

Kings Mountain's Alica Cole (24) makes a strong inside move to score two of her eight points in Thursday's 53-47 victory over Clover at the KMHS gym.

Girls beat Clover 53-47 in non-conference game

Kings Mountain's girls basketball team evened its early-season record at 2-2 Thursday night at home with a 53-47 victory over Clover.

Kings Mountain grabbed the lead early and held it most of the way. Kings Mountain built leads as high as 12 points in the second half but couldn't put the determined Blue Eagles away.

Jameka Anderson led the KM scoring with 17 points. Karen Queen added 11 and Alica Cole eight. Leah Boyd scored 16, Renalda Phillips 11 and Jenny Cauble 10 for Clover. "The biggest thing for us was balanced scoring, which we haven't had all year long," said KM Coach Tony Leigh. "Alica Cole came in and had a big

game on the boards and scoring wise. We had several good spurts where we'd push the lead up to 10 and 12 points, but it seemed like we'd always relax a little bit and let them back in the game."

Clover battled back to tie the score early in the fourth quarter, but Kings Mountain went back in front and maintained a 6-to-8 point lead the rest of the game.

GIRLS GAME

KM (53) - Anderson 17, Queen 11, Cole 8, Tami Welch 6, Tina Welch 4, Hamrick 4, Webber 2, Putnam 1.

CL (47) - Boyd 16, Phillips 11, Cauble 10, Wyte 2, Jeter 2, Plemmons 2.

KM teams in tournaments

Kings Mountain High's varsity basketball teams will compete in Christmas tournaments next week.

The Mountaineers will host the Shelby Star Holiday Classic which begins Tuesday and runs through Thursday. Some of the top high school talent in the area as well as other parts of North and South Carolina will be showcased.

The Kings Mountain girls will defend their championship in the Lincoln Bank Classic which runs Wednesday through Friday at East Lincoln High School.

The Star Tournament field includes Kings Mountain, Crest, Shelby, Burns, Anson County, Olympic, Wren High of Greenville, SC, and Gaffney.

The Mountaineers will face Anson County in the 8:45 p.m. game Tuesday. Burns and Olympic will open the tournament at 7 p.m.

While those four teams are playing at the KMHS gym, Shelby will battle Wren and Crest will oppose Gaffney in first round games at Crest High near Boiling Springs.

Wednesday's semi-finals contests will be played at KMHS, with the Burns-Olympic winner facing the KM-Anson County

Big plays lift KM over Clover

While Kings Mountain's Mountaineers have been concentrating on a fast-paced offense this basketball season, its defense has suffered somewhat.

The defense is still a long way from where Coach Larry Sipe and his players would like for it to be, but it was big defensive plays at the end of the game which gave the Mountaineers their first victory, a 73-72 win over Clover's Blue Eagles Thursday night at the KMHS gym.

A big rebound by reserve forward C.T. Williams, a blocked shot by Steve Surratt, and a deflected pass by Jarvis Bell helped the Mountaineers preserve the victory in the final nine seconds.

Kings Mountain, which led 33-31 at the half and 52-45 going into the fourth quarter, had a 70-65 lead with 2:26 to go but went on a two-minute scoring drought and saw Clover take a 72-70 lead.

Eric Tate, who scored 14 points for the game, hit a jumper with 32 seconds remaining to tie the score. Clover missed a shot with nine seconds remaining and Williams cleared the board and got the ball to Tate, who was fouled. He hit the first of a one-and-one to give the Mountaineers the final lead of 73-72.

But, the game was far from over.

Clover guard Rob Wallace drove the length of the court, had his man beat and appeared to have a wide-open layup which would have given the Blue Eagles the lead, but KM's 6-4 wing man Steve Surratt saw what was happening, left his man and appeared to come out of nowhere to block the shot.

That resulted in a tie-up under the Clover basket, and Clover still had the arrow possession and two seconds to try again. But Bell deflected the inbounds pass to mid-court, and the clock ran out.

"It was an exciting win," said Coach Larry Sipe. "Surratt was the man on the spot."

Surratt also led the KM offense with 22 points, Tate added 14 and reserve Donny Minor 10. Travis Robbins and Terrence Rainey led Clover with 16 each.

"Our intensity level was the biggest factor," Sipe said. "That has been the main focus of our practices recently. We've talked about self-motivation and playing 32 minutes. In our first three games the third quarter was our downfall, but we knew we had to go out this time and play the third quarter just like it was the first."

Once again, the Mountaineers got a big lift from the bench. Maurice Jarrett played well de-

"We knew we had to go out and play the third quarter just like it was the first."

-Larry Sipe

fensively. Williams had two big rebounds and two key baskets in the fourth quarter, and Minor was one of the team leaders in scoring with 10 points and rebounds with six.

