Students raise $177,000 at annual fundraising event

Amanda Coyne
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More than 700 students packed the main gym at the Strom Thurmond Wellness and Fitness Center for 24 hours — 7 p.m. Friday to 7 p.m. Saturday — and danced their way to $177,229.05 in donations benefiting Palmetto Health Children’s Hospital.

The conclusion of the 14th annual philanthropy event brought the grand total of money raised by Dance Marathon for the hospital via Children’s Miracle Network to $1,359,300.

"Seeing all these people together to support the local children’s hospital was awesome," said first-year art student Elizabeth Donovan. "The best parts were getting to hear from the families of Miracle Children who were treated at Palmetto Health and getting to meet them."

During the event’s opening ceremonies, Miracle Children and their families spoke to the crowd about their experiences at Palmetto Health. Jason Milton, the father of Miracle Child Hannah, told a particularly touching tale; Hannah and her mother, Karen, were diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia and breast cancer, respectively, within days of each other in 2006.

"They both lost their hair together and they both went through treatment..." Milton said.

Concentrating on how religions vary so much with sexual rules and treatment of the opposite sex, Christina mentioned that religion can stifle sexual thoughts and desires, making people feel extremely guilty.

"Within Christian, lusting in your heart is just as bad as committing adultery. It’s hardwired into people’s minds to feel this way," Christina said.

She underlined the societal implication that anything promiscuous or sexual is negative.

"Sex is dirty and bad... So, save it for the person you love," Christina said with a laugh.

Christina argued that the differences in religion and the taboo aspects of them give people the idea that they are giving themselves control over the most powerful aspects of life. She said that instilling certain ideas in people early on gives people control.

Instead of focusing on control, Christina argued that atheists should focus on what is moral. Christina stated that even though atheists don’t believe that morality

Pastafarians host atheist blogger for talk on sexuality

Greta Christina discusses morality, differences in gender roles

Marianna Devenny
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An avid atheist blogger came to campus Sunday night to tell students how they can lead a fulfilling and healthy sexual life without believing in God.

The Pastafarians at USC invited the speaker, Greta Christina, to Carroll College Sunday night to highlight various themes dealing with religion, atheism and sexuality.

Christina focused on how the majority of religions concentrate on the belief that God cares who you have sex with, when and how.

"Some religions only believe in having sex with the person you’re married to, that they’re the opposite sex as you, while other religions go as far as fun things, such as dancing, that could lead to sex," Christina said.

"You would think that if these religions were based on human interest, the rules would be the same across the board!"

Christina mentioned how despite the differences in those religions, there is a consistent double standard when it comes to the treatment of women compared to men.

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“The miracle family testimonies are always the most moving part of the event and this year we were lucky to get multiple families who were willing to talk with everyone and share their stories,” Public Relations Director and third-year public relations student Megan Reidy said. “Sharing with dancers how children that are right in front of them might not be where they are today without the help of Palmetto Health Children’s Hospital really hits home for the participants.

More than 500 students participated as dancers and were required to raise at least $150, while an additional 142 students served as volunteers. Many took part in a new program in which they would work three hours and do their job and leave, but this year we decided to give them the opportunity to volunteer but also participate and see what Dance Marathon is all about,” said volunteer coordinator Spencer Martin, a second-year finance student. “We were very fortunate this year. There are a few volunteers that have raised over $100. It's really awesome to see that they’re going above and beyond.”

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Coca-Cola Consolidated celebrated 125 years of refreshment by discussing the company’s success and changes over the years with students. Daniel Holmes, vice president of marketing for Coca-Cola, spoke to undergraduates on Friday in the Darla Moore School of Business.

Student Government partnered with business fraternities Delta Sigma Pi and Alpha Kappa Psi to sponsor the event and give marketing undergraduates insight on marketing from a company that partners with the university.

“Coke has been a part of our culture for over 125 years,” said Student Body President Joe Wright, a fourth year finance and marketing student. “I think people are just interested in Coca-Cola’s history and gain a lot of insight from someone on the inside.”

Holmes discussed Coke’s sustainability efforts, knowledge that relates to the job market and interviewing, marketing and rare known facts about Coca-Cola Consolidated.

