

Mountaineers Open Grid Drills Saturday



Pat's Peckings

By NEALE PATRICK

Notes To You From Sports Whirl

Putting together one little thing and thought after another from the whirl of sports:

The junior season is over here, but the memory lingers on, of the most fascinating Legion team in history of the local program . . . And the fans are already talking about next season when half the squad members will return . . . That's right, seven return, seven depart.

Returnees will be Jerry Morris, Punch Parker, James Robbs, Ronnie Pearson, Bud Sanders, Keith Hillard and Perry Champion, the nucleus of a good team for '60 . . . Sid Franklin misses being eligible by only three days . . . Others who have played their finale for the Legion club are Bobby Biddix and Jerry Wright, the great one-two pitching punch, Don Horn, Roy Metzger, Mike Ware, Tom Fite and Franklin.

Lending aid to the returnees will be several lads who were with the juniors for a brief time, or played high school ball . . . Ken Wilson, Steve Harmon and Larry Pearson . . . Plus some good grads from the local Babe Ruth League program.

Incidentally, the most valuable Junior player trophy which went to Biddix, has started the ball rolling, so to speak, and several trophies will be awarded in the future to Mountaineer athletic stars . . . Details on at least two new trophies will be announced soon . . . And, of course, the Legion MVP award will be an annual thing.

And before leaving baseball for a spell, hats off to other diamond champions in town . . . Bob Wilson's Kiwanis team copped the Little League crown, with several promising youngsters for future clubs here . . . And Coach Willie Grice's Moose champions of the Babe Ruth loop will have some youngsters ready to move up next year.

Kings Mountain softball teams also distinguished themselves in league and tournament play . . . The Burnil slow-pitch softball outfit won the regular-season title in a Gastonia League . . . Then most of the stars of that team switched over to the National Guard entry and made a fine showing in the district slow-pitch at McAdenville . . . And, just to prove their ability wasn't restricted to one type of softball action, some of the same players joined the Craftsman team in the fast-pitch district event at Gastonia.

Gamble Turns-Down Big School Post

Now it can be told that John Gamble turned down an opportunity to leave his Kings Mountain coaching post for one in a larger school several weeks ago . . . Salisbury of the Western 4-A Conference sought Gamble as replacement for the veteran Bill Ludwig who resigned during the summer due to his health . . . The job eventually went to another Southwest Conference mentor, George Tate of R. S. Central.

Two other Kings Mountain natives also have been mentioned in connection with high school and college coaching changes in recent weeks . . . Priddy Ratterree, Citadel aide, was talked as the possible choice for the Appalachian grid job, following Bob Broome's death . . . Jimmy Kimmel, assistant grid coach at Saluda, S. C., was among the prospects for the R. S. Central post, vacated by Tate . . . The Hilltopper went to Max Beam, Cherryville native, former coach at Mt. Holly.

The coaching change in the state which has been creating the most discussion, of course, is the one at UNC, where Jim Hickey was elevated to succeed his late boss, Jim Tatum . . . Everyone asks, "How will Hickey do as head coach?" . . . Only time will tell . . . And, of course, for the first year at least, everything Hickey does will be compared to how Tatum would have done it.

The biggest surprise in the selection of Hickey was the three-year contract . . . Actually, that was the only solution . . . It would not have been fair to Hickey, or any coach, to give a one-year "interim" contract . . . Neither would it have been fair to the players nor to the school and alumni to name a one-year fill-in with intentions of hiring a "name" coach after the season . . . Hickey's three-year appointment, thus, endorses Tatum's judgement of selecting assistants who are capable of stepping-up and also permits a man familiar with the organization to carry out long-range plans set-down by Tatum . . . Hickey was a member of the staff which aided Tatum in making the plans.

Several other Tatum assistants have stepped into successful head coaching posts . . . Such as Bud Wilkinson of Oklahoma, Bill Meek, SMU, the top-ranked team in the Southwest this season, Warren Giese of South Carolina and Eddie Teague of Citadel . . . Tatum, obviously, was a judge of coaching talent, just as he was of playing ability . . . He trained both well . . . UNC has paid him a tribute by selecting one of his aides instead of casting aside all of his organization to look for an outsider.

