

Tim Riddle Ranked Second In Tar Heelia

Tim Riddle, Kings Mountain's sensational 18-year-old tennis player, has been ranked the number two singles player in North Carolina in his age division.

The rankings came out Sunday with Riddle right behind Mark Dillon of Charlotte. Third place belongs to David Spach of Durham and Henderson's Nick Petrou is fourth.

Riddle brought home an armful of championship and runner-up trophies last summer, and that strengthened his bid to gain a high ranking.

The Mountaineer standout will have an opportunity to do something no other tennis player in North Carolina has done next spring. And that is, to win the North Carolina High School Athletic Association title in addition to the Western N. C. High Schools Activities Association crown he won as a junior.

Riddle won the singles title and led the Mountaineers to the team championship last spring in the final season of the WNCSSAA. Winning the NCHSAA will be much tougher, because there are 352 schools and over 70,000 athletes in that organization. But it's a challenge and Riddle likes challenges.



TIM RIDDLE

---Switch Pays Off

Frank Howard, the ex-Clemson coach, once said that anybody can play exciting football if they stay within their own league and not bite off more than they can chew in non-conference play.

Two good examples are Cherryville and Bessemer City high schools.

For years, they were playing out of their league as members of the Southwestern 3-A Conference. Following last season, both dropped out of the 3-A ranks and joined the District Seven 2-A Conference.

Cherryville, you may recall, went 5-5 in the SWC last year and that was a good season for the Ironmen. This year, competing against schools more their own size, the Ironmen compiled their best record in 28 years, 7-3.

Bessemer City, you'll recall, had gone 0-10 last year and carried a 39-game losing streak into this season. The Yellow Jackets didn't exactly set the woods on fire this fall but they did manage a 3-7 record and that's quite an improvement.

Several years ago, Lincolnton got fed up with competing against other schools, namely Shelby, that were much bigger. Their program was suffering and their crowds were dwindling, so the Wolves joined a new 3-A conference and immediately regained their winning ways. This season they went 8-2 and tied Newton-Conover and Statesville for the Western Piedmont title.

From the looks of the crowds at some of the SWC schools this fall, maybe it's time for others to consider playing in their own league.



---Adams Did Good Job

Since the SWC is now a member of the North Carolina High Schools Athletic Association, coaches and players of the year will no longer be included on all-conference teams.

But it's only fitting that before we put the wraps on another season, that we pause a second and recognize some of the top performances of '77.

As far as I'm concerned, only two people could qualify as coaches of the year this season. Those are Jerry Adams of East Gaston and Sid Bryson of Crest. Their programs were the only ones that took any big strides this fall.

East Gaston, which hadn't enjoyed a winning year since coming into the SWC in '72 went 7-3 and that represents a four-victory improvement over their 3-7 mark of last year.

Crest, although the Chargers didn't have a winning season, finished 4-6, a three-victory improvement over their 1-8-1 mark in '76.

The only other schools to improve their records were Shelby, which went from 9-1 to 10-0, and South Point, which went from 8-2 to 9-1. Both of those schools were supposed to do what they did.

Of the other six schools, five of them had worst records than a year ago, and the other stayed the same.

The biggest declines were at Kings Mountain and East Rutherford. The Mountaineers dropped from 8-2 to 5-5 in a year in which they were mentioned as a serious title threat. The Cavaliers were rebuilding and dropped from 7-3 to 4-6.

R-S Central went from 5-5 to 2-8, Chase from 9-1 to 7-3 and Burns from 2-7-1 to 0-10. North Gaston stayed the same at 2-8.

As far as player of the year, any number of people could have won that honor, including Anthony Webber of Shelby Richard Dill and Grant Hoffman of East Gaston, Steve Davis and Joe Shepherd of South Point, Keith Crenshaw and Alan Stroud of Chase and Kenny Bell of the Mountaineers.

I'd lean toward Dill, even though he's just a junior. He has incredible speed and balance and is the best running back I've seen in this conference since Lester Reinhardt, who led Lincolnton to a couple of titles back in the middle 60's.

Football Banquet Cancelled

For the first time in 38 years, there will be no Lions Club football banquet this year for the Kings Mountain High griders.

Instead, the civic clubs of Kings Mountain that have been sponsoring fetes for the individual sports teams will join together and sponsor one big all-sports banquet at the conclusion of the KMHS sports year.