“Our side is about the customers and retail outlets,” Holmes said. “Point of sale materials to retail promotion, local sponsorships and regional assets is what we do to make up our end of the marketing plan.”

The company is the largest independent bottler in the U.S. and distributes an estimate of 150 million cases of soda a year. As a bottler, manufacturing takes place with the “biggest of the big brands.” Syrup is purchased from Coca-Cola Consolidated to produce beverages, manufacture and distribute them around America. Vitamin Water, Powerade, Monster and other beverages are not made on Coke’s production lines because of a different manufacturing process. However, the beverages’ syrups are purchased from Coca-Cola.

A large retailer of Coca-Cola products, USC is serviced out of Bishopville, S.C. and Charlotte, N.C.

Holmes discussed Dr. Pepper’s shared partnership, as many students questioned who produces the soda. It is an independent brand that gives 30-40 percent of its business to Pepsi and Coke each. The brand can afford to distribute itself in the Oklahoma area as well.

“We’re going to drink it from our viewpoint,” Holmes said.

Coke has recently increased its sustainability efforts, including a “plant bottle” initiative with Dasani. Thirty percent of the plastic bottle comes from sugar cane, molasses and other plants. According to Holmes, 60,000 barrels of oil have been saved in the past year from this effort.

Coca-Cola also uses recycled bottles to produce T-shirts and other giveaway items. The company has created five types of recycling bins placed around organizations with which they partner, such as USC. A unique one is Coke’s recycled syrup bin.

“It’s not the most glamorous one out there, but it hits home because it does a double whammy,” Holmes said. “We are recycling the bin first, then encouraging people to recycle the bin overall.”

At the event, Coke gave USC students a keepsake for the baseball team’s championship to congratulate them in a memorable way through a classic glass Coke bottle.

“When partners go on to win back-to-back championships, we can celebrate that with them,” Holmes said. “We’re able to do a commemorative bottle.”

Holmes also gave marketing undergraduates advice to make the most of their career after graduating.

“In the beginning, don’t focus on the up,” Holmes said. “Focus on as many lateral experiences as you can get.”

Over half of the jobs are created in the manner that “it’s not what you know, it’s who you know,” Holmes said, suggesting that if students have contacts to help them in their career field, they should use them.

“The contacts get you the interview, you have to go get the job,” Holmes said.

Marketing students should try to get brand and distributor experience to help view the customer’s point of view better, he said. Between 18 months and two years should give a broad aspect of what the job is.

“I’ve grown up being a Coke drinker, so it’s cool to see how everything works out,” said first-year marketing student Mia Eriksson. “I think it’ll be cool to work in the beverage industry later on. I’m just really interested in what makes people buy what they do.”

Comments on this story? Visit dailygamecock.com/news
Political neutrality key to student experience

Rick Santorum defended Sunday evening candidates and his campaign's success in higher education. The college is not a political arena, but a safe place to voice opinions and offers their views.

"College life is about exposure to ideas not only in class, but also from individual connections."

Current practices leave economic impact in doubt

South Carolina successfully implemented a campus in 2000 to develop a major industry that generated tax revenue for the state — and massive campaign contributions for its politicians. Once the addiction was finally broken, there was little desire to gamble further. Ten years later, there is a recession. The pressure is on. A wave of lawyers and former politicians are now serving the gaming industry as lobbyists, touting the positive impacts of casinos on job creation and the economy. The competition among states in the area are attempting to build casinos on their lands, with new plans involving internet poker cafes and overseas machines to bypass the decade-old ban on land-based gambling.

There are theories on the motivation of those supporting the casinos. Some economists point out that gambling is like a form of limited-time banking, where one does not risk anything but the cost of the game. The other side points out the usual costs of buying a gun on the black market, like special police operations and officials who are biased. Ultimately, the only way casinos are really successful is when there is a lot of waste. South Carolina already has two casinos that doesn't benefit the participants, the better the quality the higher the sales.

Gambling could bring mixed blessings

Students urged to give back in fundraiser event

Hundreds of participants stayed on their feet this weekend for Dance Marathon, only charity event that raised around $775,000.

The energy was fantastic for the first time in many years. Parents and children who received some of the money that Dance Marathon raised this year expressed their gratitude for the hard work and dedication that participants endured. Through it all, it's not about making sure that parents with sick children go to the hospital.

