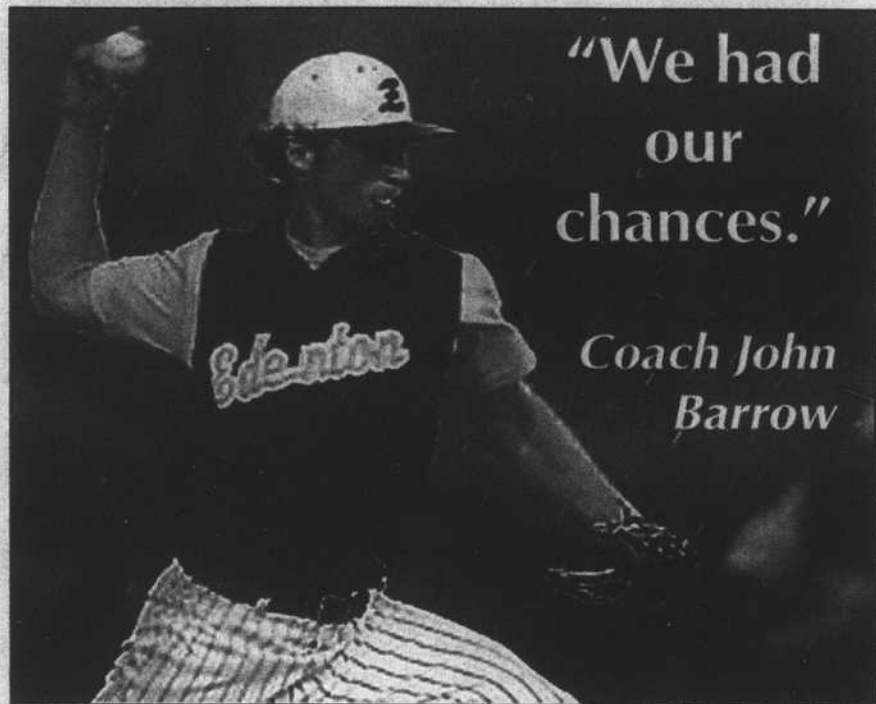


Double play: baseball, netters ousted

Aces baseball run ends one win shy of state title series

JAH tennis squad has title bid nixed by season's first loss



"We had our chances."

Coach John Barrow

Justin Falls/The Daily Advance

Edenton's Broc Sutton pitches in the rain during their Eastern Regional Game 2 against North Lenoir at Historic Hicks Field in Edenton on Friday. Sutton picked up a save on the mound and drove in two runs in the Aces' 4-1 win. Edenton lost the deciding Game 3 in La Grange on Saturday, 2-1, to end the season at 24-4.

"That hurts a little more."

— Barrow said of the Aces' inability to hold a 1-0 lead against North Lenoir in the state 2A Eastern Regionals

BY SEAN JACKSON
The Chowan Herald

Edenton's most dramatic run in the state 2A high school baseball playoffs ended Saturday in La Grange, as the Aces fell to North Lenoir in the final game of the Eastern Regional Championships, 2-1.

Edenton took a 1-0 lead in the fourth inning on Saturday when senior Steven Brown drilled Hawks pitcher Stihl Powers' offering over the left field fence.

Edenton's Broc Sutton held North Lenoir (28-2), the defending state champs, scoreless until the fifth, when the Hawks tied the game at 1-1 when Andrew Manning scored on a wild pitch.

Alex McLaughy scored the winning run in the sixth, being driven in by a Brian Smith double.

"We had our chances and we knew we had our chances," Edenton coach John Barrow told the Kinston Free Press following the tough loss, "and that hurts a little bit more. But (North Lenoir) is a great baseball team over there. They are primed and ready to go and I wish them the best next weekend."

The Hawks face East Bend Forbush in a best-of-3 series in either Greensboro or Raleigh next weekend for the state 2A title.

Edenton was led at the plate by Brown on Saturday, who went 2-for-3, while Joseph Westbrook also added two hits for the Aces.

An estimated 1,000 fans — many of them rooting for the Aces — watched the game at Wheat Swamp.

Edenton won Game 2 at home on Friday night, 4-1. Third baseman Brian Leary provided the big shot of the night, a 2-run homer in the third that gave Edenton a 3-1 lead, one it would not relinquish. Senior pitcher Landon Jordan picked up the win for Edenton (24-4) on Friday. Sutton came on with one out in the fifth and held the Hawks scoreless for the rest of the game to earn a save.

In the series opener in La Grange last Thursday (May 25), the Hawks won at home, 8-4.

