

KM Tough, But Others Are Too

SPORTS

Kings Mountain High's varsity football coaching staff is working with 68 prospects as they prepare for one of the most rugged schedules in KMHS history.

The Mountaineers have 20 lettermen back from last year's fine 8-2 team and should be one of the strongest 3-A football teams in North Carolina.

The only problem, however, is that at least three other teams in the highly competitive Southwestern Conference also will field teams that should rank among the best in the state.

Shelby, the defending SWC and Western N. C. High Schools Activities Association champion, is the top-ranked 3-A team in the state in pre-season polls and Chase and South Point, also, should give the Lions and Mountaineers plenty of trouble.

And, to make things even tougher, the SWC will have only one representative in the state playoffs as the league has moved into the much-larger North Carolina High Schools Athletic Association.

Kings Mountain has beefed up its schedule, having added R-S Central as a conference game replacing Cherryville, and Ashbrook as a non-conference game replacing Bessemer City. Both Cherryville and Bessemer City dropped out of the SWC to join the Southern District Seven 2-A Conference.

The Mountaineers open on September 2 at R-S Central and play at

Ashbrook the following week before opening their home schedule on September 16 against Chase.

One thing working in the Mounties' favor, it appears at this point, is that the tougher teams will have to come to John Gamble Stadium. The Mounties have Chase, South Point and Shelby on their home turf.

The Mountaineers have been working out for two weeks, going to twice-a-day heavy drills last Tuesday after six days of conditioning. The practices have curtailed to once a day since school has already opened for teachers.

The coaches report they are well pleased with the progress shown thus far, and they feel good about their chances of winning the conference. The coaches feel sure KMHS will field its best team since '64, when KMHS won its last conference title.

Offensively, the Mountaineers return their top rusher of a year ago, halfback Kenny Bell who rambled for over 900 yards. David Ray Robinson and Dennis Owens, who gained over 500 alternating at the fullback slot, also return and all three have ran extremely well in practice.

The Mountaineers lost their starting quar-

terback, Mike Bumgarner, but several players are looking good there, including Jimmy Hall, Jeff Cloninger, Joel Wright, and Steve Boggan. Halfback Richard Ross, now at Wofford, was the only other starter lost in the backfield.

The Mountaineers return the nucleus of their offensive and defensive lines, but they'll have to come up with replacements for guard Tim Spicer and tackle Mark Moore, who graduated, and starting guard Tim Whitaker, who was injured recently in an automobile wreck and will miss the entire season.

Some of the returnees include Bruce Valentine, a center-linebacker, guard Kelly Land, tackle David Gordon, and linebacker Scott Ellis, all of whom are being heavily recruited by several major colleges.

Others include ends Dennis Putnam, Steve Laughter, Terry McClain, Jeff Prescott, Stan Scruggs, Danny Bolin and David Seay, guards Walter Floyd and Tracy Cook, and halfbacks Mike Adams and Charlie Jenkins.

The Mountaineers lost their entire secondary, except for Bryon White,



Photo By Gary Stewart

Working on the offense!

Kings Mountain High's footballers are busy preparing for the 1977 campaign, when they hope to bring the school its first Southwestern 3-A Conference title in 13 years. The Mountaineers are going through a play in this photo. Quarterback

hopeful Jimmy Hall (with ball) has already faked to a halfback and gets set to hand off to another runner as the hole begins to open on the right side of the line. The Mountaineers open their season on September 2 at R-S Central.

who started at cornerback and backed up Valentine at offensive center.

Richard Van Dyke, a letterman as a sophomore but injured all of last year, returns

and could help out both on the offensive line and in the defensive secondary.

Those up from the jayvees and junior high, plus other newcomers, include John Estes,

David Alexander, Keith Blanton, David Bolton, Robert Bradley, Terry Brown, Chris Bumgardner, Glen Carroll, Mike Chambers, Ricky Chapman, Dwayne Clark, Jody

Deaton, Kale Goins, Wade Harrington, Mark Howell, Maurice Jamerson, Tim Leach, Andy Loftin, Norman Phillips, Allen Putnam, Tony Putnam, Monte Rhea, John Ross, David

Sherrill, Mark Shuman, Avery Smith, Dick Styers, Larry Thompson, Scott Thornburg, Jimmy West, Mirion White, Danny Williams, Ronnie Wilson, and Mike Womack.

KMer Defeats Shelbian

Austin Cops Junior Tourney

Darrell Austin Jr. of Kings Mountain won the first annual Cleveland County Junior Golf Tournament last week at Riverbend Golf Club in Shelby.

Austin shot a 75-80-155 Tuesday and Wednesday to defeat Shelby's David Cash by three shots. Herbie Beam of Grover, and Austin's teammate on the Kings Mountain High golf team, finished third with a 159.

As county champion, Austin will get an automatic berth in the upcoming Cleveland County Tournament, which annually attracts the top golfers in the county. One round of that 54-hole tournament will be played at Kings Mountain Country Club.

It was the second junior title for Austin this summer. Earlier, he won the Shelby Jayvees Junior Tournament at Woodbridge to qualify for the state tournament in Wilmington, but he passed up that event to play in the Future Masters Tournament in Dothan, Ala.

A rising junior at KMHS, Austin played the number two position

for the Mountaineers last spring and helped lead them to a third

place finish in both the Southwestern Conference and Western N.

C. High Schools Activities Association tournaments.



DARRELL AUSTIN, JR.



DO IT THIS WAY - Kings Mountain assistant line coach Bud Bumgardner works with a couple of prospects during a heavy hitting

session at KMHS football practice. Head line coach Dan Brooks, on right, looks on.

SHP REPORT

The State Highway Patrol reports 30 accidents in Cleveland County during the week of July 18-24 resulting in 11 injuries and no fatalities.

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M.H.

Tailoring Courses Are Set

The Continuing Education Department of Cleveland Tech has announced tailoring to begin Tuesday, August 2, from 9 a. m. to 12 noon. The class will meet each Tuesday and Thursday through October 6, at Tech's Uptown Annex, room 18. Stella Prine will instruct.

Persons needing further information are requested to call, 482-8361, between the hours of 8 a. m. and 4 p. m., Monday through Friday.

Adults, 18 years of age and older, interested in this class may register at the first class meeting paying the \$5 registration fee.

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