



HERALD SPORTS

By GARY STEWART

Hussey's Happy

When a basketball coach takes a perennial loser and turns it into a winner, he's sure to raise some eyebrows and some better offers. But Belmont Abbey's Bobby Hussey says he's not wanting another job just yet.

Hussey, the former Kings Mountain High mentor, took over at the Catholic school two years ago and immediately turned the Crusaders into one of the best teams in District 26 of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics. His first Abbey team went 13-13, only the second winning season for the Crusaders in 13 years.

This year's squad got off to a fast start and finished 17-11, barely missing a trip to the District 26 playoffs. Had the Crusaders not dropped their last five games, they would have earned a berth in the playoffs.

Those two winning teams, with mostly freshmen and sophomore players, prove that Hussey is one of the best young coaches in the business. And big college athletic directors are learning that.

"But," says Hussey, "I wouldn't consider another job unless it was a whole lot better than what I've got here at the Abbey. I'm pretty content and I still haven't accomplished what I want to accomplish."

What Hussey wants is the same thing other District 26 coaches are seeking: A District 26 championship and a trip to the national NAIA tournament. Guilford made the trip this year and came home with the national championship.

"It's going to be tough," Hussey says of his goals. "But we've just got to make it."

"I think District 26 is the toughest district in the nation," he continued. "I think Guilford gave a good indication of that when they didn't even win the Carolinas Conference tournament but went to Kansas City and won the national championship."

Had Hussey's team not dropped its last five games to some tough District 26 opponents, his Crusaders would have had a chance at a district tourney berth and a possible trip to the nationals.

"I don't know what happened to us in those last five games," he remarked. "We just couldn't keep our opponents from scoring. We were 17-6 at one time and it seemed like everybody we played just got super enthused about playing us."

"We had a couple of guys," he said, referring to seniors Jim McDede and Larry Cone, "who were trying to keep going on desire but they didn't have the physical stamina to keep going. They just ran out of steam."

"And, after Gardner-Webb beat us by two points at our place, our squad realized we didn't have a shot at the district tournament and it took a lot out of them."

"It was very disappointing," he continued. "It's the first time in my life that I've lost five straight and it really gets to you. If we'd felt at the beginning of the year that we'd go 17-11, it would have been different. But after getting off to such a good start, we thought we could have won 20 or 22 ballgames. But we realize now what we'll have to do next year."

Next year is a long way off, but Hussey's not adopting the old adage 'Wait until next year.' Instead, he's working hard on recruiting and thinks he has the inside track on some good players.

"We lose only two players, McDede and Cone," he says, "so our first priority will be two wingmen about 6-4 or 6-5 who can give us some outside offense and who are quick enough to play good defense. We're pretty good at the guard positions with Greg Hawkins and Mike Giles and we have a backup guard named Steve Delaney who might move somebody out. And we're strong at the posts with sophomore Carl Bell and freshman Curtis Carter."

"If we can find a couple of good wing men, we'll be in pretty good shape," he continued. "And, of course, if we recruit a big man who can play as a freshman we can move Bell to a wing spot."

Glancing over his recruiting list, Hussey noted some outstanding prospects, including a 6-3 New Jersey product who can play either guard or forward, and a 6-7 wing man from Georgia.

"We've also got hopes of landing a local 6-4 wing man and if we get him we'll be in real good shape. I don't want to mention any names but he can play as a freshman," Hussey noted.

Hussey says the Crusaders will have another demanding schedule next season, adding games with national champion Guilford, High Point and others, and keeping contests with perennial toughies Gardner-Webb, Elon, Lenoir Rhyne, Johnson C. Smith, Western Carolina, UNC-Asheville and Augusta.

"I think we had the toughest schedule of any team in District 26 this year," said Hussey, "and that hurt our chances at a district playoff berth."

Also highlighting next year's schedule will be a road trip to the New York area, where the Crusaders will play major college power St. Bonaventure and small college powers Buffalo State and Gannon College.

