



PHILBERT SMITH, who is returning for his third year of varsity play for the KM Mountaineers, takes handoff from quarterback Chuck Easley, also a three-year performer. The Mountaineers, trying to improve on last year's 5-5 record, open their '69 campaign at home on Sept. 5 against Bessemer City.

# Bates Feels Team Will Be Ready

## Lineups Almost Set; Still Weak At Couple Spots

Kings Mountain High Football coach Bill Bates admits his Mountaineers are still weak at a few positions but he feels his club will be ready when it opens the 1969 season here next Friday against non-conference foe Bessemer City.

Since the opening of school last Friday, the Mountaineers have been working out once a day and the lineups, both offensively and defensively, have begun taking shape.

Both lineups are set with the exception of a few positions. There's depth at most spots, something that has been missing the past few years.

"Right now, we're just about set," says Bates. "Our defense is a little ahead of our offense, but that's nothing unusual. Boys naturally like to play defense better than offense, especially in the line."

Presently, the big question marks are at ends and guards. "We have depth at those positions," says Bates, "but a lot of the boys are inexperienced."

Bates says he'll choose his starting defensive ends from three players, Gerald Putnam, Ray Hughes and Johnny Hogue. Hughes, a junior, and Putnam, a senior, saw limited action last season when the Mountaineers finished 5-5.

At the defensive tackles, Bates said Larry Rayfield, Gerald Herndon and Jerry Lovelace have been impressive and the linebacker posts are being manned well by a pair of returning starters, sophomore Danny Oliver and junior Randolph Ross.

Dale Russell, a promising sophomore, apparently has the middle guard spot nailed down.

Five players have been impressive in the defensive secondary: Mike Blanton, Philbert Smith, Frankie Bell, Charles Barnes and Bobby Ethridge.

Offensively, the Mounties have depth in the backfield and Bates says "we have two sets of backs ready to go."

Currently running first unit are Geeper Howard at quarterback, Smith and Barnes at halfbacks and sophomore David Bolin at fullback. Running second unit are Chuck Easley at quarterback, Chuck Carpenter and Carl Fulton at the halfbacks and Frankie Bell at fullback.

Putnam, Hughes and Ethridge are top candidates at offensive ends and Bates added that two sophomores, Chris Blanton and Steve Plunk, have also been impressive. "They're going to be real good football players," said Bates, "but they're not quite ready."

Bates said a lot of work needs to be done with the guards. Russell, Ross, Arthur Carroll and John Grier are top candidates and Bates says a tackle might be moved there.

Lovelace, Herndon, Gary Henderson and sophomore Steve Ingle have been impressive at the tackle posts.

Oliver's still running first unit center and is being backed up by Laurin Whisnant and Kenny Bridges.

"The spirit has been real high," said Bates, "and that's always a good indication of a promising football team. Our overall speed is beginning to pick up a little bit, too."

The injury bug has eluded the Mountaineers thus far.

"We haven't had to send a single boy to the doctor yet," said Bates, "and that's another thing that helps the team keep a good frame of mind."

Bates said he's been pleased with the club's overall showing and he expressed optimism of a high finish in the Southwestern Conference standings.

He said the football picture at KMHS "is better than it's been the last couple of years."

Kings Mountain fans can see the Mountaineers in action tonight at Gardner-Webb College when they participate in the annual "Pigskin Preview" along with Gardner-Webb, Chase, Shelby and Crest.

Action gets underway at 7 p.m.

### Mountaineer Football Schedule

DATE	TEAM	PLACE
Sept.		
5	Bessemer City*	HOME
12	Chase	AWAY
19	East Rutherford	HOME
26	Belmont	HOME
Oct.		
3	Cherryville	AWAY
10	R-S Central	AWAY
17	Shelby	HOME
24	Crest	AWAY
31	Burns	HOME
Nov.		
7	Lincolnton	HOME

\* Non-conference game.  
\*\* All games 8 p.m.



HIGH-FLYING TACKLE — Gerald Herndon, who is expected to open at one tackle post for the KM Mountaineers this fall, pounces on loose football. Herndon, a letterman last year when the Mountaineers finished 5-5 and fourth in the SWC's Division A, is a senior at KMHS.

