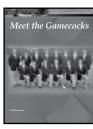
# South Carolina

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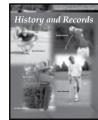
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# **Quick Facts**

University Location	Columbia, S.C.
Enrollment	27,390
Founded	
Team Name	
University President	Dr. Harris Pastides
NCAA Faculty Representative	Dr. Bill Bearden
Athletics Director	Eric Hyman
Deputy Athletics Director	Marcy Girton
Senior Woman Administrator	
Colors	
Conference	

Coaching	
Head Coach	BIII McDonald (2nd year)
Alma Mater, Year	Georgia Tech, 1989
Assistant Coach	
Director of Golf	Puggy Blackmon

#### **Program History**

RAMEGOCKS

NCAA Championship Appearances15	
NCAA Regional Appearances17	

#### 2008-09 Team

2008 SEC Finish	2nd of 12
2008 NCAA East Regional Finish	16th of 27
Letterwinners Returning/Lost	

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### Credits

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2008-09 South Carolina Men's Golf

# South Carolina Men's Golf

#### Season Preview

With two of its top three scorers returning and a wealth of talent, South Carolina men's golf eyes a return to the NCAA Championship in 2008-09. Led by junior **George Bryan IV** and senior **Mark Silvers III**, the Gamecocks have a combination of leadership, experience and youth to go with their unquestioned raw talent.

"I am extremely excited about this season," head coach Bill McDonald said. "This is a talented group of young men who will compete for championships and great achievements. Last year's disappointing finish will motivate us throughout the year. I have a tremendous amount of confidence in this team. These players are fun to coach, and they want to win almost as badly as I do."

Despite turning in eight top-five finishes in 12 events last season, the secondmost in school history, South Carolina's 16th-place showing in the NCAA East Regional ended the season on a sour note. It is one the returning Gamecocks will look to re-tune right away in the Carpet Capital Collegiate, at which they tied for first last

Bryan, a first-team All-SEC and GCAA PING All-Southeast Region selection last year, is the team's top returning scorer as he posted a 72.47 stroke average. His sophomore campaign was solid but inconsistent. He collected his first career title at the Schenkel E-Z-Go Invitational and tied for second at the SEC Championship, the best finish by a Gamecock in the event since 1999. However, his season also included five finishes outside the top 25. Bryan's game was solid over the summer, highlighted by four top-five finishes and a spot in the U.S. Amateur Championship.

"George is a tireless worker who, if anything, wants to win too badly," McDonald said. "I look for his game to continue to mature, and I believe he will be one of the best players in the country this season."

Silvers has been a strong challenger over the last two seasons and will look to hit his senior season in full stride. His 281 (+1) at the 2007 NCAA Championship was the lowest 72-hole score in school history, and he finished the 2007-08 season with a 73.13 average, third-best on the team. Silvers was strongest late in the season, finishing 10th at the Administaff Augusta State Invitational and taking seventh in the SEC Championship.

"Mark has really elevated his game over the past two years," McDonald said. "He has become one of the most exciting players to watch because he is not afraid to shoot some low numbers. He's working hard on his consistency, and I look for him to be a major contributor and leader on our team."

Three other seniors will help Silvers in his leadership role. **Patrick Cunning** posted a career-low 73.89 average last season after working on his short game. He was second on the team at the Schenkel E-Z-Go Invitational then led the Gamecocks with his first career top-10 finish at the Hootie at Bulls Bay Intercollegiate, carding a career-low 212 (-1).

**Allen Koon** struggled last spring and will have to play his way back into the lineup. McDonald describes him as a "grinder" and likes what his natural leadership ability and calm demeanor bring to the team. **Baker Elmore** rounds out the senior class having played in just six varsity events in his career. He had a solid summer that included a trip to the U.S. Amateur, and his dedication to upgrading his short game should yield rewards this season.



