

Fearless Rides With KM In Friday's SWC Battle

By FEARLESS
I'm going to put my "Wild, Wild West" show on the road. Fearless is the champion of all six shooters on his white horse "Loco." Actually, the horse is "Fearless" and Fearless is "Loco."

I've known all the trick shot champions in my time, and even the bad men (I used to play cards with Jesse James).

I watch all the old westerns on television and relive those "days of yesteryear, when out of the past comes the thundering sound of hoof beats and the cry of 'Hi-Yo, Silver, Away!'"

I was just talking recently to Matt Dillon. He's hung up his badge. Chester and Doc and Kitty of "Gunsmoke" keep in touch with me regularly.

I saw an old Tex Ritter movie recently on the Nashville Network. I even saw Gene Autry in one of his first westerns, along with Roy Rogers and Dale Evans in one of their early productions.

I've written a song called "Low Noon," an offbeat takeoff on "High Noon," when Gary Cooper and Grace Kelly had the starring roles and Gary shot holes in the bad guys on "that, his wedding day."

I hope my western song called "Low Noon" will make it big in Nashville. I've entered it in a song contest in Nashville and I'm still waiting to hear from them.

I got Gary Stewart of the Kings Mountain Herald to pick it and sing it on his guitar. Me and Gary might make it big in Nashville. If we don't hear anything in the next month, though, our quest to make it big in Nashville will have had it.

We'll still be just "tumblin' along with the tumblin' tumble weeds."

I can remember getting my first cap pistol. "Pow, pow, pow. You're dead!" I'd ride a broom for a horse and go around shooting everybody right between the eyes in the neighborhood with my cap pistol. I was 21 at the time.

One guy said, "There goes Fearless on his broomstick. I thought my wife was the only one who rode broomsticks."

My first cowboy hat sure looked sharp. It was white with a blue band around it. I'd go around chewing on a piece of straw and saying, "Howdy, Podnah!"

On my first date I forgot to take off my "spurs that jingled, jangled, jingled." Never saw that girl again. She's probably married to a rich cattleman in Dallas (Texas that is).

Well, enough of that. Let's get down to the business at hand of trying to pick this week's prep winners.

We've only got two more weeks of regular season play after Friday.

My record last week was 6-3. For the season it stands at 36-15 for a .706 percentage. Since the Southwestern 3-A



Conference is sending three teams to the state 3-A playoffs this year, they're all big from here on out.

Shelby's the high roller, having beaten both Kings Mountain and South Point and sport a current 4-0 league mark. South Point is at Kings Mountain Friday. Both teams are 3-1. Enough said. It's a big 'un. Last year the Mountaineers came within a whisker of upsetting the Red Raiders, who were unbeaten at the time and on their way to a 10-0 regular season.

But this is 1985 and my choice Friday is for a 20-14 Kings Mountain win.

East Gaston's got a tough West Charlotte team on the road this week. Everybody in

the Tri-County 4-A Conference is bigger than the Warriors, it appears. West Charlotte will be a couple of touchdowns better than the Warriors Friday. I'll call it 20-7.

Cherryville and Bunker Hill hook up in Cherryville. I'll get on my white horse and ride with the Ironmen. I'll call it 27-13.

And here's how I see the other games: Shelby 27, North Gaston 7; North Mecklenburg 14, Hunter Huss 13; Ashbrook 14, South Mecklenburg 0; Bessemer City 18, West Lincoln 14; Burns 20, R-S Central 17; and East Rutherford 28, Chase 6.

"Hi-Yo, Silver. Away!"

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ACC INSIDE STUFF
Dick DeVenzio



Golf's "Big Four" tournaments are the U.S. Open, Masters, P.G.A., and British Open. The golfer who wins all four of these is the winner of the "Grand Slam."

It is a pleasure for me again to write a weekly column in the **KINGS MOUNTAIN HERALD** for Wade Ford. And it should be a great year in the ACC. Several pre-season polls have put three ACC teams—Carolina, Duke and Georgia Tech—in the top 5 in the nation, with NC State among the top 20. Georgia Tech is being picked by almost everyone as No. 1, mostly because of their outstanding performance last year in the NCAA playoffs against Syracuse, the pride of the Big East this year.

The ACC could conceivably get all four teams in the Final Four this year—which of course puts a great deal of pressure on all of the coaches. Anything almost as failure by ACC fans. Duke is in its "must win" year, with its veteran team led by Johnny Dawkins and Mark Alarie, and the top-rated Freshman in the nation, Danny Ferry.

Georgia Tech is led by Mark Price, Bruce Dalrymple, and John Salley. Does that really add up to No. 1? It wouldn't surprise me if Georgia Tech comes 4th in the conference, which would seem terrible but could easily happen, despite the wizardry of Bobby Cremins who has firmly established himself among the nation's top coaches.

At Carolina, there is size, ability, experience, depth, and Dean Smith. You have to figure they will be among the top teams in the nation that shouldn't lose very often.

Naturally, the coaches will all make a lot of early claims about their teams' weaknesses—to deflect some attention and to try to reduce fans' expectations so a loss or two won't bring on so much criticism. Wake Forest's new coach, Bob Staak, will have plenty to make excuses about and may not win an ACC game all year. NC State's Jim Valvano will have the most legitimate excuse among the coaches of the top teams—his big guns lack experience. You have to wonder the real reason why one of his starters, Russell Pierre, didn't return to the team, but rarely do fans get the real story on such transfers.

Certainly I will be trying, throughout the season, to give you some insights and inside information. I will also, hopefully, be creating some news of my own. I am currently involved in a campaign to make some big changes in college sports. I have become tired of hearing so much talk about scandals, corruption, and under the table payments. In a nutshell, I don't think the problems in big-time sports are the fault of the players or even the coaches in most cases. I blame the universities and the NCAA, and I have decided to do something about it. I will take time later to explain.

Over the next few weeks, I will be bringing you some pre-season reports about the ACC teams and players. For now, the same things are happening at all of the schools. Everyone has that feeling of renewal. Everyone has a team of hopeful players, not yet discouraged by lack of playing time, still concentrating on all the progress they think they made this summer.

For example, I read some recent comments made by UNC-Charlotte players after two days of practice. "Things are different this year." "This year we are looking forward to practice." Their new coach, of course, is Jeff Mullins, the former Duke star who was an All-Pro as well. Mullins is recognized by nearly everyone as a very special human being. But nevertheless, even Atila the Hun can't stifle young athletes' enthusiasm after a few days.

Wait until some disappointing defeats. Wait until some of the hopefuls don't get in, or get benched after they do. It wasn't that long ago that ACC football players were talking about bowl bids. So much for the swings of fortune in sports.

If you ever get the urge to respond to something I write during this season, please feel free to do so. I am the only DeVenzio in Charlotte, and my number is listed in directory assistance, so give me a call. Or, you can always write to me in care of the paper. I sincerely hope that you will enjoy the column.

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