



SOUTH CAROLINA

2021-22 GAMECOCK WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

#1 SOUTH CAROLINA (0-0) VS. BENEDICT (0-0) (EXH.)
NOVEMBER 1, 2021 – 7 P.M. – COLUMBIA, S.C. – COLONIAL LIFE ARENA (18,000)

HOW TO FOLLOW

TV: None
Radio: None
Live Stats: GamecocksOnline.com

THE MATCHUP

GAMECOCKS

0-0, 0-0 SEC

Ranking: 1 (AP)

Head Coach: Dawn Staley

Record at SC: 331-103 (14th)

Career Record: 503-183 (22nd)

Top Returning Scorer: Zia Cooke (15.9)

Top Returning Rebounder: Aliyah Boston (11.5)



LADY TIGERS

0-0, 0-0 SIAC

Ranking: -/- (AP/Coaches)

Head Coach: James Rice

Record at BC: 180-71 (10th)

Career Record: Same

Top Returning Scorer: Ay'Anna Bey (18.2)

Top Returning Rebounder: Ay'Anna Bey (8.6)



THE SERIES

This is the second time South Carolina and Benedict have faced each other in exhibition play in the Dawn Staley era. The first meeting came on Nov. 6, 2016, with a 120-49 South Carolina win.

GAMECOCK NOTABLES

- Since it began playing other college teams in exhibitions in 2009-10, South Carolina has won its those games by an average of 52.6 points. The Gamecocks have scored 100 points in five of their last six exhibitions with the first of those a 100-25 decision over Coker (Nov. 2, 2014) in the biggest exhibition win under head coach Dawn Staley.
- With a 16-player roster, South Carolina is three-deep at every position. The group features 11 McDonald's All-Americans, including all five newcomers.
- The Gamecocks finished last season ranked third in the nation in rebounding margin (+14.4) and second in blocks per game (7.0).
- Junior Aliyah Boston has been collecting national accolades throughout her career, and she is starting her third season with the same level of recognition. A unanimous First-Team All-American, she was also named to the Lisa Leslie Center Award Watch List – an award she won in each of her first two seasons.
- Junior Zia Cooke's stellar NCAA Tournament outings cemented her national presence. She enters this season as a Preseason Third-Team All-American, according to Lindy's. Cooke also made her second appearance in as many seasons on the Ann Meyers Drysdale Shooting Guard Award Watch List.
- USA Today moved senior Destanni Henderson into Preseason All-America status, placing her on its second team. She is also on the watch list for the Nancy Lieberman Point Guard Award.
- Sophomore transfer Kamilla Cardoso earned a spot on the Lisa Leslie Center Award Watch List, her second preseason selection to that list.
- Freshman Sania Feagin joined in the positional accolades last week, grabbing a spot on the Katrina McClain Power Forward Award Watch List.

SCHEDULE/RESULTS

Nov. 1	Benedict (Exh.)	7 PM
Nov. 9	at NC State (ESPN)	5 PM
	<i>The Invitational (Sioux Falls, S.D.)</i>	
Nov. 12	vs. South Dakota (ESPNN)	7 PM
Nov. 17	Clemson (SECN+)	7 PM
	<i>Women's Battle 4 Atlantis (Bahamas)</i>	
Nov. 20	Buffalo (FH)	7:30 p.m.
Nov. 21	Oregon or Oklahoma (FH)	TBA
Nov. 22	TBA (FH)	TBA
Nov. 25	Elon (SECN+)	3 PM
Nov. 29	NC A&T (SECN)	7 PM
	<i>Big 12/SEC Challenge</i>	
Dec. 3	Kansas State (SECN+)	7 PM
	<i>Women's Jimmy V Classic</i>	
Dec. 12	Maryland (ESPN)	3 PM
Dec. 15	at Duke (ACCN)	7 PM
Dec. 21	Stanford (ESPN2)	7 PM
Dec. 30	at Missouri* (SECN)	7 PM
Jan. 2	Ole Miss* (SECN/ESPN2)	1 PM
Jan. 6	at LSU* (SECN+)	8 PM
Jan. 9	Kentucky* (ESPN)	1 PM
Jan. 13	Texas A&M* (SECN)	7 PM
Jan. 16	at Arkansas* (SECN/ESPN2)	3 PM
Jan. 24	Vanderbilt* (SECN)	7 PM
Jan. 27	UConn (ESPN)	7 PM
Jan. 30	at Florida* (SECN)	NOON
Feb. 3	Alabama* (SECN+)	7 PM
Feb. 6	Mississippi State* (ESPN2)	2 PM
Feb. 10	at Kentucky* (ESPN)	7 PM
Feb. 13	at Georgia* (ESPN2)	NOON
Feb. 17	Auburn* (SECN)	7 PM
Feb. 20	Tennessee* (ESPN2)	NOON
Feb. 24	at Texas A&M* (SECN)	8:30 PM
Feb. 27	at Ole Miss* (SECN/ESPN2)	2 PM

