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Still have shot at state playoffs

Mounties win tourney opener

Kings Mountain's Mountaineers broke open a close game with five runs in the sixth inning to defeat North Gaston 8-3 in the opening round of the Southwestern 3-A Conference tournament Monday night at KM's Lancaster Field.

The victory moved the Mountaineers of Nelson Connor into a semi-finals game Wednesday against South Point at East Rutherford High School. A victory over the Raiders would assure the Mountaineers of a berth in the state 3-A playoffs which begin next week.

Bryan Leftwich went the distance Monday to pick up his first varsity victory. The game was knotted at 2-all until the fifth, when Kings Mountain took a 3-2 lead.

Leftwich, who gave up six hits and struck out four, survived a shaky first inning. North Gaston took advantage of two errors and singles by Scott Quinn and Jason Doster to take a 2-0 lead in the top of the first.

But Kings Mountain came right back in the bottom of the first and tied the score. Brian Lefevers and Michael Bell collected back-to-back singles. Kevin Melton's sacrifice fly to deep centerfield plated Lefevers with the first run, and Bell scored the tying run when Robert Wingo bounced out to second base.

Both teams threatened several times, but neither could score until the bottom of the fifth when the Mountaineers grabbed the lead for good. Melton singled and scored with two outs when North Gaston left fielder Jason Friday dropped Kenny Bridges' fly ball.

The Mountaineers scored five runs on only two hits in the sixth inning to nail down their ninth victory overall in 18 decisions. Kings Mountain sent 10 men to the plate.

Sharee Hopper, Chris Hutchins and Duane Patterson all drew



KMHS SENIORS - Kings Mountain High Coach Nelson Connor has looked to his five seniors to provide the leadership for an otherwise young team this spring. Kneeling, left to right, Sharee Hopper and Michael Bell. Standing, Chris Hutchins, Duane Patterson and Nate Champion.

walks to lead of the inning. Leftwich's sacrifice fly to center fielder Hopper with a 4-2 lead. Lefevers walked to re-load the bases, and an out later Melton walked to force in the fifth run. Wingo followed with a two-run single to make it 7-2, and Bridges' single made it 8-2.

North Gaston picked up its final run in the seventh on a hit batsman,

Quinn's single and an error.

The Mountaineers finished with only six hits, with Lefevers getting two and Bell, Melton, Wingo and Bridges adding one apiece.

■ In other SWC opening round action Monday, Shelby upset R-S Central and South Point defeated Burns. Shelby was to play first seed East Rutherford last night,

with the winner facing the KM-South Point winner Friday at 7:30 for the championship.

East Rutherford and South Point are assured berths in the state tournament. Kings Mountain will go if the Mountaineers advance to the tournament finals and a team that finished lower than third in the regular season does not win the tournament.

Otherwise, Kings Mountain and R-S Central will play a special playoff game Friday at 5 p.m. to determine the third seed. The Mountaineers and R-S tied for third during the regular season with 6-6 records, and split their two regular season games. If the playoff game is necessary, it will be played on a neutral field, probably at East Rutherford prior to the SWC championship game.

The Mountaineers have improved in the hitting department in recent games as several players who were in early-season slumps are beginning to make good contact.

Lefevers continues to lead the offense with a .367 batting average, but Kenny Bridges has come on strong and is hitting .365. Bell is hitting .288 and Melton has improved to .265 and leads the team in runs batted in with 12. Robert Wingo is hitting .232 with 10 runs batted in and Sharee Hopper is hitting .209 with 10 runs batted in.

Hopper leads the mound staff with a 4-2 record and 2.51 earned run average. Duane Patterson is 2-2 with a 3.86 ERA. Leftwich is 1-2 with a 5.19 ERA, Timmy Harrelson is 1-0 with a 0.00 ERA and Wingo is 1-3 with a 5.11 ERA.

Score by innings:

	R	H	E
NG	200	000	1
KM	200	015	x
	3	6	2
	8	6	3

Doster, Friday (6) and Parker; Brian Leftwich and Kevin Melton. W - Leftwich (1-2). L - Doster.

