

HERALD SPORTS

By GARY STEWART

Withers' Success On Ball Field Topped Only By Success In Class

Grafton Withers, Kings Mountain High's All-Southwestern Conference first baseman, probably will never reach the superstar status but his love for the game of baseball and his never-say-die attitude will always make him a winner.

Withers is winding up a three-year career at KMHS and is off to his best start ever, hitting .412 and sporting a 1.000 fielding average.

Withers' success on the baseball field is topped only by his success in the classroom. A straight A student, he is a Morehead Scholar and this fall will enter Duke University, where he hopes to land a spot on the Blue Devil baseball team.

"I've been playing baseball about all my life," says Grafton, whose father Fred is a former professional baseball player and former coach here. "I'm going to talk to the coach at Duke (Enos Slaughter) and see what my chances are on playing baseball there. Duke will have some good boys but their first baseman graduates, so maybe that will help me."

Grafton has held numerous offices during his four years at KMHS and is currently president of the student body. He has attended Governor's School and is also co-business manager of the annual.

Withers has steadily improved during his high school baseball career. He hit .242 as a sophomore and .269 last season. He says his experience has made him a better hitter this spring.

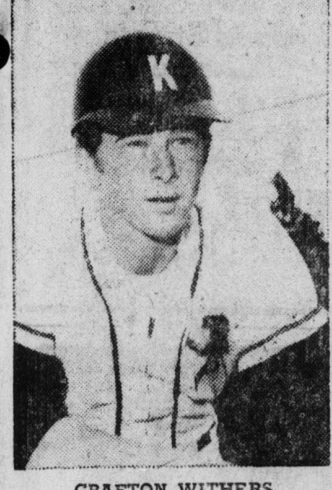
"I'm seeing the ball a lot better," he says, "but I guess the main reason my hitting has improved is the fact that I am a senior and I've seen the pitchers I've been facing many times."

"The past two years," he continued, "the pitchers I saw were mostly seniors and I hadn't seen a whole lot of them. But now I've been starting for three years and know what to expect from most of the pitchers."

Withers also points to experience as the difference in this year's team and last year's, which finished second in the Southwestern Conference with an 11-7 record.

"Seven of our nine starters have been playing together for three years," he says. "The personnel is the same. We just have experience now. And, all of us love to play baseball and we want to win."

Withers says the next two weeks, when the Mountaineers have six games carded, will make or break their season.



GRAFTON WITHERS

"Most of those games are at home," he says, "and we need to win every one of them. If we can do that, we can afford to lose one on the road. We ought to go 18-0 this year. That would be nice."

Withers, who says he tries "real hard to do the very best," says his father, who once coached former New York Yankee great Bobby Richardson, has helped him most in his baseball.

"Being a former professional," says Grafton, "he knows a lot about the game. He has always been good to take me out back and show me what I'm doing right and wrong. He has helped me more than anybody else."

Grafton also credits much of his success to his teammates and to his high school coaches, Bobby Hussey, who coached him as a sophomore, and the current KMHS mentor, Barry Gibson.

Withers says hitting in the clutch has been a key reason for KM's early success this spring. "Everybody seems to hit with men on base," he said. "We're not leaving men on base like we used to do."

Grafton played on the KMHS basketball team as a sophomore and junior and still plays some "sandlot" basketball but he says baseball has always been his first love.

"I began playing little league when I was eight years old," he says, "and I'd been a 'backyard' ballplayer even before that."

As a 15-year-old, Withers was a member of the Kings Mountain Babe Ruth All-Star team which won the state championship, so all-star honors are nothing new to him.

He would gladly, however, give up personal honors for a SWC title.

"That would be a good way for our seniors to end their high school careers," he says.

—Adams Chosen By Bucks

Kings Mountain's George Adams, All-American basketball star at nearby Gardner-Webb College, was a third round choice by the NBA champion Milwaukee Bucks in Monday's annual NBA college player draft.

Adams, who recently led G-W to fourth place in the national NAIA tournament in Kansas City, was the 47th player picked in the draft of college stars.

Adams was one of several cagers from North Carolina colleges to be chosen.

Four players from North Carolina's Tar Heels were chosen, including Robert McAdoo by Buffalo in the first round; Dennis Wuyeyik by Boston in the second round; Bill Chamberlain by Golden State in the third round and Steve Previs by Boston in the seventh round.