## Pigskin Preview Is Tonight At Gardner-Webb

BOILING SPRINGS — The first of a series of outstanding sports events sponsored by the county's strongest athletic organization will be held tonight at Ernest W. Spangler Stadium at Gardner-Webb College.

The Pigskin Preview, a kickoff of area football, begins at 7 p.m. and also trips the lever which begins a whole series of athletic programs.

Bulldog Club members, boosters of the Gardner-Webb College athletic program, have in the last three years grown from a less than \$5,000-a-year organization to a \$40,000-a-year one and growth is still evident.

This group of men and women have thrust the Bulldogs into the national junior college limelight in athletics and built a solid base of scholarship monies for the senior college program. "It is on the work of these people that future supporters will build this area's finest athletic program," states Coach Eddie Holbrook, dynamic director of the club.

Always thinking of ways to improve the club, athletics and the area's athletic program, members have initiated a Pigskin Preview, a successful Holiday Basketball Tournament and last spring's successful Bulldog Open Golf Tournament.

From a small beginning of males, the club grew until this year members asked for and received organizations for the Dogettes, a female branch of the club and the 'Dog Club, a branch for young people of the area who support the Bulldogs.

Both these organizations are growing by leaps and bounds and are expected to carry out unique functions for the program. The Dogettes' primary function will be to solicit memberships for the Bulldog Club. However, this group will enjoy serving as hostesses for many events, including the athletic contests.

The 'Dog Club will promote interest among youth and at the same time provide a club for young people who want to identify with the Bulldog Club and Gardner-Webb athletics.

Bill Elliott, president of the club, states that membership changes and benefits have been made for the coming season. Some of these are: \$10, Bulldog booster who has priority to purchase tickets to games, receives a car decal, athletic schedules and bulletins from the coaches; \$35, includes all the above and also one ticket to all home football games in the Bulldog Club section, one ticket in the general Bulldog Club section in basketball and children have privilege of joining the 'Dog Club; \$65, includes all the above benefits with the exception that the member's wife is admitted on this card to all games. The \$100 membership includes all the above plus reserved parking, reserved-numbered seats and the option to buy additional Century Club seats at the season ticket price. The \$250-500 membership has all the above plus four reserved seats for both football and basketball. The \$1,000 and above membership is the same as the \$250-\$500 except for there are six reserved seats for both basketball and football.

## East Rutherford To Participate In G-W Preview

BOILING SPRINGS — The addition of East Rutherford High School's football team to the Second Annual Pigskin Preview at Gardner-Webb College adds luster to an already strong group of gridirers.

The Thursday night preview gets underway at 7 p.m. in the Ernest W. Spangler Memorial Stadium at Gardner-Webb College with a public address description from coaches about their respective teams. All play will be intrasquad due to N. C. High School Athletic Association rules.

The Bulldog Club of Gardner-Webb is sponsoring this pre-season look at Gardner-Webb College, Crest High, Shelby High, Kings Mountain High, East Rutherford High and Chase High.

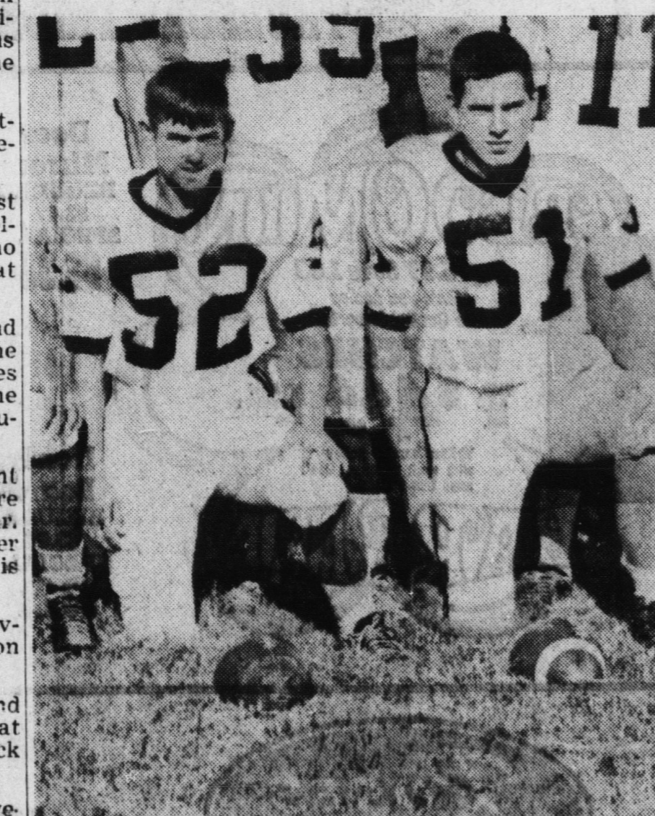
Coach Gerald Allen of Shelby High will add a "little extra" to the football evening with a clinic session of football rules and some of the various offenses and defenses being used in the game. All profit from the preview will go to the athletic scholarship fund of the Bulldog Club and Bulldog Club members will handle duties surrounding the event.

