

Mounties Clinch Playoff Berth

Kings Mountain's Mountaineers clinched their first post-season playoff berth in 21 years and their first ever playoff berth since becoming a member of the North Carolina High School Athletic Association with a come-from-behind 29-20 victory over East Rutherford Saturday night at John Gamble Stadium.

The game, which was postponed Friday because of heavy rains, was played in a steady rain before several hundred faithful Mountaineer followers. Kings Mountain scored 15 points in the final minute of play to earn its fifth win in six Southwestern 3-A Conference outings and eighth victory in nine games overall.

The Mounties, now 8-1 going into Friday's regular season-finale at North Gaston, have matched their best record since 1964 (8-2 in 1976 and 1979) and will be favored to better those marks Friday. The 1964 team was 10-0 in regular season play and 10-1 overall.

Kings Mountain will enter the state playoffs on November 15 at the home site of the number two team in the Mountain Athletic Conference. It appears at this point that team will be Canton Pisgah. If the Mountaineers win their first playoff game and Shelby wins its first playoff game against the number three team from the Western Athletic Conference, those two teams would meet in a rematch on November 22 in Kings Mountain.

SPORTS

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Thursday, November 7, 1985

East Rutherford, which fell to 3-3 in the SWC and 6-3 overall, used two long kickoff returns and one sustained drive to build a 20-14 lead over the Mountaineers going into the late stages of the game Saturday. The Mounties, who lost to South Point 21-19 on a late bomb a week earlier (the Mounties later were credited with a victory after South Point forfeited two games for using an ineligible player) used a bomb of their own to pull out the victory with just over a minute showing on the clock.

A pass from quarterback Roderick Boyce to flanker Otis Brooks which the Mounties call the "veer option pass left throw back) covered 46 yards and tied the game at 20-all. On the extra point attempt, holder Jerry Jordan was forced to go for two when the snap from center was high and Aubrey Hollifield caught the pass in traffic to put the Mounties ahead 22-20.

Kings Mountain squib-kicked the kickoff because East had burned the Mounties on two previous kickoffs and the KM coverage forced East to start from its own 20 with 1:10 remaining. East fumbled on the first play and KM linebacker Monyel McCullough recovered and returned the ball to the one-foot line. Boyce sneaked it over and Rusty Bumgardner booted the point-after for the final margin with 59 seconds left. A fight broke out and when both benches poured onto the field the officials stopped the game.

The pass from Boyce to Brooks, which clicked twice to break open a recent 20-0 victory over Burns, caught the East Rutherford defense entirely off guard. On the previous play, tailback Jerry Jordan had ran for 9½ yards to give KM a second and foot situation. The East defense was thinking run and Brooks breezed past the cornerback and was wide open for the pass.

Coach Denny Hicks praised the quick-thinking of assistant coach Bruce Clark and the execution of quarterback Boyce and fullback Sam Smith for pulling the play off.

"Clark pulled the play out of his hat," said Hicks. "He came running up the sideline and saying 'run the pass play that we used against Burns'. Roderick and Sam did a great job on the fake. If they hadn't, we might not have pulled it off. When their cornerback saw the flow, he came up and that got him out of position for the extra second Brooks needed to get downfield."

East Rutherford grabbed a 7-0 lead by driving 17 yards after B.J. Hamilton took the opening kickoff and returned it 70 yards to the KM 17. Rodney Surratt scored from five yards out and Hamilton kicked the extra point.

The Mountaineers came right back to drive 71 yards in 10 carries to tie the game. Smith, who had his best game from fullback with 89 yards in 14 carries, scored from 26 yards out and Bumgardner added the PAT.

Kings Mountain grabbed a 14-7 lead midway through the second quarter after recovering an East Rutherford fumble at the KM three yard line. Smith rambled 13 yards on the first play for a first down and a 34 yard run by Jordan to the East 15 set up a 15-yard TD around end by Boyce. Bumgardner added the PAT.

