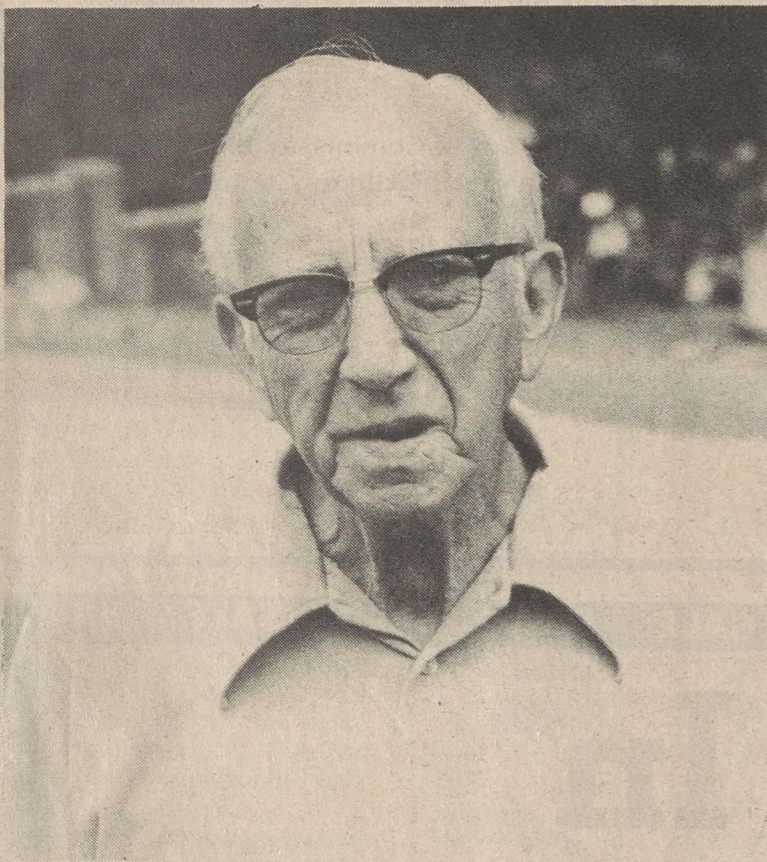




## Stewart's Slants

By Gary Stewart

### Boone Recalls KM's First Football Team



CLEM BOONE

Last Friday I rode with the David Hughes family to Radford, Va., where we visited David's uncle and aunt, Clem and Lucy Boone, and their son G.C.

The Boones grew up in Kings Mountain and, naturally, much of the conversation drifted back to their days here.

Mrs. Boone is the former Lucy Hughes. She is the daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Hughes and grew up down in the Dixon Community with my father and his brothers and sisters.

Clem grew up in the town of Kings Mountain, where his father was a policeman and he was quite an athlete.

He was a member of Kings Mountain High School's first football team in 1922. He also played baseball, basketball and tennis and graduated from KMHS in the spring of 1923.

He recalled the first football team with a huge smile on his face. There were only 15 or 16 players, he said, and they were close. He didn't remember the won-lost record but did remember that "we had a ball." Really, that's what the game's about.

His mother didn't approve of his playing football, so he kept it a secret. Since games back then were held in the afternoons, she didn't guess what he was doing after school until he came home following the third game with a broken leg.

Clem was a 150-pound halfback in the Mountaineers' single-wing attack. Age 78 now, he's still only 10 pounds over his playing weight and is slim and trim enough to still be a good athlete. He concentrates on golf now and often plays as many as 27 holes a day.

"I remember we made up money downtown to buy some fire-damaged uniforms from a Charlotte sporting goods store," he recalled. "I think they cost us about \$250."

The team had enough uniforms to go around, he recalled, but there was a shortage of football shoes. So, often times, when a player came out of the game he had to take his shoes off and give them to his substitute.

Fred and Hugh Ormand served as volunteer coaches. Some of the other players were Lawrence Lovell, Lloyd Ormand, Tom Ormand, Charles Ormand, Jake Hord, Joe Lee Woodward, J.M. McGinnis, Fred Plonk, Tom Fulton, Fat Hayes, Joyce Green, Charles Saunders and Zeb Plonk. The coaches would work a regular job during the day and coach the team in the afternoons.

