

Smith to drive in Gaffney race

The Hav-A-Tampa dirt racing series will rumble back into Gaffney, SC Saturday and Sunday for the 16th sanctioned points event of the 1997 chase for the National Championship. The special late model event will pay the winner \$15,000 out of a total purse of over \$70,000.

Defending Hav-A-Tampa national champion Freddy Smith of Kings Mountain has registered two of his 14 career series wins at Cherokee Speedway and always looks forward to the challenge of 100 laps on the demanding race track.

"There's not another track that compares to Cherokee Speedway," said Smith, known as "the Southern Gentleman." "It's a big old track that demands a lot out of both car and driver, the surface gets better and better as the race wears on. I've always enjoyed racing there because of our past success at Cherokee."

Smith, who has rung up 758 career feature wins over a 30-year run as one of the most respected drivers in the country, has seen the increased competition in the past few years in big-money dirt racing.

"This is a much tougher deal that I have ever seen before," he said. "You've got better financed teams and talent from all over the nation running for extremely large amounts of money. We haven't yet reached the point of success that we set as our goal for this season, but we're still third in the points and we're not even at the halfway point of the season. Cherokee Speedway is exciting for the fans, they get to see us run right up alongside the wall, that's the fastest way around the track. I think that with some good luck and with our past performances as experience, Cherokee could be a turning point in our title defense."

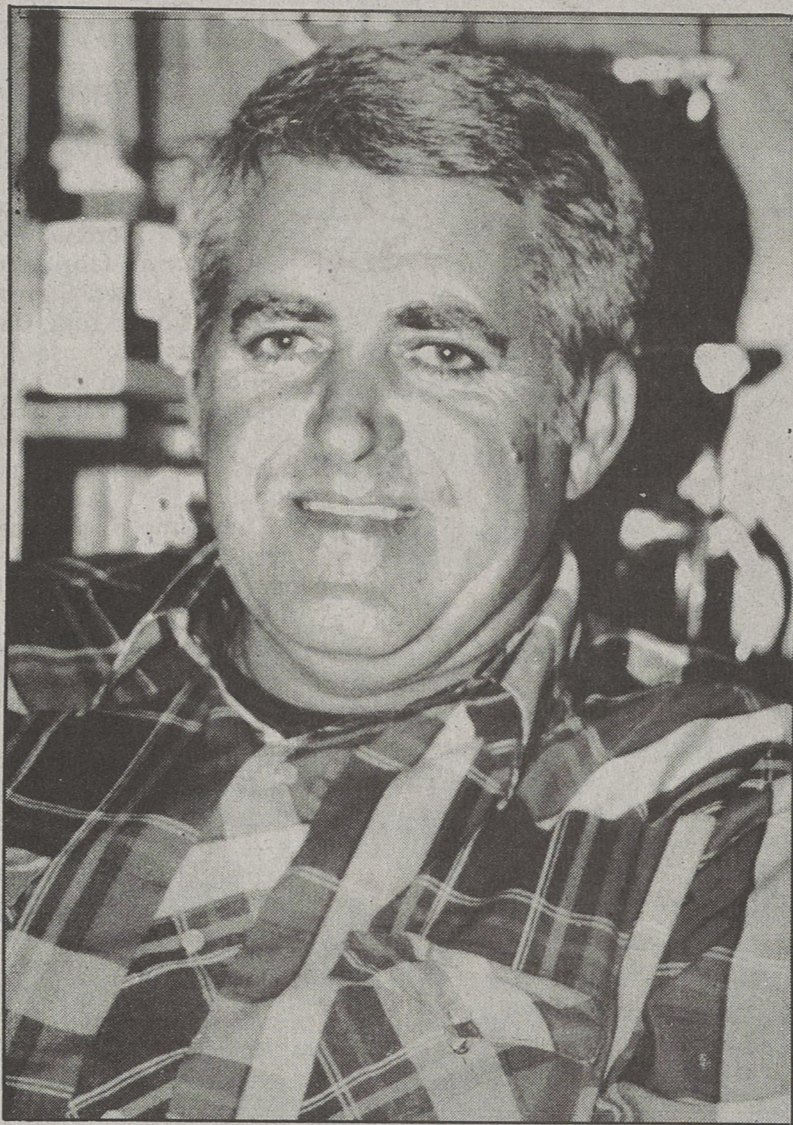
Smith's defense of the national crown this season has been a challenger indeed, as contenders Billy Moyer, Wendell Wallace, Donnie Moran, Clint Smith and Dale McDowell have all stayed within earshot of the series points lead in an attempt

to try to snatch the title away from the veteran Smith. Moyer is currently posted as the series points leader and has pulled into victory lane four times. Wendell Wallace is second in the points and has two wins, followed by Smith in third place. Moran, who picked up a series win at Cherokee Speedway in 1995, has captured three Hav-A-Tampa wins this season and currently is in fourth in the point standings. Clint Smith and Dale McDowell, each with a series victory this year, continued to stay in the thick of the championship battle at fifth and sixth, respectively, in the points.

