



HERALD SPORTS

By GARY STEWART

G-W's Not Out

Before the current basketball season began, not many area "guessperts" gave Gardner-Webb's Bulldogs much of a chance of returning to the District 26 tournament, which they won last year en route to a fourth place finish in the NAIA national tournament.

The pre-season word was that the Bulldogs were too young and inexperienced and that this would be a rebuilding year.

It has been a rebuilding year, but Coach Eddie Holbrook's charges are still in the thick of the battle for berth in the District 26 tourney. And don't bet against them.

The Bulldogs are currently 11-4 against NAIA teams with four regular season games remaining. They have only three games remaining against NAIA teams, those being UNC-Asheville tonight at the Charlotte Coliseum, Catawba in Poling Springs on Feb. 20 and Guilford at the Coliseum on Feb. 24.

Gardner-Webb is coming off two big NAIA victories last week over Lenoir Rhyne and Belmont Abbey. Both of those clubs defeated the Bulldogs in earlier action.

But, let's get back to the upcoming District 26 playoffs, set for March 6-7.

"I don't know actually how we stand," says Holbrook. "I've told my boys that they have to win every game. If we don't win the rest of our games it will take a stroke of good fortune for us to get in the playoffs."

The tournament will be made up of the Carolinas Conference tournament champ, the CCAA champion, the independent with the best record and an at-large team with the best record. The at-large berth can go to any District 26 school, regardless of what conference it is in.

Guilford in Good Position

Guilford, the Carolinas Conference leader, currently has the best NAIA record, having lost only three games. All other schools have lost at least four NAIA games.

Should Guilford win the CC tournament, it would be difficult for another CC team to gain a playoff berth. But if the Quakers fail to win the CC tourney, another conference team would occupy that CC champion's berth and Guilford would have a good shot at the at-large berth.

"It's hard to say right now what's going to happen," says Holbrook. "There are three or four teams with good shots at those at-large berths and there's no telling what will happen in the final two weeks of the season."

Top independent teams at present are Gardner-Webb, North Carolina A&T, Barber Scotia and Belmont Abbey.

"You'd have to say it's a tossup," added Holbrook. "All of those clubs can possibly qualify."

Holbrook, whose club is 17-7 overall, says his Bulldogs have improved since their recent performance in the Hawaii tournament.

"I think we're getting a little bit better," he noted. "We're getting a better performance from our young kids and veterans Al Graves and Ken Napier have been playing better."

One of G-W's biggest victories of the year came Saturday night when the Bulldogs knocked off Belmont Abbey on the Crusaders' home floor. It was a two-point victory that upset Abbey's mentor, former Kings Mountain coach Bobby Hussey.

Hussey, who is hoping for a district tourney berth in only his second year at the Belmont school, was unhappy with the officiating, noting that Gardner-Webb played a physical contest and got away with numerous fouls.

Holbrook said the officiating didn't have a bearing on the game's outcome.

"I'm sorry that Bob felt like the officiating beat him," said Holbrook. "I admit it was a rough game with a lot of contact. But I looked at the game film and we had players on the floor several times when fouls weren't called, just as they did."

"We've been in games like that before," continued the G-W mentor, "and we have lost games like that. I felt the same as Bob did when they beat us up here earlier in the year, but I didn't blame the officials."

"As you know," he continued, "sometimes officials will call every little foul and sometimes they'll let you play a physical game. There's not anything you can do about it. It's just part of the game."

"I think we won the game because we got a good result from our players," continued Holbrook. "I don't think the officials won the game for us. The officiating wasn't any worse there than it was here. I can't understand why Bob is so upset. We don't use rough house tactics. We just play hard and play to win."

Adams Playing, Scoring More

Short cuts from the world of sports: Coach Holbrook reports that former KMHS and G-W standout George Adams is continuing to improve with the ABA San Diego Conquistadors.

"I talked to George a week ago," reports Holbrook. "Stu Johnson has been slowed up because of a sore knee and George has gotten to play a lot more. He's played quite a bit in three of the last four games, and in those games he scored 21, 18 and 15 points."

