



SIGNS WITH SEMINOLE - Eric Peppard of Kings Mountain signs a scholarship to play baseball at Seminole Community College in Florida. Looking on, left to right, are KMHS Principal Jackie Lavender, Eric's parents, Susan and John Peppard, and KMHS Coach Bruce Clark.

Eric Peppard Gets Scholarship

Kings Mountain's Eric Peppard signed a baseball scholarship with Seminole Junior College in Sanford, Fla., Friday at the KMHS principal's office.

Peppard is the fifth member of the 1990 KMHS and Post 155 American Legion team to sign a college scholarship. Earlier signees were Paul Brannon with Wake Forest, Chad and Chris Plonk with Manatee Junior College and Chris Henson with UNC-Greensboro. Brannon has since signed a professional baseball contract.

Peppard was an All-Southwestern Conference and Honorable Mention All-State centerfielder for the Mountaineers, who won their first Southwestern 3-A Conference title in 10 years this spring. He hit .486 with 35 hits in 72 at bats and was the team's number two hitter behind Paul Brannon.

Peppard hit .727 (8-for-11) in the state playoffs and led the team in doubles with nine.

"Eric's come an extremely long way," said his coach, Bruce Clark. "He was a non-starter for us at the end of the 1989 state championship year. I think he knew and everybody else knew that he was going to have to bust his butt to earn a position at centerfield because he was going to have to beat out Daniel Honeycutt. He just came out during his senior year and did just that. He held his position and Daniel ended up going to left field."

In addition to being the team's leadoff hitter and carrying the second highest batting average, Peppard was also an outstanding defensive player. His excellent speed and hands allowed him to have great range and he didn't have an error until late in the season.

"Defense seemed to be Eric's problem during his junior year," Clark noted. "He didn't go get the ball and wasn't aggressive. I don't know if that was because he doubted himself or not. But his senior year we told him he had to take control out there and to take some chances. He really came through for us and even

though he had an excellent bat and speed, defense was probably the reason he held on to that position throughout the year."

Peppard, son of John and Susan Peppard, moved to Kings Mountain seven years ago from Clarksburg, W. Va. He played in the youth leagues in West Virginia and Kings Mountain and lettered three years at KMHS.

"My parents have supported me all the way from T-ball and I could not have accomplished anything without them," he said. "I really appreciate having a great coach these last two years in Bruce Clark, who believed in me and motivated me to become a better player and person."

Peppard chose Seminole over four-year schools such as Francis Marion, Eastern Kentucky and USC Coastal Carolina. The two-year school located between Orlando and Daytona Beach has an enrollment of 6,181 and plays some of the top junior college teams in the nation. Graduates can transfer to universities such as Florida State, Florida, and Central Florida. Coach Jack Pantelias is in his 17th year at Seminole and has a 609-250 overall record. Bobby Thigpen of the Chicago White Sox, Rob Ducey of the Toronto Blue Jays and John Hart, former Cleveland Indians manager, played at Seminole.

"I wanted to go to a warm climate where they play a lot of baseball," Peppard said. "Seminole plays a hundred games a year and you're involved in playing or practicing the year round. Coach Pantelias is known as a great teacher. I'm sure I'll learn a lot and hopefully can transfer after a couple of years to a Division 1 contender."

Seminole plays a 35-game fall schedule and 65 spring games. The fall games are not official games and are not included in the school's won-lost record.

See Peppard, 4-B

KM Juniors Eliminated

Caldwell County pushed across the only run of the game in the fifth inning Sunday at Deal Stadium in Granite Falls to defeat Kings Mountain 1-0 and eliminate Post 155 from the Area IV American Legion baseball playoffs.

Caldwell County won the best-of-seven Western Division championship series four games to one and advanced to the Area IV championship series.

The pitcher's duel between Jason Wallace of Caldwell County and Chad Plonk of Kings Mountain was a surprise since the teams had scored 77 runs in the previous four games. The two pitchers matched two-hitters.