Gastonia Loves Pirates' Mayhem

Gastonia baseball fans are riding the "bounty main" in perfect bliss over the deeds and actions of the recently-acquired Pirates who seem intent of bringing the Sally League pennant to the newest town in the circuit . . . But the thing which seems to trouble some Gastonia folks as much as the fear of losing the club in '60 is the inability to pin-down a real hero of the team.

A different player stars every night, and just when the faithful are ready to put the hero's shawl on one player, another yanks it from his shoulders with a game-winning play . . . It isn't Reggie Hamilton or Willie Melendez making the dog-gonest defensive plays you ever saw, it's Bill Jackson or Elmo Plaskett or Reggie Grenal or Harry Williams or no-telling-who slugging a late inning homer to rate the starring role for the Jolly Rogers.

Today's chuckle . . . Shelby couldn't beat Kings Mountain in Legion junior baseball this summer, and now we hear that some of the good folk in our neighboring town are talking the prospects of combining the two posts next year and fielding a Cleveland County team . . . If you can't beat 'em, join 'em!

Three members of the Hickory Juniors, who lost to K. M. in the Area semi-finals, are members of the Hickory High football backfield which paced the club to the Western Conference title last autumn . . . Catcher Charles Young is the quarterback, outfielder Larry Rudisill the seat halfback, and outfielder Gene Isenhour, the powerful fullback . . . The other member of the returning foursome is Richard Jackson, the WNCSSAA track sprint champion . . . The ball-totin' quartet will be favored to lead Hickory to its second straight NWC title . . . Could Kings Mountain be seeing more of those young men in another north-south playoff in football this autumn?



JOHN GAMBLE . . . Calling all gridders

Guard Eliminated In Semi-Finals Of Slow-Pitch

National Guard was caught with its guard down in the slow-pitch softball district tournament at McAdenville Tuesday night.

The Kings Mountain club was eliminated in one of the semi-finals tussles Tuesday night, bowing to the defending champion Lowell Stobbs team by a 6-1 score. It was the second loss of the event for the National Guardsmen, the club earlier having lost to Wix of Gastonia.

Pete Peterson was the pitching victim for the Guard Tuesday night, allowing ten hits while his mates reached Harold Rankin for eight. The Guard committed one error, Lowell a pair.

Gene Tignor and Ronnie Kincaid paced National Guard at bat with two hits in three trips each. Leroy Broome and Lawrence Bradley had two each for Lowell.

The Lowell team returned to the field immediately after the win over Kings Mt. and lost to Smyre American in the other semi-finals game. That contest sent Smyre against Kluttz Wednesday, with the winner there due to meet undefeated Wix on Thursday for the district slow-pitch title.

Wix handed National Guard its first loss in the tournament last Thursday, by an 8-2 score. Pete Peterson was the loser as his mates could manage only two hits, the K. M. tosser making one of those.

The Guard copped three straight wins in the tournament before meeting defeat.

Bryant Wins Gun Matches

T. W. Bryant of Kings Mountain continues to reign as the number one sharp-shooter for the Universal Gun Club.

He posted high scores in rifle and pistol matches at the Universal Gun Club range in Grover on Sunday.

Bryant won the 22-calibre rifle match at 50 yards with a score of 183-3x and topped the field in the center-fire pistol match with a score of 264-3x.

Gene Ware of Kings Mountain was second in the rifle match with a score of 164x with Frank Sikes of Shelby finishing third with a 161xxxx score.

C. D. Coats of Swansville was runner-up in the pistol firing with a score of 231x, and F. T. Green of Shelby was third with a 228x score.

Holt Reports Grover Recreation Program Has Busy Summer Season

Grover's first organized recreation program is completing a busy summer.

Preston Holt, coach at Grover High School, has served as the community's recreation director this summer, supervising playground and indoor recreational games. He has been assisted by Miss Mary Herndon, a sophomore at Wake Forest College.

Recreational facilities were set up at the Grover school grounds with a variety of activities, including softball, volleyball, badminton, shuffleboard, table tennis, horse shoes, croquet, checkers and other games.

Two tennis courts also were put into use.

Holt said that the average attendance on the playground activities was about 50 children per day.

"That is a much better attendance than we had anticipated when the recreation program was set up in the spring," said Holt who will return to Grover High School for his fifth year as coach this autumn.

Football becomes king again on the Kings Mountain sports scene this week.

The Kings Mountain High School Mountaineers will gather Saturday morning at 9 o'clock for the opening of pre-season grid drills, with some 45 candidates expected for the twice-a-day sessions.

