

KM Sports

Shelby At KMHS For Bragging Rights

Friday's homecoming football clash between Shelby and Kings Mountain at KM's John Gamble Stadium will be for bragging rights only.

Unless a major miracle occurs in the final three weeks of the season, both the Mountaineers and Lions, who have been accustomed to participating in post-season state playoff action, will sit at home while East Rutherford and Burns represent the Southwestern 3-A Conference.

Both East and Burns have already beaten Shelby while KM has fallen to R-S Central and Burns and must still play East. With two

losses against conference competition, it's very unlikely Shelby or Kings Mountain will earn one of the two berths available to SWC teams this fall.

Kings Mountain comes into Friday's game with a 4-3 overall record while the two-time state champion Lions show only a 3-4 figure. The winner can salvage a season in which both were mentioned as favorites to win the conference championship.

Shelby's chances of going to the state playoffs for the fifth straight year were dealt a very damaging blow Saturday night by East Rutherford, 28-22. The Lions earli-

er lost to Hunter Huss 12-7 and Hickory 35-14 in non-conference games and to Burns 27-10 in a SWC game.

Mountaineer Coach Dennis Hicks said he expects Shelby to play its best game of the year against the Mountaineers.

"Shelby has a tremendous amount of tradition and pride," said Hicks. "Both of us got our toes stumped (in the SWC) but I guarantee that you can count on them to come back and try to redeem themselves. I anticipate that they'll play their best game of the year against us, not just because it's a big rivalry but because of the tremendous

amount of pride they have."

Despite their 3-4 record, the Lions have one of the most explosive offenses in the conference and run the wishbone almost to perfection.

"They'll mix it up on you," said Hicks. "They go in spurts. He (Coach Jim Taylor) wants to run the wishbone. They'll run power plays off tackle, trap inside and then run the option. They do everything they can to get you to your defense from the outside in. They have as good a speed with their quarterback and halfbacks as they ever had.

"Their offense creates a tremen-

dous amount of problems for you," he said. "They'll break out of the wishbone and give you some trips and wing sets, but they still try to run out of it, and they'll go into a sprint and throw it some on you too. But their first priority is to run the ball."

Fullback Johnny Brooks, who started on last year's SWC championship team, gives the Lions a lot of power running inside and halfback Tylon Wilson is one of the league's top long-distance threats. He's averaging almost 100 yards a game rushing.

Coach Hicks is confident his defense can play well enough to keep

Kings Mountain in the game, but he continues to be concerned about the Mountaineers' lack of consistency on offense.

"If we don't come up with some kind of offensive movement it's going to be a very difficult football game," he said. "I anticipate that our defense is going to have to play just as well as it did against the run at Burns last week and will have to a much better job against the pass.

"We've just got to come up with some offensive football," he added. "We've shown that we can do it. We know that our offensive line is young but they've had three games in which they showed that they can play good football and win. We need to go out there and do it for four quarters."

'Dogs Pass KMHS 16-13

Kings Mountain's chances of making the state 3-A playoffs were dealt a severe blow Saturday night at Burns when the Bulldogs used an air attack on a wet field to outscore the Mountaineers 16-13 in a big Southwestern 3-A Conference game.

The loss was the second in three conference outings for the Mountaineers and dropped their overall record to 4-3 heading into this week's homecoming game with Shelby. To qualify for one of the conference's two state playoff berths, the Mountaineers would have to win the rest of their games and depend on both East and Burns to lose two games.

The Bulldogs, though, probably clinched a playoff berth. They sport a 3-1 conference record and have beaten both Shelby and Kings Mountain. They would have to lose two more conference games and either Shelby or Kings Mountain would have to win all three of their remaining games to keep Burns out of the playoffs.

Burns, usually a running team, showed off the arm of up-and-coming junior quarterback star Dixon Putnam, who threw for 166 yards and both Burns touchdowns. The final TD strike—a 25-yarder to Gerard Lee with just over two minutes remaining in the game, erased a 13-10 Mountaineer lead.

