

Opinions

GARY STEWART
Editor



This 'n that

■ I never cease to be amazed with coaches. I appreciate them because they are providing a lot of needed leadership for our young people, but sometimes I wonder about some of the reasoning behind their decisions.

In this case, I'm not talking about their coaching moves but their off-the-field decisions.

Recently, Southwestern 3-A Conference coaches selected their All-Conference team. Kings Mountain had five players on the team, which is good; however, I cannot figure how the coaches overlooked Kings Mountain's Stephen Fisher when choosing the Player of the Year.

The award went to Dennis Logan, a pitcher for East Rutherford, and a very good athlete. However, he compiled a 10-2 record on a third place team. Fisher was 12-0 for the team that won the conference championship.

In 1989 when Kings Mountain won the state championship and Paul Brannon set a state home run record with 25 dingers, I questioned an opposing coach as to why Brannon did not receive the Player of the Year award. His answer was that only regular season accomplishments are considered and that during the regular season, Kings Mountain finished second.

That being the case, it can be pointed out that during the regular season Fisher was 10-0. Kings Mountain was 11-1 in the conference and Fisher won nine of those games. Incidentally, he completed every game he started and when he wasn't on the mound he was playing shortstop and hitting well over .300.

I've been told several times in the past -- and it must be true -- that some coaches vote against the best players to try to strengthen the chances of their own players being named to the team. That must be the case, because I heard that this year a coach who never has a winning season nominated all nine of his starters for All-Conference. The only thing I can say to that is this: If he has that many All-Conference players and can't break even what kind of a coach does that make him?

■ While on prep baseball, people are still talking about the interference call which ended the recent Kings Mountain-West Henderson state playoff game.

To be honest, I did not see the play. I knew the man was going to be out at second and I was looking at first to see if the batter was going to be able to beat the throw to first.

But, right or wrong, I will say that the umpire who made the call - Sam Homesley - is one of the best in the business.

A couple of weeks ago I made the statement that I hoped the booking agents would assign the best umpires to Kings Mountain's playoff games. In Sam Homesley and Jerry Hudson, I think they did just that.

■ There will be a lot of new faces around Grover School next year. Principal Jim Scruggs and three teachers who have been permanent fixtures there for years have retired.

Scruggs, third grade teacher Ann Byers and fourth grade teachers Carolyn Westmoreland and Elizabeth Allen probably had over 100 years experience between them.

I had the privilege -- although I'm not sure if it was a privilege for her or not -- of having Mrs. Allen in the fourth grade. That was in 1955 and had to be her first or second year at the school. Mrs. Allen also taught both of my children, Mrs. Westmoreland taught both of them and Mrs. Byers taught one of them. They were all outstanding teachers.

In fact, Mrs. Allen spent one more year at Grover School than Mr. Scruggs did. He came as principal in 1956 when the school included grades one through 12.

These educators will be sorely missed in Grover. However, there is good news to this. Next year, Grover will be getting one of the best principals in the Kings Mountain System, Glenda O'Shields. She can't fill Jim Scruggs' shoes but she will make some footsteps of her own.

■ Here's a fish tale you won't believe. But I swear it's true.

A couple of weeks ago, Eugene Goforth, David Hughes and I were bream fishing at a local lake. We pulled up to some bream beds and were fishing on the bottom. I was in the middle of the boat, not catching a thing, as usual, and Goforth hung a bream.

As he began reeling it in, Hughes said, "I've got one too" and he started reeling his in. When Goforth took his fish out of the water I noticed he also reeled in Hughes' line.

"Ya'll tangled up," I said in my expert English. But, Goforth found not one, but two hooks in the fish's mouth. They had both caught the same fish.

AT ISSUE
Abolish the Electoral College?

U.S. Sen. David Pryor (D-Ark.) has served in the U.S. Senate since 1979 and is a member of the Senate Agriculture, Finance, and Governmental Affairs committees. He also is the chairman of the Senate Special Committee on Aging.



Should the Electoral College be abolished in favor of electing the president by direct popular vote?

