

Patriots whip Crest for second win, 8-5

Kings Mountain scored four runs in the third inning and held on for a 8-5 victory over Crest in Tri-County Middle School Conference baseball action Monday.

The Patriots, 2-0, collected eight hits and also took advantage of three Crest errors and two hit batsmen. Crest reached three KM pitchers for seven hits and also took advantage of four bases on balls and numerous wild pitches and passed balls.

Matt Echols and Caleb Williams led the KM hitting with two hits each. Ross Ellis, Tyler Allen, Warren Shirey and Elan Philbeck had one each.

Ellis started on the mound and worked 2 1/3 innings, but ran into control problems. Hunter Gaffney pitched 2 2/3 innings in relief to get the win, and Elan Philbeck pitched the final two innings to get a save.

Kings Mountain grabbed a 1-0 lead in the first on hits by Ellis, Echols and Williams, and a squeeze bunt by Buddy Black; but Crest came back to tie it in

the second without the benefit of a hit. A walk, wild pitches and passed balls did the damage.

In the second, Crest scored again on a walk and three passed balls, and at the end of two innings led 2-1 without having a hit.

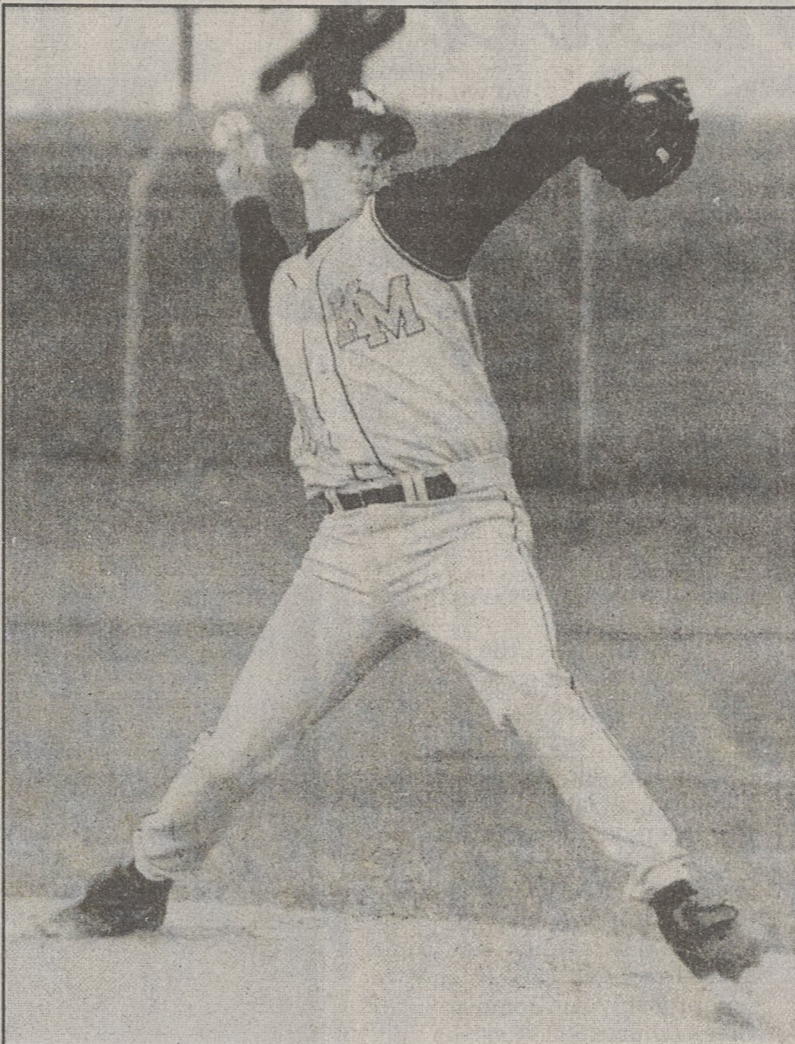
Kings Mountain scored four runs in the third to take a 5-2 lead. Warren Shirey singled in a pair of runs, and the other two scored on fielder's choices.

After Crest cut the margin to 5-4 in the bottom of the third, Gaffney came on to put out the fire.

"It was a pretty even game," noted KM Coach Monty Deaton. "Crest made three errors to our one, and that and the two hit batters allowed us to have a big inning and go ahead and get the win."

