

Photos by Gary Stewart



GOING AFTER FUMBLE - Kings Mountain and North Gaston players go after a Wildcat fumble in Friday's Southwestern 3-A Conference game at North Gaston. The Mountaineers recovered four fumbles and intercepted a pass as the defense led the team to its fourth win in six outings, 27-0.

FIRST DOWN - Kings Mountain quarterback Todd Cloninger (5) rolls around right end for a seven yard gain and a first down in Friday's Southwestern 3-A Conference game at North Gaston. The Mountaineers won 27-0. Kings Mountain hosts South Point Friday night at 8 p.m.

Pressley Nearing 1,000 Yards

Mounties Whip North, Raiders Here Friday

Kings Mountain's Mountaineers marched the opening kickoff 42 yards for a touchdown and went on to defeat North Gaston 27-0 for their first shutout of the season Friday night in Dallas.

The victory gives the Mountaineers a 4-1 Southwestern 3-A Conference record and 4-2 overall mark heading into Friday's game at John Gamble Stadium against an improving South Point eleven. Kings Mountain is tied for second place with Shelby.

Curt Pressley of the Mountaineers and Buster Benton of the Wildcats, the top two rushers in the SWC, went head to head last week. Pressley won that individual battle, gaining 130 yards in 16 carries and scoring the opening touchdown. The hard-hitting KM defense limited Benton to his season's low of 52 yards. He had an 147-yard per game average going into the contest.

Kings Mountain's Tracy Johnson, the number three rusher in the SWC, added 96 yards in 13 carries and scored three touchdowns for the Mountaineers. Kings Mountain finished with 254 yards rushing and North Gaston had 84 rushing and 22 passing.

Eric Odem of the Mountaineers returned the opening kickoff to the 45 yard line, and a 15-yard penalty against the Wildcats for tackling him out of bounds gave KM possession on the North Gaston 42. The Mounties went the 42-yard distance in eight plays, with Pressley carrying the ball seven times for 41 yards and a two-yard touchdown dive over the North Gaston defensive line. Jarvis Young added the point-after from placement to give KM a 7-0 lead.

With Benton gaining most of the yards, North Gaston took the ensuing kickoff and marched to the KM 11, but the Mountaineer defense took charge of the game and held the Wildcats on downs. They didn't enter Kings Mountain territory again.

Big defensive plays set up the final three KM touchdowns, all by Johnson. Steve Falls recovered a North Gaston fumble at the Wildcat 24 late in the half and Johnson scored from a yard out to make it 13-0 at intermission. A 23-yard run by Pressley set up the TD.

With Pressley watching from the sidelines most of the second half, the Mountaineers put the game on ice against a worn down North Gaston crew.

Danny Moore intercepted a

Gridgraph

First Downs
Yds. Rushing
Passes
Yds. Passing
Passes Int. By
Fumbles Lost
Punts
Yds. Penalized

KM	NG
10	
261	84
0-2	1-11
0	22
1	0
0	4
5-40	1-27
110	21

Score by quarters:
KM
NG

	T
KM	7 6 0 14 27
NG	0 0 0 0 0

Scoring:
KM - Pressley, 2-run (Young kick)
KM - Johnson, 1-run (kick failed)
KM - Johnson, 7-run (Young kick)
KM - Johnson, 21-run (Young kick)

MOUNTAINEER RUSHING

Player	Carries	Yds.
Curt Pressley	16	130
Tracy Johnson	13	86
Eric Odems	6	38
Todd Cloninger	1	7

KMHS PASSING

Player	Att.	Comp.
Cloninger	2	0

North Gaston pass and returned it to the Wildcat 35 late in the third period and Johnson scored from two yards out to make it 20-0. Jeff Stokes recovered a fumble at the North Gaston 30 midway of the fourth period, and Johnson scored from 21 yards out and Young booted the PAT to make it 27-0.

Coach Denny Hicks was happy with his team's performance against a physically tough North Gaston team. The Mountaineers did not commit a turnover but did have 12 penalties for 110 yards.

"We felt good about the way our players came back after last week's letdown at Crest," Hicks said. "It was a total team effort."

"Our defense did a heck of a job," he went on. "It was our first shutout and it came against one of the best running backs in the league."

