

Sipe was a good coach and excellent role model

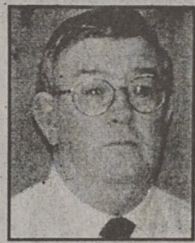
Larry Sipe's announcement last week that he is retiring as Kings Mountain High School basketball coach did not come as a complete surprise.

Most teachers and coaches look forward to getting their 30th year in so they can slow down, or at least switch gears, and Sipe has been in this teaching and coaching game for 31 years.

His success on the basketball court is well-documented. Prior to coming to Kings Mountain he helped mold the skills of NBA greats Dominique and Gerald Wilkins in "Little" Washington, N.C. In 17 years at KMHS, his teams won four conference championships, numerous district and sectional titles, and one Western N.C. championship.

He turned out some of the school's all-time greatest players. His 236 career victories rank second all-time at KMHS behind Don Parker's 248 wins.

But Sipe's greatest impact was the positive influence he had on all the people he came in contact with. Some of those may have been in his driver's ed or P.E. class, or on his basketball team, participants in his Champions of Tomorrow sum-



Gary Stewart

Editor

mer camp, or maybe even on the sidelines of Gamble Stadium where he kept the statistics for the Mountaineer football team, or those he met on the street or in church.

Whether they realized it at the time or not, KMHS students and athletes did not have to look to the spoiled professional basketball and football players for role models. They had one of the best right there in the gym and the halls of Kings Mountain High School.

Sipe's career won-lost record may not rank up there with the greatest of all time, but like most high school coaches he had to "play the hand that was dealt him" and most of the time he got the best out of his athletes. And, always, he put the behavior of his players and the class of the program above winning ball games. He loved the game, he loved his players and students, appreciated his supporters, and was always a nice guy.

I always appreciated Coach Sipe for the cooperation he gave me in reporting the boxscores after each game. Unlike many coaches this day and time, he was always faithful to call, win or lose. He realized, even in defeat, that someone played well enough to be recognized in the local paper.

I hope the coach that follows Coach Sipe will be just as successful on the basketball court. But, most of all, I hope he is as great a role model.



GARY STEWART / THE HERALD

Gretchen Turas competes in the women's backstroke in the Cleveland County Senior Games swimming competition Tuesday morning at Kings Mountain's Neisler Natatorium.

Fishermen qualify for tourney

Reggie Blalock of Kings Mountain and Chad Criswell of Shelby have qualified for the Stratos Javelin Regional

Qualifying Tournament October 13-15 at Kerr Lake near Raleigh.

The Cleveland County fishermen qualified last week in the Stratos Javelin Qualifying Tournament on Badin Lake. They came in second place with a total catch of 15.87 pounds, including a 4.79-pound bass.

They caught their six-fish limit.

The top four teams in a number of weekend qualifying tournaments advance to the Regional and a chance at the \$300,000 first prize and a spot in the World Championship.

Stratos Javelin tournaments are open to first-time owners of Stratos Javelin bass boats.

Blalock and Criswell won \$300 for their effort last week.

The duo fished a number of qualifying tournaments last year, but did not finish high enough to make the Regional Qualifying Tournament. They posted a couple of 20th place finishes.

Even though they're already

in the Regional Tournament, Blalock said he and Criswell will fish some of the other qualifying events, especially on April 30 at Kerr Lake.

"We may go down there just to learn the lake, because we've never been on it before," he said.

Area saltwater fishermen should be pleased to know that the Yaupon Beach fishing pier, which was damaged by Hurricane Floyd, has been re-opened. The Long Beach pier, the longest in North Carolina, is also well on the way to being repaired and ready for the summer fishing season.

Oak Island is also planning for the 22nd annual U.S. Open King Mackerel Tournament October 5-7 at the Southport Marina. Over \$100,000 in cash prizes are guaranteed. Entry fee is \$250 per boat. For tournament information call the Southport-Oak Island Area Chamber of Commerce at 800-457-6964 or e-mail: chamber@southport.net.

3rd Annual Friends of Scouting Dinner

to celebrate the 90th Anniversary of Scouting in America, and the

94th Anniversary of Scouting in Kings Mountain. 7pm April 27th at First Baptist Church Family Life Center.

Be our guest for this special event to honor the following:

Donald Crawford for his lifelong contributions to the Scouting program with the "Rev. Dr. Charles Bell Award."

East Elementary School for its commitment to the Cub Scout Program.

We would consider it a personal favor if you would attend this important event. All that we request is that you notify us on your intent by calling Ronnie Hawkins at 739-2591 (work) 739-7078 (home)

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Panthers sign two rookies from county

One Cleveland County football player was drafted in last weekend's NFL draft, and two others have been signed as rookie free agents by the Carolina Panthers.

Tony Scott, a cornerback from N.C. State, was drafted 179th by the New York Jets. Scott was an All-ACC choice for the Wolfpack.

Scott's teammate at Burns High School on the Bulldogs' 1994 state championship team, Scottie Montgomery, was signed to a three-year contract as a wide receiver/return specialist by the Panthers. Montgomery was the leading pass receiver and an All-ACC special teams player at Duke. Brandon Kale of Wofford College was signed by the Panthers to a two-year contract as a punter. Kale played his high school football at Crest High School.

The Panthers announced the signing of 24 other rookie free agents this week, including running back Morgan Kane of Wake Forest and offensive linemen Bryan Jones and Allen Mogridge of North Carolina.

Freddy Smith runs 6th in Hav-A-Tampa race

Kings Mountain's Freddy Smith finished sixth in the Hav-A-Tampa late model dirt track race at Fayetteville Motorsports Park Saturday night.

Rick Eckert of York, PA won the event and the \$10,500 first place money. Smith won \$2,300.

Mountaineers third in S.C. golf match

Kings Mountain finished last in a three-team nonconference golf match with Gaffney and Boiling Springs Tuesday at Cherokee National.

Gaffney won with a 152, Boiling Springs shot 159, and KM 178.

Robbie Biershank of Boiling Springs and Nick Hughley, Ben Karas, Preston Thomas and Brad Littlejohn, all of Gaffney, shared medalist honors with 38s.

Adam Mattox led the Mountaineers with a 42. Chris Jolly shot 43, J. Santora 45 and Lee Dixon 48.