

KM Sports

Mounties Win Close Games Over 'Cats, Lions

Williamson's Mid-Court Shot Whips North Gaston By Three

Marquiz Williamson's field goal from near midcourt gave Kings Mountain's Mountaineers a 77-74 Southwestern 3-A Conference victory over North Gaston's Wildcats Friday night at the KMHS gym.

The victory strengthened KM's hold on second place in the SWC. The two teams were tied in the loss column going into the contest. KM improved its SWC record to 7-2 while North Gaston fell to 5-3.

Kings Mountain, playing without the services of starting center Mark Byers, appeared to have the game in hand with a 71-63 lead with just 1:20 to play. But the Wildcats clawed away at the lead and finally cut it to two (74-72) on a basket by William Stewart with 13 seconds left.

The Mountaineers had a chance to wrap it up at the foul line but Darius Ross missed a one-and-one. North Gaston's Stewart hit both ends of a one-and-one to tie the game at 74-all with three seconds left.

After a time out, the Mountaineers had to take the ball out of bounds on the Wildcats' end of the floor. The throw went to Williamson near midcourt. He dribbled a couple of times and put up a running one-hander from 35 feet which swished the nets at the buzzer.

Williamson finished with 20 points, Ross 18, Tony Currence 14 and Brent Wilson 13 for the

Mountaineers. Tank Allison had 17 points, Stewart 13 and Herman Bratton and Chris Lowery 12 each for the Wildcats.

GIRLS GAME - Kings Mountain's girls broke a two-game losing streak in style, pulling one of the season's biggest upsets in the opener. The Lady Mountaineers stunned the second place North girls 44-41, dropping the Lady Wildcats to 5-3 and a full three games behind unbeaten Shelby in the race for the conference title.

Kings Mountain remained in sixth place but improved to 4-5 and within striking distance of three teams (R-S Central, East Rutherford and Burns) who are tied for third place in the SWC. Only the top four teams advance to the state playoffs.

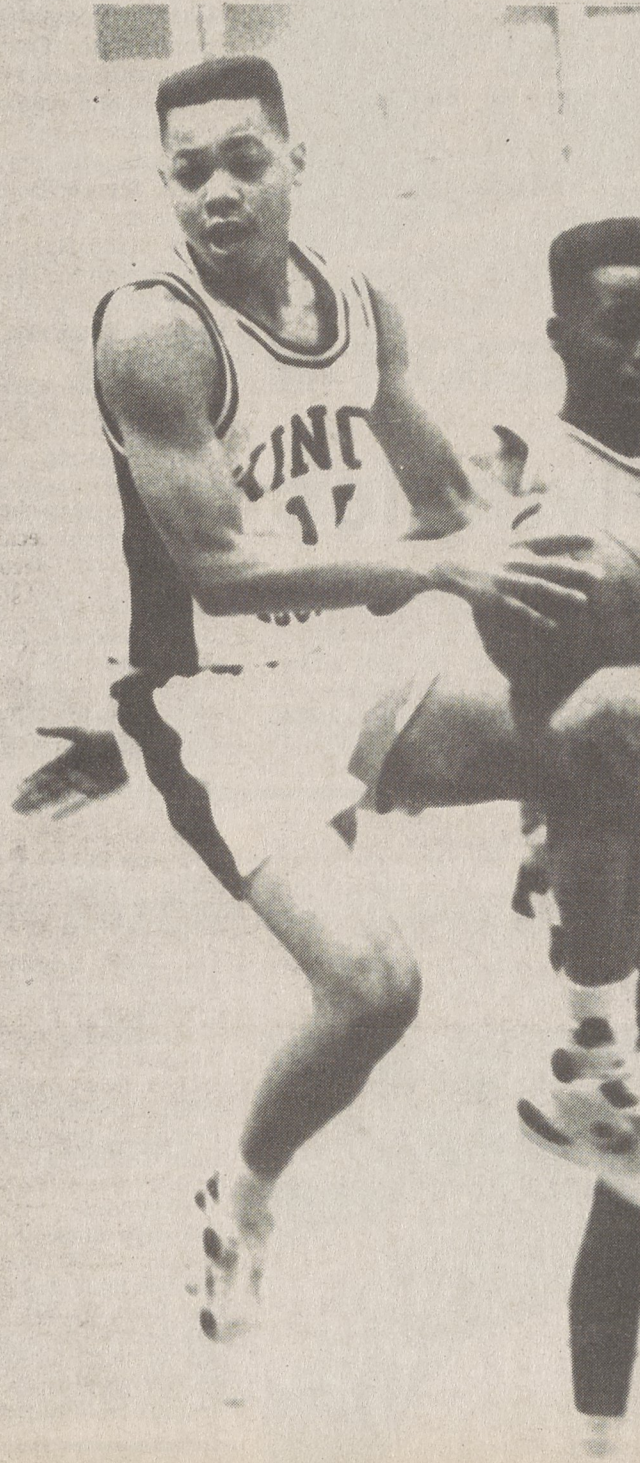
Suzette Feemster scored 24 points and grabbed 17 rebounds to lead the KM effort. Chastity Friday scored 21 and Damenda Dellinger 15 for North Gaston.

