

# SPORTS

## Mountaineers Contender, Girls Look For Soph Help

Kings Mountain's Mountaineers, with four of five starters returning from last year's team, are being regarded as one of the top contenders in Southwestern 3-A Conference basketball play this year.

Veteran Coach John Blalock says he has been impressed with the team's progress in practice, and expects to field his best team ever.

The Mountaineers, who were 8-12 a year ago, lost most valuable player Eric Dixon, but Blalock returns four inside men who stand over six feet tall, and a 5-10 point guard who should rank as one of the best players in the league.

Blalock's team is so talented, he feels, that he has decided to put Frank Parker, Kings Mountain Junior High's all-time scoring king, on the junior varsity team.

Heading the list of prospects for the varsity, which will be seeking its first conference crown since 1971, is point guard Carl Smith, a junior who was the SWC's leading scorer before being injured last winter.

Other returning starters are 6-3 wingman Terrence Blalock, 6-5 center Gerald Byers and 6-3 forward Demetrius Goode. Todd Wray, a 6-3 wingman up from the jayvees, is expected to fill the fifth starting position.

Others on the team are point guards Jimmy Brown, Vince Roseboro and Bruce Young, centers Tim Bell and Novelle Young and wingmen Wayne Brown and Paul Ingram.

"Practice has been going good so far," says Blalock. "We're working hard on defense and everybody looks to be improved. We ought to have a good season. We're still young, with four juniors in the starting lineup, but if we play together we'll have a good season."

The Mounties' strong point appears to be quickness. "We run the fast break good, with Smith handling the ball," says Blalock.

Blalock feels the Mounties will match-up well in size to every team in the league except R-S Central, the other club being regarded as the top contender. R-S has two inside men at 6-6.

"But I don't think they'll be as quick as they were last year," says Blalock. "They have two starters returning from their state championship team, and they're starting five seniors, but I think we can play with them."

Blalock said he is pleased with the team's attitude and is looking for leadership.

"I feel real good about this



JOHN BLALOCK



DAVID BRINKLEY

team," he says. "We're working hard and really expecting a good year."

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Meanwhile, girls coach David Brinkley is working hard to develop some young talent, and he feels the Mountainettes could be in the thick of the battle by the end of the season.

"Inexperience will hurt us at the first of the year," says the second-year Mountainette coach. "We have eight sophomores but they have a lot of talent. They will have to help us out."

Brinkley returns two full-time starters from last year, seniors Sheryl Goode and Diane Williams. Guards Tammy Bolton and Bridget Glass started part-time.

Others on the team include Angie Bell, Glenda Adams, Priscilla Odoms, Arjuana Curry, Elizabeth Floyd, Gloria Campbell, Trina Hamrick, Rhonda Kimble, Angie Adams, Teresa Freeman and Linda Stowe.

"So far I've been real encouraged," Brinkley said. "We've had some good practices and I've been encouraged by their attitude. They pull for each other and are good team players."

Playing as a team will be one of the big keys for the Mountainettes, who last year had to depend largely on getting the ball inside to Williams and Goode.

"If we get the ball inside, we can score," says Brinkley. "I have a lot of confidence in Diane and Sheryl. But I have a lot of confidence in everybody. All the teams know that if we get the ball inside, we can score, but we're hoping to be able to open it up and have a balanced attack."

Defensively, Brinkley says the Mountainettes will press more than in the past and run a man to man defense.

He looks to R-S Central, North Gaston, Burns and Shelby

as the teams to beat. All four of them played sophomores and juniors last year.

"I believe if we play like we should, we can be in the thick of it by the end of the year," he says. "Depth will be the biggest thing at the beginning of the season."

The two KMHS teams will get their season underway next Monday night, when they travel to Bessemer City for a scrimmage. Regular season play begins on November 24 at West Charlotte and the first home game is on November 26 against West Charlotte. Conference play

begins December 2 against East Gaston.

KMHS will not field a jayvee girls team this year, so the jayvee boys will play preliminaries to every varsity doubleheader, except against West Charlotte.

Gene Bumgardner, who coached the jayvee girls, will assist Brinkley with the varsity. Danny McDowell returns as jayvee boys coach.

### THE SCHEDULE

#### NOVEMBER

24 - at West Charlotte

26 - West Charlotte

#### DECEMBER

2 - East Gaston

5 - Shelby

9 - at North Gaston

12 - Burns

16 - at Chase

19 - at East Ruth.

#### JANUARY

2 - R-S Central

5 - at South Point

9 - Crest

12 - at East Gaston

16 - at Shelby

19 - North Gaston

23 - at Burns

26 - Chase

30 - East Ruth.

#### FEBRUARY

2 - at R-S Central

6 - South Point

9 - at Crest



Photo by Gary Stewart

**NEW JUMPER** - Kings Mountain High basketball standout Diane Williams works on the new "Jumper" machine at the KMHS gym as her parents, Lucille and Paul Williams, and Bill Grissom, president of the Booster's Club, look on. The boosters purchased the machine for \$1,200 and it will be used by basketball and volleyball players to strengthen their legs and improve their leaping skills.

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