

SPORTS

# Unbeaten Red Raiders Here For Friday Game

Kings Mountain's Mountaineers will be trying to pull the upset of the year in Southwestern S-A Conference play Friday night at John Gamble Stadium when they host undefeated South Point.

The Red Raiders bring the SWC's highest scoring team here and they will be heavily favored to win their eighth straight contest.

But one person who won't be taking the Moun-

taineers lightly will be South Point's veteran coach, Jim Biggerstaff, who saw his 1975 Raiders drop their first regular season SWC game in over three years to the Mountaineers, 33-30.

The Raiders went on to lose three more games that year for a 6-4 record, their worst since Biggerstaff took over as head coach in 1969. Kings Mountain went on to finish 4-5-1 for their worst season since Bob Jones took over as head mentor in 1971.

Many of the players that are seniors on today's South Point and Kings Mountain squads were sophomores then, and one of the KMHS sophomores, linebackers Scott Ellis, was the key figure in the Mountaineers' upset victory. Ellis broke through the South Point line to block two punts on consecutive Raider kicks in the second half to turn the game into Kings Mountain's favor.

If the Mountaineers are to pull a similar upset Friday night, Ellis and his defensive pals will have to give their greatest effort over.

The Red Raiders have already produced 254 points in seven games and have limited their opponents to just 42. Most of the points scored against the Raiders have come late in the ballgame when victory was assured.

The only close game for South Point was against Chase, when the Raiders jumped off to a 14-0 lead

and won 14-6. They have gone over the 40-point mark four times, and over 50 once, that in a 51-15 waltz past East Rutherford, a club which defeated Kings Mountain 14-12.

Against common opponents, the Raiders are 5-0 while the Mountaineers are 3-2. South Point defeated Ashbrook 28-7 while the Mounties lost to the Green Wave 21-7. Both clubs defeated Chase, North Gaston and R-S Central.

The big guns offensively for the Raiders have been quarterback Joe Shepherd, one of the league's top passers, and halfback Steve Davis, one of the SWC's top groundgainers and scorers.

South Point's power runner is Fernandez Grier, a 200-pound junior fullback. Linebacker Mitch Painter heads up the defensive unit.

Kings Mountain has been an up-and-down team on offense, but the defense has performed well in most of the games. The Mountaineers have allowed more than two touchdowns to only two teams, Ashbrook and Shelby.

Ellis and Bruce Valentine have keyed the defense from their linebacker positions. They are completing their third season as two of the league's top linebackers.

Others who have given a consistent performance include Norman Phillips, Kelly Land, David Gordon, Steve Laughter, Terry McClain, Kale Goins and Tracy Cook.

KM's defensive secondary, which has improved greatly since the first of the year, will probably receive its toughest test to date in Shepherd. Shepherd completed two bombs last year at South Point to give the Raiders a 20-13 upset victory over the Mountaineers.

Andy Loftin, Jody Deaton, Bryon White, David Ray Robinson, Jim Hall and Steve Boggan will likely be covering a lot of receivers Friday night.

Offensively, the Mountaineers have averaged better than four yards per play, but turnovers have limited their movement. In order to upset the Raiders, the Mountaineers will have to eliminate the fumbles and pass interceptions that plagued them in the first seven ballgames.

Kenny Bell, rounding out a fine three-year career, leads the rushing attack with 502 yards despite sitting out the Chase game with an injury. In the games he's played, his lowest output was 72 yards against Ashbrook and his best night was 109 yards against Crest.

The Raiders can't afford to stack their defense solely against Bell, however, because fullback David Ray Robinson has churned out 426 yards despite playing most of the season with injuries. And, in the last three games, quarterback Jim Hall has been effective with his running and now has 342 yards in six games, making him one of the top running quarterbacks in the conference.

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Photo By Gary Stewart

**KM LINEBACKERS**—Two of the major reasons for Kings Mountain's success in football over the past three seasons have been linebackers Scott Ellis, left, and Bruce Valentine, a pair of seniors who are being heavily recruited by several major and small colleges. If the Mountaineers hope to upset unbeaten South Point Friday at Gamble Stadium, they'll have to continue to get super play from these two, plus many others.

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