GIRLS GAME

NG (41) - Best 2, Britton 3, Friday 21, Dellinger 15.
KM (44) - Feemster 24, Sweezy 4, Hardin 4, Wilson 6, Hutchinson 2, Tate 4.

BOYS GAME

NG (74) - Brewer 6, Mintz 8, Stewart 13, Bratton 12, Davis 4, Lowery 12, Summey 2, Allison 17.
KM (77) - Ross 18, Currence 14, Williamson 20, Bell 3, Hopper 9, Wilson 13.



MARQUIZ WILLIAMSON
Guns winner from mid-court

See Middle, 8-A

Tuesday's Victory At Shelby Clinches Second Playoff Seed

Kings Mountain's Mountaineers wrapped up the #2 playoff seed from the Southwestern 3-A Conference Tuesday night with a 61-58 victory over Shelby's Lions.

Coach Larry Sipe's men now have an 8-2 conference slate with just two games remaining. They travel to first place R-S Central Friday night and return home next Tuesday for their regular season finale against South Point.

Kings Mountain leads North Gaston, which was upset by East Rutherford Tuesday night, by 2 1/2 in the race for second place. Should Kings Mountain lose its final two games and the Wildcats win their final three, the two teams would share second place but KM would get the #2 seed because the Mountaineers defeated North twice during the regular season.

Tuesday's final home game with South Point will be Seniors Night. The six senior players--Darius Ross, Mark Byers, Scottie Hopper, Kevin Moss, Tony Currence and Brent Wilson--will be recognized. "That's a group that has been very instrumental in our success over the past two years," Sipe said. "Last year they pushed that iceberg higher and higher out of the water and this year they've stepped forward and done the majority of the playing. It's a group I'm really proud of."

Tuesday night's victory at Shelby was the biggest of the season in terms of importance, but it wasn't one of the Mountaineers' better efforts. Shelby led 32-28 at halftime and appeared headed for its second straight upset. The Lions had knocked off fourth place East Rutherford Friday.

"We were lackadaisical," Sipe said. "I question whether we were

mentally ready to play. Shelby's not playing that badly right now. The way we played was probably dictated by the way they were playing at the time."

Kings Mountain committed eight turnovers and hit only 8-of-18 shots in the first half.

Derek Thompson's slam dunk gave Shelby a 36-29 lead with 5:29 to play in the third quarter but then KM went on a 15-2 scoring run to take command. "Instead of the dunk igniting Shelby it was kind of a wake up call for us," Sipe said.

Marquiz Williamson scored six points and Darius Ross five during the 15-2 Mountaineer run that gave the Mounties a 46-38 lead going into the fourth quarter.

Brent Pasco hit three consecutive 3-pointers to pull Shelby to within 48-47 but the Lions were not able to regain the lead.

