

GARY
STEWART**High School Football
Rules Will Be Different**

Short cuts from the world of sports:
Former North Gaston High golfer Larry Penley is off to a fast start as a freshman with the Clemson Tigers. Penley won his match last week at Hilton Head, S. C., to help the Tigers defeat rival South Carolina 21-15 in their season's opener.

Through 17 games, Kings Mountain's Butch Blalock is averaging 12.5 points per game for the Tennessee Tech Golden Eagles. His high game was 23 points in a victory over Southern Tech . . .

High School football fans will recognize some rule changes next fall. At its mid-winter meeting recently, the National Federation Rules Committee acted on 19 changes. The two you'll likely see most are the awarding of an automatic first down to the kicking team anytime a kicker is roughed (previously it was a 15-yard penalty) and reducing the penalty for an invalid fair catch signal from 15 to five yards . . .

With the winter sports seasons almost over, it's time to look back and hand out some congratulations for jobs well done. Deserving pats on the backs are the Kings Mountain High Wrestlers who shared the Southwestern 3-A Conference title with East Gaston and Shelby. If the conference still gave player and coach of the year awards, they would have to go to Chuck Gordon and Coach Steve Moffitt; the Kings Mountain Junior High girls who brought the school its first girls basketball title on the varsity level, and their coach, Candy Albergine, who does a super job with young talent; and even though they didn't win the conference title, the junior high boys and their fine young coach, Ken Napier, for sticking together and salvaging a fine 10-4 season after their top three scorers quit the team . . .

Auto racing gets back into full swing February 26 with the running of the Sundrop 500 at Hickory Speedway. Qualifying will be held on February 23-24-25 and the Sunday race will get underway at 1 p.m. Drivers from seven states have already indicated they'll compete . . .

Laura Brown, who did her student teaching and coaching last year at Kings Mountain Junior High, is now teaching and coaching girls athletics at Belmont Junior High . . . Slowpitch softball umpires from North and South Carolina will meet for a clinic March 5 at the Kings Mountain Community Center . . .

Former Kings Mountain High basketballer Ginger Finger coached her Crest High School jayvee girls team to an unbeaten season and the Southwestern 3-A Conference title this year. Her 12th straight, and final, victory came Thursday night over Kings Mountain, 60-29 . . .

Belmont Abbey's Crusaders, 17-7, need one more victory to hand Coach Bobby Hussey his 100th collegiate victory. Hussey, in his seventh year with the Crusaders, compiled a 55-7 record and won two Southwestern 3-A Conference championships in three years at KMHS prior to taking the Abbey post . . .

College football recruiters are missing the boat on an outstanding lineman, Kings Mountain High's David Gordon. The recruiters say Gordon is too short. Baseball scouts said Babe Ruth was too slow, too. If you're good, you're good, period . . .

One of the biggest tractor pulls of all time will be held Friday through Sunday at Atlanta International Raceway. The top pullers in the nation will be seeking part of the \$24,100 purse, including Tommy and Charlie Berry of Kings Mountain . . .



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Gordon Wins Sectional, Sets School Record For Wins

SPORTS

Kings Mountain's David Gordon set a school record for career victories and became the first heavyweight ever to win the outstanding wrestler award in the Southwestern Sectional Wrestling Tournament Friday and Saturday at Independence High School in Charlotte.

Gordon won all four of his matches there to give him a career record of 48-5. The 48 victories break the old record of 47 set by Hal Glass in his four-year class.

Gordon, now 19-0 so far this year, claimed his first three victories by pins, then decisioned East Mecklenburg's Tommy Burke in the finals.

Johnny Ross finished second in the 132-pound class and Robert Ingram finished second at 188, both men losing their finals by two-point decisions.

Also qualifying for the regionals was Maurice Jamerson, who finished third in the 147-pound class.

Two other Mountaineers, 167-pound Norman Phillips and 119-pound Sammy Bell, barely missed a berth in the regionals by finishing fourth.

Both KMHS Cage Teams In Tourney

Vernon Bell rebounded a missed shot by Jeff Prescott and banked it off the glass with eight seconds left Saturday night to give Kings Mountain's Mountaineers a 54-53 victory over Shelby and a berth in the Southwestern 3-A Conference basketball tournament beginning tonight at Burns.

The KM-Shelby game, played on the Lions' home court, became necessary after the two Cleveland County rivals tied for eighth place in the regular season standings with 8-12 SWC marks. Only the top eight clubs qualify for the conference tournament.

The victory sends the Mountaineers into an 8 p.m. game tonight against regular season champion, Crest, which had to come from behind Friday night to whip the Mountaineers 51-49 in the final regular season game.

Crest jumped out to an 8-0 lead but KMHS battled back to a 10-10 tie, then reeled off seven straight points for a 17-10 lead after the first quarter.

The Mountaineers stayed out front 28-28 at halftime and were still on top 38-38 after three periods. But the Chargers outscored the Mountaineers 18-12 in the fourth period to win it.

Crest won the game at the foul line, hitting 12 of 18 shots in the fourth period.

The Chargers, who were playing without starting point guard Otis Young, got 11 points from Bobby Huskey and 10 each from Isaac Hunt and Wendell Wilson. Bell led the Mountaineers with 18 points and Burris added 12.

The KMHS girls led early but the taller Crest ladies took command in the second half to lock up fifth place with a 110-85.