SEC Tournament (Nashville, Tenn.)

Mar. 2	First Round	TBA
Mar. 3	Second Round	TBA
Mar. 4	Quarterfinals	TBA
Mar. 5	Semifinals	TBA
Mar. 6	Final	TBA

All Times Listed as Eastern and are subject to change

* indicates SEC Game

SECN is SEC Network; SECN+ is online via ESPN app; FH is FloHoops online

2

Two of the Gamecocks' four freshmen earned National Player of the Year honors to cap their high school careers.

3

Three Gamecocks have earned preseason All-America honors entering the season – Raven Johnson, Saniya Rivers.

100

South Carolina returns 100 percent of last season's NCAA Final Four team.

TALE OF THE TAPE (2020-21 STATS)

SOUTH CAROLINA	75.4	.438	.337	4.5	.682	14.1	58.1	+17.3	.364	.275	+14.4	12.9	+0.3	7.0	7.2
	Points	FG%	3FG%	3FGM per Game	FT%	FTM per Game	Scoring Def.	Scoring Margin	FG% Def.	3FG% Def.	Reb. Margin	Assists	TO Margin	Blocks	Steals
BENEDICT	78.3	.419	.284	7.6	.697	14.4	55.9	+22.4	.320	.249	+12.6	16.2	+0.3	2.4	8.5

QUICK FACTS

The University

Location: Columbia, S.C.

Founded: 1801

Enrollment: 35,468

Colors: Garnet (PMS 202C) and Black

Nickname: Gamecocks

Conference: Southeastern

Interim President: Dr. Harris Pastides

Athletics Director: Ray Tanner

Facility: Colonial Life Arena (18,000)

Coaching Staff

Head Coach: Dawn Staley

Alma Mater: Virginia, 1992

Overall Record: 503-183 (22nd season)

School Record: 331-103 (14th season)

Assoc. Head Coach, Alma Mater:

Lisa Boyer, Ithaca, 1979 (14th season)

Assistant Coaches, Alma Mater:

Fred Chmiel, Excelsior, 2001 (7th season)

Jolette Law, Iowa, 1990 (5th season)

Team Information

2020-21 Record: 26-5

Home: 10-1 Away: 7-3 Neutral: 9-1

SEC Record (Finish): 14-2 (2nd)

Home: 8-0 Away: 6-2

Letterwinners Returning/Lost: 11/0

Starters Returning/Lost: 5/0

Program History

First Year of Women's Basketball: 1974-75

All-Time Record: 911-532 (48th season)

All-Time SEC Record: 216-211 (31st season)

NCAA Appearances (Last): 17 (2021)

NCAA Tournament Record: 34-16

2021 NCAA Result: Final Four, L 65-66 vs. Stanford

WNIT Appearances (Last): 4 (2011)

WNIT Record: 3-4

Media Relations

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Head Coach on Social Media

Twitter: @DawnStaley

Instagram: @Staley05

Athletics Department on the Web

Website: GamecocksOnline.com

Twitter: @GamecocksOnline

Instagram: @GamecocksOnline

Facebook: Facebook.com/GamecocksOnline

YouTube: YouTube.com/GamecocksOnline

TEAM THEME: NETWORK

South Carolina's 2021-22 season theme "Net Worth" taps into the universal symbol of success in basketball – cutting down the nets. Each member of the team, the program and the fan base plays a role in the march toward achieving that level of success.