The biggest play of the night came with 58 seconds left and KM on top 59-58. Ross went to the foul line for a one-and-one opportunity but missed the shot. However, KM's Brent Wilson rebounded and scored to account for the final 61-58 margin. Shelby attempted several 3-pointers in the final minute but couldn't connect and Ross grabbed a rebound and dribbled the ball to the corner as the final seven seconds ticked off the clock.

Williamson finished with 14 points and Byers 13 to lead the KM effort. Hopper had seven rebounds and Byers six. Thompson led Shelby with 17 points and Pasco had 14.

GIRLS GAME - Shelby's girls clinched at least a tie for first place by defeating Kings Mountain 50-28 in the opener. KM fell to 4-6 in the conference and will have to

See Mounties 8-A

Middle School Whips Lincolnton

Kings Mountain Middle School's basketball team defeated Lincolnton 56-50 and lost to Shelby 60-58 in Bi-County Conference action during the past week.

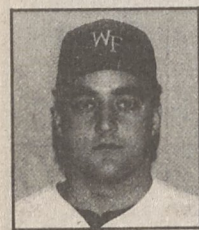
Coach Ricky Fortner's club, 5-4, hosts West Lincoln today and travels to Shelby Monday. The Patriots

MARQUIZ WILLIAMSON
Guns winner from mid-court

See Middle, 8-A

Bumgardner On Wake Baseball Team

Kings Mountain's Rusty Bumgardner, who recently completed his four-year football career at Wake Forest University, is now a member of the Demon Deacons' baseball team.



BUMGARDNER

The former KMHS All-Conference pitcher has two years of baseball eligibility with the Deacons. He plans to take a light course load this year so he can return next year and take a couple of courses and play baseball again next spring.

The Deacons open their season Friday, Saturday and Sunday at the University of Georgia. Wake will

play a 56-game regular season schedule in addition to the ACC Tournament in Greenville, S.C., and the Carolina Invitational at Chapel Hill.

Bumgardner hasn't played organized baseball since 1987. He was All-Conference his junior and senior years at KMHS and starred on American Legion baseball teams in Bessemer City. In his final season of Legion ball he slammed 18 home runs and hit over .300 while splitting time between the outfield and first base.

In addition to pitching, he also played first and third base at KMHS.

"Rusty hasn't played for quite some time, so it's going to take him a few games to get his timing down," said Wake Coach George Greer. "Once he gets comfortable, I

think Rusty is going to help us a great deal."

Greer presently has Bumgardner at first base and is also using him as a designated hitter. As he gets back into baseball shape he's expected to see some action on the mound as well. Bumgardner starts at first when Wake is pitching a lefthander and is the DH when a righthander is pitching.

Bumgardner started for four seasons with the Wake Forest football team. He started half the season at right tackle and the other half at left tackle last season.

Wake Forest expects to be among the contenders for the ACC title this spring. In three years with the Deacons Greer has compiled a 102-73-2 overall record. He coached at Connecticut-Avery

Point and Davidson before going to Wake.

In addition to his collegiate coaching, Greer served as head coach of the Cotuit Kettleers of the Cape Cod League for nine summers. While there he worked with several college stars who are now playing in the majors, including Will Clark of the Giants, Jeff Innis, Tim Lincecum and Ron Darling of the Mets, Terry Steinbach of the Athletics, and many others.

At Wake, Greer has coached two players (Billy Masse and Warren Sawkiw) who made All-American and three (Masse, Sawkiw and Frank Humber) who made it to the Olympics.

One of Greer's recruits last year was Kings Mountain's Paul Brannon, who later was drafted and signed by the Seattle Mariners.

Jones Eyes Big Year With Tar Heel Netters

Bryan Jones of Kings Mountain and his University of North Carolina tennis teammates hope to take their game up another notch this spring.

Last year the rebuilding Tar Heels won their first Atlantic Coast Conference title since 1978. This year, they hope to qualify as a team for the NCAA tournament for the first time since '78.