Tony Grant of the Cavaliers fumbled the kickoff into the endzone, then picked it up and ran 101 yards up the middle of the field for a TD. Hamilton's kick tied it at halftime.

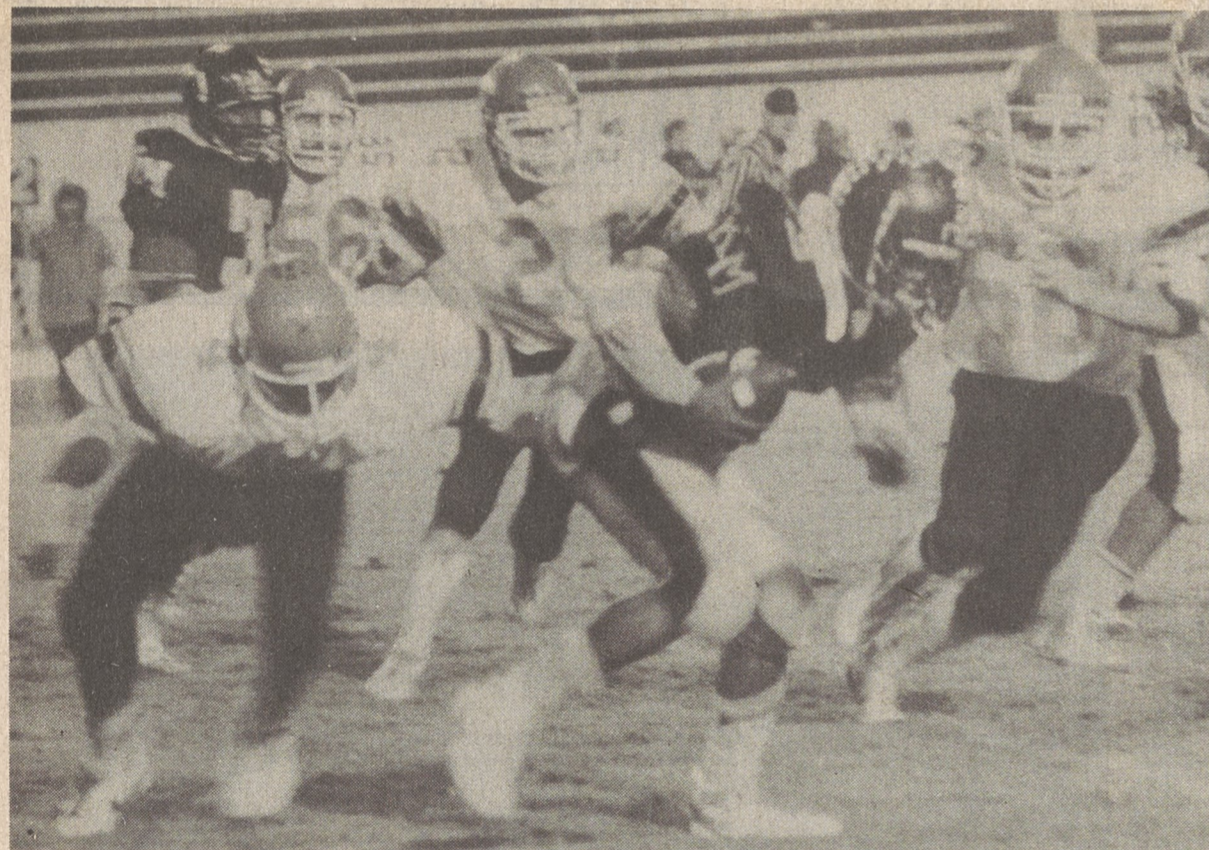
Kings Mountain, which gained 179 of its 211 yards rushing in the first half, found the running tough against the soggy field and the strong East defense in the second half. The Cavaliers moved 60 yards following a KM fumble to go ahead 20-14 on a two-yard run by Tony Douglas.