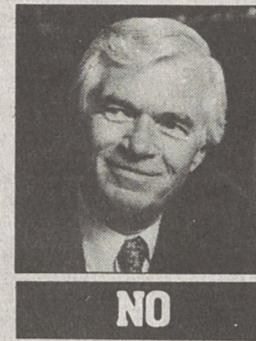
Yes. Three times in America's history, we have put in the White House a "minority president" -- that is, a president who received fewer votes than his opponent. That was due to the Electoral College system, which allocates each state's vote on a "winner-take-all" basis according to the size of its congressional delegation. Each time this has happened, it has resulted in widespread outrage from those who thought democracy had been turned on its ear. Even in recent years, we have had some close calls. For example, a shift of merely 10,000 votes in Hawaii and Ohio in 1976 would have given Gerald Ford the presidency, even though Jimmy Carter received nearly 2 million more popular votes nationwide.

What effect would eliminating the Electoral College have on presidential campaigns?

It would avert any potential constitutional crisis that could result in the future if we again select a minority president. Abolishing the Electoral College would help preserve faith in our system among the American electorate. The Electoral College may have made sense before the advent of television, radio and daily newspapers. However, the miracle of modern communication now enables every citizen in this country to be well-informed enough to directly elect their president and vice president.

What impact would abolishing the Electoral College have on our system of government?

Direct election of the president will give every man and woman in every state an equal voice in the election of our two highest national officials. It is time for our country, which believes in the equality of all its citizens, to adopt an election framework that ensures this same equality at the voting booth.



Should the Electoral College be abolished in favor of electing the president by direct popular vote?

No. The intent of the framers of the Constitution was to give each state a voice in selecting the president. Requiring the states to choose electors who cast the votes to elect the president keeps the elections from being dominated by the most populous states.

Direct election would dilute the power of smaller states and would increase unfairly the influence of large cities and population centers in presidential politics.

What effect would eliminating the Electoral College have on presidential campaigns?

Presidential candidates would tend to ignore smaller states, or even regions with fewer voters, and concentrate their time, organizational efforts and appeal for support in the most populous areas. Entire sections of the country could be overlooked or ignored as the candidates designed their campaign strategies to gather votes in the more densely populated sections of the country.

What impact would abolishing the Electoral College have on our system of government?

Farmers and rural landowners would become political outcasts. It would be likely for the president to pay much more attention to the interests of the cities than the problems of rural America. Political power in our federal government would shift away from small towns and rural communities to the urban areas. Those states without large population centers would be effectively disenfranchised.

The U.S. Senate would be the only institution left in our federal system to guarantee equal consideration of the interests and well-being of the smaller states. ■

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Our View

Open phone lines

Within a week the House is likely to take action on a bill which would allow Bell companies to enter the information market. At present, your telephone company is limiting to local and long distance phone service.

Southern Bell wants to begin offering classified advertising over the phone, and other valuable services such as emergency medical contact between doctors and patients, school-home contact services, and shopping services which would be a valuable asset to consumers.

Rep. Jack Brooks of Texas, chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, has introduced a bill which would delay Southern Bell and other Bell companies from marketing services for seven years, and would also prevent Bell from manufacturing its own equipment.

One of the strengths of America is its free enterprise system, which encourages competition and, in turn, results in lower prices and better services for the consumer.

In this case, allowing Bell to enter the information market would also create needed jobs for a sagging U.S. economy. In fact, a recent survey indicates that it would create 1.46 million jobs for Americans by the year 2001, including 50,000 jobs in North Carolina.

Your Right To Say It

Congratulations grads

To the Editor:

As a teacher at Kings Mountain Middle School, there have been times when I would ask myself if teaching is worth the pain and effort? Well, last Friday I found out that, yes, it is worth the pain and effort. You see, the class that graduated Friday night was the class I had the year I started teaching and on Friday morning three of those students came by to see me and say, "We made it!" Those students taught me a lot about caring and the real reason I chose teaching as my profession.

I am very proud of those kids and would like to thank them publicly for teaching me and giving me the opportunity to say, "Yes, you were definitely worth the pain and effort." Congratulations and best wishes.

Beth Sellers

Nat and Natalie unforgettable

I hope you've heard that recording of "Unforgettable" by Natalie Cole and her father, Nat "King" Cole.

Miss Cole, who failed as an entertainer when she first started, is finally coming into her own. I remember when she set out to become a singer, maybe twenty years ago. Her managers arranged a country-wide tour but had to cancel it because of low ticket sales. One of the problems was that Miss Cole refused to sing her Dad's songs. Lucky for her, and us, she has seen the light.