I participated in the 2011 Dance Marathon, and it was a wonderful experience. It was the first time I had stayed awake for 24 hours, but also the first time I danced alone throughout. By the end of the event, I was too exhausted to think about the four-plus hours I was on my feet.

The stories I heard told people that they were touched and made it completely worth it. Of the 500 participants in the 2012 Dance Marathon, almost all said that they would take the initiative to raise money and help those kids. Dance Marathon is a great experience and allows you to appreciate the blessing you have. You can share the experience with some of your closest friends and, the more diverse the experience, the better the overall outcome.

Corrections stifle conversation about sex

Republicans show ignorance, insensitivity on issues of reproductive, women’s health

In recent weeks, the Republican Party has made a compelling case for improving the quality and health of our nation's future. It should not be a surprise, of course, but rather by demonstrating their own incredible cluelessness. On issues involving birth control, the party of "small government." Instead, Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi has pointed to this as a clear example of the extremes can take to challenges ideas, no matter where they are.

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The Department of Student Media is the

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Delta Rae

Though Delta Rae hasn’t released a full-length album, the Durham, N.C.-based band has received national recognition thanks to a gig opening for Hanson, some local NPR interviews and a series of cover songs that gave Southern flair and raw harmonies to popular favorites. The group has musical roots that span several genres, from gospel to bluegrass to rock. Last year, Delta Rae released a series of free songs, including rare acoustic cuts of their previously released material as well as covers ranging from Kanye West’s “All of the Lights” to Alanis Morissette’s “Your House.” The group is set to release a new LP this spring and its self-titled debut EP is available for $3 on iTunes.

Freelance Whales

Though the band’s name may not sound familiar, Freelance Whales’ song “Gone Are the Days” could be heard in homes across America as the soundtrack to a Starbucks television commercial. The band, which formed in 2008, features Chuck Cissaro (older brother of “Glee” star Darren Criss) and has a unique folk-rock sound that appeals to fans of groups like The Avett Brothers and Edward Sharpe & the Magnetic Zeros. All band members play multiple instruments and bring different flavors to each track. Freelance Whales is signed to Mom + Pop Records but has given Southern flair and raw harmonies to popular favorites. In this day and age, audiences are hit with new music releases at such a fast pace and high volume that it’s easy for listeners to discover an artist several months after he or she has released an album. In this day and age, audiences are hit with new music releases at such a fast pace and high volume that it’s easy for listeners to discover an artist several months after he or she has released an album. In this day and age, audiences are hit with new music releases at such a fast pace and high volume that it’s easy for listeners to discover an artist several months after he or she has released an album. In this day and age, audiences are hit with new music releases at such a fast pace and high volume that it’s easy for listeners to discover an artist several months after he or she has released an album.

Kopecky Family Band

If you had the chance to catch Kopecky Family Band’s gig at 1 Point Pub earlier this month, you know the group put on a lively show. Formed in 2007 in Nashville, Tenn., Kopecky Family Band has released three EPs together. The indie rock band has brought its eclectic mix of guitar, cello, xylophone, accordion and a slew of other instruments to several festivals, including Bonnaroo and South By Southwest. And it doesn’t stop at the instruments — band members incorporate unusual but beautiful sounds with common objects like chains and trash cans into their shows. Kopecky Family Band is on tour and will make stops in North Carolina and Tennessee in April.

Karmin

Prior to an early February “Saturday Night Live” performance, Karmin was a relatively unknown act. The duo, consisting of soon-to-be-married Nick Noonan and Amy Heidemann, met while studying at Berklee College of Music and began recording together as part of a school project. The pair adopted the name Karmin, taken from Latin for “song” and spelled to hint at “karma,” to give their sound an identity. Karmin’s sound is a blend of hip-hop, jazz and pop with stripped-down instrumental arrangements and catchy, fun lyrics. The group’s debut album, “Brokenhearted,” is in stores now.