## KM Club Second At Cherryville

Kings Mountain's slowpitch softball team finished second in the annual Cherryville Invitational Tournament, held last week at two parks in Cherryville.

The Kings Mountain club advanced to the finals undefeated, but dropped a pair to the Cherryville All-Stars in the championship round, losing 9-5 and 14-5. In the championship contest, KM jumped out front 5-0 in the first inning but the Cherryville club scored seven runs in the fifth and sixth racks to put the game out of reach.

Four players from Kings Mountain were named to the All-Tournament team. They were pitcher Pete Peterson, infielder Bud Bumgardner and outfielders George Pittman and Ronnie Payne.



CENTER CANDIDATES — Kenny Bridges, left, and Laurin Whisnant are among candidates for the center position on the Kings Mountain High football team. Bridges, a senior, played sparingly last season while Whisnant, also a senior, sat out most of the season with an injury. Both are expected to see plenty of action this fall as the Mountaineers try to improve on their 5-5 record of a year ago.

## Points Double At Hickory Oval

HICKORY, N. C. — Double point races in both the Hobby and Sportsman divisions highlight this week's schedule at the Hickory Speedway. The winner of each race will get 100 points with each position afterwards receiving four points less.

Normally, a double point event gives drivers near the top a chance to catch up with the leaders and it could happen Saturday. This is only a mathematical probability, however, as the runners, up would have to win and the current leaders go out very early in order for a point leader to change.

Harry Gant of Taylorsville picked up 18 points on Richard Brown in Claremont in the Sportsman ranks last week despite finishing 15th after wrecking. Gant now has 581 points to 510 for Brown. Tommy Houston of Conover is a distant third with 458 points, but continues to lead the money parade with \$4,981.

Junior Crouch of Taylorsville got 40 points for his sixth place finish in Saturday's Hobby race, padding his lead over Henry Parnes of Taylorsville by 26 points. Crouch has 588 points to 502 for Parnes.

Steve Sipe of Taylorsville overtook Les Carpenter of Hickory in the Rookie ranks by winning last week. He now has \$289 to \$270 for Carpenter. No point standings are kept in this division.

This week promoter Ned Jarrett has cancelled all four heat races normally on the schedule in order to allow time for a 90-minute country and western music show featuring Bill Hefner and the Country Style Roundup team for WBTN in Charlotte. Hefner and his group will perform immediately after the three feature races. There is no extra charge for the show.

## Checkers Will Play 36 At Home

CHARLOTTE, N. C. — An attractive and challenging 36-game home schedule was announced today by Al Manch, President of the Charlotte Checkers. The opening game is slated for Oct. 17 (a Friday night) against Salem.

Pres. Manch commented, "This year's schedule is very satisfactory to us, especially in view of the demand for Coliseum dates from all activities."

"I speak for myself and Coach Fred Creighton in that we are happy to have eight home contests with Greensboro. Seven on Fridays, and one on a Saturday."

Creighton, now in his sixth season as coach of the Charlotte organization, noted that the away schedule, as usual, is taxing. However, he pointed out the Northern swing will be made in early November. Traditionally the long journey into Johnston, Syracuse, Long Island, Clinton and New Jersey is exhausting.