The Heels will get an early sampling of what the season holds February 20-24 when they play in the prestigious USTA/ITCA Men's Indoor Team Championships in Louisville, Ky. UNC is one of 20 teams that qualified based on last year's record and a preseason ranking of #15 in the country.

Carolina, with only two seniors on the team, finished 19-8 overall and 5-2 in the ACC last spring. The Heels entered the ACC as the #3 seed. Playing without their #1 singles player, Jones, who had torn ligaments in his ankle just four days prior to the tournament, the Tar Heels outlasted sixth-seeded Georgia Tech 5-4 and then scored back-to-back upsets over #2 Duke and top-seeded Clemson to win the crown.

Jones had a tremendous sophomore year, making the NCAA Tournament as a singles participant. He finished the season

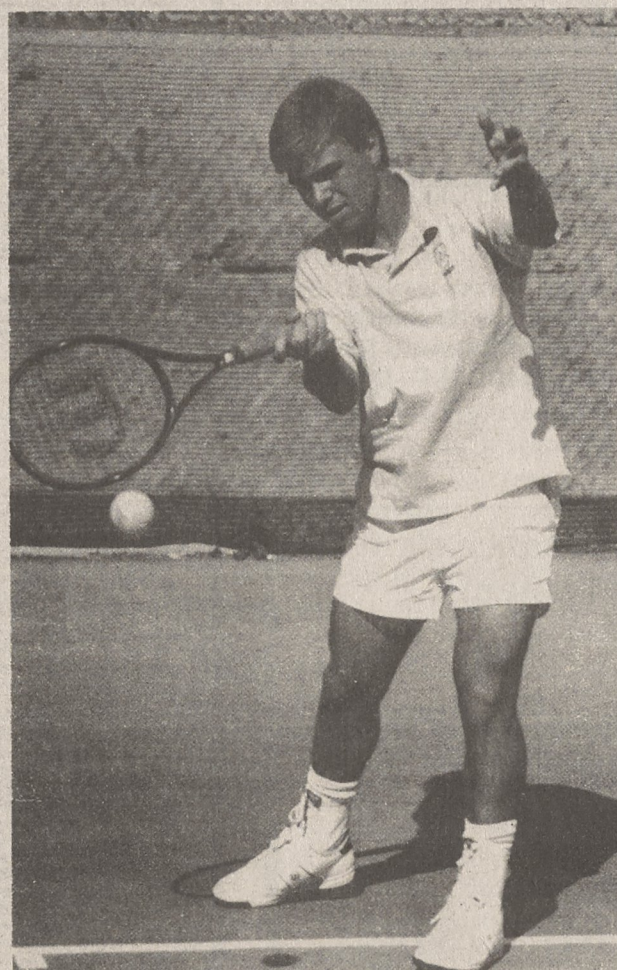
as the nation's 59th ranked singles player in the Volvo Tennis/Collegiate Men's Singles Rankings. His overall record was 32-17 and he was named to the All-Atlantic Coast Conference team after posting a 6-1 league record. He combined with Joe Frierson to win the ACC's #3 doubles title and was named the team's hardest worker. Jones was Region II Rookie of the Year in 1989.

Last fall Jones was featured in the Carolina Blue magazine as the Hardees Player of the Week. He was also selected ACC Student-Athlete of the Week.

During the off-season, Jones won the singles title in the Catawba-Cheerwine Open in Salisbury by defeating Amiche Nwese of Nigeria 6-1, 6-2. He also upset Howard Herr of South Africa in the Asheville Open Championships men's open finals, 4-6, 6-4, 6-3 for his first professional win, but because of his amateur status Jones was not awarded the \$1,500 first place prize money.

As a member of the Southern Collegiate team, Jones won the U.S. Tennis Association Junior Davis Cup Championship in New York, defeating Gumar Salumma of Indiana in the finals 6-1, 3-6, 6-2.

See Jones, 6-A



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