Grouplove

Formed after an improv jam session at an artist colony, Grouplove could easily be labeled a jam band. The band’s debut album, “Never Trust a Happy Song,” is a collection of high-energy songs with multi-part harmonies and rich instrumental texture. Grouplove’s members channel their emotions into performances; their live performances are high energy physical tour de force. The band’s song “Tongue Fu” was featured on an iPod Touch commercial and has become an alternative radio hit. Check out Grouplove’s SPIN Sessions performance on spin.com to see the band’s passionate playing in action.
Most of the hype that surrounds “Act of Valor” is that this film is supposedly more realistic than every other action and war movie of its kind because active duty Navy SEALs were cast instead of actors. The co-directors felt that casting actual Navy SEALs would be better for the film. Personally, I don’t know that, based on past compelling war dramas such as “Saving Private Ryan” (1998) and “The Hurt Locker” (2008), the action movie can indeed be realistic. Everything else about “Act of Valor” is generic and not compelling.

Directed by ex-Navy SEAL and extreme sports documentarian Mike McCoy and Scott Waugh, the team makes “Act of Valor” look like what “Battle: Los Angeles” (2011) was. A complete recruiting video filled with constant military movie clichés and overly stereotyped military propaganda.

The story opens in the most over dramatized way possible: A terrorist explosion occurs in Indonesia and doesn’t just kill an American diplomat, but schoolyard full of children as well. We are then introduced to the SEALs, supposedly portraying themselves, as they sail on a mission to rescue a CIA agent (Roselyn Sanchez) held captive by a family value-f熏ising drug kingpin (Christos Alexides). He’s in cages with a Chocoboy (Shakirah) named Abu Shabal (Jason Coster) who plans to transport suicide bombers to major cities in America.

The screenplay, written by Kurt Johnstad (“300”), leans heavily on hilariously taudious, poetic voice-over narration from one of the main SEAL characters, including lines such as “Being dangerous was sacred” and “War is the country of will.” It also includes too many throwaway lines like, “This could be big trouble in little China.”

The cinematography in “Act of Valor” doesn’t impress much either. The camera work in some of the action sequences often jumps into the perspective of a first-person shooter video game, particularly “Call of Duty.” In fact, there is one point-of-view shot that also includes calculated slow motion, making it seem like the camera style was indeed borrowed from a “Call of Duty” video game.

There are some action sequences that feature some thrilling shots of naval operations. The opening rescue has an entertaining sequence of boats dropped from helicopters and the scene featuring a nuclear submarine surfacing is partially breathtaking. However, the movie makes little sense of how these men communicate and strategize together. The screenplay often gets cluttered with technical vernacular in the field that isn’t fully explained.

As for the casting idea for this film, I found it incomprehensible why the Navy thought it was a good idea to showcase their brave men and women by letting active duty SEALs portray characters in a story that isn’t a documentary and doesn’t look like a generic action film.

As for their characters in the movie, the on-screen Naval officers are neither well-developed nor well-written. Every SEAL in this movie is simply portrayed as a brave and honorable family man.

“Act of Valor” reminds audiences that it’s the job of the SEALs to put their lives on the line to protect the freedoms that we so often take for granted. But it’s my duty to tell you if this movie is worth your time and money. And it isn’t. The story is completely clichéd, the acting is stiff, the music is over dramatic, the dialogue is pretentious and every character is undelved.
Women’s hoops top MSU 53-47 on Senior Day

Prior to the game on Sunday, Markshia Grant, Charonne Stephens, Courtney Newton, Ebony Wilson, and La Keisha Sutton were honored as the five seniors on the team who were playing their final home game in front of the Colonial Life Arena crowd.

During the 53-47 win over the Arkansas Razorbacks, they showed exactly why they have brought this team to contention in the SEC. Tenacious defense, aggressive play and an undeniable attitude were just too much for the Razorbacks as South Carolina (21-7, 10-6 SEC) clawed back from an eight-point deficit with 15 minutes to play in the second half.

Head coach Dawn Staley said the seniors have played a huge role in bringing the program to where it is now. “These seniors have been through a 10-18 season and it didn’t feel good,” Staley said. “We all looked at things differently in that we wanted to turn that around. It took us committing to one another and to being a student-athlete in its totality, because it’s not just working on one thing or the other, it all has to work together. It also takes some time to mature and these seniors have put themselves in position to take this program to another level since I’ve been here.”

The Gamecocks started the game off with a rash of turnovers that put them in a hole where they struggled until 10 minutes had gone by in the second half. With eight turnovers in the first nine minutes, USC was giving Arkansas (21-7, 10-6 SEC) easy baskets that resulted in a 41-27 lead for the Hogs in the first half.