Kings Mountain's D.J. Williams returned the ensuing kickoff to the Burns seven yard line but a controversial clipping call brought the play back to the 40 yard line, and Burns' Shed Byrd intercepted a pass to seal the victory.

Kings Mountain played one of its best all-around games even though the Mountaineer running game found the going tough against the big, physical Burns defense. But what the Mounties lacked on offense, the kicking game made up for and kept the local eleven in the game.

The Mountaineers managed just 111 yards on the ground and four first downs. Fifty-three of the rushing yards came on one run by fullback Jeff Lockhart, who broke through the middle of the line to the Burns two in the third period to set up KM's second score. Victor Bell scored from the two to put KM on top 13-10.

Lockhart finished with 82 yards in 17 carries to lead all rushers. Burns held tailback D.J. Williams to 29 yards rushing, but he returned three kicks for 179 yards, had 23 yards in punt returns and intercepted a pass and returned it 42 yards.

Kings Mountain's defense held the Bulldogs to 124 yards on the ground. The Mountaineers did a good job on Burns' 1-2 running punch of Mark Hush and Melvin Montgomery but Lamont Wells gained 55



LEADING RUSHER
KM's Jeff Lockhart (35) picks up some tough yards against Burns

yards in 13 carries to lead the Bulldog attack.

The big story, though, was the Putnam to Lee passing combination which clicked four times for 142 yards and both Burns touchdowns. Montgomery also kicked a 33-yard field goal which turned out to be the winning points.

Early in the game it was the Burns offense against the KM defense. The Bulldogs drove inside the KM 10 twice only to be turned back. After blocking KM's first punt of the game, the 'Dogs moved to the 10 and had a first down but a 15-yard penalty put them out of scoring range.

Later in the first half Burns drove to the KM four but was stopped an inch short on a fourth down run up the middle.

The Bulldogs then went to the air and found that Lee could do just about anything he wanted to in the KM secondary. With 1:22 remaining in the half, he caught a pass in the right flat, juke around KM defender Scottie Hopper and outran three KM defenders 33 yards down the Burns sidelines for a 7-0 lead.

Montgomery added his field goal early in the third quarter to put the Bulldogs on top 10-0 but in a quick flurry at the end of the third quarter and early in the fourth quarter the Mountaineers used their kick return game to set up two scores which resulted in a 13-10 KM advantage.

Williams took the Burns kickoff 81 yards to the Burns 10 yard line to set up a seven-yard touchdown pass from Timmy McClain to Brent Wilson. Kevin Moss added the PAT as KM trimmed the margin to 10-7.

After Williams returned a Burns punt to the 37, Lockhart ripped 53 yards up the middle to the Burns two, setting up Bell's go-ahead score.

Neither team could manage much offense until the final three minutes when Burns drove 76 yards for the winning score. A missed tackle by the KM secondary allowed Lee to turn a short pass from Putnam into a 45 yard gain, then with 2:34 remaining Lee got behind two KM defenders at the goal line and hauled in the winning pass from 25 yards out.

Coach Happy Despite Loss

Anytime a team loses, its players and coaches have to be a little disappointed. But KMHS football coach Dennis Hicks says he can't complain about his players' effort in Friday's 13-10 loss to Burns.

"Quite obviously, from a won-lost standpoint we're very disappointed," he said. "When kids give the kind of effort that our kids gave and still come up short it makes it even harder. But we always tell our guys as long as the effort's there they'll never hear any complaints from us. As long as they're giving a good effort and representing the school well, as far as hard play and getting after it, we won't complain."

The Mountaineers probably gave their best overall effort of the year. The defense held the highly-touted Burns offense to its lowest point production of the year in the 16-13 victory and the kick return teams accounted for well over 200 yards. That was by far their best showing of the year.