Bell, a junior, played probably his best all-round game Saturday as the Mountaineers knocked Shelby out of the tournament for the first time in years. He led both teams in scoring with 21 points, grabbed nine big rebounds and had a big steal on the Shelby end of the court after hitting the winning basket.

The Mountaineers trailed 42-46 going into the final eight minutes but Bell scored 11 points during that span to bring them back.

Bell was on the foul line with a one-and-one with eight seconds left and KM trailing 58-52 when the stage began to be set for the last-second heroics. Bell missed the foul shot, but Prescott rebounded for the Mountaineers. Prescott missed the follow-up but Bell rebounded it and scored for the winning basket.

The victory was the third in four tries for the Mounties over the Lions this year. The two teams split their two regular season games and the Mountaineers took an opening round victory over the Lions in the County Tipoff Tournament.

Bell had a strong supporting cast Saturday as all of the Mountaineers played a big role in the victory.

Prescott added 10 points and nine rebounds and hit two big free throws to narrow the gap to two points (48-46) in the final minutes.

Eric Dixon scored nine points, dished out seven big assists also hit a big free throw in the fourth quarter, and hit four

straight jumpers from the top of the key to keep the Mountaineers in the game in the third period.

William Lockhart scored four points and had some big rebounds and played probably his best defensive game of the year, and Everette Burris scored six points, played a good defensive game and intercepted a desperation pass by Shelby as the game ended.

The two teams were even in field goals but KM won the game at the foul line. The Mountaineers hit 10 of 18 free throw attempts and Shelby hit nine of 17.

The Mountaineers gave first place Crest all it could handle in Friday night's regular season finale at the KMHS gym.

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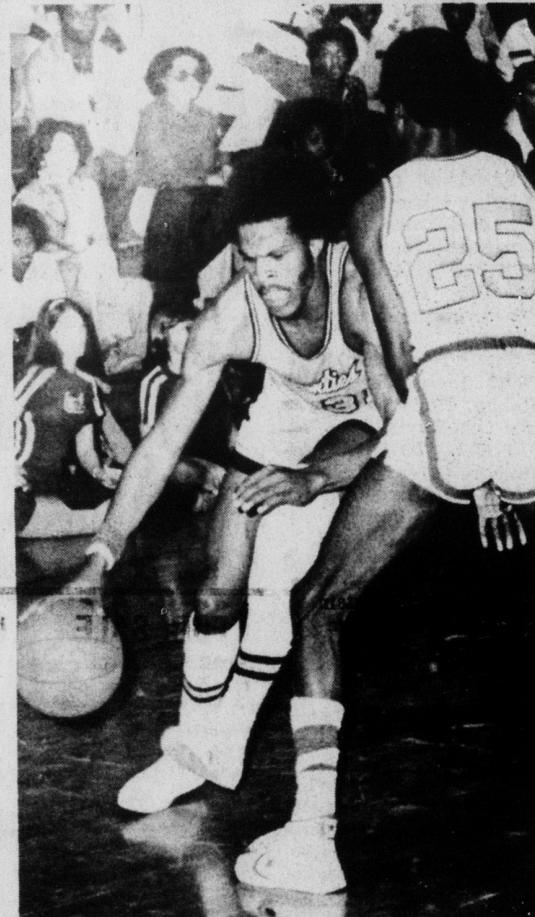
Gordon appears to be headed for a collision with Watauga's 320-pound giant Bobby Cooper, the man that defeated Gordon for the Western N. C. High Schools Activities Association title last winter. They're in separate brackets in the regionals and if both continue to win they'll meet for the regional championship.

"Team-wise we did real well," noted Coach Steve Moffitt. "I was kind of surprised but really pleased. We were in it all the way."

"Our four guys that qualified for the regionals can still win the state championship," he added. "When you make it to the finals everyone is good and they can turn right around and win the regional and state."

Gordon's most outstanding wrestler trophy won at Charlotte gives him two outstanding Wrestler trophies already this season. He earlier won that same prize in the Gaston Invitational.

Gordon will receive a permanent trophy and the school will house the plaque which goes with it for one year. The trophy is given in honor of R. B. Sandiford who drew up the plans for the state wrestling tournaments.



VERNON BELL charges
into Crest defender...



PRISCILLA RICKENBACKER tries
to drive around tall Lady Charger...

State Champs To Be Honored

The Kings Mountain 18-15 year old girls softball team, which won the state tournament last summer and finished third in the World Series at Whiteville, will be honored with an awards night dinner at the Western Sizzler Steak House in Shelby on Tues., Feb. 21 at 6 p.m.

There will not be a guest speaker, but coaches Candy Albergine and Laura Brown and members of the recreation department staff will give brief comments and present trophies.

All 17 members of the team will receive individual trophies for finishing third in the World, and the sponsoring recreation department will be awarded the third place and sportsmanship trophies.

Kings Mountain High's jayvee cagers closed out their seasons last week, both clubs finishing third in Southwestern Conference play.

The girls split two games, defeating East Rutherford 46-18 and losing to undefeated Crest 60-29. Mary Moore led the scoring against East with 21 and Kim Gladden led against Crest with 18.

The boys won two of the three games, defeating South Point 57-51 and Crest 68-62 and losing to East Rutherford 62-52.

Kenny Guinn led the scoring in every game, hitting 22 against South Point and 21 against East and Crest.

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