However, Sutton and junior Ashley Brunner carried the Gamecocks back into the game with 19 of the teams 24 points at halftime. Brunner finished the game with 15 points and eight rebounds, six of which came on the offensive end, and Sutton had a game-high 16 points. “We got stops and made baskets, and we were all hyped, so that helped,” Brunner said. “On film we knew that they didn’t box out so my thing was that if they didn’t put a body on me, I was going to the glass.”

Added Sutton, “We have a three minute drill that we do in practice where it’s the first squad against the second squad and we have to go after it and get stops, and that really fired me up personally and I think it did the same thing for my team.”

The start of the second half looked much like the start to the game with the Gamecocks turning the ball over and Arkansas finishing fast breaks on the other end. With 1:48 left in the game, the Gamecocks found themselves down 38-30 after a La’Keisha Sutton turnover. It was at that point that Carolinas turned it up defensively and went on a 14-4 run that gave USC its first lead of the game.

Arkansas head coach Tom Collen attributed the collapse to the job USC does in scouting their opponents. To their credit, they did what we wanted to just do two things,” Collen said. “They kind of ran the ball at us off the dribble and got us back on our heels. They got their layups or their post players got offensive rebounds, so that really hurt us. They do a tremendous job preparing, I think that’s the biggest thing they do defensively as our game prep for each team that they play. We ran this same stuff at Tennessee and scored 70-something points on them and we tried to run it again against South Carolina and couldn’t score.”

The Gamecocks held the Razorbacks to just five field goals in the second half on 20.8 percent shooting. On the other hand, USC shot 50 percent (13-26 from the field) in the second half. “In the first half, they were playing off of our post players and drawing up the lane,” Staley said. “So we went into our 1-3 flat where we either put on one or start up some dribble handoffs. We thought that opening the floor a little bit allowed us to attack the basket, and that is kind of what it was, allowing our players to make plays.”

This philosophy resulted in 42 of the 53 Gamecock points to come from within the paint. On the day, USC made just one 3-pointer. “I think for us, we have a tendency to rely on inside shots, so when they’re not falling we don’t make the adjustments,” Staley said. “We wanted to score by way of our post players and by way of perimeter players getting offensive rebounds.”

In the win, the Gamecocks lock up the fifth seed in the SEC tournament, which starts Thursday. Staley addressed the crowd after the game, thanking them for their support throughout the season and telling them that “there is still a lot of basketball left to be played.”

“We have an opportunity to get in (to the NCAA tournament) by way of winning the SEC tournament, that is first and foremost,” Staley said “Our resume speaks for itself.”

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Bright gets two starts at second base in win

Richard Pearce
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When South Carolina baseball coach Ray Tanner was a player he had one outing where he didn’t play well, but his coach told him that he would play him the next game because otherwise all he would think about was the poor outing.

“The quickest way you can forget about something like that is to get back on the field,” Tanner said. Tanner took that lesson from his days as a player to heart this past weekend.

In the ninth inning of Saturday’s game against the Elon Phoenix, Tanner said freshman second baseman Connor Bright “had one go through the wickets,” allowing two runs to score and cutting the USC lead to one. USC was able to hold onto the lead and win Saturday’s game 3-2.

What Tanner had learned as a player, he taught as a coach, but as the coach, Tanner still hasn’t made a decision about who will secure the spot at second base.

In Bright’s start on Saturday, he had two hits, an RBI, as well as an error in the ninth. Bright had nothing more than a distant memory about Saturday’s game, playing well in the field Sunday; however, he struggled at the plate with no hits and one walk, though he scored a run on a triple by freshman infielder Tanner English.

After losing three infielders last year, Tanner has had confidence in him. “Today I felt more comfortable, and I felt more comfortable at the plate as well,” Bright said.

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After losing three infielders last season, Tanner has had three runs in Friday’s 8-1 win, is becoming more of the player that he is meant to be as he plays more games. Tanner said English was making the same sort of development.

The spotlight on the team, however, remains to the left of Pankake. While Bright started Game 2 and 3, junior college transfer Chase Vergason got the start in Game 1. Tanner said Bright has been more comfortable, while Vergason has been “antsy.”

