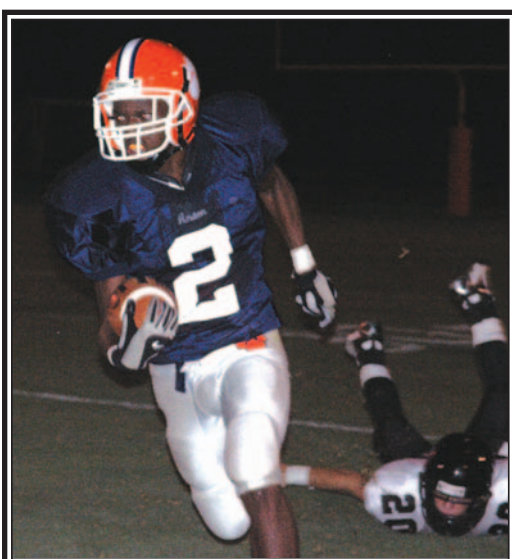


SPORTS

With MEL MORSE

Anson's Michael Bowman Receives Apology from USC Coach Steve Spurrier



This photo shows Anson's Michael Bowman leaving his opponent face down in the dust. Bowman, now playing football with the ECU Pirates, said during a call to me on Monday, "I am thankful for this opportunity and am very, very happy." We too are happy things worked out so well for you Michael. Could this perhaps be a blessing in disguise?

During a press conference held on Sunday, August 5, USC head football Coach Steve Spurrier seemed to spit out some terrible tasting words while squirming like a worm in hot ashes. It seems, at last, he is willing to take responsibility for the defamation of former Anson great, Michael Bowman, who was recruited heavily and signed early with the USC Gamecocks, while foregoing other scholarship offers from Colorado, Hawaii, Tennessee and ECU, only to be informed a few days prior to his arrival in Columbia he could not attend USC for reasons still unclear.

Spurrier said, "I am embarrassed by his rejection as he was indeed qualified under NCAA standards. We made a mistake and we're going to change this practice. I cannot continue to mislead high school coaches and expect to remain credible. It's my fault. We made the same mistake last year, again this year, and I cannot continue as head coach here if this persists in happening."

"I have suffered a severe blow in Anson County where Michael Bowman is

from and I have to try and restore my credibility there," Spurrier added.

He also contends that he did not agree with admissions President, Andrew Sorensen, but that he was taking the responsibility for what could have been a disastrous blow to Bowman and his football career, not to mention his college education.

Michael, who has already landed in Greenville to begin his stint with the East Carolina Pirates, is just happy that it is over and that he has a place to do what he does best, play the game of football. In a telephone interview Michael said he wanted everyone to know, "I feel great! I have a wonderful opportunity here at ECU and am enjoying just being part of the Pirate family. Meeting my teammates has been a super experience and I feel so lucky. I would like to thank you, Ms. Morse and Coach Grooms for all that you have done for me."

Former Anson Head Football Coach Jody Grooms said, "Michael is a great student athlete who has so much potential. He has suffered throughout this ordeal but it has made him a stronger and wiser young man. I know he will be successful at ECU."

As for me, I say to Spurrier, "Too little too late." It took great measures from a lot of people to make this apology, for lack of a better term, take place. Spurrier was right when he said, "I have suffered a severe blow in Anson County." What did he expect, wine and roses? He is a man with, supposedly, all his faculties. What he apparently still fails to realize is the severe blow he delivered Michael Bowman. Michael is just a teenager looking to find his way, while at the same time, vulnerable to what lies ahead. More obstacles haphazardly strewn in the path of a kid on his way through the course of life are unacceptable. Particularly from a grown up who is trusted with one's life ambitions.

We're all behind you Michael. You go get everything great life has to offer because you certainly deserve it. You deserve it all. Don't ever forget that you have the support of an entire community on your side. One that is proud of you, will stand by you and never let you fall without first offering you a hand. Congratulations again and good luck as an ECU Pirate.

Photo and story by Mel Morse

Bearcats Scrimmage at Home Friday Night!

The Anson Bearcat Football team will play host to West Forsyth High School this coming Friday night. Game time is 6:00 p.m. and ticket cost is \$3 per person.

Come on out and get a sneak peek at our preseason Cats in action. Coach Mac and the entire football team would appreciate your support. Go! Fight! Win! By Mel Morse


2XSalt Soccer Camp

2XSalt is having a soccer camp the week of August 13 to 16. The camp will run from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. each evening. The cost is \$75 per person.

To register, come by Anson County Parks and Recreation and fill out a registration form. Make checks payable to 2XSalt. There must be a minimum of 25 people signed up for the camp to proceed. The deadline to register is Monday, August 6 by 5:00 p.m. For information call Wendell T. Small at 704-694-5751.

Please remember to send your sports information to melmorse@gmail.com.

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