

Ronnie Owens Named Lions MVP

By NICHOLAS HANCOCK

Ronnie Dale Owens, a senior fullback, was named as Mars Hill Lions most valuable player Thursday night at the annual football banquet held on campus.

The 5 foot - 11 inch, 225 pound Walnut Cove native was voted by his teammates to receive the honor, and was called an "inspirational player and great blocker" by Lion football officials.

Owens made 63 carries for 300 yards and scored two touchdowns for the Lions this season.

The annual banquet drew nearly 300 players and supporters who dined and heard guest speaker Fred "Kingfish" Isaacs deliver an "off the cuff" message that stressed "football is a great adjunct to life," and that a Christian attitude and good academics would be the ingredients that would lead the young men to successful living.

Isaacs, a highly successful sports personality and rather flamboyant East Tennessean, also honored college president Dr. Fred Bentley and the en-

tire football coaching staff by inducting them into the Tennessee Hillbilly Society. He jokingly told the honorees that belonging to the society was "second only to salvation" according to Tennesseans.

Others awards bestowed by the football staff were:

Most Improved Player — Jeff Loftis, a 5'11" junior from Greenville, S.C. Loftis began the pre-season at the flanker position and later shifted to defense. He became a starter at the middle of the season as a safety and intercepted one pass for the team.

Best Offensive Player — William Mitchell, a 6'2" 195 pound senior tailback from Rome, Ga. Mitchell was the Lions' leading rusher with 734 yards in 169 carries for an average of 4.3 yards per carry. During the 1981 season he had 298 yards in kickoff returns and was ranked 14th in the nation. He chalked up 6 TDs.

Best Defensive Player — Chris Ellis, a 5'10", 225 pounder from Tampa, Fla., he led the team with 80 tackles and 113 total hits. The junior

class member played at defensive noseguard. Greg Plemmons President's Award — went to junior linebacker Greg Cheek. The 5'8", 190 pounder from Weaverville was captain of the special teams and was recognized for being a "hard-nosed player and very enthusiastic team member."

Cliff Yeargin, WLOS-TV sportscaster, served as master of ceremonies for the banquet and gave special recognition to the coaching staff and other guests.



Photo by N. Hancock

MVP AWARD — Mars Hill College Athletic Director Claude Gibson presented the Most Valuable Player award to Ronnie Dale

Owens at Thursday night's annual football banquet held at the Coyte Bridges Dining Hall on campus.

Coach Sams Pleased With Team

Despite losses to East Tennessee, University of North Carolina at Asheville, High Point, and Tusculum, Coach Pat Sams is pleased with his young team's progress. They won three games over Barber-Scotia, Warren Wilson, and Catawba to go 3-4 before the Christmas vacation.

The games at UNC-A and East Tennessee involved playing very tall teams. Each team had three players who were six feet or better while the Lady Lions did not have a player who is six feet.

The team made a tremendous comeback against UNC-A cutting a 20 point deficit to three points in the closing minutes of the game. Against a strong East Tennessee team, the score was 21-20 at the end of 12 minutes of the first half before the Buccaneers dominated the game.

Sophomore Holly Hough from Mars Hill is leading the team in both scoring and rebounding with 15 points and 10 rebounds respectively. The third leading scorer is freshman Joanne Christopher after a 17 point scoring effort against East Tennessee State. She is averaging just over 11 points and hitting 52 percent of her shots from the field to lead that category.

Brenda Caldwell, a sophomore from Morganton, is averaging almost 13 points a game, is second in rebounding, and is tied for the lead in assists. Freshman Lisa McFadden from Charlotte is averaging almost 10 points a game and is tied with Caldwell in assists. She also has the best percentage in shooting free throws — 85 percent.

Freshman Karen Jarvis of Hendersonville, a co-captain with Hough, is averaging 10 points a game. She and McFadden are extremely aggressive defensive players.

