



BUNTING PRACTICE—Tim Ludlum works on his bunting form while Jonathon Gore catches. Allen Stewart (far right) observes while waiting for his trip to the

plate. The Trojans open the baseball season Tuesday at South Brunswick.



BASE RUNNING TACTICS—West Brunswick first baseman Allen Stewart awaits a possible pickoff attempt while Tom Brown (left) ponders his next move.

Coach Richard Hubbard (right) provides advice. West Brunswick hosts Laney next Friday in its home opener at 4 p.m.

Pitching, Defense Carries West Brunswick's Hopes Of Third Straight TRC Baseball Crown

BY JOHNNY CRAIG

Two-time defending Three Rivers 3-A Conference baseball champion West Brunswick takes the first step for an unprecedented three-straight title Tuesday opening the new season at South Brunswick. The Trojans, under new coach Richard Hubbard, again look to a strong pitching staff and stingy defense to help key another conference championship.

"We definitely have a number of holes to fill since we lost some key players in both the infield and outfield," said Hubbard. "However, we are looking for a trio of All-Three Rivers Conference and All-Brunswick County seniors—pitcher Matt Gore, centerfielder Henry Stevenson and catcher Keith Stanley—to lead the way."

Gone from last year are a pair of All-Conference and All-County performers in Scott Evans and Jeff Johnson.

Evans was the team most valuable player and last season leading the squad in hitting (.400), runs batted in (29), hits (28) while finishing with a 9-2 pitching record. Evans also led

the team in innings pitched (72) and had a 1.46 earned run average.

Johnson, who anchored shortstop last season, was the team's third-leading hitter (.338).

All-County performer Pat Smith is another standout gone from last year's 19-3 squad.

Gore (9-3) led last year's pitching staff with a team-low 1.37 ERA while also leading the team in strike outs (89). At the plate, Gore was the third-leading hitter (.338) and also was second in runs batted in (23).

Stanley, an excellent defensive catcher, batted .237 last season and was third in runs scored (17). Stanley, along with Gore, were both all-conference football performers last fall.

Stevenson was the second-leading hitter (.347) last year while finishing third in RBIs (19) and led the team in runs scored (24). Stevenson, along with Gore, is the Trojans primary long-ball hitter.

The three seniors along with junior shortstop Derek Long give the Trojans strength up the middle.

"Derek has been very impressive in practice thus far," said Hubbard. "He is very fluid with his motion at the plate and is a good defensive player."

Rounding out the Trojans strong pitching staff is senior Tim Ludlum. Ludlum (1-0) pitched only 10.2 innings last season but struck out 15 while sporting a 3.33 ERA.

One of the major areas of concern for Hubbard is at first base where as many as three players are battling for the starting nod. Allen Stewart may have the inside advantage while Donnie Vansteen could provide depth. Brad Thomas is another likely prospect at first base but has been unable to practice due to the Trojans participation in the district basketball playoffs.

"We have two other players along with Brad who will not report to the team until the basketball season is over. Rusty Johnson and Chris Johnson are also on the basketball team and will probably make immediate contributions when they are able to play."

In fact, Rusty Johnson (All-TRC and All-County) returns for his second year at second base with Allen Rising giving depth to the position.

Both Gore and Chris Johnson will alternate at third base. When not pitching, Gore will anchor the corner with Johnson stepping in for replacement.

Stanley begins his fourth year at catcher making the position one of the most experienced on the team. The Trojans are shallow in depth behind the plate with Long the only other player with only a brief catching experience. Junior Tom Brown will be at left field while senior Scott Williams playing right field. Both Craig Johnson (junior) and Tommy Love are other likely candidates to see action in the outfield.

"We will open the season with a lot of players at new positions. The key to our success will depend on if these new people can do the job," said Hubbard.

"The kids have worked hard and have a lot of character. We scrimmage New Hanover in Wilmington this week and I hope to find out some more things then. For the most part, all the players are pretty knowledgeable of the game and we have not had to spend a lot of time teaching.

