

## Marshall, Feemster look for big years on gridiron

By GARY STEWART  
Editor of The Herald

Kings Mountain's two contributions to Division I football - Kareem Marshall and Riko Feemster - have been having a ball over the Christmas holidays visiting family and friends and catching up on happenings around Kings Mountain and their hometown of Grover.

But as soon as the holiday break ends, it'll be back to business for both men as they begin working toward what they hope will be a successful football season in the fall.

Marshall and Feemster were teammates on the KMHS football teams of 1996, '97 and '98 which won an unprecedented three consecutive Southwestern 3A Conference championships and came within a late fourth quarter fumble of winning the state championship.

Marshall, a 6-6, 360-pound offensive guard, recently completed his two-year career with Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College in Stone County, MS where he made All-American, All-State, and All-Region. During his entire time there, he didn't allow a quarterback sack.

Now it's on to much greener pastures for Marshall, who recently signed a scholarship with the University of Georgia of the Southeastern Conference.

For years Marshall's dream was to play for the UNC Tar Heels, but the coaching change at UNC and the prospects of playing for a SEC and national contender changed his thinking.

"I think Georgia is going to be a good opportunity for me," he says. "The new coach (former Florida State offensive coordinator Mark Richt) is wide open. He pretty much likes to throw the football and I feel like I'm a real good pass protector and also a good run blocker. Georgia is going to be a real good opportunity for both of us."

Marshall also had offers from LSU, NC State and Memphis and prior to the Christmas holidays had narrowed his choices to Georgia and Memphis, the latter coached by former Clemson Coach Tommy West.

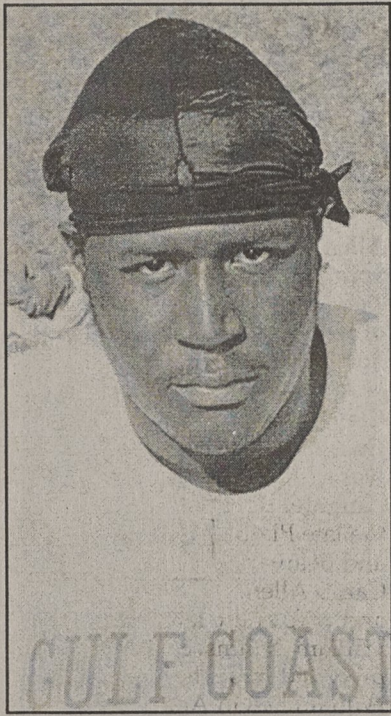
The shorter distance between Kings Mountain and Athens, GA (a three-hour drive) also played a part in his decision, Marshall said.

But the big sell was the good feeling he had when he visited the campus and the legendary Sanford Stadium "Between the Hedges."

"It just really felt like home down there," he said. "I just felt like it was the place for me to be."

The Bulldogs finished 8-4 overall this season under Jim Donnan, who was fired. Marshall feels like the Bulldogs would have won several more games had it not been for injuries to key personnel, including quarterback Quincy Carter. And, with many starters and top-quality recruits coming back next year he's confident the Bulldogs will be a serious contender in the SEC.

Marshall was scheduled to report to Georgia yesterday to



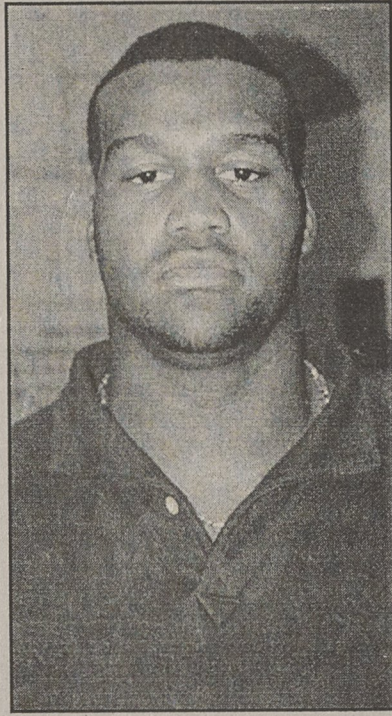
KAREEM MARSHALL

register for classes, and will soon begin winter conditioning and preparations for spring practice with the Bulldogs. He graduated Gulf Coast in early December.

