

# Sports Beat

BY BILL JOHNSON



## SAY YOU SAW IT HERE....

Herman Thomas deserves the lofty honors of being named "Manager of the Year" in the popular Triple County Semipro Baseball League. It would be most fitting and proper if the league would single out this hard-working young gentleman with the highest honors it has to offer.

Thomas has won the league's regular season championship and he most likely will add the league's playoff series title to his trophy chest. He and his team have also given the league a tremendous amount of publicity and improved status with their showing in the National Baseball Congress tournament in Lenoir earlier in the season.

Thomas is more than just a manager to his young Morris Field Rangers. He's father, counselor and he sometimes serves as the soothing medicine for their needs outside the baseball field.

As manager, Thomas was at his best Thursday night at Harding High School's athletic field where his doughty chargers encountered the always dangerous Hoskins Giants in the third round of the current Triple County League Championship Play-off Series.

Baseball has not produced a more bitter rivalry.

The Giants, who had not tasted the sweet nectar of victory over the Rangers in their last five meetings, sneaked out in front and were leading 1-0 when Thomas went into his act along the third base coaching box. He is one of the best master-minders seen this side of the major leagues. And his beloved Rangers, who respond to the demands of his signals with the fond assurance a pet lion gives his cagemaster, were ready for the challenge.

The unusually large crowd was not ready for the performance. Neither were the Giants.

Thomas gave the bunt signal to his first batter, who expertly placed the ball down the firstbase line and raced safely to first. Everyone in the ball park, Hoskins included, anticipated another bunt, moving the runner up to second. They guessed right, but Thomas gave them just a bit more than they had suspected. The batter also got the ball in good position and he, too, was safe at first. And when pitcher Benny Little hesitated in fielding the ball, the runner at first scooted all the way to third on what appeared to be a simple sacrifice bunt.

With runners camped at first and third, and the very clever Londell McClary coming to bat. Thomas again crossed up Giants. He again gave the bunt signal. McClary played the "squeeze" perfect and the Rangers' first run of the game crossed home plate to tie the game at 1-1.

The runner at first continued to third on the play, placing Rangers at first and third. McClary promptly stole second and Hoskins's manager James Berry promptly removed Little for southpaw Floyd McDowell.

Thomas apparently liked what he'd been doing. So he call for still another bunt and two Rangers came home on the play. An assessment revealed that the Rangers produced four runs enroute to a big six-run inning without hitting a ball out of the infield. Hoskins chipped in two errors and Thomas had led his Rangers out of danger.

It was a masterpiece of coaching in a league where knocking the ball long distances is the vogue and poor management is commonplace.



Herman Thomas  
...Rangers manager

## Here Saturday

# Charlotte Chiefs To Meet

## Rangers For TCL Championship

The Morris Field Rangers and the Charlotte Chiefs will square off Saturday afternoon for the Triple County Semipro Baseball League's championship.

The contest, which will be played at the Harding High School Athletic Field, is scheduled to begin at 3 p.m. It will climax a playoff series that began a little over a week ago. If the Chiefs win, a second game will be necessary to determine the winner. It will be played at the same time Sunday afternoon.

Both teams advance to the finals through a field of eight tough teams. The Rangers have won four straight games, including a triumph over the Chiefs, who have posted three wins in four starts in the tournament.

The Chiefs whipped the Charlotte Red Birds, 11-2, Saturday afternoon before losing, 13-4, to the Rangers Saturday night. They returned Sunday to edge the Charlotte



Kevin Staley  
...Rangers leader

David Yost limited the Red Birds to four hits while striking out five batters while Nestar Valesquez and Steve Helms were leading the Chiefs' 13-hit barrage against Emmett Cherry, the losing pitcher, and Fokie Davis. Valesquez went 3-for-4 at the plate while Helms was getting four hits in four plate appearances.

Bill Whitmire and Tim Morris also helped to rough up pitcher Jim Erwin and Bill Williams. Whitmire had a two-run homer and Morris came through with a triple and a pair of singles.

The Rangers started the week's play by walloping the Hoskins Giants, 14-7, last Thursday night, behind the pitching of Larry Wright, who struckout 16 Giants while giving up three hits and as many bases on balls.