Costen, the other candidate at second, played throughout the weekend as a designated hitter or in left field, getting the start in left field in Game 3 and pushing senior Adam Matthews out of the lineup for the day.

“We’ve got to give TJ some opportunities as well. He’s a pretty good offensive guy with great speed,” Tanner said. “We’re still going through the process to figure out exactly what we want them to do.”

Despite the uncertainty that lingers at second base, Tanner said that the six games have given his new players confidence, which will be particularly important in the next weekend series against instate rival Clemson. The Gamecocks will have to play a midweek game against Presbyterian on Tuesday night first.

“Good teams have to be able to roll,” Tanner said. “At the end of the day you have to be able to win your games, despite any circumstances they get, the better they’re going to play.”

Tanner said shortstop Joey Pankake, who went 2-for-4 and had three runs in Friday’s 8-1 win, is becoming more of the player that he is meant to be as he plays more games. Tanner said English was making the same sort of development.

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Tanner is happy with progress of freshmen through six games

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USC freshman second baseman Connor Bright started in Game 2 and 3 of the series sweep against Elon, committed just one error and scored a run over the weekend.

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USC tops Elon after allowing just seven hits in the series.

Isodore Khoury/USC Athletics

For most of the weekend series against Elon, the South Carolina dugout was quieter than usual.

With a no-hitter going through 8 innings in Game 1, and then another no-hitter going until the fifth in Game 2, none of the players could talk about the no-hitters so as to not jinx them.

"You think about it, but at the same time, you want to try to get it out of your head as soon as possible," said first baseman Christian Walker. "You don't want to sit there and blame yourself for it (not happening) just because you were thinking about it or our program.

Though the Gamecocks would ultimately get through the weekend without their first no-hitter since 1975, they would sweep the Phoenix by scores of 8-1, 3-2 and 6-0, respectively, behind dominating starting pitching.

Though USC coach Ray Tanner said he wasn't impressed in getting a no-hitter in the fourth and fifth games of the season, he was happy with his pitching after USC had 32 strikeouts and allowed just seven hits over the series.

"I think it's the reason we had a chance to win our games," Tanner said. "We've played pretty good defense, but we haven't been a potent team offensively. We scored some runs and we won, but we've got to be able to win our games because of our pitching staff.".

All three starting pitchers were on a restricted pitch count, just as they were for the opening series against Bryant Military Institute.

Though Tanner said he left Friday starter Michael Roth in an inning longer than he wanted to, he pulled Saturday starter Matt Price after he threw three pitches through five innings.

Price, who said his arm tired toward the end of his first outing against VMI, allowed just one hit and struck out a career-high eight batters. He reliever Tyler Webb combined for six strikeouts.

In his first outing, Price struggled with his command, hitting three batters and walking another three, though he didn't allow a hit and had seven strikeouts against Elon.

Price said his arm tired toward the end of his first outing against VMI.

"I think Colby has been one of those guys that has kind of cooled in the shadows of Roth and Price and some other guys," Tanner said. "He's been pretty steady for us. He's better. His fastball has a little bit more grip, he's got a great change-up... He's competitive and he's intense. That's what I like about Colby — if you score some runs for him, then he'll come back out there and we call it the shutdown inning. He'll try to get back at the dugout again and try to use that momentum to his benefit. He's done a nice job for us.

Tanner attributed the strong pitching performance to the veteran leadership of starters Roth, Price and Holmes, though Tanner felt comfortable in throwing freshmen Evan Bean and Vince Fierchio after he pulled Holmes, who had eight pitches.

Fierchio, Bean, and senior Ethan Carter combined for six no-hitters, nine walks and three strikeouts in relief for Holmes.

Tanner said that freshman Jordan Montgomery is the probable starter for the midweek game against Presbyterian.

But with a young lineup, the veteran starting pitching has been able to take some of the pressure off the offense, which is still finding its footing.

"As an offense probably need to swing a little better, but they've been picking us up so far," Tanner said. "Third baseman LB Dantzler. I'm not going to come out here and say they're going to be our game where we pick them up — hopefully not if they keep throwing the ball like this — but we've been able to generate some confidence because of so far we score one or two runs, we're going to win.

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Though USC coach Darrin Horn said that the players needed to finish shots in the Gamecocks' third-straight loss...