He's confident he can win a starting position on the offensive line.

"Going in as a junior, I don't feel like they would have recruited me unless I could start," he said. "I feel like if I go down there and work hard, stay in shape and stay injury free I'll have a starting position."

"I always wanted to go with a team that I thought would be a contender for the national championship," he added.



RIKO FEEMSTER

"Georgia has a lot of talent coming back on both sides of the ball and I feel like they should be a contender."

"And, it's going to be good for me to go down there and prove to a lot of people that I can play at this level. There's a lot of people out there that said I couldn't do it and I'm going to prove them wrong."

Those who have witnessed Marshall's progression through the years feel that Georgia might not be his final stop on the gridiron. With his size, ability and speed he's sure to attract attention from the NFL.

"Oh, yeah!, it's always been a goal of mine to play in the

NFL," he said.

While Marshall's heading down I-85 South toward Georgia, Riko Feemster will be heading up I-85 North to Chapel Hill where he hopes to help the UNC Tar Heels continue to turn their program around under new coach John Bunting.

Feemster, who was one of the Heels' top recruits after the '98 season, was a redshirt freshman on last year's team which improved to 6-5 after a disastrous 3-8 mark in '99.

Feemster, a back-up guard on both sides of the offensive line, saw action in several games and got in about a quarter and a half of action in the Tar Heels' season-ending 59-21 thrashing of arch-rival Duke.

"Things went pretty well," says the 6-5, 320-pounder. "Just getting some playing experience on the field was real good for me. I'm hoping this year I'll be ready to move into a starting role."

Feemster, a communications major, hated to see Coach Carl Torbush and most of his staff terminated but he's confident the program will continue to improve under Bunting, a former Tar Heel linebacker who comes back to the nation's oldest university from the New Orleans Saints, where he was defensive coordinator.

"I think he's going to be a good coach," Feemster said. "Just like Coach Torbush was a good coach. They've got different styles of coaching. I wish Coach Torbush and the other coaches the best."

"This might bring a little more attention to the school," he said of the hiring of Bunting. "Really, I just talked to some of them (the new coaches) recently, and he (Bunting) gave an hour's speech to the team. So I really haven't gotten to know them as coaches yet. But from what I hear he's a real fine coach."

Feemster called the 6-5 season a good one ("It's always good when you have a winning record," he says) but he felt like the Tar Heels should have done much better.

"We were much better than our record showed," he said. "Some of the games we lost, we should have brought them home as wins. We didn't finish a lot of games."

Feemster was also disappointed that the Tar Heels didn't get to go to a bowl game, and said the firing of Torbush may have played a part in that.

"There were a lot of 6-5 teams that were selected for bowls, and there were a couple of teams that we beat that went to bowl games," he said.

With the Tar Heels graduating four seniors off the offensive line, Feemster feels he'll have a good shot at earning a starting position next year.

"After we get back to school after the break we'll go right in to our winter conditioning program," he said. "We'll be getting ready so we'll be top-notch for spring practice in March. Everybody will be ready to win their position, and with the change I'm sure everybody will have to win their position."

## KMHS girls win Garinger tourney

Kings Mountain High's girls basketball team defeated West Mecklenburg 50-46 and Garinger 54-47 in overtime Thursday and Friday to win the University City Round Ball Classic at Garinger High in Charlotte.

Sophomore Shonda Cole, who scored 41 points in the two contests and had 10 rebounds in the championship win over Garinger, was voted the tournament's most valuable player. She was joined on the All-Tournament team by teammates Cherlyn Cole and Anna Ramey.

The victories improved the Lady Mountaineers' record to 7-1.

"This was a big confidence booster going into conference play," said Coach Kevin Moss. "We won this tournament because of our team defense."

Kings Mountain led most of the way against both 4A Charlotte opponents, but couldn't deliver the knockout punch until late in the game.

Against West Meck, KM led 24-22 at the half and 40-30 going into the fourth quarter, but the Lady Indians came back to make it close at the end.