The winners put together six hits, three walks and three Giants and produced nine runs to break the game open in the second inning.

Hoskins eliminated Kings Mountain, with a 8-5 victory Saturday afternoon. Strong pitching by Willie Dixon and timely hitting by Pete Gwinn and Jerry Alexander provided the margin of victory. Dixon whiffed nine batters while giving up seven singles. Gwinn and Alexander each contributed a double and a single to the Giants' 10-hit attack on Charley Barnes and Marshall.

The Charlotte Bumpers put Hoskins out of the tournament Sunday afternoon with a 5-4 triumph. Melvin Latta, one of the tournament's most outstanding pitchers, gave up only three hits and struck out 16. He walked only two men.

With the scores tied at 4-4, the Bumpers broke away to the victory when an Hoskins error, a stolen base and a single produced the winning margin in the last of the seventh inning.

The win also set the stage for the meeting of the Chiefs and the Bumpers in the second part of Sunday's doubleheader. The Bumpers could not pull the upset, losing 15-12 before a large crowd.

## Hoover, Carr Gain Post's

### "Players of Week" Honors

By James Cuthbertson  
Post Staff Writer

With Melvin Convell Hoover returning punts well within enemy territory and his cousin, Gerald Carr, sending aerial bombs zig-zagging across enemy defensive patterns for explosive touchdowns and long yardage gains, the North Mecklenburg Vikings appears to be the team to beat in the Southwestern 4-A Conference.

Friday night in a 29-0 victory over Mount Airy's Bears, the Charlotte Post's Co-Football Players of the Week set the stage for future exploits.

Six foot, 160 pound Hoover, the son of Mr. and Mrs. James Withers of Brownes Road, returned punts for 35 and 40 yards setting up one Viking touchdown and gained a total of 115 yards for the night.

Six-foot-two inch, 168 pound Gerald Carr passed for 164 yards, completing 6 of 16 passes including a 57-yard strike for a touchdown to Gary Poole, and engineered 138 yards rushing.

Seventeen-year-old Hoover plays basketball and baseball. With his eyes set on professional football as a career, he wants to attend Georgia Tech, or a big "Top Ten" or "Top 20" school.

The former All-County Football Teamer likes Lynn Swann, Mary Lowery, Coach Herb Pattera, O.J. Simpson, Blue, Black, Yellow, Washington D.C., ping pong, swimming, tennis, dancing, the O'Jays, The Ohio Players, George Benson, Earth, Wind and Fire, Wild Cherry and Beef Steak.

Carr, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Orlando Carr of Davidson, likes baseball, basketball, football, serving as Student Council treasurer, O.J. Simpson, Chris Evert, Rochester, Minnesota, all athletes, and traveling.

"We are going to be number one," said Carr, who wants to pursue a career in business, adding, that to finish number one "we must beat East and South."

Melvin agrees, explaining that "I ain't worried about East. I believe we'll take it all the way."

Other prep stars included Curtis Wilson, Myers Park halfback, who ran for a 10 yard touchdown and carried 12 times for 52 yards in a 35-6 Mustang victory over Olympic...Aaron Cunningham of South, who completed five or seven passes for 74 yards and engineered 167 yards rushing in South's 14-7 victory over Gastonia's Ashbrook...Francis Forney of North, who ran for 35 yards down the right sideline for a score of 7-16 at the first quarter...Dale Munday, David White and Gary Berry of North, who anchored the Vikings defense in the 29-0 victory over the Bears.



## JOHNSON C. SMITH UNIVERSITY (GOLDEN BULLS)

- Vs -

## LENOIR RHYNE COLLEGE (BEARS)

SATURDAY NIGHT, SEPTEMBER 11

8 P.M.

CHARLOTTE MEMORIAL STADIUM



Eddie McGirt  
...Athletic Director and Head football coach



Charlie Cox  
...Assistant football coach

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CHAMPIONSHIP CONTEST  
Harding High School Field  
3p.m.  
Saturday, September 11  
MORRIS FIELD RANGERS  
Vs.  
CHARLOTTE CHIEFS  
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