"Offensively, we were pleased with our determination. We got some good down field blocking. We showed a lot of patience. They played us real tough for 1 1/2 quarters. They probably hit us as hard as anybody we've played. It was a good, tough, hard-nosed football game."

Things won't get easier this week as the Mountaineers face a

South Point team which is always tough and is getting better every week. The Red Raiders have won their last two games after getting off to a 1-2 start.

"They're about identical to North Gaston, except that South Point has a real good quarterback in Mark Young. He throws the ball well. South Point's a real sound, belly-type offense that uses the option well and puts a lot of pressure on the defense," Hicks said.

"It should be a real good ballgame for the fans to watch," he added. "Both teams like to go after their opponent."

The game could be the one that gives Pressley his 1,000th yard rushing. The talented KM senior thus far has 953 yards in 114 carries, an average of 8.4 per carry. He's been over 100 yards in every game except the loss to Ashbrook, when he gained 81 yards in 19 carries. He's been over the 200-yard mark twice, against Burns and East Rutherford.

Johnson, a junior, also has a good shot at going over the 1,000-yard mark this year. Through six games, he has 708 yards in 90 carries, an average of 7.9 per carry. He's been over 100 yards in four of the six games and gained 96 in the other two.

Mack Has Biggest Game With Tigers

Kings Mountain's Kevin Mack had his biggest day in a Clemson uniform Saturday when he led the Tigers to a 42-21 homecoming victory over Virginia at Death Valley.

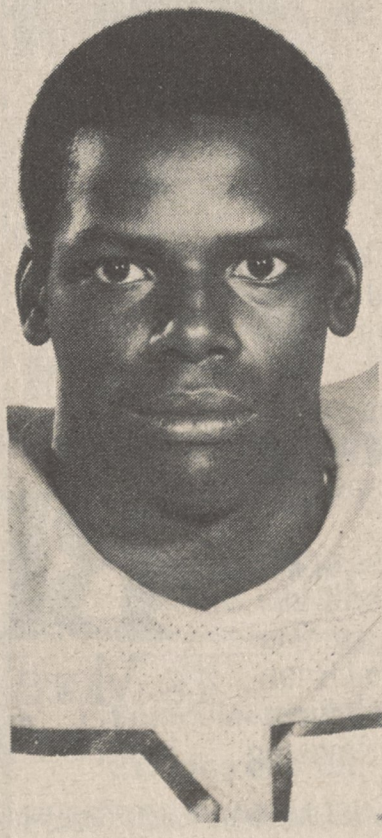
The 197-pound senior fullback picked up 109 yards rushing in 13 carries and scored two touchdowns.

Mack, who was voted ACC Back of the Week following his 96-yard performance in a recent 17-17 tie with nationally-ranked Georgia, bruised his knee early in the game with Georgia Tech two weeks ago and sat out after that.

The Tigers had a week off last week and the talented former Kings Mountain Mountaineer used it to whip back into shape.

He carried the pigskin six times for 80 yards in the first half as the Tigers built up a 21-6 lead. Both of his touchdowns—which gave him three for the year—came during the first half of play.

When he wasn't carrying the



KEVIN MACK

ball for big yardage, he was using his outstanding blocking ability to clear the way for the running of tailback Stacey Driver and the passing of quarterback Mike Epley.

During the last three games in which he has played the whole ballgame, Mack has gained 94, 96 and 109 yards. Saturday's effort was his first 100-yard game since going to Clemson.

Announcers calling the game for Playback Saturday night on the Raycom Sports Network noted that Mack "has not only developed into one of the premier running backs in the ACC, but one of the finest in the country."

Mack set single game and season rushing records his senior year at Kings Mountain High School, when he gained 287 yards in a game against R-S Central at 1,585 for his senior year. His records are now being threatened by Curt Pressley, another talented runner who is being eyed by Clemson and several other major colleges.

THE WINNERS CORNER



Kings Mountain High football players turning in a winning effort in last week's 27-0 victory over North Gaston are pictured above. Front row, left to right, Steve Falls, Gerald Gladden, Roderick Boyce, Shawn Rainey, Doug Ramsey and Todd Cloninger. Second row, Tracy Johnson, Rocky Lutz, Brad Reynolds, Shane Burton, Danny Moore, Curt Pressley and Tim Elder. Back row, Dale Moore, Thomas Putnam, David Parker, Therndon Brown, Jarvis Young and Jeff Stokes.