The series, sanctioned by the United Dirt Track Racing Association, is in its eighth season as the nation's top-rated dirt racing circuit, continuing to expand its geographic reach while staying on course to provide a broader television package for series competitors and sponsors.

The stop at Gaffney's Cherokee Speedway annual marks the turning point of the Hav-A-Tampa season's path to the season-ending Hav-A-Tampa Shootout. The 1997 season will close with the running of the eighth annual Hav-A-Tampa Shootout at Dixie Speedway September 26-27, where posted awards to the winner are already over \$73,000. Fourteen of the 32 Hav-A-Tampa series events are scheduled for national TV coverage this year.

Racing action at Gaffney will get underway Saturday with the 750 plus horsepower Hav-A-Tampa late models battling to make the Sunday show by transferring through preliminary heat races. With an average of 54 race cars attempting to make the 24 car starting field, Saturday night's heat races should provide some of the most competitive racing for the weekend. Also on tap for Saturday night will be heat races in 4 Cylinder Stock, 4 Cylinder Modified, Thunder-N-Lightning, Limited Sportsman



FREDDY SMITH

and Open Wheel Modified divisions. Gates will open at 4 p.m. Saturday with racing getting underway at 7:30 p.m.

On Sunday, the Hav-A-Tampa dirt racing series will run two last-chance qualifying races to fill the starting field, before feature events are conducted in local divisions. The Hav-A-Tampa drivers will take the green flag in a 100 lap "Showdown to the Shootout" being presented by Burns Automotive of Gaffney, SC. Grandstand and pit gates will open at 4 p.m. Sunday. A special open practice session is scheduled for all divisions on Friday night at 7 p.m. with free admission for fans in the grandstands.

Sunday's agenda also includes a special autograph session that will allow race fans to meet their favorite dirt track heroes. The autograph session will also give fans a chance to photograph and be pho-

tographed with legends like Freddy Smith.

Tickets for the special race weekend at Cherokee Speedway are still available and can be obtained by calling the speedway office at (704) 732-2685. Fans can take advantage of special two-day ticket pricing to save money for the race weekend. As an additional price-saver, fans can receive ticket discounts with proof of purchase from any Hav-A-Tampa/Phillies Cigars five-pack product.

Previous Hav-A-Tampa dirt racing series winners at Cherokee Speedway:

1990 - Ricky Weeks; 1991 - Mike Duvall; 1992 - Jack Pennington; 1993 - Ricky Weeks; 1993 - Scott Bloomquist; 1994 - Freddy Smith; 1994 - Scott Bloomquist; 1995 - Donnie Moran; 1995 - Freddy Smith; 1996 - Scott Bloomquist; 1996 - Scott Bloomquist.

KM Juniors ousted from Area IV play

Kings Mountain's American Legion Juniors fell to Cherryville Post 100 three games to one in the opening round of the Area IV playoffs.

Tony Leigh's outfit, which finished the regular season with a 7-8 record, fell behind the Cherries two games to none before winning its only game on Monday night. But Cherryville closed out the series Tuesday night in Cherryville to advance to the second round.

Kings Mountain scored three runs in the top of the ninth inning to take a 6-3 lead in Tuesday's game, but Cherryville came back to score five runs and win the game 8-3. After Cherryville loaded the bases and scored one run on an error, Ralph Roberts ended the series with a grand slam home run.

Seth Denton's triple gave KM a 4-3 lead in the top of the ninth, and the Mounties scored two more runs on a single by Tony Stokes, double by Rusty Putnam and sacrifice fly by Ty Toney.

Putnam went the distance for KM and pitched well, and also had three hits. Toney also had three hits, Beck two, and Denton, Stokes, Jeremy Cooke and Ray Biddix one each.

"Rusty Putnam pitched a good ball game, but we didn't really give him a whole lot of support in the last inning," said Coach Leigh. "We finished 8-11, and compared to the amount of talent we faced night-in and night-out, that was very good."

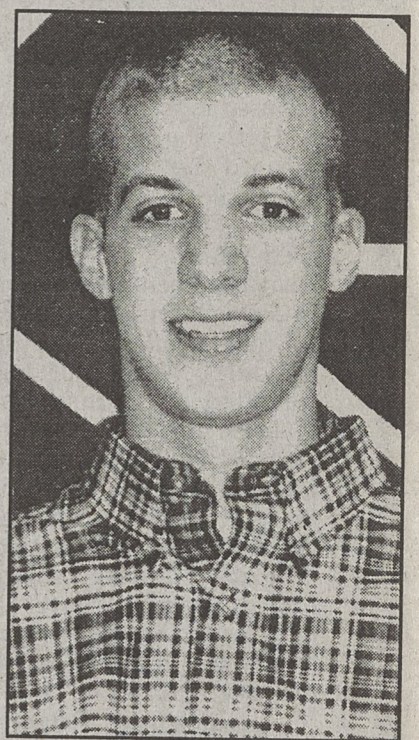
Kings Mountain's only victory in the series came Monday night at home when Denton survived a shaky start and hurled a complete game 11-6 win.

Roberts' two-run homer in the first got Cherryville off to a fast start, and Josh Cobb's two-run homer in the third put the visitors on top 4-2.

