

Babe Ruthers Will Get Automatic Berth

KM To Host '78 Regionals

Kings Mountain will host the 1978 17-18 year old Southeastern Regional Babe Ruth baseball tournament.

Local BR officials were notified of their acceptance this week.

The double-elimination tournament, featuring the state champions from several southern states, will be played at Lancaster Field next August.

As host team, Kings Mountain will draw an automatic bye in district, area and state play and will advance straight into the regional tour-

namment. North Carolina will also be represented by a state champion.

Charlotte's 17-18 year old all-star team won this year's regional Tuesday night in Huntsville, Ala., and will play in the Babe Ruth World Series in Kentucky later this month.

Next year's regional here will give KM its third regional representative. Five years ago, the 18-15 year old all-stars won the state title and played in the regionals in Florida, and three years ago the 18 year old all-stars won the state title and played in the regionals in Alabama.

That 18 year old team, which included many of the same players that last week won the state 16-year-old title, finished third in the regionals.

Although the tourney is a year away, local BR followers feel good about Kings Mountain's

chances of winning the title. Not only will KM have most of the players that played on last week's state championship 16-year-old team, but will also have the better players off the current 17-18 year old team.

BR officials also point out that the opportunity of playing in the regional tournament will give the KM players a lot of exposure by major league scouts. All of the major league clubs will be represented here.

This will be Kings Mountain's first attempt at hosting a regional tournament, but the town has hosted several district, area and state tournaments.

Kings Mountain youth baseballers have played in only one World Series, the 1966 Teener League All-Stars finishing third in the national tourney in Hershey, Pa. KM went to the Babe Ruth program a few years later when the Teener program folded.

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IN 49th YEAR — I. C. Apple, 79 year old official, is in his 49th year as an umpire in the Amateur Softball Association. Apple will be calling balls and strikes tonight when the 32-team state church league softball tournament begins at City Stadium.

79-Year-Old Will Ump In Church Tourney

Seventy-nine year old I. C. Apple will be one of the umpires tonight when the annual State Church League softball tournament opens at three Kings Mountain parks.

Apple, who has been officiating for 49 years, is the oldest, but one of the best, softball umpires in North Carolina.

Apple will be umpiring tonight at City Stadium, where action begins at 6 p. m. City recreation director Roy Pearson, who is director of the 32-team tournament, said all Kings Mountain senior citizens are being invited to the games.

At the same time Apple is overseeing the action at City Stadium, there will also be a full slate of games at Deal Street and Macedonia parks.

El Bethel of Kings Mountain, the District 10 champion, will be playing at 6 p. m. at Deal Street against the District 21 champion. That team will come from the Albemarle area.

Second Baptist Church, the city champion and host team, will not play its first game until Friday at 7 p. m. at City Stadium. They will play the District 15 champions.

Apple, who has a park in Greensboro named in his honor, is one-half of the only father-son umpiring duo to ever officiate in the World Tournament, which they did in Cincinnati in 1968.

And that's not Apple's only distinction. He's been honored by almost every sports association in the state

for his services to youth, officiating, and recreation.

Apple served as NCASA umpire-in-chief until 1973, has served as an honorary consultant to NCASA since '73 and currently serves as district commissioner in Guilford County.

"I don't know what I would do if I couldn't be out there with the youngsters," he says. "I just feel better when I'm out there on the field. I feel involved."

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Youth Gridders Are Practicing

Kings Mountain's youth footballers are practicing each day from 4-6 p. m. at City Stadium, and any youngsters interested in playing may come out for the team by coming to practice and seeing either Charles Burns or Jimmy Littlejohn.

Kings Mountain will be sponsoring three, and possibly four teams, in league action this fall. Plans are now to have both a light and heavy pee wee team, plus junior midget and midget teams.

Littlejohn will be in charge of the pee wee

program and Burns will head up the junior midget and midget program.

All teams are desperately in need of more players and also need equipment back from last year. Any players or former coaches who have any type of practice or game equipment that has not been returned are urged to return it as soon as possible.

Practice will continue daily throughout this month and regular season action will begin in early September.

Austin Leading Tourney

Two Kings Mountain High School golfers were battling yesterday for the championship of the first annual Cleveland County Junior Golf Tournament.

The 36-hole event was being played at Riverbend Golf Club in Shelby.

Darrell Austin Jr. went into the final 18 holes as the leader, having shot a 75 in Tuesday's opening round. Herbie Beam was one shot back at 76 and tied with Shelby's David Cash.

The winner of the tourney gets an automatic berth in the Cleveland County Golf Tournament, which attracts the top amateur golfers in the area.



EARLY DRILLS — Kings Mountain youth footballers are shown going through some light drills at City Stadium. Practice is underway from 4-6 p. m. every weekday and youngsters interested in coming out for any of the teams may do so by coming to practice and seeing coaches Charles Burns and Jimmy Littlejohn.

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