"One thing that has helped us tremendously is the batting cage that the school athletic boosters club bought. It has been a big asset in practice," continued Hubbard.

This season's schedule has been altered slightly with the addition of nonconference opponent South Robeson. Loris, S.C. has been dropped while the Trojans will continue to play North and South Brunswick and Laney in nonconference play.

Hubbard is unsure of the conference race since being in his first year at the Trojan helm.

"I do know that West Columbus returns nearly every player from last season and will probably be one of the teams to beat," said Hubbard.

For the second year the Trojans will play all four conference foes three times instead of the usual

home-and-home format. West Brunswick will travel to face both West Columbus and East Bladen twice while hosting Clinton and Pender in two of their three meetings.

After opening Tuesday at South Brunswick, the Trojans will host Laney on Friday in their home opener.

West Brunswick will play five non-conference games before opening league play Friday, March 22 against Clinton.

Hubbard is now the third baseball coach in as many years with the Trojans. Sam Page, who guided West Brunswick to a 19-win season last year, resigned at the end of the 1983-84 school year. Hubbard was named to fill the void shortly after being appointed as assistant football coach.

The 19-3 record of last year's team set a school record for the most wins in a single season while the Trojans won 13 straight before being ousted in the second round of the state playoffs.

"We can't live on last year's accomplishments. We've got to look at the season ahead because last year is history," Hubbard pointed out.

Before coming to West Brunswick, Hubbard was junior varsity baseball coach at South Brunswick. He has also coached on the junior college level (1974) at Massanutten Military Academy in Woodstock, Va.

Date	Opponent	Time
Tue., Mar. 5	at South Brunswick	4:00
Fri., Mar. 8	Laney	4:00
Sat., Mar. 9	North Brunswick	1:00
Tue., Mar. 12	at South Robeson	4:00
Fri., Mar. 15	at Laney	3:30
Fri., Mar. 22	Clinton*	4:00
Tue., Mar. 26	at West Columbus*	4:00
Fri., Mar. 29	South Brunswick	4:00
Tue., Apr. 2	at East Bladen*	7:30
Fri., Apr. 5	at North Brunswick	7:30
Thurs., Apr. 11	South Robeson	4:00
Fri., Apr. 12	Pender*	7:30
Tue., Apr. 16	at Clinton*	4:00
Fri., Apr. 19	West Columbus*	7:30
Tue., Apr. 23	at Pender*	4:00
Fri., Apr. 26	East Bladen*	7:30
Fri., May 3	Clinton*	7:30
Tue., May 7	at West Columbus*	7:30
Fri., May 10	Pender*	7:30
Tue., May 14	at East Bladen*	7:30

*denotes Three Rivers Conference game.



TROJANS PREPARE FOR OPENER—First baseman Donnie Vansteen (left) applies the tag on Scott Williams during recent Trojan baseball practice. Vansteen is one of three players battling for the first base job while Williams will likely see action in right field.

Boating Classes Offered

Statistics show the Brunswick County coastline is the fastest growing pleasure boating area along the Atlantic seaboard.

The Shallotte U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 10-08 will sponsor classes to instruct the growing number of boaters on boat handling skills and knowledge starting March 18, at the Shallotte Senior Citizens Center at 7:30 p.m.

"Too many of today's accidents can be traced to faulty boat handling by the inexperienced or untrained skipper," said J.R. Athey, commander of the Shallotte flotilla.

For more information on the boating classes, call 579-2367 or 842-3144.