Florida State's chances of getting an at-large berth in the NCAA regional tournament appears slim, as state rival Jacksonville continues to climb in the national polls. The Seminoles have now dropped six games and apparently are having some dissension among the players. Coach Hugh Durham recently suspended leading scorer Benny Clyde and benched 5-7 point man Otto Perry. King Mountain's Otis Cole is now FSU's third leading scorer with a 9-8 average, ranking behind Lawrence McCray and Reggie Royals. All-American Ron King continues to sit out with an ankle injury. The Seminoles, who play North Carolina on regional TV Saturday, are probably now looking for an NIT berth.

Joe Cafferky, one of only two seniors on N. C. State's second-ranked Wolfpack, admits that the players are feeling the pressures of their 19-game winning streak which is four shy of the school record. "Sure, it's there and we know it," he says. "It's something a good team must learn to live with, and we think we have a good team. As long as we remain unbeaten, there's going to be a little added pressure every time we take the floor. But I think we can handle it."

Duke's Gary Melchioni has averaged 23.3 points per game in his last four contests, with a high of 39 against Maryland. N. C. State's sophomore whiz, David Thompson has averaged 29.3 in his last three games, scoring 88 against UNC, Clemson and Georgia Tech.

Race fans who like the underdogs can help one of their favorites in the May 27 Charlotte World 600. The driver who hasn't won a major speedway race, who gets

R-S Central Here Friday In Home Finales

After sweeping the Cleveland County Tipoff Tournament in early December, Kings Mountain's Mountaineers were apparently the team to beat in the Southwestern Conference basketball race.

Coach Allen Dixon's charges came out of the tourney with a perfect 4-0 record and an impressive victory over county-rival Shelby, the pre-season favorite to take all the marbles.

Now, with only two games remaining in regular season play,

the Mounties are on the verge of experiencing their third straight losing season.

The Mountaineers are currently 7-9 in SWC warfare and 11-9 overall. They need a victory over R-S Central here Friday and a win at Chase Tuesday to finish regular season play with a break-even record.

The up-and-down Mounties are favored in their final two. Earlier in the year against R-S Central, the Mounties led most of the game before losing in overtime

and against the Trojans, the home club romped to a school scoring mark of 106 points in a lop-sided victory.

Coach Dixon has already warned his players of the importance of the final two contests. The Mounties could get a good seeding for the upcoming SWC tourney if they finish with victories. Two losses, however, would give them a final record of 7-11 and the Mounties would finish in the second division, thus drawing one of the frontrunners in the first

round of the tournament.

The tournament is set to begin next week but as of yet the site is undetermined. The event was awarded to Burns High School but that school backed out and now the word is that it will be either Crest High or Gardner-Webb College.

Kings Mountain's girls, who upset Shelby Tuesday night, appear to be gaining momentum for their final two games and the tournament. The Mountaineers aren't 8-8 in the SWC and 10-8 overall.

"We have played real good defense in our last two games," noted Coach Blaine Fronberger. "I attribute our winning to defense more than anything else."

The Mountaineers have already beaten R-S Central and Chase so they are favored to run their final record to 10-8. They still have a shot at finishing in the first division.

Deborah Crockett and Kathy Ledford continue to lead the Mountaineers in scoring but Fronberger has gotten good performances from all of his start-

ers. The Mountaineers' leading scorer, Butch Elalock, is currently hampered by a finger injury. He scored only two points, his season's low, in Tuesday's loss to Shelby.

Shelby's boys have their division title under wraps and the Burns girls have clinched a tie for their division title. The regular season champions and the SWC tourney champions will advance to the Western N. C. Activities Association finals at Catawba College.

Cagers Sweep Cherryville Mountaineers Nip Shelby

Blazing Start Keys Victory Over Ironmen

Kings Mountain High's varsity cagers swept a Southwestern Conference twinbill from Cherryville Friday night on the road, the girls winning 40-23 and the boys 41-34.

It was the third straight victory for Allen Dixon's Mountaineers, who now appear to be in winning form after experiencing a mid-season slump.

