

# Baseball Team Opens Saturday



**MOUNTIE HOPEFULS** — These two juniors will probably be in the lineup Saturday when Kings Mountain High opens its baseball season against Hunter

Huss. Left is catcher Tim Whitaker and right is outfielder Alan Putnam. Both were lettermen last year when the Mounties finished second to South Point.

Kings Mountain High's baseballers open their season Saturday with a 2 p. m. game against 4-A Hunter Huss at Lancaster Field.

The Mountaineers travel to Ashbrook Wednesday for another non-conference game before opening Southwestern 8-A Conference action on March 17 at R-S Central.

Saturday's game with pit two veteran teams, but as has been his custom in past years, KMHS Coach Barry Gibson intends to use the game for experimental purposes. Gibson's a strong believer in giving everyone a chance in non-conference games in hopes he can choose the best nine before the Mounties get into the conference season.

"We're going to play as many people as we can," he said, "but we won't be able to do as much experimenting as we did last year when we had seven non-conference games."

Many of the KM starters Saturday will be familiar to the fans, but Gibson hopes to work all 24 of his players into the lineup.

Ronnie Wilson, last year's most valuable player, will get the starting nod on the mound, but he'll probably work only two or three innings. Gibson hopes to use at least two other pitchers, maybe more.

Bruce Valentine, last year's most improved player and leading home run hitter with four, will get the starting nod at first base, David Ray Robinson, last year's leading hitter with a .395 average, will open at shortstop and Tim Whitaker, a reserve last year, will be the starting catcher.

"All the other positions are still up for grabs," said Gibson. "I'm happy that we have a lot of competition at most of the positions."

Second base is still close between four players, all strong in the defensive department. Last year's starter, Tim Chapman, is being pushed hard by Eric Moore, Tim Patterson and Ricky Chapman.

Mike Spears is backing up Robinson at shortstop, and he could be a valuable asset when Robinson is called on to pitch. Steve Boggan is also a strong candidate at shortstop as well as third base.

Danny Bolin, an All-Conference performer last year, has a slight advantage at third base over sophomore Mark Schuman and Boggan.

Gibson will choose his three outfielders from a

list of four, all experienced. Those players include All-Conference Jimmy Hall, Bryan White, Andy Loftin and Alan Putnam.

Lyn Hayes, a sophomore, will probably see a

lot of action behind the plate.

Coach Gibson said Scott Ellis, an All-Conference catcher the past two seasons, will probably be held out of the two non-

(Turn To Page 8)



Photos By Gary Stewart

**KMHS PITCHING STAFF** — The six young men will be carrying a lot of weight on their shoulders this spring as the KMHS baseball team attempts to win the Southwestern 8-A Conference. Left to right, the pitching staff

includes Jeff Cloninger, Ronnie Wilson, David Ray Robinson, Tim Leach, Jimmy Hall and Andy Loftin. The Mounties open Saturday at 2 p. m. here against 4-A Hunter Huss.

## Basketball Tournament Is Slated

The Optimist Club and recreation department will sponsor a city basketball tournament for boys ages 10-12 March 15-18 at the community center.

Eight teams will compete for the title.

A karate demonstration will be given at 7 p. m. on the 15th between the first and second games.



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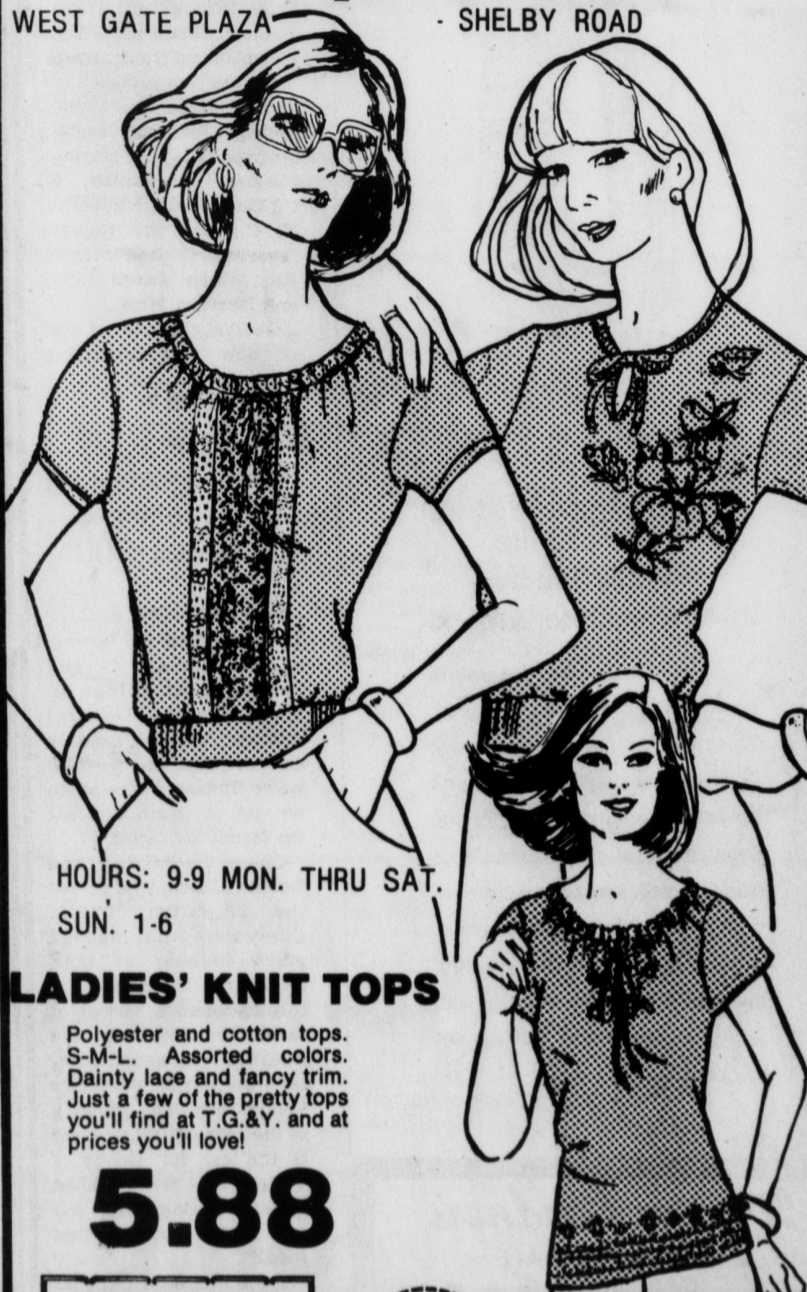
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