"That will be a real challenge for us," said Hussey. "But if I'm going to take a trip I'd rather play someone of national stature rather than playing some YMCA teams."

"Gannon and Buffalo aren't too well known to area people, but they're both real strong. And everybody knows about St. Bonaventure. It's a big challenge."

But, Hussey's met challenges before. And, who knows, with a couple of good breaks on the recruiting trail, the hard-working Abbey headman might just reach his goal in only his third year as a college coach.

Freshmen Lose Opening Season Contest To Mt. Holly Team, 6-2

Kings Mountain High's freshman basketball team dropped its opening game of the season here Monday, losing a non-conference outing to Mt. Holly, 6-2.

The Little Mountaineers managed only one hit—a first inning double by Jacky Wray—which produced both KM runs.

A three-run third inning was the difference for Mt. Holly, which collected seven hits.

The Little Mounties have three more non-conference games, one

against Mt. Holly and two against Lovell Holbrock, before opening Tri-County Conference play.

Coach Allen Dixon has a 17-man roster, including Richard Anderson, Rusty Bell, Jeff Carroll, Kevin Ford, Shane Gibson, Hal Glass, Danny Goforth, Jeff Gregory, Alfred Jamerson, Mark Jenkins, Chris Johnson, Scott Ledford, Ronnie Terry, Mark Thornburg, Jeff Walker, Mike Williams and Jacky Wray.

KMHS Hosts Ironmen Today, Central Friday

Kings Mountain's Mountaineers, 3-0 and leaders of the Southwestern Conference baseball race, have two toughies this week, hosting Cherryville's Ironmen today and R-S Central Tuesday.

Cherryville is currently tied with defending champion South Point for second place with a perfect 2-0 record while R-S Central is 1-1, having dropped a 1-0 decision to South Point.

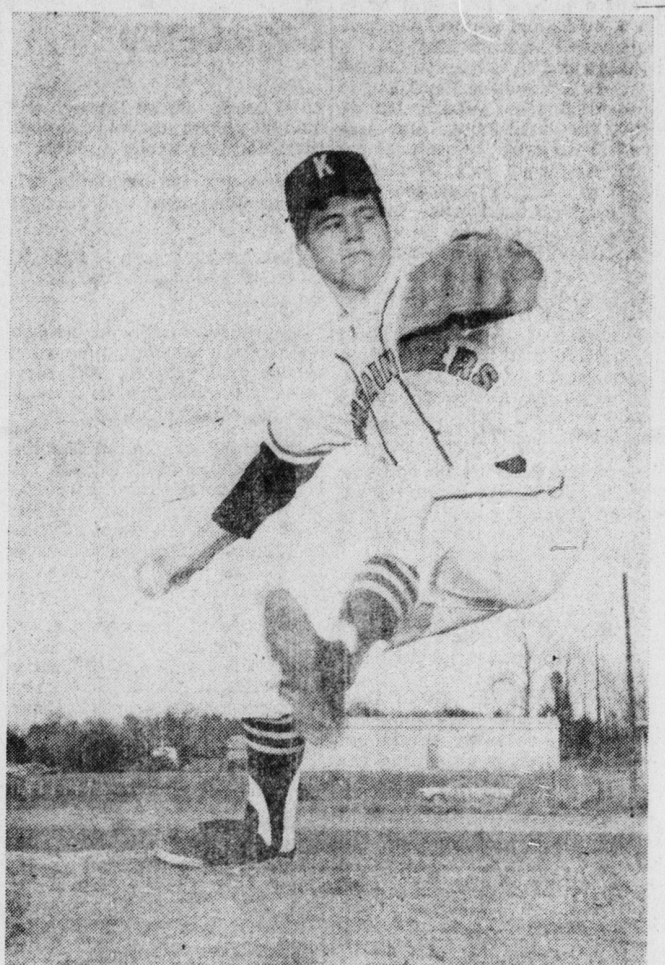
The Ironmen, who always play at their best against the Mountaineers, have to date defeated Burns 2-0 and Shelby 6-3. They'll likely be at top form again today.