Old rival Greensboro will first be met on Oct. 26 in the Gate City. The first Charlotte Coliseum clash with the Generals will be on Oct. 31 — after the Checkers have met Salem, Nashville and Jacksonville on home ice.

"Now that the schedule is completed, we're confidently embarking into the 1969-70 season," said President Manch. "It's my feeling we have one of our most rewarding seasons in history."

## Herald Sports

Football is just around the corner and Kings Mountain High School fans are ready to go.

Though the opener for the Mountaineers is still over a week away, several clubs open Friday night and one of the western 3-A Conference game—Burns at R-S Central is on tap.

One other Southwestern Conference club opens Friday at one.

Kings Mountain opens at home next Friday against Bessemer City of the Little Six Conference. Bessemer plays east Lincoln, another 2-A school, in its season opener this Friday in Bessemer City.

The Mountaineers have been hard at work preparing for the Sept. 6 opener and the general feeling among most fans is that Coach Bill Bates' club is in for a good season.

The Mounties finished 5-5 overall last year and have good shot to better that mark this time. It is said only Chase and Shelby have better material than the Mountaineers.

Pre-season ratings say that Shelby will repeat as the conference champions, with Chase the top club in Division I. Most SWC coaches agree that Chase has the league's top player in quarterback Gary Cobb, an all-conference election last trip.

Chase won the Division B title last year, and whipped Vatauga in the opening round of the Western North Carolina playoffs before running into the Shelby club, which went on to cop the association title.

Shelby went undefeated, but was tied, 20-20, by Chase in a regular season game.

Shelby Coach Gerald Allen, who is beginning his 21st season as head coach of the Lions, declares his '69 club is not nearly as good as last year's team. The Lions lost super-star Mike Haggard, but have a good crop of returning starters, including quarterback Robbie Reynolds and halfback Marcus Mauney, both all-conference selections a year ago.

Kings Mountain, with quarterback Geeper Howard and halfback Philbert Smith returning to the offensive backfield, has been given a good shot at third, but Belmont and R-S Central are also expected to field tough clubs.

Belmont has consolidated with Cramerton, a club which advanced to the semi-finals of the state 2-A tournament last year while playing mostly sophomores and juniors.

The Red Raiders also have several starters back from last year's Belmont club, which finished second in the Division B standings. Rick Cherry, a 6-2, 220-pounder, returns for his third year at quarterback and is rated one of the top passers in the conference.

R-S Central, always a toughie in the SWC, has 15 lettermen back from last year's club which finished third (behind Shelby and Lincolnton) in the Division A race.

Lincolnton, with only four starters back from last year's club which finished 9-1 (it's only loss being to Shelby, 14-0), is said to be in the rebuilding stage but those who have seen Von Ray Harris operate in the past know that he'll be tough before it's over.

Crest, which finished 3-7 last year in only its second year of football, is said to be improved and could be the powerhouse in Division B. Max Beam, who built powerhouses at Mt. Holly and R-S Central, returns as head coach of the hargers and he's being assisted by Kings Mountain's Huert McGinnis.

Cherryville and Burns are said to be lacking in talent and might bring up the rear in Division B. The Ironmen are laying under a new coach for the second straight year. Red King has taken over for Don Scott, who resigned after one season to take a coaching post at Dunn, N. C. King is being assisted by Kings Mountain's Lyn Cheshire.

Nothing much has been said of East Rutherford's Cavaliers, once a conference powerhouse. The Cavs, who won the title in '65 and '66, were down for the past two years.

Kings Mountain's hopes ride on its offensive line and defense. The backfield is well balanced with Howard at quarterback, Smith and Charles Barnes at the halfback lots and David Bolin at fullback.

Only one starter returns up front, tackle Jerry Lovelace, and he missed several games last year because of an injury. Several untested sophomores and juniors are being counted on to fill the vacancies.

Kings Mountain will be in action this Friday at Gardner-Webb College, where they'll participate in the second annual "Pigskin Preview." Teams from Shelby, Chase, Crest and Gardner-Webb will also participate.