One of the most promising players is freshman center Amy Hasenhauer from Hayesville. After missing the High Point game due to illness, she replaced Caldwell in the UNC-A game and sparked the team to the tremendous comeback with her scoring, rebounding, and defense. Brenda Caldwell missed part of the UNC-A game and the entire East Tennessee game due to a severely bruised thigh. She should be able to play in the next game on Saturday, Jan. 9 at Lenoir Rhyne. The next home game is against Belmont Abbey on Monday, Jan. 11. The team then plays Western Carolina University on Wednesday, Jan. 13 at Mars Hill.

Reserves Beth McCluskey of Aberdeen, Karen Hefner of Spruce Pine and Lynette Reid of Charlotte have been improving with each game. All three are freshmen.

Lady Lions Three For Three

The Mars Hill Lady Lions lost their third game in a row in a contest with the University of North Carolina at Asheville on the latter's home floor Dec. 10. However, the game was only decided after the Lady Lions had cut a 20 point lead to 3 points only to lose 87-80.

The taller UNC-A team dominated the first half as 6'2" Shelia Ford scored 18

points and had 21 rebounds to lead the Bulldog Women to a 52-36 lead. That lead was extended to 64-44 with approximately 10 minutes to go in the game.

A back injury to center Brenda Caldwell of Morganton seemed to inspire the Mars Hill team and particularly her replacement, Amy Hasenhauer of Hayesville. The Lion women cut the

margin to 81-78 and again to 83-80 with less than a minute to go, but four free throws sealed the win by UNC-A at seven points.

Shelia Ford led UNC-A with 24 points and 30 rebounds. Hasenhauer and Caldwell led the Mars Hill scoring with 14 points each. Holly Hough of Mars Hill had 13 points and led in rebounds and assists. Joanne Christopher was a top rebounder and had 12 points. Lisa McFadden of Charlotte had 11 points while Karen Hefner of Spruce Pine and Karen Jarvis of Hendersonville had 8 points each.

The aggressive play by Lynette Reid and Beth McCluskey of Aberdeen also contributed to the comeback by Mars Hill.

College Receives \$7,500 Grant

Mars Hill College has received a \$7,500 grant from Eastman Kodak's 1981 Educational Aid Program through the corporation's Tennessee Eastman Co. in Kingsport, Tenn.

Mars Hill's grant includes \$500 for the general scholarship fund that will be used for grants to students pursuing a bachelor's degree in business, chemistry or mathematics. The remaining \$7,000 will be used for the purchase of necessary instructional equipment for the college's Harris Media Center.

Lions Upset Old Rival UNC-A

By BOBBY HAYES, JR., Sports Information Director

The Mars Hill Lions roared back from a six-point deficit midway in the second half to upset old rival UNC-Asheville 67-58 in Mars Hill last Monday night. Down 50-44 with 12:39 left to play, the Lions went on a 12-2 spurt to record the win. Mars Hill went ahead for good when 5'7" guard Lewis Taylor canned a short jumper to put the Lions up 54-52 with 6:43 remaining, and the home-standing Lions pulled away from there.

Lion guard Pat Covington and forward Jeff Binns led the way for victorious Mars Hill, both netting 14 points, while freshman forward Raymond Lettsome chipped in with 11 points and 10 rebounds. The Lions improved their record to 3-7, while UNC-Asheville dropped to 5-3.

Prior to the UNC-A contest, the Lions participated in the First Annual Kiwanis Classic played in the Greensboro Coliseum and made a very respectable showing. On opening night, the Lions thrashed Elon 91-86 in a game they thoroughly dominated. Raymond Lettsome once again played a superb game, scoring 21 points and hauling down 10 rebounds as the Lions defeated a team that handed them a 103-86 setback in the opening game of the season.

The Lions were not quite as successful in the semifinals as they lost to a strong Catawba club for the second time of the year, 93-70. Jeff Binns scored 18 points and Raymond Lettsome collected eight rebounds, but their efforts were not enough as the Indians remained unbeaten and went on to win the tournament the next night.

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