The Mountaineers that year played some of the junior colleges in the area, as well as the few area high schools such as Lincolnton, Belmont and Gastonia. He doesn't recall if they played Shelby.

"The worst we were beaten was 25-0 by Charlotte Institute," he recalled. "They had an excellent coach named Marvin Rich. After the game he stayed and coached us until dark. He said if he had our players he'd win the state championship."

"Our biggest win was 74-0 over York," he recalled. "They had the finest little quarterback I've ever seen. He took pneumonia right after we played them and died."

"Those were the good old days," he said. "I remember one night we were playing basketball at Charlotte. We rode over there in J.M. McGinnis's daddy's Ford. It had a copper radiator on it and four or five miles out of Charlotte it ran hot. We were pushing it and pushed the radiator off."

"Kings Mountain had some real fine basketball teams during those days," he went on. "When I was in the eighth grade, they had a team which played Churchland for the state championship. Herbert Plonk, Jim Hambricht and Hugh Ormand were on that team. It was the best high school team I've ever seen."

The first football team, he recalled, held a reunion several years ago. There was a parade downtown during the day, the players had dinner at Kings Mountain Country Club and were special guests at the homecoming football game that night.

"Joe Lee Woodward (now deceased) was the master of ceremonies," he recalled, "and he introduced me as Betchie Boone. I got that nickname from always going around saying I betchie."

"Most of the players were there that night," he said. "They're about all gone now."

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Any social studies teachers in the area who just happen to have coaching experience may want to get in touch with Kings Mountain High School Principal Bob McRae.

McRae currently has three coaching vacancies, but only one teaching job available.

Football assistants Greg Richardson and Gary Powers and head basketball coach John Blalock announced recently that they would not return to coaching duties this year.

However, Richardson and Blalock are staying on as teachers, so the new coach who is recruited must be able to serve two sports. He'll definitely have to assist the football program and will coach either jayvee or varsity basketball, McRae said.

Atlantic Coast Conference basketball standouts Vincent Hamilton of Clemson and John Toms of Wake Forest will serve as guest lecturers at the annual Kings Mountain Recreation Department Basketball Camp July 26-30 at the Community Center.

Persons ages eight to 18 are eligible to attend, Camp Director George Adams said. Registration will begin Mon., July 19 in Adams' office at the center gym.

#### YARD SALE

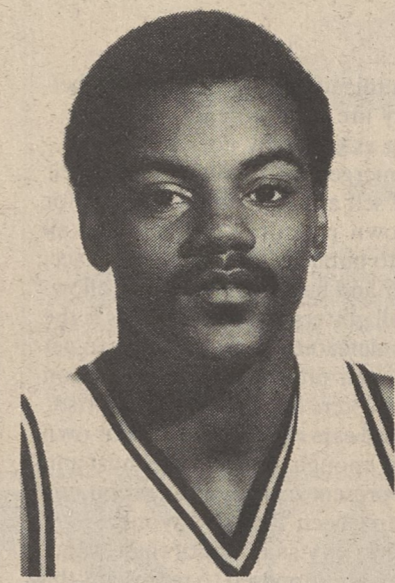
There will be a gigantic combination yard and bake sale Saturday at 306 Waco Road. Hot dogs will also be served. Proceeds go to the WMU Pathway Baptist Church.

### ACC Stars To Be In KM

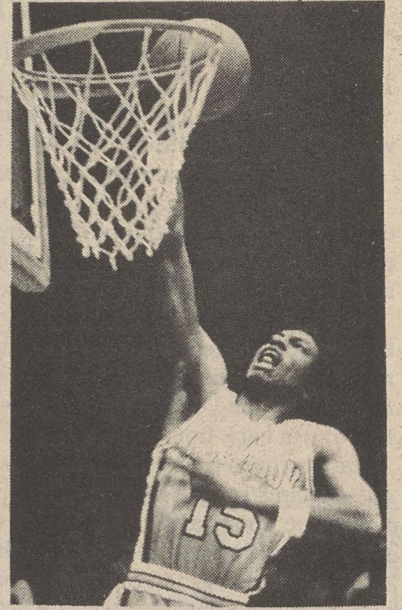
Both Hamilton and Toms are well-known to area basketball fans, both having received their prep training at Southwestern 3-A Conference schools. Hamilton was Player of the Year in the SWC his senior season, when he led R-S Central's Hilltoppers to an unbeaten season and the North Carolina 3-A title. Toms was an All-Conference standout at Shelby.