Senior Mark Silvers III

#### 2008-09 Roster

Name	Yr.	Hometown/High School
Sam Braver	Fr.	Roswell, Ga. / Centennial
George Bryan IV	Jr.	Chapin, S.C. / Dutch Fork
Wesley Bryan	Fr.	Chapin, S.C. / Dutch Fork
Patrick Cunning	Sr.	Aiken, S.C. / South Aiken
Baker Elmore	Sr.	Cheraw, S.C. / Cheraw
Allen Koon	Sr.	Bamberg, S.C. / Bamberg-Ehrhardt
Bryan Miller	Jr.	Dalton, Ga. / Dalton
Chris Piumelli	So.	Vero Beach, Fla. / Saint Stephens Episcopal
Patrick Rada	Jr.	Anderson, S.C. / T.L. Hanna
Mark Silvers	Sr.	Savannah, Ga. / Savannah Country Day
Clint Tolleson	Fr.	Spartanburg, S.C. / Dorman
Paul Woodbury	Jr.	Lake City, S.C. / Lake City
Head Coach: Bill	McDonald	Assistant Coach: Michael Burcin

A tremendous competitor, junior **Patrick Rada** gained valuable experience last season that he looks to turn into a regular spot in the Gamecocks' lineup. His careerbest fifth-place finish in last spring's Furman Intercollegiate led the team, and his first-round 68 in the Bank of Tennessee Intercollegiate last fall was a career low.

"Patrick has greatly improved his ball striking over the last six months, gaining both distance and accuracy," McDonald said. "His will to win is infectious, and he is probably the best on our team right now at handling adversity."

Junior **Paul Woodbury** is on the cusp of a breakout season having increased his distance and consistency off the tee. He has worked tirelessly on his game and will have a chance to find a regular spot in the lineup this year. **Bryan Miller**, also a junior, is in much the same situation as Woodbury. He played his first varsity event in the spring, which gave him a chance to see how close he is to breaking into the lineup on a more regular basis.

Still looking for his college debut, sophomore **Chris Piumelli** showed tremendous improvement in his first season on the team, and he saw the results over the summer. He turned in three top-10 showings and advanced to the quarterfinals of the Florida State Golf Association Match Play Championship. That experience makes him a contender in every qualifying round this season.

McDonald and assistant coach Michael Burcin delivered a solid class of freshmen for 2008-09, beginning with **Wesley Bryan**. Notably the younger brother of George, Wesley had an outstanding summer and should have little trouble making a name for himself as a member of the Gamecock squad. The two-time South Carolina Class AAAA Boys State Champion, Wesley entered match play at the 2008 U.S. Amateur as the second seed.

"Wesley's game is ready for prime time," McDonald said. "His results at events around the country this summer show that. Still, he continues to improve his game, and I expect him to contribute greatly to our team right away."

A two-time all-state selection and an AJGA Rolex Honorable Mention All-American, **Sam Braver** is another young player looking to break into the Gamecocks' lineup. One of the longest hitters on the team, he can shoot extremely low scores when he gets on a streak.

"Sam is always smilling and playing fast," McDonald said. "He is fun to watch and a breath of fresh air to the college game."

**Clint Tolleson** rounds out the class after a three-time all-region high school career that saw him win the 2007 Region II-AAAA Championship and help Dorman to four straight regional titles. With several relatives that played professional baseball, including his father, Wayne, and brother, Steven, also a former Gamecock, Tolleson brings an athletic pedigree to the squad.

"Clint is a great athlete with all the skills necessary to succeed at the college level," McDonald said. "He drives the ball ridiculously long and just needs some refinement in his game. Being in our competitive atmosphere will help him grow as a player."

Playing a spring-heavy schedule against the nation's top teams, including the always-competitive SEC Championship, the Gamecocks will rely on their blend of experience and youthful enthusiasm to get back to the NCAA Championship. Of course, with so much depth, the most difficult part of any tournament this season may be just making the lineup.