

SPORTING SCENE

Queen City Kitties Debut In 669 Days

Unless you have a note from your saintly mother, you'd better be dressed in some combination of black, blue and silver. You'd better be wearing at least one garment bearing the image of a ferocious-looking black cat.

Seriously, the Carolina Panthers will play their first National Football League game in only 669 days. Time is running out for those of you who haven't bolted to the nearest store to purchase your first load of Panther wear.

What are you people waiting for? Christmas? By now, you've had eight full days, including a weekend, to stock up on Carolina Panthers T-shirts, sweatshirts and baseball caps.

Don't worry your little head. It's only a matter of time before those high-dollar items like inflatable football helmets and "Taz In The NFL" watches will be available to us Panther fans. Promise.

Hey, I'm excited about the Panthers. My favorite NFL team, the Eagles, is starting to take on the aroma of that lumpy, yellow fungus behind my refrigerator.

I desperately need a new favorite team to make Sunday afternoons fun again. Not that I'll ever abandon the Eagles, but it's always nice to have an auxiliary favorite team.

I just hope I can survive another 22 months, another 95 weekends, without Panther football. It's going to be rough, especially if those egotistical Dallas people win another Super Bowl. Gag.

It'll be worth the wait if Carolina Panthers' owner Jerry Richardson makes good on his promise to deliver a Super Bowl championship to Charlotte within 10 years.

I believe he will. Jerry hasn't lied to us yet, and he did get every owner in the NFL to go along with expanding the league into North and South Carolina. Unanimous support from football owners is pretty rare.

With the advent of free agency, continued support for salary caps and a wealthy owner like Jerry Richardson, it shouldn't take too long to turn the Panthers into contenders. Ten years is plenty of time.

The NFL owners were smart to select the Carolinas for an expansion team. Fans have shown a lot of support for the Charlotte Hornets since they were added to the National Basketball Association five years ago.

Look for the same thing to happen with the Panthers. In fact, seats on the bandwagon are already filling up quickly.

I have a feeling that getting tickets to a Panthers game will be next to impossible by the time this team actually takes the field. They're already beloved by thousands, and we don't even know who the quarterback is yet.

When they finally take the field in 1995, the Panthers will be the only team in the NFL wearing black pants. I can't put my finger on it, but there's something neat about that. Those britches will hide the dirt well, for sure.

There's a lot to like about these Panthers, not the least of which is that uptown, black-cat logo. On a scale of 1 to 10, we're looking at a "cool quotient" of least 9.2.

The Queen City Kitties will begin play in 669 days, or 670 if they open the 1995 season on Monday Night Football.

To quote an MTV spokesman: "Huh-huh...This is gonna be cool."

Doug Rutter
Sports Editor



STAFF PHOTO BY DOUG RUTTER

WEST BRUNSWICK clinched its second straight county soccer championship last week. Team members are (kneeling, from left) Gabe Cooper, Adam Bollinger, Jason Wilkes, Jay Gray, Jeremie Varnam, (standing, from left) Cameron Jones, Scott Summerfield, April Varnam, Ashley Ware, Jamie Arms, Assistant Coach Leland Payne, Andy Russ, Chris Payne, Head Coach Teak Hemphill, Zack Hicks, Jay McRoberts, Steve Varnum, Tony Shreve, Mark Thomas. Not pictured are John Branning and Cameron Kinlaw.

COUNTY SOCCER CHAMPS

West Brunswick Booters Blast Cougars 5-0

BY DOUG RUTTER

West Brunswick wrapped up its second straight county high school soccer championship last Thursday, beating South Brunswick 5-0 in a match marred by a brawl and two player ejections.

South's Jamie Bruner, one of the Cougars' leading scorers, was ejected just seven minutes into the match after several players were involved in a melee near midfield.

With Bruner out, the host Cougars were forced to play the rest of the match with just nine players and a goalie.

West Brunswick capitalized on the one-man advantage, controlling the ball for almost all of the opening half and scoring four goals in the first 25 minutes.

The conference rivals played at even strength for most of the second half, when West Brunswick's Tony Shreve was ejected after being whistled for several fouls.

"It's always a big rivalry between West and South and it really showed today," South Brunswick Coach Greg Bland said. "Temper really flared out there early."

West Coach Teak Hemphill said he thought the Trojans would have won with or without the one-man advantage. "We controlled the ball even with Bruner in there. I think it would have come eventually."

West Brunswick got on the scoreboard early when Jeremie Varnam lifted a beautiful pass over the South defense and Zack Hicks drilled the shot past goalie Tommy Bunting.

The Trojans went up 2-0 minutes later when left wing Steve Varnum headed the ball toward the middle of the box and teammate Andy Russ scored from 10 yards out.

West Brunswick got two more unassisted goals before halftime from Jay Gray and Chris Payne.

The Trojans bumped their lead to 5-0 early in the second half when Gabe Cooper assisted on Payne's second goal of the match and team-leading 16th of the season.

"The passing was real good today," Hemphill said. "I think they're starting to see what they can do as a team."

"If they can play like that in the playoffs, as much as South's improved, we have a chance," he

added. "They have to keep their heads in the game and play two halves."

In addition to Payne's 16 goals, Cooper had 11 for the Trojans and Russ finished the regular season with five. Goalie Jay McRoberts had a 1.13 goals against average and four shutouts in 15 matches.

West Brunswick finished the regular season with a 5-0-2 record against county opponents and an overall record of 11-2-2. South Brunswick finished 3-8 overall.

"It was tough playing one down most of the game," Bland said following the match. "I just commend West. They have a great team and I wish them luck in the playoffs."