"We were tickled to death to see our kicking game help us a little bit," Hicks said. "Basically, the only thing that kept us out of the game was that we didn't have the offense we needed. If we'd just had four more first downs anywhere during the game that would have given us 12 more plays and taken 12 away from them, we would have had a much better chance of winning. It's been a little bit of a problem for us all year and in preparing for our final three games of the year we're going to have to get more intensity on offense."

For the game, Burns ran 62 plays, including 44 rushes for 124 yards and 7-of-18 passes for 166. KM had the ball for only 36 plays, including 28 on the ground.

Overall, Hicks said he was pleased with the KM defense but admitted the secondary may have been too loose in its coverage of the Burns receivers, especially Gerard Lee who caught four passes for 144 yards and two touchdowns.

"We didn't have very tight coverage and didn't drop to the zones very well," he said. "But Putnam is a good thrower. We didn't have constant pressure on him from the folks up front."

"But as far as our defense against the run, every player on the field was giving one heck of an effort. We couldn't find anybody that we didn't think wasn't giving all he could give us. Offensively, we just didn't have any control of the line of scrimmage. The week before against South Point we got off the ball well and had some good movement and during the week of practice we did real well. But Saturday night we just started position blocking and didn't create any running lanes."

See Football, 8-A

How They Did It!

	KM	BR
First downs	4	14
Yards rushing	111	124
Passes	3-8-1	7-18-1
Yards passing	33	166
Punts	6-26	3-34
Fumbles Lost	0	1
Yds. Penalized	43	41

Score by quarters: T

KM	0	0	7	6	--13
BR	0	7	3	6	--16

- B - Lee, 33 pass from Putnam (Montgomery kick)
- B - Montgomery 33-FG.
- K - Wilson, 7 pass from McClain (Moss kick)
- K - Bell 2 run (kick failed)
- B - Lee 25 pass from Putnam (Kick failed)

RUSHING

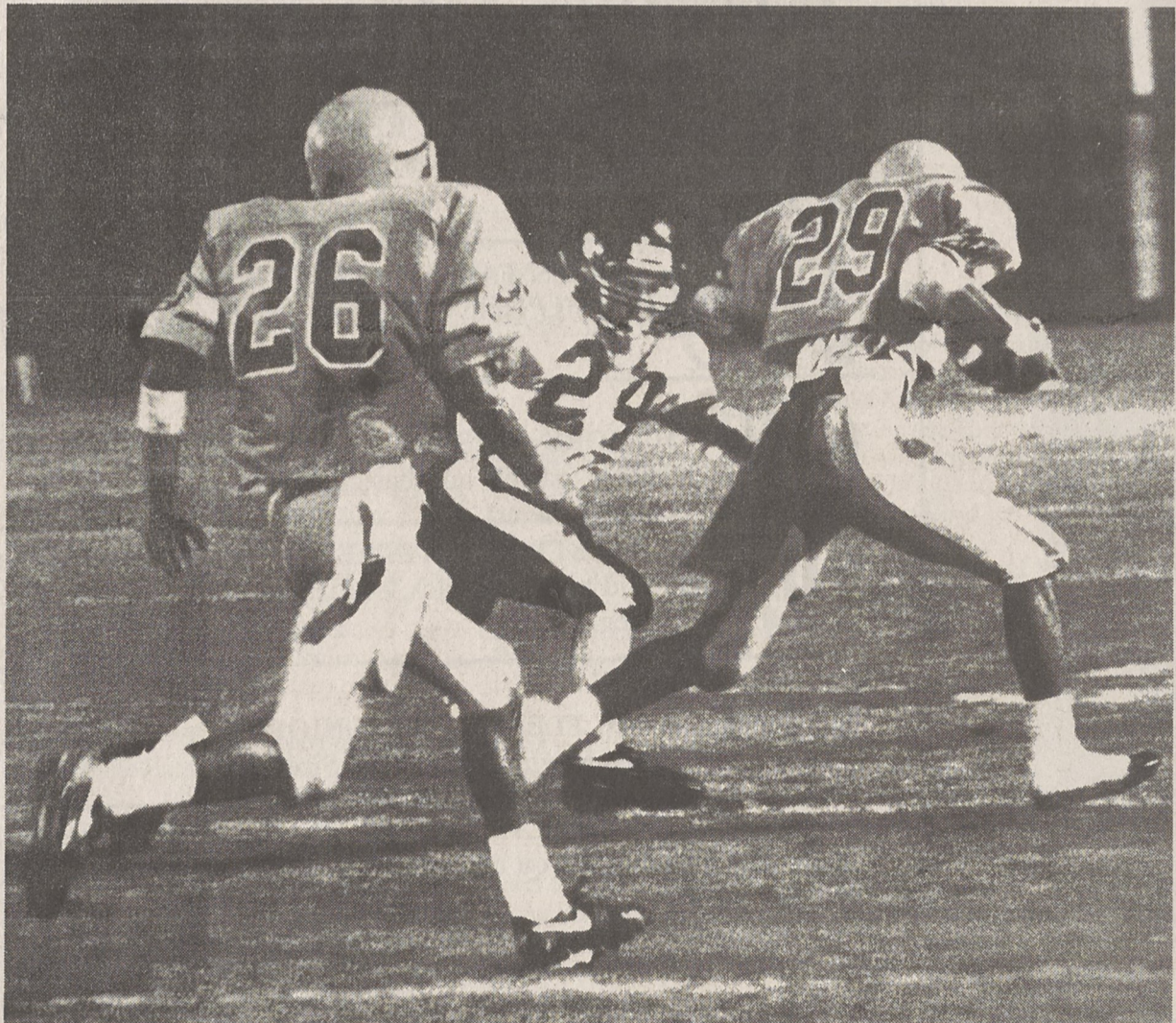
- KM - Lockhart 17-82, Williams 7-29.
- B - Wells 13-55, Hush 11-45.