"We're getting better. We improved from our first game. But we need to work on playing with more emotion and enthusiasm."

SPORTS BRIEFS



Eric Boyd pitched and hit Kings Mountain's Mountaineers to victory over South Point Tuesday at Lancaster Field.

Mountaineers beat South Point 10-3

Kings Mountain's Mountaineers scored six runs in the fourth inning and went on to defeat South Point 10-3 in Southwestern 3A Conference baseball action Tuesday at Lancaster Field.

The win gives Tony Leigh's charges a 1-1 conference and 7-2 overall mark. They to East Rutherford Friday and host Burns Monday.

The Mountaineers collected nine hits, with pitcher Eric Boyd leading the way with 3-for-4, two RBI and two doubles. Brandon Putnam had two doubles, Tyler Falls was 2-for-4 with two RBI, Andy Leigh was 1-for-3 with an RBI, and Brian Thornburg hit a solo home run.

South Point got on top early with a run in the top of the first, but the Mountaineers grabbed a 2-1 lead in the third on RBI singles by Leigh and Boyd.

The Mountaineers broke it open in the fourth, getting their six runs on two hits, a South Point error and three walks. Boyd doubled home two runs, and Falls singled home a pair.

South Point narrowed the margin to 8-3 with a pair of runs in the top of the fifth, but Thornburg got one of them back in the bottom of the inning with a home run. KM's final run came in the sixth on back-to-back doubles by Boyd and Putnam.

Boyd went 4 1/3 innings to get the win. He gave up eight hits and struck out four. Seth Denton pitched the final 2 2/3 innings and gave up one hit and fanned three.

"We played errorless ball again," Coach Leigh noted. "We're beginning to do the things we're supposed to do on the field. We had good pitching and played good defense behind them."

Mountaineer netters defeat Wildcats 8-1

Kings Mountain High's tennis team defeated North Gaston 8-1 in Southwestern 3A Conference action Tuesday.

(Singles)
 Kenny Houston (KM) d. Keith Lineberger 6-2, 6-1; Zach George (KM) d. Phillip Robinson 6-1, 6-1; J Chapman (KM) d. Daniel Schmitt 6-2, 6-1; Basit Gangoo (KM) d. Blake Lineberger 6-0, 6-1; Chris Bennett (KM) d. Sean Healy 7-6 6-2; Josh Rountree (KM) d. Juliana Steppenbeck 4-6, 6-4, 6-2.

(Doubles)
 Houston-Bennett (KM) d. K. Lineberger-Robinson 8-0; George-Chapman (KM) d. Healy-Schmitt 6-1, 6-2; B. Lineberger-Steppenbeck (NC) d. Gangoo-Shergill 8-3; Owens-Shergill (KM) d. Sam Martin-Jamie Pasour 6-1, 6-1.

Mountaineer golfers whip Gaffney, York

Kings Mountain High's golf team defeated Gaffney and York in a non-conference match Monday at Cherokee National.

The Mountaineers shot a 152, followed by Gaffney at 153 and York 157.

Evan Osteen of the Mountaineers was medalist with an even par 36. Michael Jolly shot 37, Justin Etters 38 and C. Bridges 41.

In a match Tuesday at Meadowbrook, Boiling Springs, SC won with a 156, followed by KM at 160 and Chesnee, SC at 190.

Van Burgess of Boiling Springs was medalist with a 35. Will Hendricks led the Mountaineers with a 38, followed by Osteen 39, Jolly 40 and Gray Howard 43.

PATRIOTS

From 1B

"Travis did a great job," Deaton said. "He needs to work on some things from the stretch, but from the windup he had good control. His ball moves good, and he's a left-hander, so he's going to be real effective."

"Hunter has improved tremendously on the mound, and he's another guy who will

get some relief pitching for us and may even get a few starts."

"We have a pretty strong pitching staff. We really don't have an ace, but we have a lot of guys that can throw the ball for strikes and mix it up."

Deaton said one of the most pleasing things about Thursday's big win was that it allowed him to get all of his players in the game.

"Everybody didn't get to bat, but they did a good job out in the field for us," he said.

PISGAH

From 1B

Proctor worked the first five innings and got the win. He gave up only two hits and fanned five, but walked seven.

Denton came on in relief and gave up only one hit and

fanned three batters over the final two innings.

