



Stewart's Slants

By Gary Stewart

Letter To Santa

Dear Santa Claus:
It's time again for your annual trip to Kings Mountain to reward all the little boys and girls who have been good during the past year.

Your sleigh's probably over-loaded already, but see if you can find room for the following:

An outright Southwestern 3-A Conference championship for Kings Mountain High's football team. Sharing first place with two outstanding teams such as Shelby and East Rutherford is quite an accomplishment, especially after a 22-year dry spell, but it would be even nicer to be alone at the top...

A Shrine Bowl coaching position for Kings Mountain's Denny Hicks. He would be fair to all of the players and give them all ample opportunity to show their talents. This year's North Carolina staff certainly didn't do that, even though they did give players from their own schools a lot of playing time...

The Southwestern 3-A Conference Wachovia Cup for KMHS. The trophy is given each year to the team which has the best overall record in athletics. First place finishes by the football and volleyball teams in the fall puts KM into a good position to win the all-sports trophy...

A state high school tennis championship next spring for KMHS junior Bryan Jones, who is one of the top young players in the nation. He inches closer to the state title each year, having finished third last spring...

Some healthy wrestlers for KMHS coach Steve Moffitt, who is accustomed to winning conference championships. If he can get his grapplers mended during the Christmas break, he could lead the Mountaineers to their second straight SWC title in 1987...

Many more multi-talented athletes for KMHS. Athletes like Aubrey Hollifield, Rusty Bumgardner, Daron and Anthony Hillman, Wayne Brazzell, Danny Hamrick, Monty Deaton, Regina Brown, and others, have proved that high school athletes can participate in a number of sports and be successful...

A Super Bowl ring for Kings Mountain's Kevin Mack and his Cleveland Browns teammates. Mack has been bothered most of this season with a hurt shoulder and hasn't ran up the yardage he did last year during his AFC Rookie of the Year season, but a trip to the Super Bowl would give him the opportunity to show his stuff...

All-Conference honors for Kings Mountain basketballers who are performing on the college level this year, including Carl Smith at Massachusetts, Lavar Curry at Belmont Abbey and Arnold Jordan at Limestone. A successful entry into the college ranks next winter for KMHS seniors Mike Woods, who's headed for East Tennessee, and Regina Brown, who's going to UNC-Wilmington.

A 10th straight Western N.C. Junior High Athletic Association championship for the KMJH Patriots, who have lost only one conference match in history...

A Southern District 7 2-A Conference title next fall for Bessemer City's Chip Herring, truly one of the nice guys in the high school coaching profession. He always puts an exciting team on the field...

Winning seasons for all former Kings Mountain athletes who are now successful high school coaches, including Charles Barnes at Richmond County, Charles Greene at South Point, Darrell Van Dyke at East Gaston, Mike Ware at Newberry, Clarence Ash at Hunter Huss, and any others I may have forgotten...

Another Southern Conference basketball championship for former KMHS coach Bob Hussey and his Davidson Wildcats. The 'Cats have lost several of their lives in non-conference

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Aubrey Hollifield Heads List Of Winners At Fall Sports Fete

The stars came out Wednesday night at Kings Mountain High School as the Mountaineer Club honored athletes from fall sports programs.

Included among the honorees were members of two championship ballclubs, the Mountaineer volleyball and football teams.

Top award winner was footballer Aubrey Hollifield, a North Carolina Shrine Bowler who received the BDF Tackling Award, the Dr. George Plonk Most Valuable Player Award and the Friday's Heroes Player of the Year Trophy.

Other football award winners were Jerry Jordan, BDF Offensive Award and Hardee's Most Outstanding Defensive Back; Raynard Roberts, Hardee's Most Outstanding Offensive Back; Rusty Bumgardner, Most Outstanding Offensive Lineman and a special award for breaking his own school record of most points from placement in a single season (40); Kevin Champion, Fred Plonk Blocking Trophy; Daron Hillman, Most Outstanding Defensive Lineman; Gus Degree, American Legion Most Improved Player; Paul Heffner, Mountaineer Club Coaches Award; Danny Hamrick, John Gamble Scholastic Award.