Hamilton was the leading scorer for Clemson last winter and was a second team All-ACC selection. Toms was a starting guard at Wake, averaging in double figures.

Hamilton cracked Clemson's starting five as a freshman and led the ACC in total rebounds by a guard.



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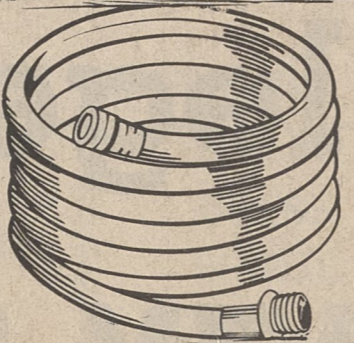
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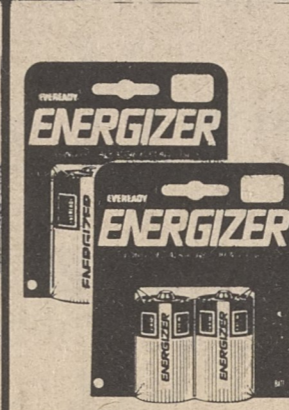
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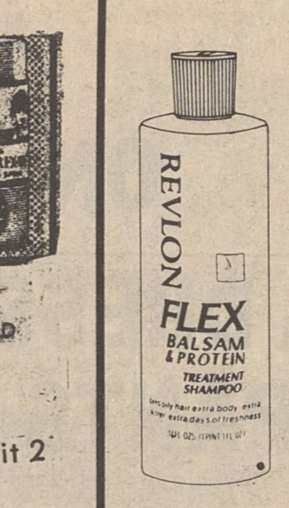
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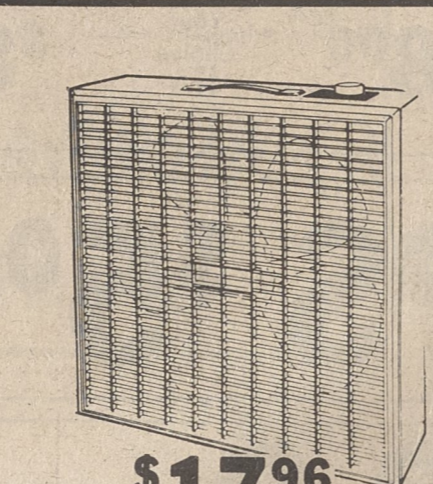
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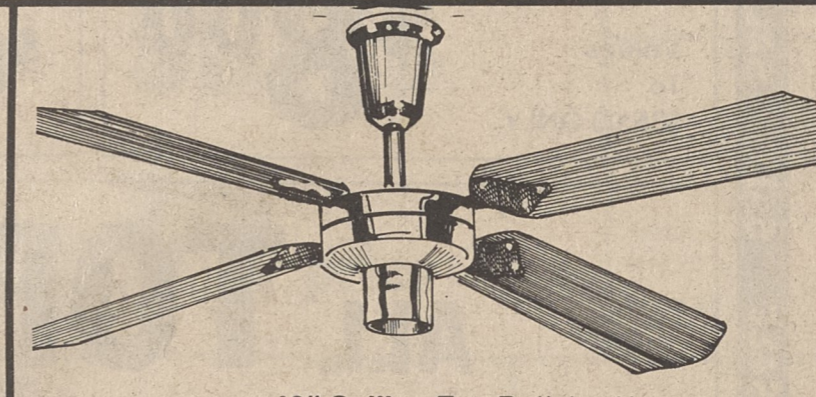
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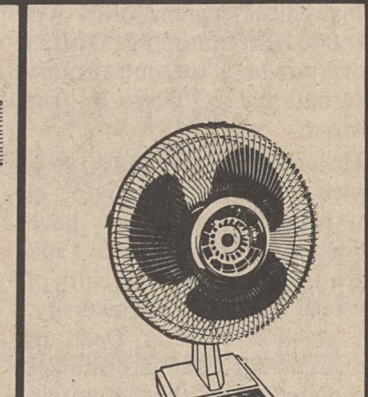
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