Coach Barry Gibson of the Mountaineers hasn't decided on a pitching choice for today's game. He said he'd choose between southpaw John McGill and right-handers Kenny Farias and Richard Gillespie.

McGill, a junior, worked three innings against Crest last Friday before giving way to Farias, who went on to pick up the victory. They combined for 13 strikeouts and did not walk a batter.

Only returning starter off last year's mound staff, will likely draw the starting assignment against the Hill-toppers on Tuesday. R-S Central has probably the top hitting team in the league, paced by Jerry Hines, whose last-inning three-run homer last year whipped the Moun-

tainies 7-6 and knocked them out of a first place tie with South Point. Coach Gibson is hoping his team's hitting will improve in the next two contests. Only senior Robbie Moore is having a good year at the plate and he's currently 10-for-10.



WINNER IN RELIEF — Kenny Farias, above, pitched four strong innings of relief last Friday at Crest and picked up the victory in a 3-2 decision. He gave up only two hits and fanned six over the final four frames. (Photo by I. G. Alexander)

Moore Runs Hitting Streak To 10 Straight In Win Over Crest, Burns

Shortstop Goes 3-For-3 Again Against Crest

Kings Mountain's Mountaineers came from behind for the second straight game against Crest Friday on the Chargers' field, winning their second Southwest Conference game of the season, 3-2.

A three-run fifth inning erased a 2-0 Crest lead and left the Mountaineers of Coach Barry Gibson atop the SWC standings.

John McGill, a southpaw, worked the first three innings on the mound for the Mountaineers. He was impressive, giving up only four hits, walking none and fanning seven, but still left the game trailing 2-0.

Kenny Farias, who is quickly developing into one of the top hurlers in the conference, came on in relief and allowed only two Crest baserunners over the final four innings. He retired the last seven men to face him, gave up only two hits and struck out six.

Senior shortstop Robbie Moore had his second straight 3-for-3 plate performance against the Chargers and knocked in the winning run against the Chargers in the season-opening game at Kings Mountain three days before.

Sophomore catcher Dale Hartsoe started the winning rally in the fifth, rapping a one-out double to deep left-center. Hartsoe later scored on a passed ball and Farias walked and stole second.

Darrell Van Dyke singled, putting runners on first and third and Moore singled both runners in to climax the rally.

Except for Moore's the Mountaineer bats were silent. KMHS contained just five hits, giving the Mounties only 11 hits in their first two contests.

BOXSCORE table with columns: Ab, R, H, Rbi. Rows for Kings Mtn., Crest, and individual players like Van Dyke, Moore, Parker, etc.



1,000 HITTER — Senior shortstop Robbie Moore, above, is off to one of the fastest starts a KMHS baseball player has ever had. After three games, he's a perfect 10-for-10 at the plate, including two 3-for-3 performances against Crest and a 4-for-4 outing against Burns.

Robbie Cracks Four Straight Against Burns

Robbie Moore ran his season's hitting performance to 10-for-10 Tuesday afternoon at Burns, lashing out four straight hits to lead Kings Mountain's Mountaineers to their third straight victory, 5-1.

The win left Coach Barry Gibson's Mountaineers atop the Southwestern conference with a 3-0 record but several other clubs are also unbeaten with 2-0 marks.

Moore's performance Tuesday included three singles, a double and one run batted in. Wayne Mountaineer with more than one hit. He went 2-for-3 in a 10-hit attack, KM's biggest of the young season.

The game was never in doubt as the Mountaineers jumped off to a 6-1 lead after three innings. Keith Parker worked the first three innings for the Mountaineers, then gave way to sophomore Chuck Austin who finished up. The two KM hurlers combined for an eight hitter.