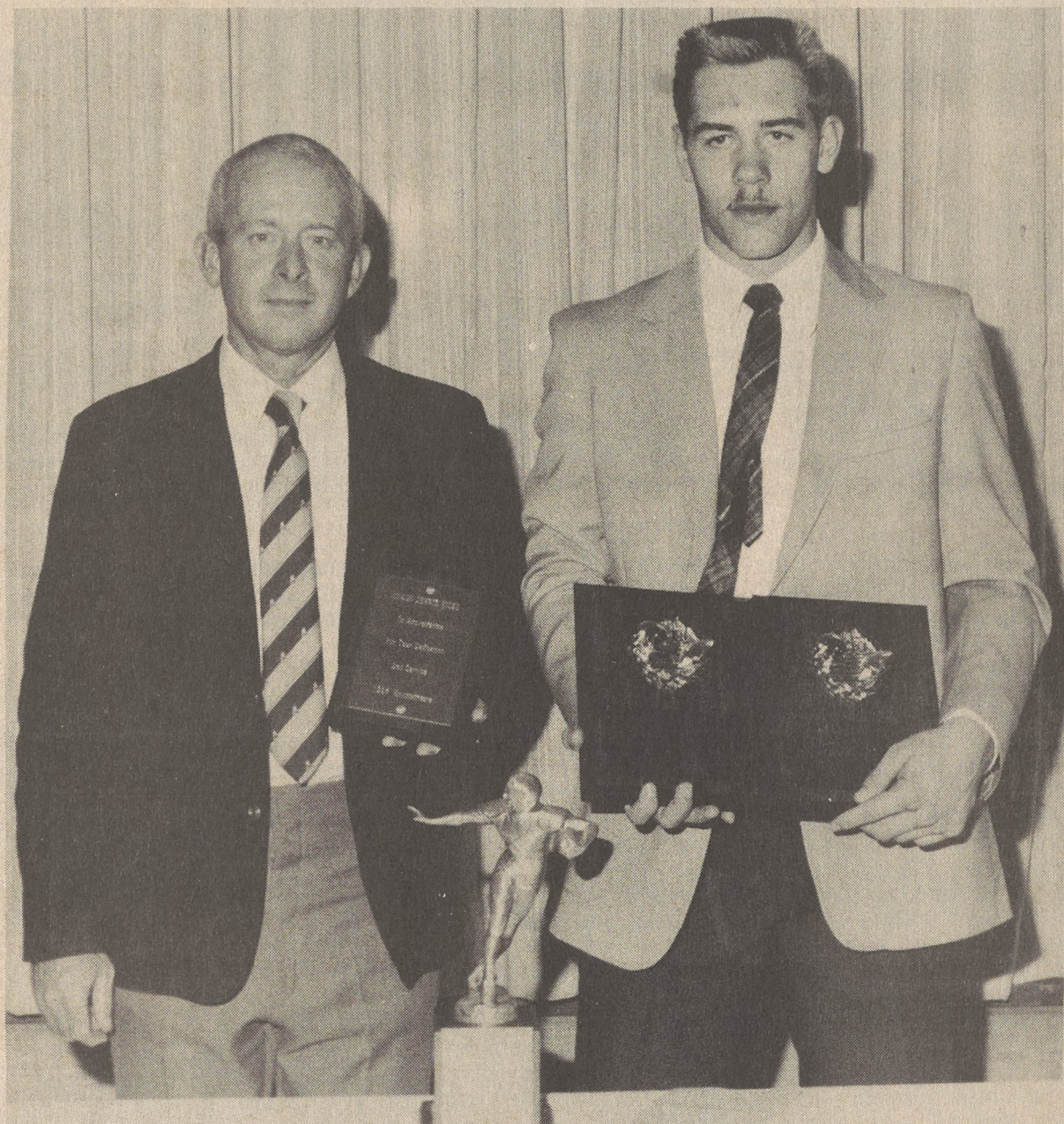
Regina Brown was named Most Valuable Player in volleyball and most improved in volleyball was Tina Anderson.

