

89-year-old golfer still going strong

by CHUCK BRIDGES
Summer Intern

Shooting one's age is always a remarkable feat in golf. Jay Patterson did it two years ago when he was 87. He still plays two or three times a week at the Kings Mountain Country Club.

"I didn't start playing golf until I was 40," Patterson, who turned 89 Tuesday, said. "I played tennis from age 10 to 40, but then I couldn't play that anymore, so I started playing golf, and have been playing ever since." He has been retired 24 years, and now uses the senior citizen tee.

Patterson said his health comes from simply taking care of himself. Playing 18 holes of golf at least once a week is part of that care.

Though he has not shot his age recently, Patterson still plays a mean game. "The other day," he said, "on the back nine, I shot two birdies on par three holes. Sank two puts from the edge of the green." In golf, a birdie is accomplished when the player takes one less stroke than par to sink the ball.

As Patterson opened the trunk of his car to get his clubs, he said, "You can look in the back of my car and tell it's golf I play." Besides the clubs, there were many packs of golf balls and an old pair of spiked golf shoes.

Howard Broadwater, Patterson's partner, arrived then and went to get a cart. There were many carts lined up with people getting ready to play, something Broadwater said was unusual for just after noon. The Gaston County Personnel Association was having their 1994 annual outing that day, so Patterson and Broadwater would just start on the back nine.

Patterson's usual partner, Don Parker, was out of town. Patterson said Parker had his 80th birthday recently, and Patterson told him he wanted to see him shoot his age. The next day, he shot a 78.

Patterson, who came to Kings Mountain in 1944, said that when he started playing at the Country Club, the greens were sand, not grass. "You had to drag a rug over where you had been. It was harder to put, but you could see the path



JAY PATTERSON

of where the ball went."

When Broadwater returned with the cart, Patterson was changing his glasses. "I can't play in trifocals," he said, smiling. "With trifocals, you move your head, and the

ball goes up and down."

The two men had paid their \$16 senior citizen fee for a round of golf (it used to be \$14, Patterson said), and so rode out for a relaxing game on a familiar course.

Mountaineers lose to East in SWC finals

East Rutherford scored three unearned runs in the bottom of the fourth inning to break a 2-2 tie and defeat Kings Mountain's Mountaineers 5-3 in the championship game of the Southwestern 3-A Conference baseball tournament Friday night at East Rutherford.

The victory was the 17th in a row for the Cavaliers, who also won the SWC regular season. The loss dropped Kings Mountain to 10-10 entering the first round of the state 3-A playoffs Tuesday at South Caldwell.

Big right-hander John Hill went the distance for the Cavaliers, giving up only three hits and fanning seven Mountaineers. Sharee Hopper worked the first five innings for the Mountaineers and took the loss.

Despite giving up nine hits, the Kings Mountain senior right-han-

der pitched good enough to win. Four of the five runs off him were unearned as the Mountaineers committed three costly errors.

A two-out error in the bottom of the first got the Cavaliers started. Bryan Cobb's routine ground ball to shortstop was fielded cleanly, but thrown over the first baseman's head. Tony Dobbins' double to left-center drove Cobb home with a 1-0 lead.

Kings Mountain came right back in the top of the second to tie the score at 1-1. Kevin Melton drew a walk to lead off the inning and moved to second on a single by Robert Wingo, who had two of KM's three hits. After a double steal, Melton scored when Hopper bounced out to first base.

Kings Mountain took a 2-1 lead in the top of the third as Bryan Leftwich doubled and later scored on a sacrifice fly by Michael Bell;

but East Rutherford came right back in the bottom half of the inning to tie the score on a long home run by Hill.

Two costly KM errors and a timely hit to leftfield by Hill resulted in a three-run fourth which put the game away for the Cavaliers. David Campfield opened the inning with a single but was gunned down by Melton trying to steal second. Ryan Freeman singled but was forced at second on Ryan Haulk's ground ball to short. With two outs and a runner on first, no one seemed to be alarmed, but Jason Walker's routine fly ball to centerfield was dropped. Ninth place hitter Marty Silvers singled home the go-ahead run, then two more runs scored when Hill's single to leftfield went through Kenny Bridges' legs and all the way to the fence.

The Cavaliers threatened to do

even more damage in the bottom of the sixth, but KM Coach Nelson Connor called in Wingo from first base to put down a potential rally. Freeman and Haulk led off with back-to-back singles. Wingo came on to strike out Walker, then Melton gunned down Freeman trying to steal third. Silvers bounced out to shortstop to end the inning.

Kings Mountain picked up its final run in the seventh when Melton was hit by a pitched ball, moved to third on Wingo's single and scored on a sacrifice fly by pinch-hitter Michael Cobb.

Score by innings: R-H-E

KM 011 000 1 3-3-3
ER 101 300 x 5-9-0

Sharee Hopper, Robert Wingo (6) and Kevin Melton; John Hill and Tony Dobbins. W - Hill. L - Hopper (4-3).

5-run first inning lifts Mounties over South Point

Kings Mountain's Mountaineers scored five runs in the first inning and went on to defeat South Point 7-4 in the semi-finals of the Southwestern 3-A Conference baseball tournament Wednesday afternoon at East Rutherford.