The Mountaineers knew they were in for a good day when leadoff hitter Darrell Van Dyke slammed the second pitch of the game to deep rightfield for a triple. Bridges and Moore followed with doubles and the Mounties had a quick 2-0 lead.

A walk to Bridges, singles by Moore and soph David Lancaster and four Burns errors led to four KM runs in the third and Parker exited after that frame with a 6-1 lead.

In the fourth, the Mounties picked up two more runs on singles by Bridges and Moore and a double by Austin.

The Mountaineers added their final run in the seventh on an error and a single by Dale Hartsoe.

G-W Aid Ron Hooper To Speak At Banquet

The first annual Youth League Basketball banquet, honoring players in both the church and city youth leagues, will be held Monday night at 7:30 in the Mountaineer rooms at Kings Mountain Community Center.

Ron Hooper, former University of North Carolina standout and now top assistant to Gardner-Webb College Coach Eddie Holbrook, will be guest speaker for the event.

Highlighting the night will be presentation of trophies to outstanding teams in the two leagues. The champions and runners-up in both regular season and tournament play will receive awards and there will also be a team sportsmanship trophy.

Several high school and college coaches and players will be in attendance.

Hooper will bring with him some of GW's outstanding players and also on hand will be Belmont Abbey Coach Bobby Hussey and his All-District 26 standout center, Carl Bell of Reidsville, N. C.

Roy Pearson, recreation director, said he expects between 200 and 250 persons to attend. Mayor John Moss will serve as emcee.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

BOXSCORE table with columns: Ab, R, H, Rbi. Rows for Kings Mtn., Burns, and individual players like Van Dyke, Bridges, Moore, etc.

Minus Jolly, Golfers Fourth In Opening Meet

With last year's medalist Jimmy Jolly sitting out with an injured ankle due to a basketball mishap, Kings Mountain High's golfers finished last in a four-team season opening Southwest Conference golf match last Thursday at Shelby's River and Golf club.

Defending SWC champion Shelby walked off with first place, shooting a 295 score. R-S Central was second at 313. Rutherford third at 320 and KMHS fourth with a 372 score.

Mike Bright of Shelby, last year's Western N. C. High School Activities Association champion, shared the least honors with teammate John Kirkham, each shooting a two-over-par 74.

With Jolly out, Tony Beam was low man for the Mountaineers with an 89. Other KM scores included Gary McWeze 91, Mitch Hope 92, Eddie Anderson 100, Dennis Trout 109 and Ronnie Morrison 122.

The Mountaineers will participate in a three-team SWC match this afternoon at Belmont, meeting host South Point and East Rutherford. The Mountaineers are at home at Kings Mountain Country Club for the first time next Thursday, hosting Chase and Lincolnton.



KMHS GOLF TEAM — The nine high school students pictured above comprise the 1973 Kings Mountain High golf team. The Mountaineers have already competed in one match and will be in action again this afternoon at South Point. First row, left to right, are Jim Jolly, Mitch Howze, Gary Howze, Robbie Bridges and Tom Tate. Back row, same order, are Dennis Trout, Tony Beam, Eddie Anderson and Ronnie Morrison. Jolly, last year's medalist for the Mountaineers, is currently out of action due to an ankle injury. (Photo by Gary Stewart).

Central Opens Next Tuesday Against South

Central Junior High's Patriots, gunning for their third straight undefeated season under Tommy Pruitt, open season play next Tuesday at South Cleveland.

Coach Pruitt says he hasn't decided on a starting lineup but hopes to play as many boys as possible in early contests.

Pruitt likely will hurl three pitchers in the opening game, Steve Lancaster, Don Henderson and William Thompson.

Others expecting to see action are Ricky Deaton at first base, Darrell Queen and John Garble at second, Kenny Self at third, Preston Short at shortstop, Carl Goforth, Mike Stone and Tim Spicer in the outfield and Scott Ellis and Mike Bumgardner behind the plate.