Jacksonville's Ernie Fleming, a former Gardner-Webb standout and a former teammate of Adams, was chosen in the fourth round by Detroit. UCLA's Henry Bibby, a North Carolina native, was chosen by New York in the fourth round.

Two cagers who played in area tournaments this season were also chosen. St. Augustine's Curtis Pritchett, who played in the Kings Mountain Invitational, was chosen in the seventh round by Philadelphia. Joe Gaines of Belmont College in Tennessee, who played in the Gardner-Webb Holiday Tournament, was chosen in the sixth round by Portland.

And, just for the record, Gary Stewart was chosen in the fourth round by Golden State. Stewart was a collegiate standout at Canisius.

KM Hosts Lincolnton Friday, Chase Monday

Kings Mountain High's baseball team, 4-2 in Southwestern Conference play after back-to-back losses to South Point and Shelby, try to get back in the thick of battle here Friday when they host winless Lincolnton.

The Mountaineers will remain at home Monday for a makeup game with Chase, then will begin second round play Tuesday at Crest High School. The Mountaineers still have a makeup game with East Rutherford.

Senior Rick Hord, who lost his first game Friday to South Point, will probably start for Coach Barry Gibson's club against Lincolnton, a team which has yet to find the winning combination under new Coach Richard Smith, a former major leaguer.

Needless to say, the Mountaineers will probably be doing much work on their defense. A sure-fielding club during their first six games, the Mountaineers com-

KM, East Play Today

Kings Mountain High's baseball game with East Rutherford, rained out Wednesday for the second time, is scheduled to be played today at 4 p.m. on the KM diamond.

The Mountaineers, 4-2 in Southwestern Conference play, will be trying to break a two-game losing streak.

mitted 12 errors in their two losses to South Point and Shelby. They booted the ball seven times in Friday's 14-6 loss to South Point and Shelby. They booted the ball seven times in Friday's 14-6 loss to South Point and they made five miscues, in Monday's 8-2 defeat at the hands of Shelby.

South Point, which was tied with the Mountaineers for first place until Friday, now holds a full two-game lead in the race

for the SWC title. The Mountaineers and Cherryville are tied for second place with 4-2 marks. The Red Raiders have already won two SWC titles this year, one in football and one in girls basketball.

Grafton Withers, KM's All-Conference first baseman, will lead the Mountaineers into battle in their upcoming contests. He's the team's top hitter with a .417 av-

erage, having collected 10 hits in 24 times to the plate.

Keith Parker and David Bolin who were the leaders last week with .421 marks, have slipped somewhat and are now below the coveted .400 level. Parker is hitting at a .370 clip with 10 hits in 27 times at bat and Bolin is hitting .357 with 10 hits in 28 trips to the plate.

Shelby's Corn Is Top Winner At Carolina

By RICK BREWER

CHAPEL HILL — The biggest winner among athletes at the University of North Carolina is the Littlest Tar Heel of them all. Jimmy Corn, the 5-6, 132-pound senior from Shelby, has blazed an incredible four-year tennis record at Carolina.

Corn, currently playing at the number two single and doubles spots for the Tar Heels, has posted a career record of 70-11 in singles and 69-10 in doubles. He has a great chance to break Tommy Bradford's career record of 77 wins in singles play.

"Crack," as he is generally known on the UNC campus, has won three Atlantic Coast Conference singles titles and two doubles crowns in his three years of competition in the ACC Tournament. He is now the defending flight two champion in singles and doubles.

Only former Carolina star Bryson Van Wyck has won as many ACC titles as Corn. And Jimmy will get a chance to break that tie in the ACC Tournament at Charlottesville, Va. April 20-22.

But it isn't so much the number of matches he's won, as it is the way he has won them that has made Jimmy one of the most exciting players ever at Carolina. His size and his mop of blond, sometimes sun-bleached white hair give him the appearance of a junior high schooler. Until he walks on a tennis court.

Because of his size he doesn't have the big serve. But he does have an excellent service return, good ground strokes, and a determination to win.

"The best part of his game is his head," says UNC Coach Don Seale. "He's always thinking. And he's very dedicated. He works on his game all the time. It's gotten stronger every year he's been here."

Corn believes that having a mental edge is more important than having a physical edge. "Everyone has certain strengths and weaknesses," he says. "The key to winning is to play to your opponent's weakness and force him to play to your strength. You've got to outthink him and keep the pressure on until you're controlling the tempo of the game."