The victory not only moved the Mountaineers into the championship game against East Rutherford Friday but also clinched a berth in the state 3-A playoffs which begin next week.

The victory, which improved KM's overall mark to 10-9, was the second over South Point in three games this season.

Duane Patterson worked the first four and one-third innings for the Mountaineers and picked up his third win against two losses. Robert Wingo pitched the final two and two-thirds innings.

The first five Mountaineer batters scored in the first inning to give Nelson Connor's charges the lead. The Mountaineers sent 10 men to the plate and chased starting pitcher Cherry. Catcher Jamie Worley took over and pitched good ball the rest of the way.

Worley's moving from the catcher's post to the pitcher's mound opened the way for an extra offensive strategy for the Mountaineers - they decided to test

the arm of an inexperienced catcher, Christian Robinson, and stole everything that wasn't tied down. For the game, the Mountaineers stole six bases in six attempts, including three in the five-run first inning.

Kenny Bridges, who has been on a hitting tear of late, led off the game with a single, and Michael Bell was hit by a pitched ball. Brian LeFevers singled to load the bases, and Kevin Melton singled home Bridges for a 1-0 lead. Robert Wingo's single plated two more runs, another scored when Chris Hutchins reached on a fielder's choice, and the fifth run scored on Patterson's single.

Patterson had little trouble over the first three innings, but South Point struck for two runs in the fourth inning and two more in the fifth to make the game interesting.

In the fourth, Patterson walked Jason Lineberger, who moved to second on a wild pitch and then scored on Brent Carpenter's double. Carpenter later scored on an error.

Kings Mountain picked up a run in the top of the fifth on consecutive singles by Wingo, Sharee Hopper and Hutchins to make the

See Mounties, 7-A



The Westy's soccer team of Kings Mountain participated in the Greater Cleveland County Soccer League this spring. Front row, left to right, are Sarah Propst, Molly Hamrick, Lesley Potter and Lauren Causby. Second row, Heather Causby, Stephanie Edwards, Lauree Barron, Sloane McDaniel. Back row, Bess McGinnis, Meghan Potter, A'me Mauney and Laura Propst. Not pictured, Nicole Matthew and Jennifer Regan. There will be a fall league that will be forming later this summer for girls interested in playing.

Mounties ousted by South Caldwell

Kings Mountain grabbed a 2-0 lead in the first inning in its first round playoff game with unbeaten South Caldwell Tuesday night at Granite Falls. But the Western Piedmont Conference champions scored four runs in the fifth inning and three in the sixth to break a 2-2 tie and went on to eliminate the Mountaineers 9-4.

The loss ended KM's season at 10-11. Nelson Connor's Mountaineers finished in a tie for third during the regular season but qualified for the state playoffs by advancing to the finals of the conference tournament.

Kings Mountain collected only six hits off the Spartans' ace right-hander, Brandon Banks, who had thrown a three-hitter against them in a 3-1 opening season victory in March. Banks struck out six.

Coach Connor was naturally disappointed in the loss, but praised his players for their accomplishments in a rebuilding year.

"I was pleased with the way we started off," he said. "We were flying high before we crashed and burned. Eleven hits, six walks and three errors usually will not translate into a win. Most of the year we played with a lot of intensity and emotion, but we might have lost control of that emotion and intensity and it translated into some immaturity."

"But, all in all, given the fact that we didn't return a single starter and were very inexperienced, the players performed well all year and probably performed a little bit above expectations. I'm just hoping that I'll have an opportunity to coach them again next year."

The Mountaineers grabbed a 2-0 lead with two out in the first inning. Kevin Melton singled and stole second, and scored on a double by Robert Wingo. Wingo scored on a single by Brian LeFevers.

Brian Leftwich started for the Mountaineers. He worked out of a potential problem in the first inning when the Spartans put runners on first and third with two outs, but South Caldwell got to him for a pair of runs in the third to tie the score at 2-2. As has been the case many times this season, a KM error opened the floodgates and allowed the first run to score, and then Banks contributed an RBI triple.

The Mountaineers had baserunners in the second, third and fourth innings, but couldn't score, and then Banks put them down in order in the fifth. South Caldwell took command in the bottom of the fifth, scoring four runs for a 6-2 lead.

A single to right by Doug Edwards got away from KM right-fielder Chris Hutchins for an error, and Roger Craig followed with a sharp single up the middle to drive in the winning run. After Banks fanned, Leftwich walked a pair of batters to load the bases. Connor called Duane Patterson in to pitch, and he fanned a batter but then issued a bases-loaded walk to make the score 4-2. Gary Crouch followed with a two-run single to make it 6-2.

The Spartans added three more runs in the bottom of the sixth to make it 9-2. With one out, Craig doubled and scored on a single by Banks. Ted Anderson and Al Spohn added back-to-back run-scoring doubles.

Kings Mountain added its final two runs in the seventh inning on a walk to Nate Champion, Hutchins' triple and a single by Timmy Harelson.

KM 200 000 2 4-6-3
SC 002 043 x 9-11-0
Bryan Leftwich, Duane Patterson (5) and Kevin Melton, Josh Turbyfill (6). Brandon Banks and Ted Anderson. W - Banks. L - Leftwich (1-3).

BESIDE SEARS • M-F 9-6 • SAT 9-5

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