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Mounties whip 'Cats 9-4 Friday

Kings Mountain's Mountaineers overcame two early deficits to defeat North Gaston 9-4 Friday night at Lancaster Field.

The victory improved the Mountaineers' Southwestern 3-A Conference record to 6-6 and earned them a tie for third place with R-S Central's Hilltoppers.

Because the Mountaineers split with second place South Point during the regular season they earned the #3 seed for this week's SWC tournament.

Sharee Hopper went the distance to pick up his fourth victory in six decisions, and his second win of the year over the Wildcats. Hopper also had a big night at the plate, officially going 1-for-1 with a two-run home run, a sacrifice fly and two runs scored.

North Gaston grabbed a 1-0 lead in the first inning on a KM error and Johnny Doster's run-scoring single. Hopper's home run in the second inning plated Kenny Bridges, who had singled, and gave the Mountaineers a 2-1 edge.

North Gaston took the lead again in the third, scoring three runs to go ahead 4-2. Three consecutive errors and a run-scoring single by Alex Gregory accounted for the runs.

The Mountaineers cut the margin to 4-3 in the fourth as Robert Wingo reached on an error, stole second, moved to third on Chris Hutchins' single, and scored on Hopper's sacrifice fly.

Kings Mountain scored two in the fifth to take the lead for good, 5-4. Michael Bell reached on a fielder's choice following Brian Lefevers' single, and scored on a triple by Wingo. Wingo then scored the winning run on a single by Bridges.

The Mountaineers added four insurance runs in the sixth. Hopper walked and scored on a single by Lefevers. After Bell walked and Kevin Melton reached on a fielder's choice, Wingo drew a bases-loaded walk to make it 7-4, and Bridges singled home a pair to close out the scoring.

Kings Mountain finished with nine hits, with Bridges going 3-for-3. Lefevers was 2-for-4 and Melton, Wingo, Hutchins, and Hopper had a hit each.

Hopper scattered six hits and struck out seven.

Score by innings:

	R	H	E
NG	103	000	4
KM	020	124	x
	4	6	1
	9	9	4

Friday and Parker. Sharee Hopper and Kevin Melton. W - Hopper (4-2). L - Friday.



Local medalists in the recent Cleveland County Senior Games are pictured, left to right. Front row, Inell Decker, Pearl Pressley, Carolyn Rush and Bill Alexander. Back row, Charlie Blalock, Ruth Mayher, Jack Hauser and Joann Hauser.

81 win in Senior Games

Eighty-one local senior athletes have qualified for the state finals of the North Carolina Senior Games by winning one or more awards in the Cleveland County Senior Games April 25-29.

Of the regional participants, 21 from Kings Mountain brought home a total of 191 medals.

The Kings Mountain winners and their awards were:

Barbara Coxen, 19 - gold, 100 meter dash, 200 meter dash, 400 meter dash, running long jump, standing long jump, table tennis, basketball shoot, badminton singles, badminton doubles, badminton mixed doubles, swimming, 50 yard free style, 25 yard free style, 50 yard back stroke, 25 yard back stroke, putt-putt; and silver, football throw, shotput, discus, and bronze, softball throw.

Carolyn Rush, 1 - bronze, standing long jump.

Peggy Flowers, 7 - silver- football throw, croquet, horseshoes, bowling, putt putt; and bronze, shuffleboard and basketball shoot.

Tony Bumgardner, 7 - gold, table tennis, billiards, horseshoes, basketball shoot, bowling, badminton singles and putt putt.

Margaret McGinnis, 2 - gold, 1500 meter walk, 5K walk.

Odell Brendle, 1 - bronze-horseshoes

Pearle Pressley, 1 - gold, bowling.

Marion Flowers, 14 - gold, spincasting, billiards, shuffleboard, bowling; silver, 100 meter dash, horseshoes, croquet, badminton doubles, putt putt and bronze, football throw, softball throw, shotput, basketball shoot and badminton singles.

Charles Wilson, 1 - silver, golf. Inell Decker, 3 - gold, 1500 me-

ter walk, bowling; bronze, football throw.