West Brunswick was expected to open the state 3A playoffs Wednesday night with a home match against Northwest Guilford, the second seed from the Triad Conference. The match was slated for 7 p.m. on the high school football field.

If the Trojans win their first playoff match, they will host a second-round match Saturday night. West carried a four-game winning streak and nine-game unbeaten streak into the playoffs.

Stallions Kick Cougars 21-14

South Columbus scored 15 unanswered points in the second half to take a 21-14 win over visiting South Brunswick Friday night in a Waccamaw Conference high school football game.

The Stallions trailed 14-7 at half-time and 14-12 after three quarters, but they got a field goal and touchdown in the final 12 minutes to pull out the win.

Corey Lewis rushed for 75 yards and one touchdown and William Ellerby ran for 61 yards and two scores to lead Coach Jack Holley's South Columbus squad.

The Cougars were led by Terry Galloway with 67 yards rushing and O.J. Morris with 44. Senior quarterback Jeff Simon completed 5 of 21 passes for 100 yards and one touchdown.

It was South Brunswick's other quarterback, sophomore Jeremy Baker, who gave the Cougars an early lead on a 22-yard scoring pass to Izesta Brown with 5:54 remaining in the first quarter. Jamie Bruner nailed the extra point to give the visitors a 7-0 lead.

South Columbus answered with a 45-yard touchdown run by Lewis. The extra point attempt was no good, however, and South Brunswick held a 7-6 lead.

The Cougars bumped their advantage to 14-6 just before halftime. Simon fired an 11-yard scoring pass to Lewis Vaught with 28 seconds remaining in the second quarter.

The tide started turning in favor of the Stallions early in the third quarter when Donald Jeter recovered a South Brunswick fumble at the Cougars' 21-yard line.

Ellerby scored on a 1-yard run with 9:06 left in the period, but the

extra point attempt failed again and South Columbus trailed 14-12.

The Stallions took their first lead of the night with 7:47 left in the fourth quarter on a 27-yard field goal by Jake Fonvielle.

On South Brunswick's next possession, the Cougars fumbled again and South Columbus recovered near midfield. Ellerby capped a 48-yard drive with a 2-yard touchdown run with 4:04 left in the game.

On its last possession, South Brunswick drove to the Stallions' 27-yard line before John Kelly intercepted a pass by Simon.

South Brunswick, which fell to 2-3 in the conference and 5-4 overall, wraps up the regular season at home this week against rival West Brunswick. The Stallions finished the season 3-3 in the league and 6-4 overall.

The Cougars clinched a state 3A playoff berth two weeks ago at Pender, but have no shot at the conference's top 3A seed following last week's loss at Tabor City.

South Brunswick will get the Waccamaw Conference's second 3A seed, and West Brunswick will be the top seed. The Trojans will have home-field advantage through the playoffs.

THE YARDSTICK

South Bruns.	S. Columbus
11	8
33-149	40-161
7-23-115	3-8-26
3-3	1-1
1	0
3-41	4-38
7-61	3-15

Score By Quarters

South Columbus	6	0	6	9	21
South Brunswick	7	7	0	0	14

THREE RIVERS ROUNDUP

Red Springs Stops North

Red Springs defeated North Brunswick 20-16 Friday night in a Three Rivers Conference high school football game.

It was the 18th straight loss for the Scorpions, who fell to 0-6 in the conference and 0-9 overall. Red Springs improved to 3-3 in the league and 4-5 overall.

North Brunswick will play its final game of the season Friday night at South Robeson.

In other Three Rivers Conference action this week, St. Pauls will host Tar Heel, East Bladen travels to Fairmont and Bladenboro visits Red Springs.

St. Pauls and East Bladen are 5-1 and tied for the conference lead going into the final regular-season games. Bladenboro and South Robeson are tied for second place at 4-2.

THREE RIVERS CONFERENCE

Team	Conf.	O'all	PS	PA
St. Pauls	5-1	8-1	218	74
East Bladen	5-1	6-2-1	232	79
South Rob.	4-2	6-3	177	121
Bladenboro	4-2	5-4	140	112
Red Springs	3-3	4-5	138	190
Tar Heel	2-4	2-8	137	275
Fairmont	1-5	2-7	97	243
North Brun.	0-6	0-9	53	250

LAST WEEK'S RESULTS

■ Red Springs 20, North Brunswick 16

■ St. Pauls 36, Fairmont 0

■ South Robeson 28, Bladenboro 21

■ East Bladen 62, Tar Heel 6

FRIDAY NIGHT'S GAMES

■ North Brunswick at South Robeson

■ Tar Heel at St. Pauls

■ East Bladen at Fairmont

■ Bladenboro at Red Springs

All games start at 7:30 p.m.

Effective November 14, 1993 North Carolina Has A New Area Code—910

What Will Stay The Same?

Despite the change, much will remain the same:

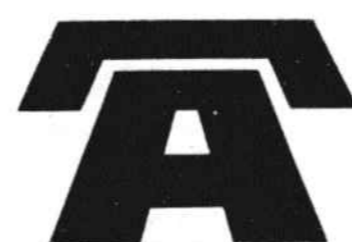
- No change in local 7-digit telephone numbers
- No change in local rates or charges
- No change in local calling areas
- No change in Area Code 704

There's A Three-Month Transition Period

You will have a three-month transition period for the new 910 Area Code.

Starting November 14, 1993, you will be able to dial either the 910 or 919 Area Code to reach long distance numbers in the new 910 area.

Beginning February 13, 1994, only the new 910 Area Code can be used to reach numbers in the 910 area. After that, you'll get a recording if you dial 919 by mistake. The recording will ask you to dial the number again using the 910 Area Code.



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