"Since I don't have an overpowering serve, I've worked on my service return. If I can break my opponent's serve and hold my own consistently enough, I'm going to win."

One reason Corn is so popular is the constant chatter he keeps up on the court. He's always taking a sarcastic cut at his own game.

"Gee, that's a lovely shot, Jimmy," he'll say after a poor play. (Continued On Page Four)



WINS AT CHERRYVILLE — It's not easy to win a baseball game without throwing a pitch but Keith Parker, above, has the secret. He did it Thursday at Cherryville.

Parker Doesn't Throw Ball, But Wins Game

It's not easy to win a baseball game without throwing a pitch. But Kings Mountain High School's Keith Parker did just that last Thursday at Cherryville.

Parker was pitching for KMHS several weeks ago when the two clubs had to call it quits due to darkness after 11 innings. The score was tied 2-2.

Thursday, the two teams met on the Cherryville field to complete the game. Kings Mountain came to bat in the top of the 12th and scored four runs for a 6-2 lead.

So, when the Mountaineers took the field in the bottom of the inning, Coach Barry Gibson decided to move Parker to shortstop and called on Danny Hartsoe for relief duty.

Hartsoe allowed only one base-runner, via a base on balls, and saved the game for Parker, who picked up his first victory of the season ... without throwing a pitch.

The Mountaineers won the

game against Cherryville's All-Conference ace, Joe Heavner, who had come on in the sixth inning. Heavner's own wildness contributed to the Mountaineers' big 12th inning rally.

Rick Hord, who had started on the mound several days earlier, singled to lead off the rally and stole second and third. Wayne Bridges walked and stole second and Hord then scored the tie-breaking run on a wild pitch.

After Heavner hit Grafton Withers with a pitch, David Bolin reached on an error which scored Bridges. Keith Parker then doubled to drive in Withers and Bolin later scored on Hartsoe's sacrifice fly.

As it turned out, Cherryville out-hit the Mountaineers 11-8 with Heavner leading the way with 3-for-5. Tony Owens added 2-for-3. Bolin, Parker and Hord had two hits apiece to lead the Mountaineers and Tim Echols and Hartsoe added one apiece.

The loss was the second for the Ironmen, who are challenging South Point and Kings Mountain for the Southwestern Conference title.

Defense Crumbles In Losses To South Point And Shelby

Mounties Make Five Miscues In 8-2 Defeat

Kings Mountain's Mountaineers turned in their second straight shoddy fielding performance here Tuesday afternoon and dropped their second straight Southwestern Conference contest, 8-2 to Shelby's Lions.

The Mountaineers jumped off to a 1-0 lead in the first inning when David Bolin cracked a long homer over the centerfield wall but the Lions came storming back in the fourth, fifth and sixth innings to claim their third SWC win in seven outings. The loss dropped the Mountaineers to 4-2 and into a tie for second place.

Danny Hartsoe was charged with the loss after coming on to relieve Keith Parker in the fourth with KM ahead by 2-1. The Mountaineers had picked to their second run in the third. When Robbie Moore walked and later scored on a single by Grafton Withers.

Two KM errors, a walk and (Continued On Page Four)

Mounties Error Seven Times Against Belmont

Kings Mountain's usually-tough defense committed seven errors and South Point rocked KM pitchers Rick Hord and Danny Hartsoe for 15 hits here Friday afternoon as the Mountaineers dropped their first Southwestern Conference game of the season, 14-6.

The victory kept the Red Raiders unbeaten and in first place in the SWC. Kings Mountain dropped to second place.

Danny Clawson, South Point's ace, picked up his fourth victory of the year but the strong right-hander, who earlier hurled a no-hitter against East Rutherford, needed seventh inning relief help from Don Davis.

All of South Point's nine starters obtained at least one hit as KM's pitching staff was given its biggest embarrassment of the season.

Hord, who hurled the first two innings, was charged with the defeat. Hartsoe, who hadn't given up a run in his first 16 innings, was tagged for nine runs, four of them earned.

The Mountaineers managed just six hits off Clawson and four of those came in the fifth inning, when the Mountaineers scored four runs to cut a 12-2 deficit to 12-6.

The only bright spot in KM's hitting attack were Tim Echols and Grafton Withers, who blasted home runs. Echols slammed a two-run homer in the second inning to tie the score at 2-all. Withers hit a three-run shot in the fifth.