PASSING

- KM - McClain 3-8-1-33.
- B - Putnam 7-18-1-166.

RECEIVING

- KM - Wilson 2-7, Houser 1-26.
- B - Lee 4-142.



BLOCKED PUNT
Kevin Moss (24) draws bead on Burns' Lamont Wells (29) after 'Dogs blocked punt

KM Runners To Compete For SWC Championship

Kings Mountain High's cross country team will travel to Shelby the next two Thursdays for the Pre-Conference and Southwestern Conference meets.

The defending champion Mountaineers are hoping to be at full strength after going through most of the season with injuries. R-S Central and Shelby are favored to win.

"We were conference champs last year but haven't done well this year because of injuries," said Coach Gordon Edwards of the Mountaineers. "But we have a chance with the return of Aaron Ford. I'm not sure how fit he is after missing 2 1/2 weeks."

Patriots Lose To Burns, Play Final Game At Home

Kings Mountain Middle School lost to Burns 28-0 in a Bi-County Conference game Monday at John Gamble Stadium. The game had been rained out last Wednesday.

Leslie scored two touchdowns and a pair of two-point conversions to lead the Burns attack. Scott and Shade scored one TD each.

Kings Mountain took the opening kickoff and marched to the

Edwards said he expects Ronnie Yarbrough to challenge for the top spot and Bill Foard to challenge for the top five.

"But the most important thing for us will be the performance of Matthew Denton, Mike Black, Aaron Ford and Jon Putnam," Edwards said. "If they finish high in the individual standings, we'll have a chance to win."

The top seven Mountaineer runners will compete in the regionals November 2 at Freedom.

Kings Mountain's girls probably will not field a full team at Shelby. They have been bothered by injuries and it looks like Dawn

See Runners, 7-A

Burns 20 but lost the ball on a fumble. After that, it was all Burns.

"Our defense played real well in the first quarter," KM Coach David Heffner said. "But, after that it seemed like Burns came alive and we just couldn't stop them."

The Patriots, 3-2, were scheduled to host Shelby yesterday. They host East Lincoln in their final game next Wednesday at 5 p.m.