

## Kings Mountain Sports

# Mounties lose, playoff hopes in limbo

Once again, North Gaston's Wildcats may have doused Kings Mountain High's hopes of a state baseball championship.

Last spring, when the Mountaineers were favored to win their second straight state crown, North Gaston upset the Mountaineers in the third round at Lancaster Field and went on to

play in the state championship series.

Monday night at Lancaster Field, it was *deja vu*. The Wildcats defeated the Mountaineers 5-3, this time in the opening round of the Southwestern 3-A Conference tournament.

This time, though, the Mountaineers still have a slim

chance of staying alive. If regular season champion East Rutherford wins the SWC tournament, the Mountaineers will still compete in the state tourney beginning next week. If a team other than East wins the SWC tournament, Kings Mountain's season is over.

"We're just sort of in limbo," said KM Coach Bruce Clark after

Monday's disappointing loss. "We're hoping East Rutherford can win the conference tournament and keep our hopes for the state playoffs alive." The final two rounds of the tourney will be played Wednesday and Friday at North Gaston.

If East wins the tournament, KM would begin its state playoff partic-

ipation next Tuesday at the home field of the South Piedmont Conference champion.

Nothing seemed to go Kings Mountain's way in Monday's loss, which dropped KM's overall record to 13-11. North Gaston won for just the fourth time this year.

The Wildcats took advantage of a most unusual play to score four

runs in the third inning and they went on to grab a 5-0 lead before the Mountaineers finally dented the scoreboard.

In the wild third frame, North took a 1-0 lead on back-to-back doubles by Neil Welcome and Brent Payton, then scored two

See Playoffs, 5-A

## Mounties 1-1 in final week

Kings Mountain's Mountaineers completed their regular season last week.

The Mountaineers ended Southwestern 3-A Conference regular season action Wednesday night with a 3-2 loss at Shelby, but bounced back Friday to defeat Crest 6-2 in "Senior Night" at Lancaster Field.

The results left the Mountaineers with an 8-4 SWC and 13-10 overall record. The Mounties finished second in the conference to East Rutherford, giving their two seconds and a first place finish in their three years under Coach Bruce Clark.

Kings Mountain went into the Shelby game with a mathematical chance to tie the Cavaliers for the regular season crown. East Rutherford lost to South Point 2-1 on the same night but bounced back Friday to beat North Gaston and win the SWC by two games.

Despite getting only four hits, Shelby, which finished third in the SWC with a 7-5 record, broke KM's six-game winning streak. The Lions won the game in the bottom of the seventh inning on a

sacrifice fly by Mike Curtis.

Shelby had grabbed a 2-0 lead in the bottom of the fifth, getting three of its four hits off Stephen Fisher during that inning. Kings Mountain tied it in the sixth on run-scoring singles by Donald Bell and Rick Marr. KM proceeded to load the bases but couldn't score any more runs.

Brent Pasco went the distance for the Lions, scattering six hits.

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A four-run fourth inning, sparked by Tommy Payne's fourth homer of the year, lifted the Mountaineers over Crest Friday night. After Payne's solo shot over the left-centerfield fence, the Mountaineers scored three more runs on singles by Fisher, Brad Melton and Robbie Ruff, and a Crest error.

Payne pitched the first four innings and got the win. He gave up only two hits. Donald Bell came in from rightfield to pitch the final three frames. Crest got its other two hits and both of its runs off Bell in the seventh.

See Crest, 5-A



WELCOME BACK - North Gaston's Neil Welcome hustles back to first base to avoid being picked off in Monday's SWC tournament game against Kings Mountain at Lancaster Field. KM's first baseman is Damon Putnam. North Gaston won 5-3.

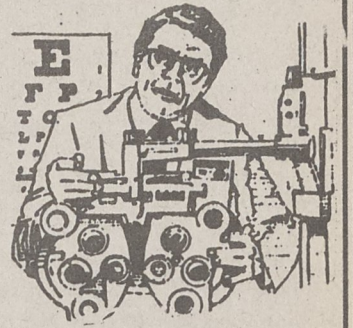
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## Sports Briefs

### KM AAU team is third in state

Kings Mountain's 19-year-old AAU basketball team finished third in last week's state tournament in Winston-Salem.

Kings Mountain won three games in pool play to advance to the championship round.

In pool action, KM defeated Greensboro 112-75. Era Vaughn scored 25 points, Stanke Williams 20, Alex Leary 21, Quame Jackson 16 and Marquiz Williamson 10.

In the second round, KM outscored Salisbury 105-90. Williams scored 31 points, Vaughn 28, Mark Byers 22 and Apollo Brooks 20.

In the final game of pool play, KM won 108-75 over Winston-Salem. Williams scored 36 points, Byers 22, Jackson 16, Brian Curry 12 and Williamson 10.

In the first game of the championship round, KM defeated the Charlotte Royals 115-98. Leary scored 28 points, Byers 21, Williams 20, Curry 20 and Brooks 10.

KM lost out to Winsotn Lake 108-95. Leary scored 45 points followed by Byers 12, Williams 11 and Curry and Jackson 10 each.



STEVEN BELL

WINS TOURNEY - Steven Rhyné Bell, 13-year-old son of Steve and Deana Bell, won the 16-year-old division in the Hickory Open/Novice Junior Tennis Tournament May 11-12. Steven is coached by Bobby Jones of Kings Mountain.

### KM AAU team first in state

Kings Mountain's 15-16 year old AAU basketball team won the state tournament last weekend at Mooresville Junior High School.

KM defeated Winsotn Salem 96-50, Pineville 89-65 and Mooresville 90-70.

Against Winston, Jovan Bell scored 15 points, Sharee Hopper and Robert Williams 15 each, Jan Adams 14 and Darius Stinson 10.

Against Pineville, Williams scored 13, Bell 12, Hopper and Adams 11 each and Stinson and Bobby Height 10 each.

Against Mooresville, Williams, Bell and Hopper scored 13 each, Adams 11 and Stinson and Height 10 each.

Other members of the team were Junior Gordon, Daven Harris, Issac

Kisner, Jeff Melton, Troy Phillips, Jason Rayford, David Taylor, Ron Woods and Skip Youngblood.

### Singles tennis results listed

The Kings Mountain Tennis Association began its season Monday at the KMHS courts.

In women's singles, Bridget Martin defeated Jerri Cates 6-2, 6-1 and Debbie Bumgardner defeated Pam Cheshire 6-2, 6-4.

In men's singles, Lyn Cheshire defeated John Bumgardner 6-2, 6-1 and Brian Smith defeated Ed Owensby 6-3, 6-3.

The league meets each Monday at 6:30 at the KMHS courts. Any Kings Mountain residents may join by going to the courts at that time. For more information call Pat Huffstetler at 739-5706.

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