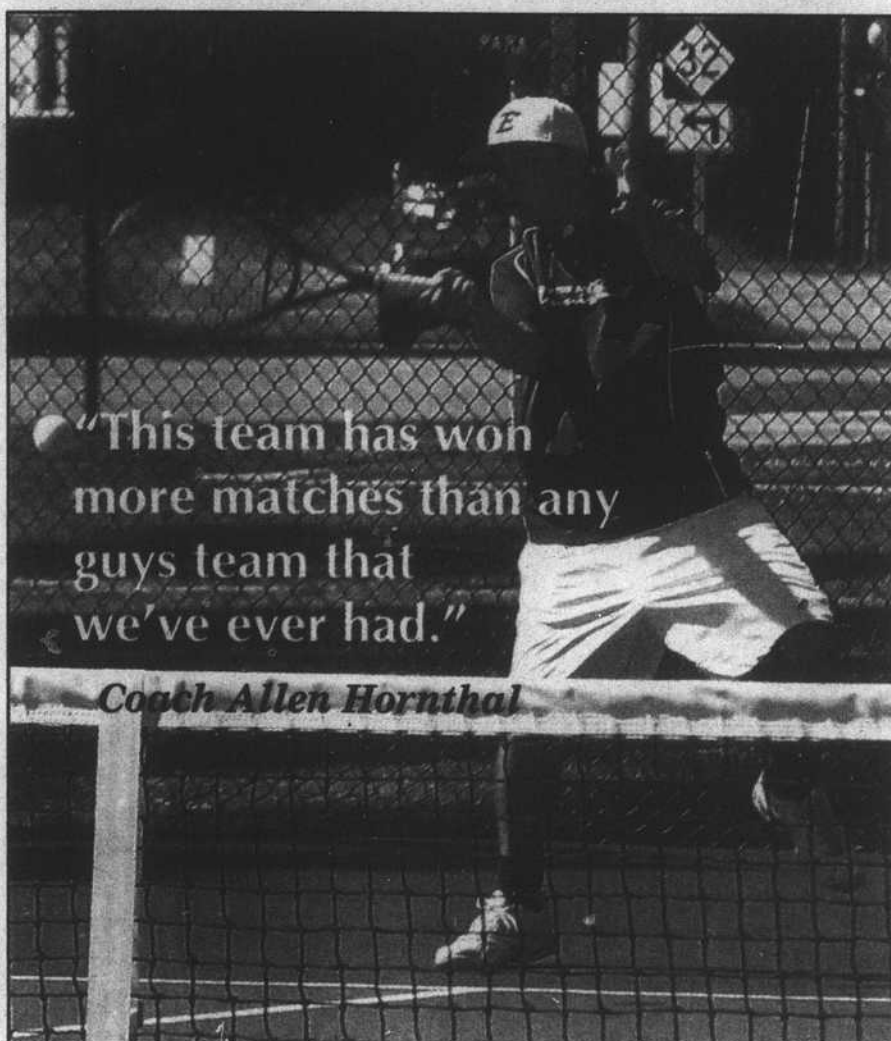
After grabbing a late lead, 3-2, heading into the bottom of the sixth, North Lenoir rallied for six runs and never looked back.

Powers had the big hit for the Hawks, crushing a grand slam in the 6-run sixth.

The Aces would take a lead into the late innings of all three games, but were unable to hold those leads in their pair of losses.

On the series, Edenton was outscored just 11-9, but the Hawks got the big hits when they needed them in games 1 and 2, putting North Lenoir in position to win its second consecutive state crown.

Edenton advanced to the regional finals with a 16-10 win over South Lenoir on May 23, with Jordan picking up that victory on the road.



"This team has won more matches than any guys team that we've ever had."

Coach Allen Hornthal

Sean Jackson/The Chowan Herald

Chris Edmundson made quick work of his match at No. 5, besting Jack Saunders 6-0, 6-0 for the lone point of the match in the third round of the 2A state tennis tournament in Edenton on May 23. First Flight took five single matches en route to a 5-1 win, ending the Aces' season after a perfect 23-0 start.

BY SEAN JACKSON
The Chowan Herald

It wasn't supposed to end this way.

Since Edenton's spring tennis season opened on Feb. 28 against Manteo, the wins kept piling up. The team cruised through an undefeated regular season, with the only misstep coming in the Northeastern Coastal Conference tournament, with First Flight taking top honors.

But Edenton had beaten the Nighthawks twice in the season, 6-3 and 5-4. Coming into the Eastern Regional Semifinals against First Flight, Edenton coach Allen Hornthal was expecting another 5-4 match — with either the Aces or the Nighthawks coming out on top.

It was supposed to come down to Edenton's strength, doubles play, with Alex Boehling and Collins Small teaming up for one win at No. 1 doubles, and Mike Potocki and Nick Summerford bringing home another victory at No. 2.

But neither of the duo — who both qualified for the state individual doubles tournament in Cary the weekend before — even got to take the court together. First Flight (15-2) finished off the match, and Edenton's stellar men's tennis season, with a 5-1 victory on the Aces' home courts last Tuesday (May 23).

"I am (disappointed), but this team

has won more matches than any guys team that we've ever had," Edenton coach Allen Hornthal told the Daily Advance. "I told them, 'This is not so much about what you couldn't do, but what they did.' I'm proud of my guys, I'm proud of what they've done this season."