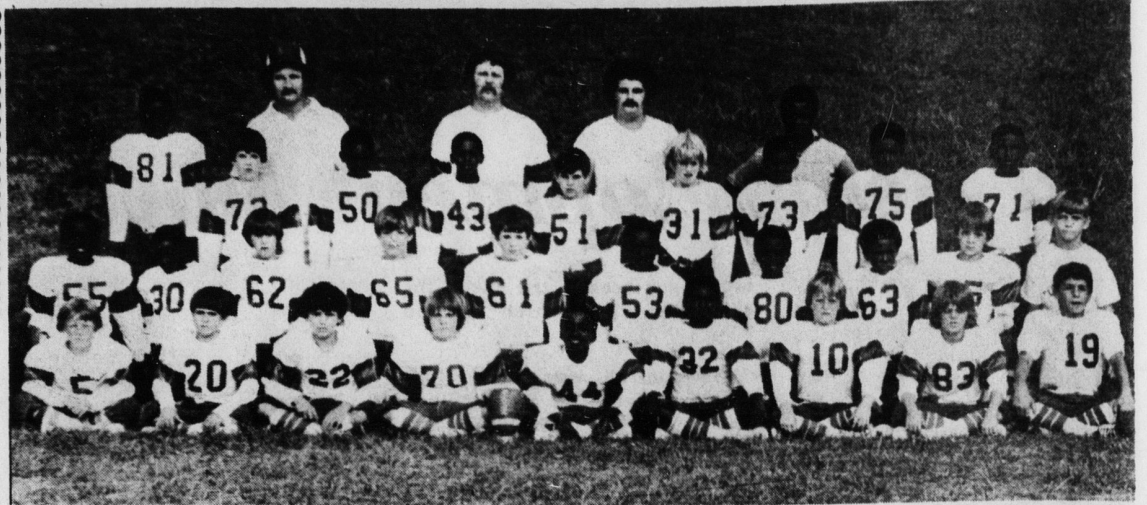
Assistant Schools Superintendent Bill Bates said he presented the idea to the civic clubs at the request of KMHS Principal Forrest Wheeler and the coaching staff. Wheeler was out of town at the time of this writing and could not be reached for comment.

In the past, the Lions Club has sponsored the grid banquet, the Kiwanis Club the basketball and wrestling banquet and the Rotary Club the baseball and tennis fetes.

Awards for minor sports, such as golf, softball and track in the past have been given at the annual KMHS Awards Day.

The grid fete, which was an annual attraction in December, was begun in 1939 and attracted some of the top after-dinner speakers in the South,

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LEAGUE CHAMPS — Here's the Kings Mountain pee wee football team which won the Gaston League title this fall with a 6-0-2 record. Team members include front row, left to right, Jeff Whisman, Neal Scism, Tommy Putnam, Jamie Black, Casey Roberts, Anthony Petty, Todd Cloninger, Shane Absher, and Casey Durham. Second row, Larry Logan, Tony Wade, Frank

Whittington, Dale Putnam, Chris Boheler, Kenny Wilson, Derek Jordan Sidney Brown, Quinton Rikard and Eric Spicer. Third row, Todd Reed, Charles Herndon, Jeff Brown, Edward Sherer, Dennis Hope, Phillip Ramsey, Scott Brown, Ronnie Frazier and Denoris Wilson. Back row, coaches Danny Bagwell, Jimmy Littlejohn and Rick Sutherland.

Pee Wees Are Champs

Kings Mountain's pee wee footballers, with some help from Groves Thread, are the undisputed champions of the Gaston League.

The Mountaineers, who ended their regular season last week with a 13-6 victory over Groves, were awarded the championship trophy Tuesday night after Groves upset Mt. Holly 21-7 in their regular season finale.

Mt. Holly went into the game with a 5-0-2 record and could have clinched a tie with KM by defeating Groves. KM finished with a 6-0-2 record, having tied Mt. Holly twice by 6-6 score. Had Mt. Holly beaten Groves, the Hawks and KM would have had to playoff the tie.

The Groves victory gives KM its first Gaston League title ever. This is the first year KM has won over one game in the pee wee division.

The title was also the second straight for KM coach Jimmy Littlejohn, who coached the junior midgets to the league title last winter.

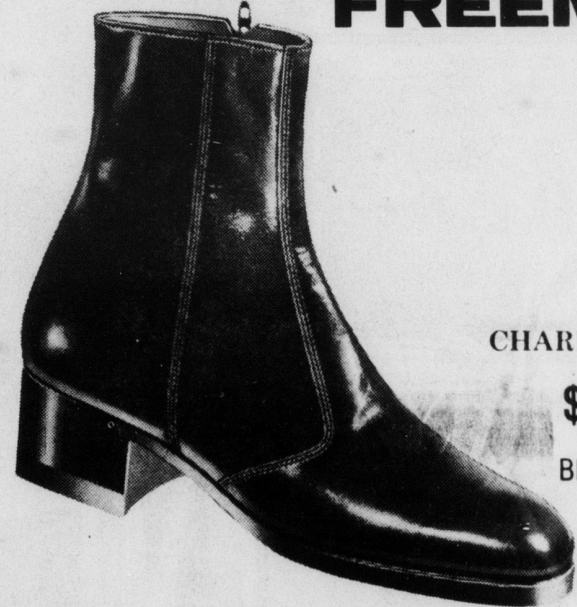
Kings Mountain now is preparing for the annual John Moss Classic which will be played here on Sat., Nov. 19. KM will meet un-

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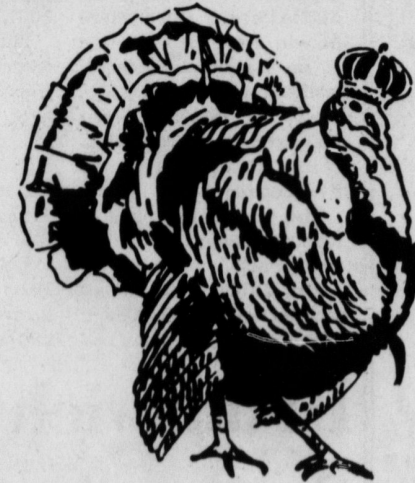
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