The Mountaineers decided to go to the air and Boyce hit four of six passes for 87 yards

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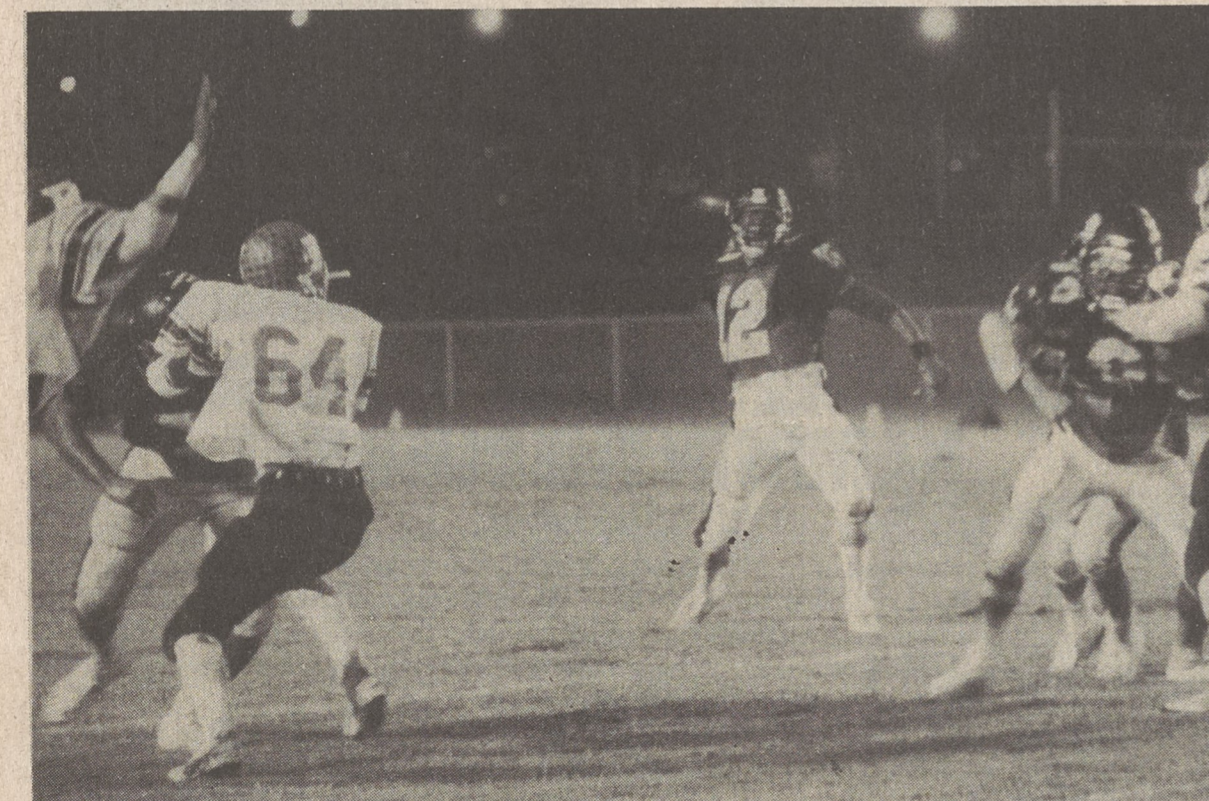


LEADING RUSHER - Kings Mountain's Sam Smith (33) picks up a huge chunk of yardage through the middle of the line in Saturday's 29-20 Southwestern 3-A Conference victory over East Rutherford at Gamble Stadium. Smith led all rushers with 89 yards in 14 carries.



Photos by Gary Stewart

BIG GAIN - Kings Mountain's Jerry Jordan goes around right end for a big gain in Saturday's Southwestern 3-A Conference football game with East Rutherford at Gamble Stadium. Mountaineers won 29-20.



WINNING TOUCHDOWN TOSS - Kings Mountain quarterback Roderick Boyce (12) has excellent blocking from the Mountaineer offensive line as he throws a 46-yard touchdown

Mountaineers Seek Ninth Victory At North Gaston

Each time Kings Mountain's Mountaineers take the football field the remainder of this season, they will be trying to reach another milestone in the history of KMHS football.