I don't know how they meshed those two for that recording but the result is good listening.

Nat Cole has always been one of my favorite singers, with hits such as the aforementioned "Unforgettable," "Too Young," "Mona Lisa" and a host of others.

Most people don't remember that before Nat Cole was a singer he was a jazz pianist, the leader of a group known as the King Cole Trio. If you are a jazz fan and can get your hands on some of their 1940's offerings you're in for a rare treat.

The King Cole Trio had a light, bouncy, cheerful style that was true swing but not the pounding, grinding format employed by some of the larger bands of that era. Their music just seemed to skip along in almost perfect harmony. They used a guitar, a bass fiddle and Nat's piano.

Cole became a singer almost by accident. The trio was playing a club one evening and he started humming one of the tunes, then sang a little of it. The crowd loved it and begged for more. After that the group added a few tunes that required vocals to the act.

Cole's voice always reminded me of smoke and honey. He was one of a kind and his tunes hold up even today.

Jim Heffner
Columnist



I listen to a lot of music from the 30's and 40's. It sure beats the junk you hear today. Most of the stuff you pick up on the radio is loud and indecipherable, a mish-mosh of unrelated sounds that makes no sense at all. I am always amazed that radio stations continue to force feed that garbage to the public.

Now, don't get me wrong. This is not an indictment of all radio stations. I just tend to lose patience with those that play non-music.

To me, non-music consists of most of today's rock and roll and what is loosely referred to as rap. Actually, current "composers" and "artists" are having a very good effect on country music. They have driven more and more people to country, and because of the increase in country fans, a new demand has been created.

A whole bevy of new country artists have hit the scene. Their music is good and you can even understand the words.

Where could you ever find a better voice than Vince Gill's?

There are plenty of excellent musicians right here in this area. I've discussed it with my good friend Jim Arp many times. Arp is a country music authority who

writes about that subject for this newspaper. I maintain that, if there was a promoter to pursue it, a really good live show could be staged using local talent only.

Some civic organization ought to give that some thought.

I guess I could be way off base. Music is a fluid entity and today's trends might be tomorrow's obsolescence. My son Jeff claims to be a music expert and he tells me Pat Benatar has a new album that emulates the rhythm and blues of the 50's. Benatar has been pretty much a hard rocker over the years.

Jeff is not to be trusted however, as he also likes some rap. He tells me M.C. Hammer is excellent. Hammer, to me, is just another bad poet who owns a race horse.

The young man is an interesting guy though. Once upon a time, when Hammer was a teenager, Charlie Finley hired him and made him a Vice-president of his Oakland A's baseball team. Of course nobody ever accused Finley of playing with a full deck.

I guess when you get right down to it music is a personal choice for each of us and maybe I shouldn't knock any of it.

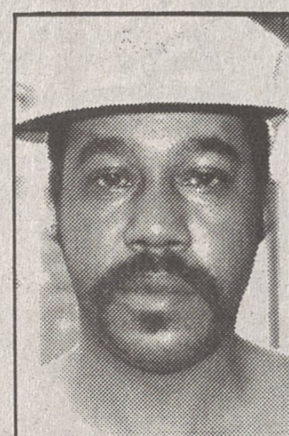
N-a-a-a-h. I am partial to a wide variety of music and musicians. I like Sinatra, Willie Nelson, Dave Brubeck, Vince Gill, Carly Simon, Michael Bolton and lots of others. My favorite song is "Funny Valentine," or is it "Send in the Clowns?" Come to think of it Dave Brubeck's "Little Girl Blue" isn't bad, nor is "Desperado" by the Eagles or Linda Ronstadt.

"I'm Getting Sentimental Over You," a 30's release by the Tommy Dorsey orchestra is as good an instrumental as you'll ever hear.

To each his own, I guess, which incidentally, is a good 40's tune.

Sidewalk Survey

With the Education Summit coming up, what topics would you like to see discussed?



Keith Jones
Discipline.



Bessie Smith
Adult education.



Phoutasinh Silaphat
Grading.



Jerry Wright
Discipline and child care.



Joan Rickle
I think teachers should get paid more. More help for kids below average, maybe tutoring. And keep P.E. in.



Fannie Smith
Adult education. I would like to participate in a computer class.

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