But Denton settled down to tame the Cherryville bats the rest of the way. At one stretch, he retired 14 of 15 batters.

Kings Mountain battled back to tie the game at 4-4 after four innings, then took the lead for good in the fifth on Beck's three-run homer. KM broke the game open with four runs in the seventh.

Beck and Denton led the KM plate attack with three hits each.



SETH DENTON

Cherryville scored three runs in the top of the 10th inning to defeat Post 155 3-0 in the series opener Saturday night at Lancaster Field.

Ralph Roberts went the distance on the mound for Cherryville and struck out 19. He allowed only three hits and walked two.

Rusty Putnam went the distance for Kings Mountain, scattering five hits and striking out 14. Three of the Cherryville hits came in the decisive 10th inning.

A passed ball following a Putnam strikeout of Thomas Pruett opened the floodgate. Pruett raced to first before the catcher's throw, and scored the winning run on back-to-back singles by John Mackie and Will Lane. Chad Cash added a two-run single to left for the insurance runs.

Cherryville scored six runs in the first inning and went on to trounce Post 155 10-3 in the second game of the series Sunday night in Cherryville.

Jonathan Brookins went the route for Post 100, scattering seven hits and fanning nine.

Brookins and John Mackie led Cherryville at the plate with 2-for-4 each. Rusty Putnam led KM with 3-for-4 and Tony Stokes hit a home run.

See Legion, 7-A

Booster Club selling ads for program

The Kings Mountain High Booster Club is soliciting advertisements for its 1997 football program.

This is the 75th anniversary of KMHS football and boosters say everyone in the area will want to be a part of the special 75th anniversary program.

Businesses, industries, churches, individuals and parents of players and cheerleaders are invited to purchase advertisements. The prices are \$100 for a full page, \$50 for a half page, and \$25 for a quarter-page. Advertisements for players and cheerleaders, which in-

clude a picture and brief message, are \$30.

Donations of any amount will be accepted to help underwrite the cost of the program.

The deadline for submitting advertisements is July 15. Send a copy of the ad and a check to Charlie Smith, 1019 Brookwood Drive, Kings Mountain, NC 28086, or contact Smith at 739-2559 or Coach Ron Massey at 734-5647 ext. 35 for more information.

The Mountaineers are coming off one of their most exciting seasons in history. They went 9-

1-1 overall last year, won the Southwestern 3-A Conference and set numerous school records for scoring, rushing and passing.

The Mountaineers are currently participating in weight training and passing league games and will begin preseason practice with a special "Mountaineer Madness" on August 1 at 10 p.m. They will participate in a 12-team scrimmage at Carter-Finley Stadium in Raleigh on August 16 when they will battle perennial Eastern North Carolina powers Northern Durham, Garner and Fayetteville Byrd, and they will

participate in the annual Gaffney Jamboree on August 21 against perennial South Carolina power Gaffney.

The Mountaineers will play an 11-game regular season schedule, including six games in John Gamble Stadium.

THE SCHEDULE

Aug. 29 - East Gaston; Sept. 5 - Bessemer City; Sept. 12 - at new Charlotte East school; Sept. 19 - at Shelby; Sept. 26 - Crest; Oct. 3 - Freedom; Oct. 10 - at Burns; Oct. 17 - R-S Central; Oct. 24 - at East Rutherford; Oct. 31 - at South Point; Nov. 7 - North Gaston.

Shrine Golf Tournament July 12 at Country Club

The Shrine Golf Tournament will be held Saturday, July 12 at Kings Mountain Country Club.

The format is a four-man team, Captain's Choice. Entry fee is \$40 per golfer and in-

cludes green fees, cart and hamburgers.

Call the KMCC pro shop at 739-5871 or Gene Stone at 739-2978 for more information.



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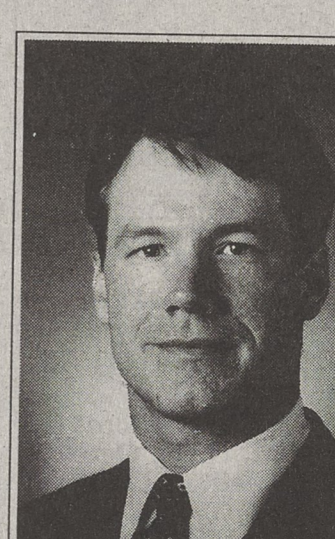
As one of the area's most progressive women's health centers, the staff of Courtview OB/GYN represents physicians and nurse practitioners with the finest background and professional training. Dr. Jerry Matkins, Jr., and Women's Health Nurse Practitioner Christine Deneseus, are two of the practice's newest and brightest professionals you should get to know.

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Jerry Matkins, Jr., MD

Undergraduate: Davidson College

Medical School: University of North Carolina School of Medicine

Residency: Carolinas Medical Center

Member: American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology

Personal: Wife, Preeti Matkins (pediatrician) and son, Jack (age 2)

To better serve patients, Courtview OB/GYN will move into expanded facilities adjacent to Gaston Memorial Hospital in August 1997.

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