Mike Thomas, last year's leading scorer, played perhaps one of the best games of his senior season, scoring 25 points to lead the Mountaineers in that department. Butch Elalock added 23 points and Randy Wingo 14, giving the Mountaineers a balanced scoring attack.

Kings Mountain's balanced scoring offset a fine individual performance by Cherryville's Jimmy Graves, the SWC's leading point producer. Graves was the game's top scorer with 28 markers but only one other Ironman, Joe Reid, was able to reach double figures. Reid had 14 points.

A blazing start was the difference in the contest. The Mountaineers hit on 57 percent of their field goal attempts in the first half and finished the game with a 44.5 percentage mark, hitting 32 of 72 shots.

A strong board game was also a key factor as the Mountaineers out-rebounded their foes, 46 to 37. Thomas also led in that department and Wingo also played a strong board game.

The Mountaineers had the game pretty much on ice after a period when they held a 22-10 lead. They increased their margin to 53-31 at halftime and 67-18 heading into the final chapter.

Deborah Crockett and Kathy Ledford continued to supply the 1-2 scoring punch as the Mountaineers gained revenge for an earlier loss to the Cherryville girls. Crockett finished with 14 points to gain game scoring honors and Ledford was close behind with 11 markers.

The Mountaineers were never in serious trouble, leading 8-2 after the first period and 22-9 at halftime.

Defense was also a key factor for the Mountaineers as they didn't allow a Cherryville player to reach double figures. June Gaston's six points represented the best performance by the losers.

GIRLS GAME
K. Mtn. (40) — Crockett 14, Kathy Ledford 11, Karen Ledford 3, Proctor 6, Byers 3.
Cherry, (23) — Gaston 6, Fairies 5, Giles 1, Hope 3, Mitchell 2, Huffstetler 3.

BOYS GAME
K. Mtn. (41) — Dawkins 8, Thomas 25, Elalock 23, Davis 2, Hamrick 9, Smith 1, McGill 4, Wingo 14.
Cherry, (23) — Graves 28, Ledford 6, Putnam 8, Reid 14, Lyles 1, Newton 2, Hull 2, Borders 3, Bridges 1.



KEYS UPSET — Deborah Crockett, above, leading scorer on Kings Mountain's girls basketball team, tallied 17 points Tuesday to lead the Mountaineers to a 41-34 win over Shelby. The Mountaineers are 8-8 in conference play and 10-8 overall heading into their final two regular season games.

Six Pitchers, Three Catchers Working Out

Six pitchers and three catchers have begun pre-season baseball drills at Kings Mountain High School.

Coach Barry Gibson said infielders and outfielders will begin practice next Wednesday, Jan. 21. Three others, John McGill, Steve Southwell and Tony Payne, have indicated that they will come out for the team at the conclusion of the basketball season.

Pitchers currently on the roster include seniors Keith Parker and Dale Suggs, junior Kenny Fries and John Deal, and sophomores Chuck Austin and J. D. Austin. Parker and Fries are the only returnees from last year's club, which finished 12-6 and second in the Southwestern Conference.

Catchers on the roster include junior Darrell Van Dyke and sophomores Dale Hartsoe and Kenny Falls. Van Dyke is the only one in that group with varsity experience.

The Mountaineers will begin play on March 6 against 4-A Hunter, Huss at Sims Legion Park in Gastonia. The Mounties have a March 9 non-conference bout at home against 2-A Bessemer City.

This year's KMHS team will be comprised mostly of sophomores. Gibson said 25 players have signed up for the team and about half are tenth graders.

The only returning starters are Parker, second baseman Robbie Moore and third baseman Wayne Bridges. Others with limited varsity experience are Van Dyke, first baseman Jimmy Fitts, Farris and outfielder Junior Sellers.

Gibson, a standout left-hand pitcher during his high school years, said he will be a coach.

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Big Second Half Sparks Girls To 41-34 Win

Kings Mountain's Mountaineers had their three-game winning streak snapped Tuesday night by Shelby but the Mountaineers pulled even in Southwestern Conference play by upsetting the third place Shelby girls.