Every role is not the same, but every person has a "Net Worth" – an added value necessary for the team to achieve its goals.

Five-Second Count

South Carolina women's basketball is in the midst of its most successful era, claiming at least 20 wins for the last 10 seasons, including four 30-win seasons in the last seven campaigns. The Gamecocks have played in the NCAA Final Four three times in the last six NCAA Tournaments, including winning the 2017 National Championship, and have been ranked in the AP Top 25 for 169 consecutive weeks, including 38 straight weeks in the top 10. Staley has led the Gamecocks to their only No. 1 rankings in program history (12 weeks in 2014-15, 10 weeks in 2019-20, 3 weeks in 2020-21, 1 week in 2021-22), five SEC regular-season titles and six SEC Tournament championships.

Under Staley's leadership, seven Gamecocks have earned All-America status, two have earned SEC Player of the Year honors and 16 have picked up All-SEC recognition at least once. Eight Gamecocks have been selected in the WNBA Draft in the last six years, including 2018 No. 1 overall pick A'ja Wilson, who went on to become the Gamecocks' second-straight WNBA Rookie of the Year (2018) and the program's first WNBA MVP (2020).

Scouting Benedict

The Lady Tigers were picked to finish first in the SIAC East Division this season with four players picking up preseason all-conference honors.

Leading returning scorer and rebounder Ay'Anna Bey is the two-time SIAC Player of the Year and was picked to maintain that title again this season. Keondra Archie grabbed Preseason All-SIAC First-Team honors with Wykira Johnson-Kelly and Ayanna Armstead named to the second team.

Schedule Strength

In a season in which all of the AP top 10 teams have scheduled at least six games against ranked opponents, South Carolina's schedule is among the toughest. The Gamecocks have nine confirmed games on the schedule against fellow AP Top 25 opponents with two other possible match-ups in the Battle 4 Atlantis. Only Stanford's 12 games and Maryland's 10 top South Carolina (no additional possible opponents for each).

South Carolina will face six of those nine opponents at home.

Ranking Review

The Gamecocks enter the season ranked No. 1 in the AP Preseason Poll. The USA Today/Coaches Preseason Poll is scheduled to come out on Wednesday.

Ranked in the AP Top 25 for the last 169 consecutive weeks, South Carolina has the fourth-longest active streak in the nation, which dates back to Dec. 10, 2012. With 38 consecutive appearances in the top 10 of the AP Poll, the Gamecocks have the fifth-longest active streak of top-10 showings in the nation.

Staley's Stand

In October, the University of South Carolina awarded head coach Dawn Staley a seven-year contract totaling \$22.4 million. With a guaranteed \$2.9 million this season, the move made Staley the highest paid women's basketball coach at a public institution and the highest paid Black coach in college women's basketball.

Ever the trailblazer, Staley emphasized that her negotiations were about more than her contract. They were founded in her desire to make a point about the inequality in salaries for women, and Black women in particular, throughout her sport and across all professions.

The Staley File

In 21 seasons as a head coach, Dawn Staley has a .733 (503-183) winning percentage, which ranks 12th in the nation among active head coaches with at least 10 seasons of experience (seventh among Power 5 conference coaches). The unanimous 2020 National Coach of the Year, she became the first person to win both a Naismith Player of the Year Trophy and a Naismith Coach of the Year Trophy.

In her 14th season leading the Gamecocks, Staley is the program's all-time winningest coach (331) with a program-record 10 postseason appearances (9 NCAA/1 WNIT). She accounts for all three of the Gamecocks' Final Four appearances (2015, 2017, 2021) and the first national championship in program history (2017).

After winning five SEC regular-season titles, Staley has won 152 SEC games to rank second among active league coaches (Gary Blair, Texas A&M, 154) and fourth all-time. Her 11.7 SEC wins average is the best in league history, and her .738 SEC winning percentage (152-54) is second only to Tennessee's Pat Summitt (.874) in league history.

Oh Captain, My Captain

For the second time in as many seasons, senior Victoria Saxton and junior Aliyah Boston will serve as team captains. It is Saxton's third season in that position.