"West Meck has some outstanding guards who like to penetrate the lane and dish off," Moss said. "We did a good job cutting off their guards. Cherlyn Cole and Anna Ramey

played outstanding defense. They both had to play against taller players and did a fine job blocking them out. Katie Bennett also kept pressure on them by not allowing them to get into the lane."

The Indians got a balanced scoring attack, led by Kateese Burkes with 14 points and Quita Rozzell with 13, but they couldn't do anything to counter Cole's inside strength. Finally, in the fourth quarter West Meck had to foul Cole to try to shut off her inside scoring, but she hit five of six free throws to clinch the victory.

For the game, KM hit 14 of 20 free throws.

The Mountaineers trailed Garinger 24-23 at the half but fought back to grab a 34-33 lead going into the fourth quarter. Garinger came back to take a 45-42 lead, but KM's Anna Ramey hit a 3-point field goal with six seconds left to tie the game at 45-all at the end of regulation. Ramey, Cherlyn Cole and Shonda Cole each hit a basket and Ebony Moore hit two clutch free throws in overtime as the Mountaineers outscored Garinger 9-2 to win going away.

Ramey finished with 15 points, Shonda Cole scored 13 and Cherlyn Cole 10 to lead the KM scoring. Karen Foggie scored 14 and Courtrice Starks 13 for the Wildcats.



GARY STEWART / HERALD  
Qwenshon Goode led the scoring for KM's Mountaineers in last week's Crest Christmas Tournament.

"Garinger was a much taller team," Moss said. "We knew we had to keep their players off the offensive boards in order to keep them from scoring off of trash baskets. We held them to one shot most of the game."

See Girls, 5A

## Mountaineers sixth in Christmas tourney

The holiday break and tournament action are over, and Southwestern 3A Conference action is beginning this week for Kings Mountain High's basketball teams.

The varsity squads were scheduled to host Forestview in their opener last night at the KMHS gym, and on Friday they will travel to East Rutherford for the first of four straight road games. They play at North Gaston next Tuesday and step back out of the conference on Wednesday to face Latin in Charlotte.

While the girls are sailing high and looking to be one of the teams to threaten Forestview's bid for a second straight SWC crown, the KM boys are struggling. Danny McDowell's club is 3-7 with all three of their wins coming in tournament action.

Earlier in the year, the Mountaineers won back-to-back games against Clover and Bessemer City in their own Mountaineer Classic, and last week at Crest they knocked off arch rival Shelby in the Crest Christmas Tournament. KM lost its tournament open-

er to Gaffney, SC 79-64 on Wednesday afternoon, topped Shelby for the first time in three tries Thursday afternoon, 68-66, and then lost to another county rival, Burns, 65-53 in the battle for fifth place on Friday.

Myers Park's Mustangs won the event, defeating Crest 81-70 in double overtime.

Turnovers were a bugaboo for the Mountaineers, who lost the ball 28 times to the pressing Gaffney defense in Wednesday's tournament opener.

With 6-5 center Qwenshon Goode dominating the inside with 19 points, the Mountaineers stayed with the more experienced Indians for most of three quarters. Gaffney led 23-16 after the first quarter and 46-37 at the break. KM closed the gap to 51-45 midway of the third quarter but Gaffney went on a 10-0 scoring run to put the game out of reach.

Tron Thompson led a balanced Gaffney scoring attack with 14 points. Chris Bonner scored 12 and Quinton Holmes, A.Z. Reid and Dory Brown added 10 each. Jamal Byers added 10 for the Mountaineers.

Goode's lay-in with six seconds remaining lifted the Mountaineers over Shelby in Thursday's opener. The win broke a five-game losing streak and was also KM's first win over Shelby in three games this year.

Turnovers continued to plague the Mountaineers, although their 15 turnover total was much less than the day before.

Shelby led 23-18 after the first quarter and 39-32 at the break. Kings Mountain battled back to cut the margin to 54-51 going into the fourth quarter and took the lead on a Byers basket with less than three minutes to play.

See Mounties, 5A

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