Coach John Gamble and his aides will send the hopefuls through their paces again at 4 o'clock Saturday afternoon and will follow the same time schedule for the next two and a half weeks until school opens.

The practice slate calls for the Mountaineers to workout from 9 until 11:30 each morning, and from 4 until 6 in the afternoon.

The two-a-day workouts will continue for the next two weeks, except for Saturday and Sunday holidays, after the opening Saturday, until Kings Mountain schools open for the autumn on Wednesday, Sept. 2.

Practice sessions will drop back to once-per-day for the final two afternoons before the opener against Bessemer City here on Friday night, Sept. 4.

Uniforms were issued last spring to all boys planning to turn out for football, and the Mountaineers will be ready to get down to heavy work upon reporting Saturday morning. The candidates have been following a training schedule outlined by Coach Gamble several weeks ago. It called for the prospects to go through daily exercises and running.

All candidates also are reminded to report to the High School Gym Thursday afternoon at 1:30 for physical examinations.

Dr. Z. P. Mitchell, county health officer from Shelby, will give the examinations. All boys must pass the exams before being allowed to practice or play.

Boys unable to attend the physicals on Thursday must obtain a slip from his family physician indicating that he has taken and passed the exam.

Craftspun Loses In Title Game; Four K. M. Players On All-Tourney

Craftspun came to the end of the line in the Midwestern district fast-pitch softball tournament at Gastonia Tuesday night, losing to new champion Dallas by a 12-1 score.

Bo Davis held the Kings Mountain club to four hits while his mates reached Bud Ross for ten knocks.

The loss was Craftsman's second to Davis and Dallas in the double-elimination tournament which determined the district representative to the state event in Charlotte next week. Dallas succeeds Minette Mills A team as the district champ. Minette's defending state champions received a bye through the district journey into the state playoffs.

Craftspun's four hits Tuesday night were divided among as many players as Davis, a veteran tinker in Gastonia softball ranks for years, kept the Kings Mountain club under control.

Dallas was undefeated in the tournament, and if Craftsman had won the first game Tuesday night, a second game would have been required to determine the champion.

Despite the loss, Craftsman placed four players on the all-tournament team, picked by coaches and officials. Bud Ross was picked as one of the pitchers, Lefty Moss at firstbase, Holland Smith in the outfield, and Gene Tignor as a utility outfielder. Dallas and Belmont also placed four on the team.

Minette's B team placed two on the mythical selection, catcher Russell Pinkleton, and pitcher Thurman Peterson.

Others on the all-district softball team were:

Pitchers Bo Davis of Dallas and Dave Riley of Belmont; catcher Louis Brown of Dallas; second baseman Kermit Williams of Belmont, shortstop J. D. McDonald of Belmont, third baseman Bob Crunkleton, outfielders Howard Willard of Gastonia City team, and Ted Crunkleton of Dallas, and utility infielder Ed Isenhour of Belmont.

Forest City Repeats Little League Title

Forest City is the State Little League baseball champion for the second straight year.

With virtually the same players as last year, Forest City polished off Charlotte and Fort Bragg, 10-9, to capture the title on their home field.

Forest City will represent the Tar Heel state in the southern regional little league tournament at Gulfport, Fla., this weekend. The majority of the Forest City players are ticketed to enter Cool Springs High.

injury received last year.

Guards Ronnie Tignor and Danny Bagwell aren't expected out. Bagwell has been living and working in Ohio this summer, and may not return to school here.

Four newcomers to Kings Mountain are among the hopefuls. They are Jimmy Shutt, tenth grader from Augusta, Ga.; Chester Clontz, 11th grader, from R. S. Central High; Ray Hastings, 11th grader from West Yalick High; and Henry Raines, 10th grader from Edenton.

Clontz and Hastings were members of the school football squads at the schools attended last year.

The complete list of prospects who have signed-up for football and have drawn uniforms follows: Lettermen and returning squad members from last year: Paul Hendricks, Gary Blanton,

Harold Crawford, Chip Thorburn, Steve Henderson, Mike Ware, Jerry Adams, Phil Mauney, Punch Parker, Steve Harmon, Arthur Allen, Don Fisher, Mike Dixon, Don Champion, James Bobbs, Curtis Floyd, Jimmy Blanton, Dennis McAbee, Franklin Franklin, Perry Champion, Franklin Dean, Don Roper, Richard Ware, Dale Hollifield, Charles Burns, Jimmy White, and Chalmers Johnson.