Joann Hauser, 7 - gold, shuffleboard, badminton doubles, badminton mixed doubles, silver, croquet, table tennis, badminton singles and bronze, 1500 meter walk.

Clara Earle, 15 - gold, standing long jump, billiards, basketball 3 on 3, badminton doubles, badminton singles, croquet, shot put, putt putt, horseshoes, basketball shoot; silver, spincasting, football throw, softball throw, discus; bronze, table tennis.

J.C. Bridges, 19 - gold, 1500 meter walk, billiards, running long jump, table tennis, badminton doubles, croquet, discus, putt putt, badminton singles, swimming 100

yard free style, 50 yard free style, 25 yard freestyle, 50 yard back stroke, 25 yard back stroke; silver, bowling, bronze, standing long jump softball throw, shuffleboard, shot put.

Jack Hauser, 12 - gold, basketball shoot, badminton doubles, badminton mixed doubles; silver, billiards, shotput, discus, horseshoes; bronze, putt putt, 1500 meter walk, football throw, table tennis, badminton singles.

Bill Alexander, 21 - gold, 100 meter dash, 200 meter dash, 400 meter dash, 1500 meter walk, running long jump, standing long jump softball throw, spincasting, billiards, table tennis, badminton

See Seniors, 9-A



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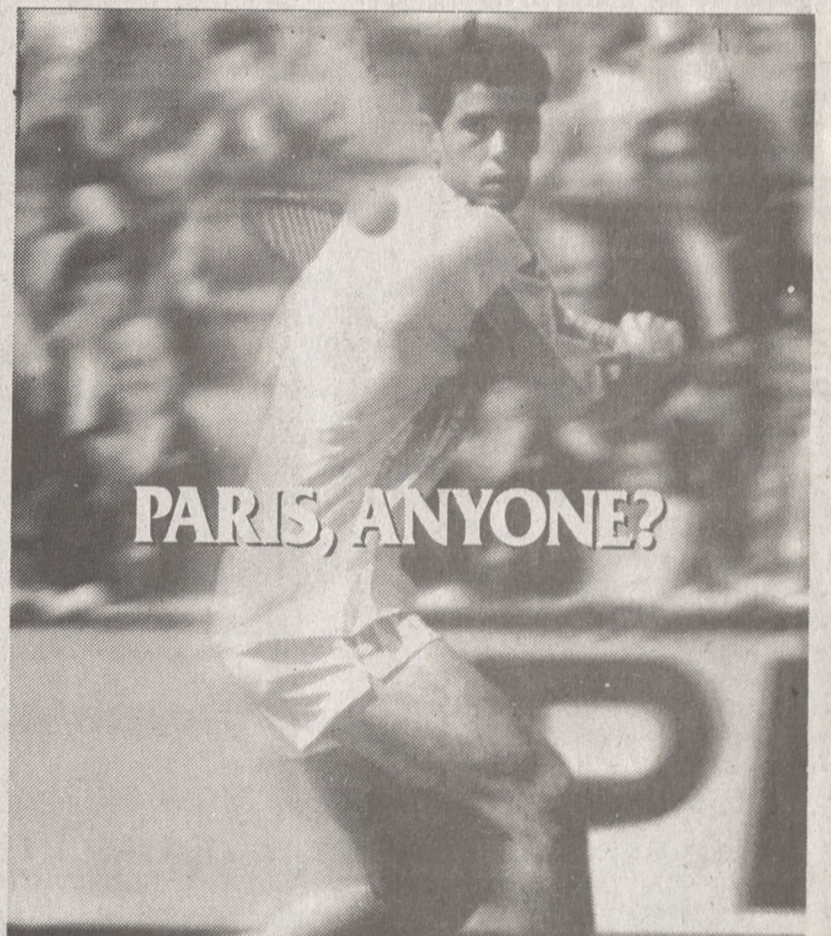
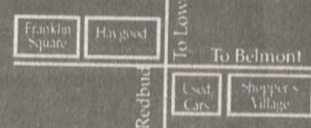
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