

1923

GAMECOCKS FALL BY AN EXTRA POINT

Clemson's new head coach, Bud Saunders, had been an outstanding athlete at the University of Missouri and held a degree in law from that institution. He came to Clemson full of hopes and expectations but would enjoy only one winning season with the Tigers, and that in 1923 when his team would go 5-2-1 on the season. Worse, his Tigers would win only one game with Carolina over the next three years.

Back at Carolina, Coach Metzger was back for another year as head coach, though his Gamecocks were not setting the woods on fire in 1923. They'd beaten Erskine and Newberry while losing to NC State and PC prior to Big Thursday.

As for today's game, the experts considered it a toss up. The real difference, as it turned out, would be the toe of the Tigers' Charles Robinson, a Winnsboro boy, who once kicked four field goals in one game while playing for Mt. Zion High School. He'd kicked the field goal that beat Carolina in 1922, and his extra point this afternoon would turn the same trick.

Over 9,000 fans jammed the old grandstands today, by far the most people ever to witness an athletic event in South Carolina.

Captains Butch Holohan of Clemson and Joe Wheeler of USC met for the coin toss. Wheeler won and elected to receive.

The first half was a viciously fought defensive struggle with neither team able to move consistently against the other, and they went to the locker rooms tied at 0-0.

In the third quarter, following an exchange of punts, Clemson kicked out of bounds at the Carolina 15-yard line. Tom

Brice fumbled on the first play and Sam Jackson recovered for Clemson. On third down for the Tigers E. G. Dotterer passed to Charlie Garrison who took it in for a TD. Charlie Robinson then kicked the extra point and the Tigers led 7-0.

Then following several more punt exchanges, Charlie Robinson again went back to punt for Clemson, but Carolina's J. C. Long blocked it and Frankie Meyer picked it up and ran 15 yards for a Gamecock touchdown. W. C. Sizemore then attempted the extra point, but Clemson blocked it and thus kept the lead, 7-6. And that, finally, is how the game ended.

Clemson would finish the season with a good 5-2-1 record, while the Gamecocks would struggle through to a 4-6 record, their only losing season under Coach Metzger.

Following the game, reported *The State*, students from both Carolina and Clemson marched around the field cheering their institutions, their teams, themselves, and their opponents. As for the game itself, *The State* concluded (in a bit of florid prose):

That the Tigers scored but one touchdown is a tribute to the back-to-the-wall spirit of the Birds who fell before the rushing Tiger until the goal post hour glass flashed its warning danger signal and then emphasized with an inspiring resistance the dictum, "They shall not pass."

But despite these stirring last words, the Tigers did "pass" and in fact won the game with a pass. That plus the toe of Charlie Robinson.



The Clemson Tigers of 1923. Linemen (L-R): C. C. Garrison, Butch Holohan, Stonewall Jackson, J. B. Wertz, Dutch Tennant, Frank Strother, Gary Finklea.

Backs (L-R): Charles Robinson, E. G. Dotterer, Bratton Williams, Pat Harmon.