Kings Mountain grabbed a 3-0 lead in the top of the first with Jason Bridges and Proctor supplying RBI singles.

Matt Bridges singled and scored on a single by Bell in the sixth; and Boyd doubled and scored on a single by Leigh in the seventh.

SOCCER

From 1B

Owens, and ten minutes before halftime Lauren Causby set up Heather Kubu for a goal which accounted for the final score.

"We outshot them 28-6, and I think about all of their shots came in the first half," Potter

said. "Once we woke up they never had another opportunity. But the first couple of minutes were kind of rocky."

Friday, the Mountaineers traveled to East Gaston for a make-up game and blanked the Lady Warriors 3-0 in what Potter termed was their best game up to that point.

"We did some really good

things up front," he said. "We outshot them 29-2, and that's really dominating a game."

Ware scored two first half goals, one off an assist by Georgia Dawkins. Meghan Potter scored the final goal in the second half off a short corner kick from Meredith Ware.

Potter was especially pleased with his defense, which is com-

ing on strong.

"Lindsay Hamrick recorded the shutout (at goal), and Kerri Brutko and Naphaphone Ratsavong really played outstanding defense," Potter noted.

The two teams hooked up again Monday at KMHS, and this time the Mountaineers rolled to an 8-0 victory. Lauren Causby, Heather Kubu, Emily Owens, A'ne Mauney, Bess McGinnis, Naphaphone Ratsavong, Meredith Ware and Meghan Potter scored a goal each.

McCLEARY

From 1B

Mountain, he transferred to Bessemer City for his senior year and made All-State in helping lead the Yellow Jackets to a 10-2-1 record and a state playoff berth.

"I didn't play defense until I went to Bessemer City," he recalled. "They started me at right guard, and I made All-State as an O-lineman. But they wanted to also try me on defense because I could run faster than any of the other linemen. They tried me on defense the last six games and I had seven sacks and 75 or 80 tackles."

McCleary had dreams of playing on the Division I collegiate level, but East Carolina wasn't on his early wish list. He had narrowed his choices to North Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia. But he didn't quite make the required SAT scores to play as a freshman and decided against some of the schools' advice that he attend junior college for two years and then transfer.

Had he taken Tennessee up on its offer to send him to

Coffeyville, Kansas Community College, he could have played on the Volunteers' national championship team this year along with his high school teammate at BC, Phillip Crosby.

"Playing JUCO was alright," he said, "but I decided to seek other opportunities and go somewhere right then and there."

A coach from ECU entered the picture and told him about the Prop 48 situation where he could enroll at East Carolina as a freshman and sit out a year until he got his grades in order. He has no regrets.

"They originally recruited me to play O-line," Norris recalled, "but during my Prop 48 year some of us would go out on the field to practice running and catching the ball and some of the coaches saw how well I could move. The first game I played in was against Oklahoma. They put me in on defense and that's where I've been ever since."

McCleary and his teammates begin spring training today, and between that and off-season weightlifting he won't see many more breaks between now and the season opener against West Virginia on September 11 in

Charlotte's Panther Stadium.

He looks forward to playing some top in-state talent this year as well. The Pirates play at Duke in their second game, and host N.C. State in their regular season finale.

"A couple years ago we beat State in Charlotte, and we played Wake Forest two years ago and beat them," he noted.

"I am really looking forward to playing them. It's ACC teams and everything, and plus it's in-state and in the Atlantic region. We play North Carolina next year but I won't get to be a part of that. But I like to play in-state rivals."

His family is in the stands at every game, and if things go well they could be watching him in the big time pretty soon.

"It's a dream of mine to play in the NFL," he said, "but dreams don't always come true. I'm level headed enough to know that."

But he's still working on it.

"That was our best game of the season," Potter noted.

"When you get eight different players scoring it is a great situation. That means they're very unselfish and it's a full team effort. Everybody on the team played half the game."

Hamrick, again, recorded the shutout at goal, and the defense continued its excellent play.

"I hope it will stay this way for this week's tournament at Crest," Potter remarked. "We'll play Crest Friday at 7 p.m. and either Shelby or Ashbrook on Saturday, and all three of those teams will be better than anyone we've played so far. It's going to be a real challenge."

Shelby and Ashbrook play Friday at 5 p.m. The first day losers play Saturday at 12 noon, and the winners play at 2 p.m. for the championship.

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