Dutch Harris, a sophomore outfielder, was the big gun for the Red Raiders. He had a single, double and two-run homer in four times at bat. Robert Clawson, Kyle Fletcher, Lewis Lineberger and Billy Stone added two hits apiece.

KM-Shelby Boxscore

Boxscore table for Kings Mountain vs Shelby. Columns include player names, AB, R, H, RBI. Kings Mountain totals: 4-0-1-0. Shelby totals: 8-2-8-5.

Wray's Slam Leads Patriots

Jacky Wray's pinch-hit grand slam home run in the bottom of the seventh inning Monday led Central Junior High's Patriots to their third straight victory, 11-7 over West Cleveland.

The victory was Central's 13th straight victory over the past two seasons.

Wray's home run handed Scott Ledford's pitching victory. Ledford went all the way for the Patriots, scattering six hits and striking out 19 West batters.

Steve Southwell paced the Patriots' seventh-inning attack with 2-for-4 and Jeff Jones had a double. Five errors almost cost the Patriots.

Coach Tommy Pruitt takes his charges to meet Ashley in a non-conference game. The Patriots have four conference games carded next week. They play Central Cleveland away Monday, North Cleveland away Tuesday, West Cleveland away Wednesday and South Cleveland at home Friday.

The South Cleveland game next Friday will be at 7:30 p.m. at Deal Street Park.

Boxscore KM-Belmont

Boxscore table for Kings Mountain vs Belmont. Columns include player names, AB, R, H. Kings Mountain totals: 3-1-1-1. Belmont totals: 15-14-15.

Baltimore Team Takes Top Spot In Tournament

Baltimore bowlers fared well in the week-end competition in the National Duckpin bowling tournament at Richmond, Virginia, over the week end.

The Post's Sport Shop Team, Baltimore, Maryland, took the lead in the Women's Championship team division with games of 662, 640 and 600 for a 1902 score. Individual scores were Peggy Nichols 408, Joan Lang 411, Hannah Krause 366, Rose Perzinski 370 and Sue Burucker 405.

Cathy Sanders and Jackie Tull, Baltimore, moved into first place in the Women's Doubles with 776. Sanders rolled 419 and Tull 357.

Wally Adams, North Haven, Connecticut, took over in men's singles with games of 180, 172, and 116 for 468.

Stanley Webster, Baltimore, Maryland, took the lead in the Men's All-Events with 1282. He had 440 in Singles, 426 in Doubles, and 416 with his team. Cathy Sanders, also from Baltimore, leads in the women's All-Events with 1203. She had 374 in Singles, 419 in doubles, and 410 with her team.

The Mixed Doubles lead was taken by Dot Mainley and Ted Lewinski, also of Baltimore, with 790. Mainley rolled 361 and Lewinski 429.

BOWLING ...right down your alley...

Mixed League

Bob Herdon and Wimp Bowen shared individual scoring honors in mixed league action Thursday night but Bowen's team, captained by Robert Ramsey, came out on top, four games to none.

Both bowlers scored 364 sets but more balance scoring led the Ramsey team to victory. Fololwin Bowen's 364 were Ramsey's 349 and Eddie McKee's 333. Mrs. McKee won high line honors with a 138.

Herdon had a 130 line to go with his 361 set. But the only other member of his team to top 300 set mark was Pat Herdon, who scored a 327.

Mull Ramsey tallied a 125 line and 326 set to lead his team to three wins over Dilling Heating. Charly Tignor's 122 line and John Dilling's 321 set led the losers.

Ranny Blanton's team swept four games from Plonk Brothers as Elanton scored a 147 line and 347 set. Jenny Oates led the losers with a 129 line and 326 series.

Men's League

Ronnie Culbertson won high scoring honors in men's league action Monday night, scoring a 123 line and 363 set in Cub's Paint Company's three-game loss to Alberts Brackett's team

Ladies League

Jenny Oates was high scorer in women's league action Tuesday night, scoring a 120 line and 334 set to lead Oates Shell to a four-game sweep of West End American. Pat Herdon's 198 line and Betty Wells' 285 set led the losers.

Becky Barnett's 121 line and 327 set led Cleveland Radiator Service to three wins over Drevs Tax Service. Louise Dover led the losers with a 119 line and 326 set.

Plonk Brothers and American split their four-game series. Bobbie McKee led Plonk Brothers with a 122 line and 293 set. Barbara Miller led American Legion with a 102 line and 291 set.

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