In last week's 29-20 win over East Rutherford's Cavaliers, they became the first Mountaineer team ever to qualify for the North Carolina High School Athletic Association playoffs. When the 1964 Mountaineers won the Southwestern 3-A Conference and participated in post-season play, the school was a member of the old Western N.C. High Schools Activities Association.

If the Mountaineers defeat North Gaston Friday night in Dallas, they will become the first team since that championship 1964 team to post nine victories in a regular season. The 1976 and 1979 teams were 8-2.

And, should the Mounties defeat North Gaston Friday and be fortunate enough to win their opening game in the state playoffs, they would equal the school record of 10 victories in a season. The 1955, 1956 and 1964 teams each posted 10 victories. All three teams won the Southwestern 3-A Conference and the 1956 team won the WNCSSAA with an overall record of 10 wins and one tie.

Coach Denny Hicks, whose club has made a complete about face after going 1-9 last fall, would love to see his team equal or better those records, but he isn't about to look past Friday's regular

season finale at North Gaston. Even though the Wildcats' won-lost record isn't the best in the world, the team has played some good ballclubs some very close games.

"They do a lot of things offensively," said Coach Hicks, who says he's very impressed with North's 215-pound fullback, Eric Wallace. "He's a real fine football player and their quarterback (Todd Anderson) is also real impressive. He fakes inside and runs the bootleg a lot, and he throws real quick."

The Wildcats, playing under new coach Bob Patton, former head coach at Salisbury, run a multiple offense, and rely heavily on hard running of Wallace. "He gained almost 100 yards against Shelby, so we'll have our work cut out containing him," Hicks says.

Defensively, Hicks said, the Wildcats run a basic 50 "but they give you five or six different looks out of it. They run a stack 60 (eight-man front) a lot and run a 6-1 where they pinch you a lot."

The Mountaineers hope to continue to play tough defense, which has been their trademark over the years, and to continue to improve offensively. Since a 10-0 loss to Shelby in the fourth game of the year, the offense has made great strides and now ranks as the highest scoring offense in the conference.

After Friday's contest, the Mountaineers will begin preparing for the state 3-A playoffs. They are scheduled to open on November 15 at the home site of the number two team from the Mountain Athletic Conference. It appears that game will be against Canton Pisgah, which is tied for first place with Asheville Erwin. Erwin defeated Pisgah 6-0 last Friday in the rain, so if those teams remain tied, Erwin will get the number one playoff spot because of its regular season victory, and Pisgah will get the number two spot. Erwin plays Enka Friday and Pisgah meets

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How They Did It!

	ER	KM
First Downs	10	13
Yards Rushing	152	211
Passing Yards	17	98
Passes	1-1	5-10
Fumbles-lost	4-2	3-3
Penalties-yards	6-45	3-25

By quarters:	T
ER 7 7 0 6	20
KM 7 7 0 15	29

Scoring:
 ER - Surratt 4-run (Hamilton kick)
 KM - Smith 25-run (Bumgardner kick)
 KM - Boyce 15-run (Bumgardner kick)
 ER - Grant 101-yd. kickoff return (Hamilton kick)
 ER - Douglas 2-run (Kick failed)
 KM - Brooks 46-pass from Boyce (Hollifield pass from Jordan)
 KM - Boyce 1-run (Bumgardner kick)

MOUNTAINEER RUSHING		
Player	Carries	Yards
Smith	14	89
Jordan	14	68
Boyce	7	43
Hollifield	2	8
Roberts	1	2
Brooks	1	1

MOUNTAINEER PASSING				
Player	Att.	Comp.	Int.	Yds. TD
Boyce	10	5	0	98 1

MOUNTAINEER RECEIVING			
Player	Catches	Yards	TD
Brooks	1	46	1
Sherer	2	27	0
Bumgardner	1	15	0
Jordan	1	10	0