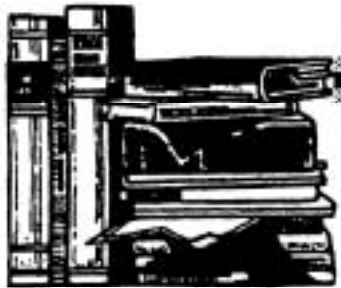
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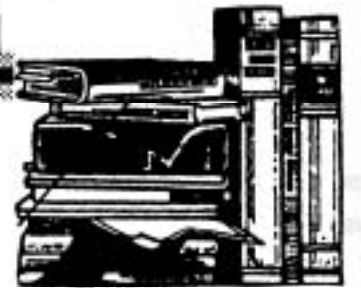
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