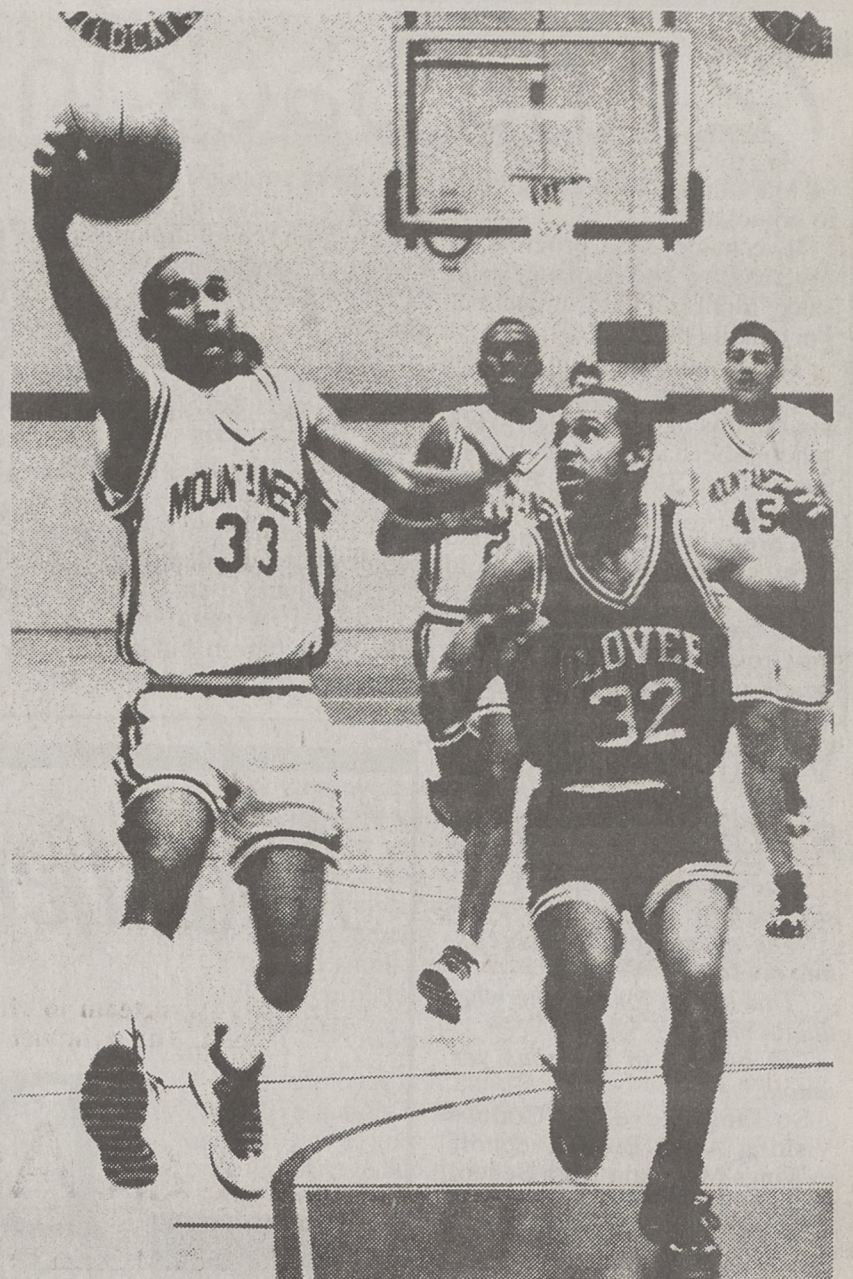
"We've got to get a big lift from players coming off the bench," Sipe said. "We have to have people come in and pick us up."

"We're still looking good on defense as we hope to be when our conference play starts in January," he said. "But Clover has a fine basketball team and I'm sure they will do well this year and go a long way in the South Carolina playoffs."

BOYS GAME

KM (73) - Jarrett 3, Leftwich 8, Tate 14, Perkins 6, Bell 6, Williams 4, Surratt 22, Minor 10.

CL (72) - Wallace 11, Moses 11, Gore 6, Ware 2, T. Robbins 16, Rainey 16, S. Robbins 10.



Kings Mountain's Steve Surratt (33) leads the fast break in Thursday's game with Clover at the KMHS gym. A big block by Surratt at the end of the game helped the Mountaineers win their first game, 73-72.

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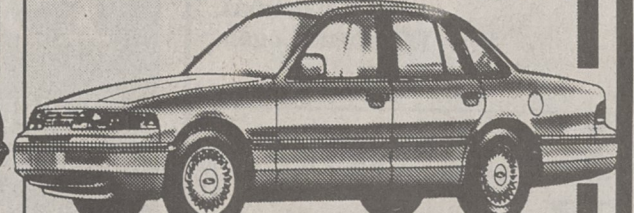
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