Sophomores and freshmen up from the Jayvee team: Wally Harris, Eddie Ross, Tommy Houser, Sammy Houston, Steve Brown, Bill Ramsey, Alton Stewart, Jerry Rickard, Barry Bridges, Robert Whistnant, Genhard Piel, and Tommy Armstrong.

Newcomers are Jimmy Shutt, Chester Clontz, Ray Hastings, and Henry Raines.

and Jimmy Crawford are squad members from last year who may move up. Two big sophomores show promise, Eddie Ross and Jerry Rickard.

GUARDS — David Plonk was due to be the only loss here, with five lettermen expected to return, but for various reasons the group of returnees has been cut to two. Charles Burns and Steve Henderson are the lone letter guards now ticketed for action. Jimmy Rikard, Ronnie Tignor and Danny Bagwell are the trio of missing guards. Another hopeful for the position is a scrapping 130-pounder, Curtis Floyd.

CENTER — Three letter centers departed, Karl Moss and Gene Bowers from the offensive unit and linebacker Jimmy Littlejohn. Mike Dixon is the lone holdover and he saw only brief action in '58.

QUARTERBACKS — Don Fisher returns for his third year at this post, with his '58 understudy, James Robbs, a threat to move up. Wally Harris, brother of former K. M. star, George, is a fine future prospect for the signal-calling role.

HALFBACKS — Scatback Don Gladden is the big loss here and his touchdown shoes must be filled. Reserve Freddie Hambright is another departed baller. Punch Parker was due to head the halfback delegation, but his injury has revamped plans, leaving Phil Mauney and Paul Hendricks as the only two fullbacks still on hand. Both saw limited ball-carrying action last year. Tommy Houser and Alton Stewart are two promising sophomore runners up from the Jayvee team.

FULLBACK — Offensive regular Jimmy Blanton returns and defensive regular Wray Plonk has departed from this position. They were the only two fullbacks last year, and a newcomer must be developed to back-up Blanton.

Offsetting the returnees is the graduation of 12 lettermen, of whom five were offensive starters and at least two other regulars on defense.

Chief among the losses are all-Conference halfback Don Gladden and dual-trophy winner guard David Plonk. The latter won the Gastonia Gazette trophy as the outstanding lineman in the area and also won the annual blocking trophy given here by his father.

Other graduation losses, plus the summer injuries, have left the Mountaineers with only one letter tackle and no veterans at center, two mighty important spots in the line.

The run-down by positions, noting the letter losses and returnees and new hopefuls:

ENDS — Only loss is Don Parker, reserve flanker last season. Four lettermen return, including Mike Ware and Gary Blanton, along with top reserves Chip Thorburn and Jerry Adams.

TACKLES — Four letter tackles have departed, headed by regulars Max Lee and Gilbert Brazzell, along with subs Derek Smith and Larry Miller. Pending the return of Chalmers Johnson, the only vet tackle is Harold (Tank) Crawford, a staunch defensive performer last year. Steve Harmon, Dale Hollifield

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Wilmington is seeking its second state junior title in four years, having defeated Coach Fred Withers' Gastonia team in the 1956 state finals. Shelby has won the past two state crowns. Kannapolis is a three-time winner in state Legion history, the last time being in 1952.

Steve Kesler and John McGinnis have not played their first round match, opposite Ed Ledford who defeated Jerry McCarter earlier.

The semi-finals round of the doubles was completed this week when Rudy Frazier and Roger Stowe defeated Jim Macomson and Julian Wray, 6-3, 10-8. That sends Frazier and Stowe against Ed Ledford and Bill Childers who won their opener earlier.

The top bracket doubles semi-finals pits defending champions John Warlick and Fred Plonk against R. G. Plonk and Joe Austin, 6-0, 6-1, and thus is due to play

Five Expected Lettermen Among Missing As K.M. Opens Football

Seventeen lettermen were eligible for the 1959 edition of the Kings Mountain High Mountaineer football team . . . but the total reporting this week has been trimmed by five as result of summer-time broken bon injuries and other reasons.