The Mountaineers came from behind in the second half to score a 41-34 victory but the boys were left at the starting gate in the nightcap, 75-51.

Shelby's girls, who whipped KMHS earlier on the Shelby court, held a 22-19 cushion at halftime but the Mountaineers came on strong in the final two periods behind the scoring of All-Conference Deborah Crockett.

Crockett finished as the game's top scorer with 17 points and freshman Joan Proctor chipped in eight key markers.

Another key factor in the victory was the defensive play of sophomore Myra McGinnis. "She scored only three points," noted Coach Blaine Fronberger, "but he was all over the court harassing the Shelby offense. She played probably her best game."

Debbie Garbee sparked the Shelby attack with 12 points. Shelby's boys took advantage of early KM turnovers and completely outplayed the Mountaineers of Allen Dixon.

Kings Mountain turned the over five straight times in the first period without getting a shot at the basket. As a result, the Lions jumped off to a 10-0 lead, built it to 19-8 after one period and 37-18 at halftime.

The Mountaineers began to come around in the second half but the damage had already been done.

Shelby held KM's leading scorer, Butch Elalock, to his season's low of two points. Elalock recently injured a finger and played very little in the second half.

Alvin Gentry led the Shelby attack with 20 points. James McKissick added 17 and Floyd Bridges 18. Mike Thomas with 18 points and Tony Falls with 17 were high scorers for the Mountaineers.

GIRLS GAME
K. Mtn. (41) — Crockett 17, Kathy Ledford 6, Karen Ledford 2, McGinnis 3, Byers 5, Proctor 8, Shelby (34) — Parbee 12, Glenn S, Wright 2, Black 3, Collins 4, Lattimore 5.

BOYS GAME
K. Mtn. (51) — Dawkins 2, Thomas 18, Elalock 2, Wingo 6, Falls 17, Davis 6.
Shelby (75) — Bridges 10, Gentry 20, McKissick 17, Surratt 8, Cash 2, Hopper 6, Cooper 2, Wright 6, Byers 4.

BUILDING PERMITS
Randy Gantt, of route 9, Shelby, was issued permits to build two new six-room residences at 313 and 315 Somerset Drive by the city building inspector Tuesday. Mr. Gantt will be contractor for the construction.



KM WRESTLERS TO TOURNAMENT — The Kings Mountain High wrestling team, shown above, will be participating in the Western N. C. Activities Association tournament today and Friday at Catawba College. Members of the team are, front row, left to right, Hilary Pouchak, Gary Howze, Bill Cashion, Hal Glass, Kenny Palmer, Scott Moss and Tony Beam. Second row, same order, Reggie Whitmore, Ronnie Morrison, Terry Guin, Larry Biddix, Alfred Ash, Chris Tindall, Steve Chrscoe and Robbie Eng. (Photo by I. G. Alexander.)

Ash Number One Seed For WNCHSAA Event

Kings Mountain High School senior Alfred Ash has been seeded number one in the 183-pound class for the Western North Carolina High Schools Activities Association wrestling tournament scheduled for today and Friday at Catawba College.

Ash is the only undefeated wrestler in his class, having run up a 16-0 record during the regular season. Ash was 14-1 his junior year and had a string of 28 straight pins going into his last regular season match last Thursday against Wilkes Central. That string was broken, however, as he had to settle for his first decision of the year.

"He could have easily pinned his man in the first period," said his coach, Warren (Bo) Goldth. "But we wanted him to get in shape for the association tournament, so I told him to go all three periods. Then, in the third period, he must have weakened some and he had to settle for a 12-6 decision."

The Mountaineers finished the regular season with a 1-15 record, their lone victory coming over East Lincoln. They came close to winning on several other occasions but due to a lack of players, forfeited matches caused them drop matches that they could have had a chance to win.

Four KMHS wrestlers will draw byes in the opening round of the tourney. They are Hal Glass in the 98-pound division, Ronnie Morrison in the 138-pound class, Ray Putnam in the 155-pound division and Reggie Whitmore in the 195-pound class.