It was a 23-1 mark that may only stand for one season, however, as Boehling, who also plays No. 3 singles, is the team's only senior.

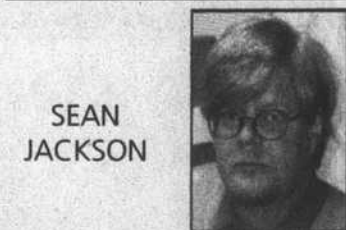
Potocki and Small are juniors, while Summerford is only a freshman and sophomore Chris Edmundson (No. 5 singles) should also become a force to reckon with over the next two years, Hornthal has said.

But for the present, Hornthal and Co. have to lick the wounds of a tough loss against a tough opponent.

"It didn't go our way this time," Hornthal told the Daily Advance. "It is very, very difficult to beat a good team three times in a season."

Singles

William Gray (F) d. Nick Summerford 6-3, 6-0; Taylor Sullivan (F) d. Mike Potocki 5-7, 6-3, (10-8); Pierce Herring (F) d. Alex Boehling 6-0, 6-2; Ian Cook (F) d. Collins Small 6-3, 6-3; Chris Edmundson (E) d. Jack Saunders 6-0, 6-0; Sean Dwyer (F) d. Danny Brusko 2-6, 6-4, (7-5).



SEAN JACKSON

This king is no jester

• Petty thoughts: NASCAR legend Richard Petty thinks racing is a men's-only sport, a venue which women should avoid. I'm not sure if the King has been out on many highways lately, to see ladies pacing along — or past — many male drivers on such harrying routes as Wake County's inner and outer beltlines.

• No. 2: With his historic dinger on Sunday, Barry Bonds has only Hank Aaron to pass to become baseball's homer king. Should he get to 756, would the sport's fans adorn him with a bejeweled crown, a crown of thorns, or the ones they used to give away at Burger King?



No, that wasn't a solar eclipse Sunday afternoon in San Francisco, that was the shadow cast by Barry Bonds doffing his helmet to the fans cheering for his 715th homerun.

• Prince Albert in a can: Through 48 games, the Cardinals' Albert Pujols had 24 homers, on a pace to belt a record 81 for the season. Can Albert set a new record? Probably not.

• Plodding along: Very, very quietly, White Sox first baseman Jim Thome is not just having another stellar season, but is also slowly acquiring some impressive career stats. Through Memorial Day, the 35-year-old had 45 RBI on the season (1,238 for his career) and 18 homers (448). And Thome has not been rumored to be a steroids user.

• Being helpful: In case you hadn't heard, Danica Patrick finished eighth in Sunday's Indy 500. And Carolina leads Buffalo in the Eastern Conference finals, 3-2, meaning the Hurricanes may yet get a chance to vie for the Stanley Cup.

• One more time: Having a Mavs/Heat match-up in the NBA finals wouldn't just give us a chance to see the league's two best teams (Detroit peaked early) in action, but we'd also see Shaq, perhaps for the last time, in a marquee setting. Just make sure the kids look away when he launches a free-throw attempt — which still reminds me of someone tossing a hat up into the top of a closet.

• Triple-size it: So, Kobe wants to go from wearing jersey No. 8 to 24, or three times his current product. He claims it's time to start the next phase of his career. He could easily begin that by convincing Lakers management that the team needs more than one NBA-ready player out on the floor.

Smith Heating & Air rules on UK night

BY JOHN TURNER
Contributing Writer

Smith Heating & Air team members defended their last win with another victory on Saturday night at Cycle Speedway. With a change in temperature, fans and riders were greeted by hot and muggy conditions at its Edenton facility. The racers were ready to hit the track despite the warmer conditions.

The evening began with the Super 8 Foot Race. Cody Eaves of Moyock would lead the two laps en route to claiming the win.

Smith Heating and Air and Phelps Logging would start the team event with a 5-5 tie in heats one and two



Cody Eaves leads Lee Persons and Logan Byrum into turn one on the international track during Saturday night's racing.

of the overall 18 heat race event. In heat three, Bryan Byrum would claim the win for Smith Heating and Air, giving

ing the team a one point advantage. Heat four would see Cody Eaves of Moyock taking the victory, giving his team a two

point lead for Smith Heating and Air.

The teams would battle back and forth over the next several

heat races. At the halfway point, the teams would be tied with 38 points apiece.

The teams would trade the lead in points over several heat races. In heat race 13, Smith Heating and Air would have a one-two finish and took the lead in points with 56 to 52. Smith Heating and Air would not look back as the team rallied to win three of the last five heat races. Phelps Logging suffered several upsets by losing points in heat 14 due to team member Derrick Phillips being lapped by Bryan Byrum, who won the heat race. The team also lost points in heat 16, as Lee Persons was un-

See SPEEDWAY On Page B4