Punch Parker and Chalmers Johnson will be on the absent list when the Mountaineers begin banging heads Saturday morning at City Stadium. Both were tabbed for first string berths this fall, Parker at halfback for the second straight season, and Johnson at the already-depleted tackle post.

Parker is out for some six weeks with a broken collar bone suffered in the final American Legion junior baseball game of the season with Mt. Holly here a couple of weeks ago. Coach John Gamble hopes he will be ready for action when the season turns into October and the Mountaineers meet Shelby.

Johnson's status is uncertain. He suffered a broken leg in a freak accident falling out of an automobile during the summer. He also may be able to play by October.

Three guards who won letters last year and were in line for more action this autumn have been crossed off the list for varied reasons.

Jimmy Rikard has been advised by physicians to give up football as result of a shoulder injury he suffered last year. Danny Bagwell has been spending the summer in Ohio with relatives, and may not return to school here. Ronnie Tignor, a regular offensive guard last season, has given up football.

The loss of the five lettermen leaves Coach Gamble and his aides with 12 lettermen, four of whom were considered regulars last year when the Mountaineers finished second in the Southwest Conference for the second straight season.

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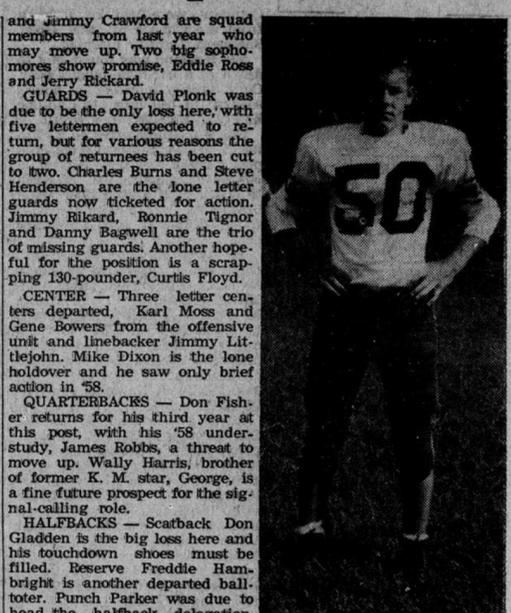
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PUNCH PARKER . . . one of the wounded

Jerry McCarter Coaching Aide At Ware Shoals

Jerry McCarter, former Kings Mountain high school athletic star will move into the football coaching ranks this autumn.

The ex-Mountaineer three-sport ace will serve as a practice teacher and assistant grid coach at Ware Shoals, S. C., High School during the fall semester while he completes studies at Erskine College.

McCarter has been named to coach the Jayvee team at Ware Shoals, a member of the Class B high school athletic organization in the Palmetto State. He also will teach classes in physical education, and attend a few classes at Erskine, located eight miles away at Due West, S. C.

A member of the football, basketball, and baseball teams at Kings Mountain High, McCarter has played basketball and baseball at Erskine.

McCarter will return to Erskine to complete his studies at the end of the fall semester at Ware Shoals. He will graduate from Erskine next spring.

He will leave Kings Mountain this week end for Ware Shoals to be on hand for the opening of pre-season drills on Monday morning.

K. M. Coaches Pick-Up Grid Points

Mountaineer coaches John Gamble and Bill Bates were highly impressed with the South Carolina football clinic they attended in Columbia last week.

They attended clinic classes conducted by two successful young coaches, Darrell Royal of Texas and Ben Martin of the U. S. Air Force Academy. Royal discussed his split-T formation and his organization which is returning the Longhorns to a foremost position in collegiate football.

Martin explained his "flying T" and his system which helped the Falcons gain a Cotton Bowl berth last year.

Both coaches showed pictures of several of their top games last year, including Texas' big upset over Oklahoma.



PRESTON HOLT . . . directs Grover recreation

one of the Shelby Little Leagues. This is the first year of the organized playground and recreation program in Grover, Holt said, and that the response has been so gratifying that the activities will be continued next summer.

Hughes And Stewart Hurl Dixon Victory

The Dixon community junior baseball team copped another win Friday, defeating Pine Ridge, 6-3. Jackie Hughes and Gary Stew-

art teamed-up to pitch the win, with Ronnie Roberts, Ronnie Parker and Butch Stallings hurrying for the losers.

Arnold Jackson led Dixon's hitting with a homer and double. Hughes hit a triple and Gary Bo-