Only four of KM's wrestlers posted winning records during regular season action. In addition to Ash, they were Glass, who

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KM Wrestlers Lose Finale To Wilkes 38-20

Kings Mountain's wrestlers dropped a 38-20 decision to Wilkes Central in their final regular season match Thursday night at the KMHS gym.

Only Robbie Eng, competing in the 170 pound class, won a pin for the Mountaineers.

Alfred Ash saw his string of 28 straight pins snapped in the 183-pound match as he had to settle for a decision over Wilkes Central's Eric Scoggins.

Other KM winners were Hal Glass, who picked up a forfeit in the 101-pound class, and Ronnie Terry, who won a decision in the 108-pound class. Glenn Roberts, competing in the 115-pound class, picked up two points on a draw.

Results:
101—Hal Glass (KM) won on forfeit; 108—Ronnie Terry (KM) dec. Greg Cope (WC); 115—Glenn Roberts (KM) and Bill McClain (WC), draw; 122—Mark Whitling (WC) won forfeit; 129—Reggie Cull (WC) pinned Gary Howze (KM); 135—Allen Lambert (WC) dec. Scott Moss (KM); 141—James Roberts (WC) dec. Ronnie Morrison (KM); 148—Larry Bennett (WC) pinned Tony Beam (KM); 158—Quincy Roberts (WC) dec. Ray Putnam (KM); 170—Robbie Eng (KM) pinned Steve Woodie (WC); 183—Alfred Ash (KM) dec. Eric Scoggins (WC); 195—Henry Church (WC) dec. Reggie Whitmore (KM); Unl. dec. Gregg Hendren (WC) pinned Keith Eddix (KM).

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GINA'S ROYAL PALACE LEOPARDS is truly one of the most unique and best trained wild animal acts in show business. They'll perform on stage, unaged, during the six act entertainment segment of the Sportsman's, Boat, Camping and Vacation Show of the Carolinas. The 16th Annual event, scheduled for the Charlotte Coliseum, will open at 5:00 p.m. Tuesday, February 27th and continue through Sunday, March 4th.

Nicknames For All Tar Heel Players

CAR-O-LINES by Jack Williams
CHAPEL HILL, N. C. — Bubbas gets a rebound, throws a long pass to Jabber who in turn feeds Dr. K and it's another two points for the Carolina Tar Heels. But wait a minute? Who are all those players with such mysterious names?

Well, if you're close to the Carolina basketball family, then you would know that Bubbas is none other than Bobby Jones, Jabber is Darrell Elston and Dr. K is the nickname of the freshman whiz, Mitch Kupchak.

In Tar Heel basketball, everybody gets a nickname. It's a form of acceptance. Make the team and immediately you are tagged with a moniker all your own.

The most votes in a fan balloting, will get to wheel a competitive car owned by Charlotte Motor Speedway President Richard Howard. Last year, Howard put Wendell Scott in a good car and he finished in the top 10...

For example, Brad Hoffman is known to his teammates as Fritz or Heinie. Donald Washington is Shaft (naturally) and Eddie Smith is Hulk. Even the student managers have nicknames. They call Greg Miles, the popular assistant student manager, Chi Chi. No one knows why for sure. He certainly does not resemble the golf professional, Chi Chi Rodriguez.

Not all the nicknames are new, however. Some date back to the days when the Tar Heel players were in grade school. Bobby Jones, for example, says he has been called Bubbas most of his life and he really can't remember why. Some of the Carolina players don't accept Bubbas because the nickname is too old.

They just call Bobby Jones B. J. Ray Harrison is called Raynard by his teammates and that sounds like a nickname, too. Actually, however, Raynard is the young man's real name. Other players have tagged Harrison with the nickname Alfred and again, no one is sure why.

George Karl, the team leader, admits his feelings were hurt for a long time because his teammates never really gave him a nickname. "They called me Georgie, but actually that's just a form of my name," Karl says. But a trip to Spain changed all that. Karl's teammates began calling him the Spanish equivalent of George which is spelled Jorge and is pronounced Hor-jay. Now Karl is happy.

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