Tennis awards went to Kimberly McGinnis, most valuable; and J.J. Warlick, Jan Fryar Memorial Award.

Crosscountry winners were Cliff Meeks, Most Outstanding; and Neil White, Most Improved.

Special awards were presented to all senior members of the fall sports teams, to all players who received all-star recognition, and to varsity coaches Diana Bridges, Dennis Hicks, Paul Bolt, Chuck Gordon, John Goforth and Bruce Clark.

In addition, the Southwestern 3-A Conference presented trophies to the school for the championship volleyball and football teams, and Four Star Sports of Shelby presented the Mountaineers the "Battle of Buffalo Creek" trophy, which is given each year to the winner of the Kings Mountain-Shelby game and which is displayed at the winning school until the following year's contest.



TOP AWARD WINNER - Aubrey Hollifield, right, was the top trophy winner at Wednesday's KMHS sports banquet, winning the football MVP and Leading Tackler Awards along with Friday's Heroes Player of the Year trophy. Coach Denny Hicks, left, received a plaque as Friday's Heroes Coach of the Year and Hicks and all of his assistants received special awards from members of the team.

Hollifield, a 6-3, 215-pounder, was praised by Coach Denny Hicks for his success in all sports. He has lettered in three varsity sports since his sophomore year and is regarded as one of the best all-around athletes to come through KMHS.

In football this year, he made 120 tackles in 12 ballgames and led the Mountaineers to a 9-3 overall record and a share of the SWC title with Shelby and East Rutherford. KMHS shared the grid title for the first time in 22 years.

"Aubrey's a unique individual," said Coach Hicks. "He's a three-sports standout and has proved that you don't have to specialize in one sport to be successful."

Hollifield was All-Conference on both offense and defense for the past two seasons. He also plays basketball and runs track for the Mountaineers.

"If you want to play sports,

just say the word and he's ready," said Coach Hicks. "He also carries a 3.3 grade point average. For three years, we've watched him grow and develop. He's the type individual that makes coaching worthwhile."

Defensive coordinator Bruce Clark also had words of praise for Hollifield.

"He's just an unbelievable athlete," Clark said. "It would do everybody good to be associated with him. Six times during the year he pulled his right groin, and in the Brevard game he pulled his left one. The next week he couldn't hardly walk and we felt there was no way he could play against Owen, but he did play and had 15 tackles."

Hollifield, a linebacker, was defensive captain of the Mountaineers and also played tight end. He was a top-notch blocker and pass receiver who ran well after catching the ball.

"We became real close over the past three years,"

Clark said. "We laughed together and cried together. I hate to see him leave. He's an exceptional man and one of these days we're going to see him playing football on TV."

Hollifield is being highly recruited by a host of major colleges and has narrowed his choices down to several area schools, including N.C. State and Clemson.

One of football's most coveted awards went to guard Danny Hamrick, who was presented the John Gamble Scholastic Award which is given in memory of the late KMHS football coach. It is given each year to the football player who carries the highest scholastic average during the football season.

Hamrick, Principal Ronnie Wilson pointed out, carries a 4.277 grade point average and made 1250 on his college SAT. He's being recruited by several major colleges, including Princeton and Yale.

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TROPHY WINNERS - Football players pictured above received trophies at Wednesday's Fall Sports Banquet at Kings Mountain High. Left to right, Gus Degree, Danny Hamrick, Raynard Roberts, Rusty Bumgardner and Jerry Jordan.



MORE WINNERS - Athletes pictured above were among the trophy winners at Wednesday's Fall Sports Banquet at KMHS. Left to right are Kimberly McGinnis, J.J. Warlick, Neil White, Paris Floyd, Cliff Meeks and Tina Anderson.

Photos by Gary Stewart