Caldwell County won the game with two out in the fifth inning. Wallace walked, moved to second on a passed ball and scored on Chad Moore's single to left.

Daniel Honeycutt and Chris Bullock each had a single for Kings Mountain, which completed its first legion season since 1985 with a 17-10 overall record. Post 155 eliminated Cherryville and Taylorsville in three straight games before losing to Caldwell.

This marked the first year since 1969 that a Kings Mountain legion team has made it to the division finals. In '69, Post 155 lost to Gastonia in seven games.

Kings Mountain played for the Area IV title in 1956 and 1959 against Paw Creek, losing both times.

The fifth game was originally scheduled for Friday night, but rained out. It was rescheduled for Saturday and rained out again. For Post 155 to win the division title, it would have taken two victories Sunday and another Monday night.

CALDWELL 13, KM 10

Caldwell County overcame an 8-7 KM lead with four runs in the bottom of the sixth and went on to defeat Post 155 13-10 in the third game of the series Wednesday night in Granite Falls.

Rob Winkler came on in the fourth inning and picked up the win for Caldwell County. Chris Bullock, who relieved starter Tommy Payne in the sixth, took the loss for KM.

Bruce Black's RBI single gave

Caldwell County the lead for good at 9-8.

Kings Mountain had taken its 8-7 lead in the top of the sixth on a two-run homer by Chris Plonk, his seventh of the year. Chad Plonk hit his 10th homer of the season and Chip Cash slammed his fifth for Post 155.

KM 7, CALDWELL 6

Ken Crook's single up the middle against a drawn in infield in the bottom of the ninth inning scored Chip Cash with the winning run as Kings Mountain won the fourth game of

the series, 7-6 Thursday night at Lancaster Field.

Caldwell relief pitcher Josh Bolick intentionally walked Chris Bullock to load the bases and set up a force or double play situation.

Crook fell behind 0-2 before ripping a sharp single to win the game.

Cash had walked with one away to get the winning rally started. The three Caldwell outfielders put their backs to the fence when KM's leading home run hitter, Chad Plonk, came to bat. Plonk had cracked his 11th homer of the season in the fifth

See Legion, 4-B

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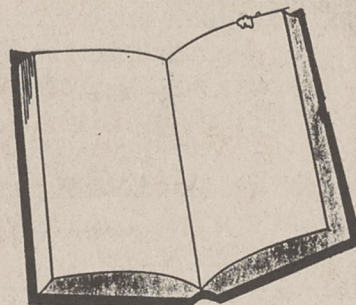
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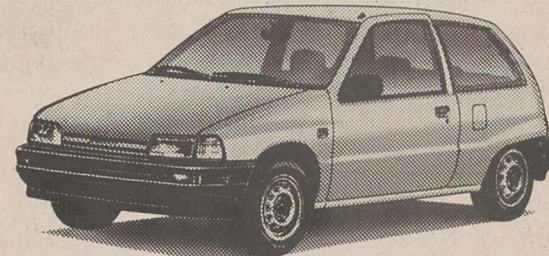


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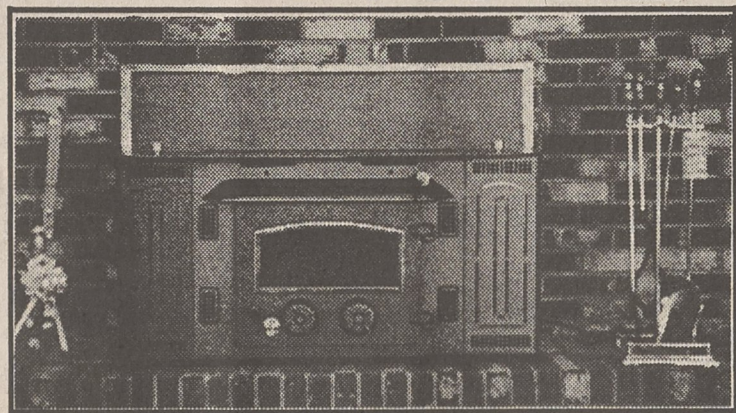
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