2021-22 ROSTER

No.	Name	Pos.	Ht.	Yr.	Hometown/Last School
0	Olivia Thompson	G	5-8	Jr.	Lexington, S.C./Lexington
1	Zia Cooke	G	5-9	Jr.	Toledo, Ohio/Rogers
2	Eniya Russell	G	6-1	So.	Baltimore, Md./Saint Vincent Pallotti
3	Destanni Henderson	G	5-7	Sr.	Fort Myers, Fla./Fort Myers
4	Aliyah Boston	F	6-5	Jr.	St. Thomas, U.S.V.I./Worcester (Mass.) Academy
5	Victoria Saxton	F	6-2	Sr.	Rome, Ga./Model
10	Kamilla Cardoso	C	6-7	So.	Montes Claros, Brazil/Syracuse
11	Destiny Littleton	G	5-9	Sr.	San Diego, Calif./Texas
12	Brea Beal	G	6-1	Jr.	Rock Island, Ill./Rock Island
15	Laetitia Amihere	F	6-4	Jr.	Mississauga, Ontario, Canada/King's Christian Collegiate
20	Sanja Feagin	F	6-3	Fr.	Ellenwood, Ga./Forest Park
23	Bree Hall	G	6-0	Fr.	Dayton, Ohio/Wayne
24	LeLe Grissett	G	6-2	Gr.	Durham, N.C./Hillside
25	Raven Johnson	G	5-8	Fr.	Atlanta, Ga./Westlake
32	Elysa Wesolek	F	6-1	Sr.	Charleston, S.C./Northwood Academy
44	Saniya Rivers	G	6-1	Fr.	Wilmington, N.C./Ashley

Head Coach: Dawn Staley

Assoc. Head Coach: Lisa Boyer; **Assistant Coaches:** Fred Chmiel, Jolette Law

2020-21 South Carolina Basketball
South Carolina Combined Team Statistics (as of Apr 02, 2021)
All games

RECORD:	OVERALL	HOME	AWAY	NEUTRAL
ALL GAMES	26-5	10-1	7-3	9-1
CONFERENCE	14-2	8-0	6-2	0-0
NON-CONFERENCE	12-3	2-1	1-1	9-1

#	Player	gp-gs	min	avg	Total		3-Point		F-Throw		Rebounds				pf	dq	a	to	blk	stl	pts	avg		
					fg-fga	fg%	3fg-fga	3fg%	ft-fa	ft%	off	def	tot	avg										
01	Zia Cooke	31-31	994	32.1	179-459	.390	48-122	.393	88-114	.772	14	78	92	3.0	42	0	62	78	1	28	494	15.9		
04	Aliyah Boston	31-31	941	30.4	164-338	.485	13-49	.265	84-110	.764	127	230	357	11.5	88	0	50	49	81	36	425	13.7		
03	Destanni Henderson	31-31	1054	34.0	141-328	.430	41-99	.414	55-72	.764	24	122	146	4.7	34	0	157	88	5	39	378	12.2		
05	Victoria Saxton	31-30	725	23.4	114-199	.573	0-0	.000	49-78	.628	80	99	179	5.8	65	0	14	39	45	37	277	8.9		
12	Brea Beal	31-30	842	27.2	87-204	.426	16-54	.296	31-54	.574	46	117	163	5.3	57	0	33	31	24	27	221	7.1		
15	Laeticia Amihere	31-1	560	18.1	80-201	.398	0-10	.000	50-83	.602	67	102	169	5.5	66	1	29	71	37	21	210	6.8		
24	Lele Grissett	25-1	479	19.2	67-134	.500	1-3	.333	33-59	.559	57	48	105	4.2	55	1	26	38	16	14	168	6.7		
02	Eniya Russell	26-0	169	6.5	22-66	.333	4-20	.200	21-35	.600	3	21	24	0.9	21	0	7	15	3	8	69	2.7		
11	Destiny Littleton	28-0	324	11.6	19-58	.328	11-36	.306	24-30	.800	7	61	68	2.4	16	0	21	10	2	9	73	2.6		
00	Olivia Thompson	20-0	53	2.7	6-17	.353	4-13	.308	0-0	.000	2	3	5	0.3	3	0	1	4	0	2	16	0.8		
32	Elysa Wesolek	18-0	84	4.7	3-10	.300	0-3	.000	1-4	.250	7	12	19	1.1	12	0	0	2	4	3	7	0.4		
Team											72	58	130											
Total.....		31	6225		882-2014	.438	138-409	.337	436-639	.682	506	951	1457	47.0	459	2	400	436	218	224	2338	75.4		
Opponents.....		31	6225		708-1945	.364	125-454	.275	261-395	.661	328	682	1010	32.6	575	15	305	444	158	189	1802	58.1		