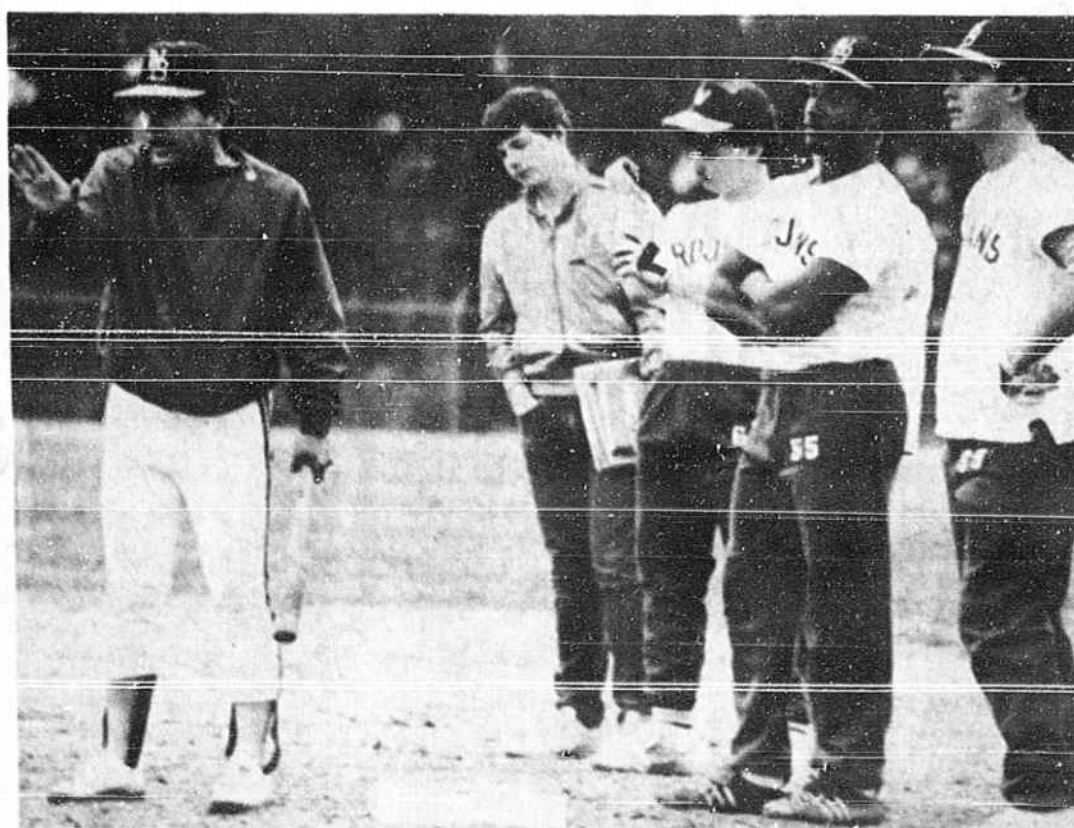
FOR TIRES
at the best prices, plus a whole lot more of what you stop at a service station for, stop in at

DYKES' TIRE CENTER & EXXON SERVICE STATION
HWY. 17 SHALLOTTE
PHONE 754-6333

Schaeffer Buick's Weekly Specials!
1982 Chevrolet Monte Carlo 1 top, full power, local, one owner, \$7,995

Two 1984 Buick Regal Coupes. Both with air, stereo, split seats. You choose \$8,500

SCHAEFFER BUICK
3rd & Walnut St., Wilmington
Phono 763-6269



INSTRUCTION TIME—West Brunswick baseball coach Richard Hubbard (left) makes a point in a recent practice session. Listening to Hubbard at right is

Jonathon Smith, Allen Rising, Henry Stevenson and Derek Long.

STAFF PHOTOS BY JOHNNY CRAIG

MARCH SPECIALS

Robinson's Variety #9-5 MON.-SAT. 842-6775
#HOLDEN BEACH CAUSEWAY

20-GAL. GALVANIZED GARBAGE CANS **6.69**

6-GAL. ATTWOOD MARINE GAS TANK **12.49**

MARCH SPECIALS

While Supplies Last

Prompt Service
When you need us, we'll be there with our own ready-mixed concrete. Estimates. Call us!

BRUNSWICK BUILDING SUPPLIES
READY MIX CONCRETE

Hwy. 179, between Ocean Isle & Sunset. 579-3561