



Kings Mountain High baseball standout Matt Biddix, second from right, last week signed a scholarship with North Greenville College. Pictured, front row, left to right, are Sherri Biddix, Tim Nihart, Matt Biddix and Donnie Biddix. Back row, Tony Leigh, Phil Weathers and Steven Fisher.

KM's Biddix to play baseball at North Greenville College

Kings Mountain High baseball standout Matt Biddix last week signed a grant-in-aid with North Greenville College. A righthander, Biddix was the ace of the KMHS and American Legion staff this year, and as an outfielder was also one of the team's leading hitters. He made the All-Southwestern 3A Conference team. "Their coach feels like Matt can come in and be a player right off the bat," said KMHS Coach Tony Leigh. "He's looking to use him strictly as a

pitcher." Leigh credits Biddix with helping turn the Mountaineers' season around late in the year. "We were so young, our statistics don't do him justice," he said. "He came on strong late in the season. He hurt his arm midway through the season and we sat him down from playing outfield and pitching. He got some rest and came back and was one of the main reasons we were so strong in the second half." Biddix had several low-hit games late in the year, includ-

ing a 1-0, one-hit shutout of first place R-S Central. He pitched an 11-inning three-hitter against South Point in the Southwestern 3A Conference tournament. "He was a key player for us on the mound, and the boys played tremendous defense behind him," Leigh said. "I think North Greenville will be a good place for Matt, and he will do well for them," he said. "They play good baseball down there."

KM's Rickenbacker joins coaching staff at Loyola University Chicago

By GARY STEWART
Editor of The Herald

Kings Mountain native Priscilla Rickenbacker has been named assistant women's basketball coach at Loyola University Chicago. Rickenbacker coached this past season at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay where she helped guide the Phoenix to the 2000 Midwestern Conference championship and the NCAA tournament. She spent one season as an assistant at Johnson C. Smith University in Charlotte. "Priscilla will do a good job recruiting for us because she has worked in our conference and knows the talent level we can get here," said head coach Helen Walker. "She believes in what we're trying to do here." Rickenbacker was a standout basketball and softball player at North Carolina Wesleyan in Rocky Mount. She led her team to the NCAIAW Division III National Championship and was a Division III Honorable Mention All-American. Rickenbacker was an All-Southwestern 3A Conference basketball and softball player at Kings Mountain High School in the 1970s. She served five years as women's JV basketball coach at KMHS and two years as head



Former Kings Mountain High and North Carolina Wesleyan standout Priscilla Rickenbacker has been named assistant women's basketball coach at Loyola University Chicago. She spent last season at the University of Wisconsin at Green Bay.

Rocker (don't we all?) spoke without thinking



Jim Heffner
Guest Columnist

I've kept quiet about the John Rocker episode as long as I can, so here is my one and only Rocker column. I read the story in Sports Illustrated which got him in trouble, and frankly, I thought it was funny. There are people in New York City with multi-colored hair. There are people riding the subways who have just been released from jail, and there are probably a fair assortment of pregnant teenage girls. You can bet there are people who have AIDS. Can there be any doubt a significant segment of New York inhabitants are foreigners?

The news media has blown this story all out of proportion and have come close to destroying a young man's career. There will be people who say: "Who cares?" They will be some of the same people who go to church every Sunday and profess to be Christians.

I care, that's who cares. The kid is 25 years old and lest we forget, young people sometimes speak without thinking. So do older people for that matter. Why is it that when somebody such as Tiger Woods wears a frown when he is participating in a sports event the media says he has on his game face, but when John Rocker does the same thing he is glaring at the crowd?

Now comes a professor from a highly respected university, Emory University Law School, who writes a syndicated column with national distribution who calls Rocker a "human Confederate flag."

The professor's name is David J. Garrow, and he is also a Pulitzer Prize winner. After years in the newspaper business, I have finally found out what it takes to win a Pulitzer Prize, a low I.Q. Here is a quote from the Garrow column: "Thousands of fans stood and roared in a manner reminiscent of a George Wallace campaign rally or the infamous 1962 Ole Miss football game where tens of thousands of Confederate flag-waving fans cheered Mississippi Gov. Ross Barnett's defiance of a federal court desegregation order."

ground from the bullpen. Do you see the significance of that paragraph? In other words, if you support John Rocker or disagree with those who have come to despise him, you are a racist. Garrow even goes so far as to say that fan support for Rocker is much more about racial antipathy than it is about baseball.

There is nothing racist about Rocker's quotes in the SI article in my opinion. It is true he called Randall Simon a fat monkey, but you must understand these guys have played baseball together for years, and anybody who knows anything about clubhouses knows a lot of kidding goes on there. Anyway, Simon is the player whom the Braves released, even after hitting .316. Why do you think that is? Could it be Simon was a troublemaker?

Garrow also likens Turner Field to Stone Mountain, which he calls "A rallying ground where hateful sentiments can be symbolically yet openly expressed." The people of Stone Mountain, Ga. will be surprised to learn that because of a Braves pitcher, they are now racists.

It always amazes me that some people think the whole world is wrong and they are right. I am outraged that there is a growing number of Americans who think it is better to be politically correct than to be fair. I am further outraged that a law professor would trample on anyone's first amendment rights.

Garrow closes out his column this way: "Never again can Rocker represent Atlanta in a Braves uniform." Well, learn to live with it Davey boy, John Rocker has been called back up.

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