TEAM STATISTICS	SC	OPP	Date	Opponent	Score	Att.
SCORING	2338	1802	11/25/20	COL. OF CHARLESTON	w 119-38	3500
Points per game	75.4	58.1	@ 11/28/20	vs South Dakota	w 81-71	0
Scoring margin	+17.3	-	@ 11/29/20	vs #21/20 Gonzaga	w 79-72	0
FIELD GOALS-ATT	882-2014	708-1945	12/03/20	#8/6 NC STATE	L 46-54	3500
Field goal pct	.438	.364	< 12/06/20	at #23/18 Iowa State	w 83-65	864
3 POINT FG-ATT	138-409	125-454	12/17/20	TEMPLE	w 103-41	3500
3-point FG pct	.337	.275	* 12/31/20	FLORIDA	w 75-59	3500
3-pt FG made per game	4.5	4.0	* 01/04/21	at Alabama	w 77-60	637
FREE THROWS-ATT	436-639	261-395	* 01/10/21	at #10/8 Kentucky	w 75-70	1200
Free throw pct	.682	.661	* 01/14/21	at Vanderbilt	w 106-43	24
F-Throws made per game	14.1	8.4	* 01/18/21	#15/16 ARKANSAS	w 104-82	3500
REBOUNDS	1457	1010	* 01/21/21	#22/23 GEORGIA	w 62-50	3500
Rebounds per game	47.0	32.6	* 01/24/21	at LSU	w 69-65	918
Rebounding margin	+14.4	-	* 01/28/21	at #21/19 Mississippi State	w 75-52	1000
ASSISTS	400	305	* 01/31/21	ALABAMA	w 87-63	3500
Assists per game	12.9	9.8	* 02/04/21	at Auburn	w 77-58	608
TURNOVERS	436	444	02/08/21	at #2/5 UConn	Lot 59-63	0
Turnovers per game	14.1	14.3	* 02/11/21	MISSOURI	w 77-62	3500
Turnover margin	+0.3	-	* 02/14/21	LSU	w 66-59	3500
Assist/turnover ratio	0.9	0.7	* 02/18/21	at #21/21 Tennessee	L 67-75	2512
STEALS	224	189	* 02/21/21	#17/17 KENTUCKY	w 76-55	3500
Steals per game	7.2	6.1	* 02/25/21	OLE MISS	w 68-43	3500
BLOCKS	218	158	* 02/28/21	at #3/3 Texas A&M	L 57-65	2700
Blocks per game	7.0	5.1	^ 03/05/21	vs Alabama	w 75-63	2409
ATTENDANCE	38500	18406	^ 03/06/21	vs #14/16 Tennessee	w 67-52	2662
Home games-Avg/Game	11-3500	10-1046	^ 03/07/21	vs #16/21 Georgia	w 67-62	2872
Neutral site-Avg/Game	-	10-794	\$ 03/21/21	vs Mercer	w 79-53	0
			\$ 03/23/21	vs Oregon St.	w 59-42	0
			\$ 03/28/21	vs Georgia Tech	w 76-65	0
			\$ 03/30/21	vs Texas	w 62-34	0
			\$ 04/02/21	vs #2/2 Stanford	L 65-66	0

@ = Bad Boy Mowers Crossover Classic (Sioux Falls, S.D.)

< = SEC/Big 12 Challenge

* = SEC game

^ = SEC Tournament (Greenville, S.C.)

\$ = NCAA Tournament (San Antonio, Texas)