

# JACKSON

From 6A

sort of removed - seclusive or withdrawn might be the word."

Fitts produced a picture of Joe in his old age, sitting out in his back yard at Greenville. Shoeless Joe, who couldn't write, had his wife sign Joe's name on a baseball for the preacher. "I've searched the house over for it," he said, "but I can't find it."

It would probably be worth a fortune today.

When Jackson talked baseball to Fitts, it was usually about some of the great players of his day like Ty Cobb and Babe Ruth. Cobb, of the Detroit Tigers, was always Jackson's main competitor for the top hitting laurels in the American League. Jackson is the only major league player to ever have back-to-back seasons in which he hit over .390 but didn't win the batting crown. Each year Cobb hit over .400.

Ruth, who started his career as a pitcher before becoming a home run king, said he copied Jackson's batting stance and hitting techniques.

Jackson could do it all - hit, run and throw. Home run hitters weren't as prevalent in those days as they are now, but Jackson hit with a lot of power. He often led the league in triples, or "three-baggers" as he called them.

Because he knew the man, Fitts knows he is innocent. "How can they say he took

part in throwing the Series, when he set a record for the most hits (12) in a World Series that stood for years until Bobby Richardson of the Yankees got 13 hits in the 1950s," Fitts noted. Jackson had the highest batting average in the Series (.375), scored one-fourth of his team's runs (5), 30% of his team's doubles (3), hit the only home run of the Series, and drove in 35% of his team's runs (6). And, he didn't have a single error in the Series.

"Those are not the kind of statistics of someone trying to fix a World Series," Fitts said.

Baseball greats such as Hall of Fame slugger Ted Williams have tried to get Jackson's ban lifted so he could take his rightful place in the Hall of Fame. There have even been hearings before Congress.

With the Series over 70 years removed, and Jackson's death occurring 50 years ago come December, and the older generation dying out, Fitts is afraid unless something is done now Jackson will never get his just rewards.

"I feel like he deserves to be in the Hall of Fame," he said. "He was proven innocent in a court of law."

"I've thought about calling our Congressmen and talking to them about it."

Then, another thought came to mind.

Fitts, who always had a knack of saying something comical, added, "Maybe when President Clinton was going out of office we could have gotten him to pardon him!"

# Church League softball season begins

First Wesleyan defeated Kings Lighthouse Pentecostal 15-6 to win the Kings Mountain Area Church Softball League Pre-Season Tournament Saturday at Macedonia Baptist Church Field.

First Wesleyan, coached by Toby Deaton, won all four of its games. In earlier contests, they beat Macedonia/Second Baptist 9-7, Bright Light Baptist 16-2, and Kings Lighthouse Pentecostal 12-8.

Kings Lighthouse was coached by Shane Cole. Third place was First Baptist, coached by Keith Miller.

Other tournament scores included First Baptist 8, Shady

Grove/Long Branch 6; Bright Light 19, Love Valley 2; Kings Lighthouse 12, First Baptist 8; Macedonia 18, Love Valley 17; Shady Grove/Long Branch 7, Bright Light 0; First Baptist 9, Macedonia/Second Baptist 4; First Baptist 14, Shady Grove/Long Branch 8; and Kings Lighthouse 9, First Baptist 2.

Regular season games are played on Mondays and Thursdays at 6:30, 7:30 and 8:30 p.m. at Macedonia Baptist Church, 1101 South Battleground Avenue. The field is located behind the church on Park Grace Road.

Regular season play will continue through July 19 (except on Memorial Day). A post-season tournament will conclude the season.

In regular season games last week, Christian Freedom defeated Shady Grove/Long Branch 20-1, First Wesleyan defeated Macedonia/Second Baptist 25-7, First Baptist defeated Bright Light Baptist 18-13 and Patterson Grove 17-10, First Wesleyan defeated Shady Grove/Long Branch 16-6, and Kings Lighthouse Pentecostal defeated Bright Light Baptist 12-9.

Next Monday, Kings Lighthouse will face First

Baptist at 6:30, followed by First Wesleyan-Christian Freedom and Love Valley-Shady Grove/Long Branch.

On Thursday, May 10, Christian Freedom will battle Love Valley at 6:30, followed by Macedonia/Second Baptist against Bright Light, and Shady Grove/Long Branch against Patterson Grove.

League standings: First Baptist 2-0, First Wesleyan 2-0, Christian Freedom 1-0, Lighthouse 1-0, Love Valley 0-0, Macedonia 0-1, Patterson Grove 0-1, Bright Light 0-2, Shady Grove/Long Branch 0-2.

## SPORTS BRIEFS

### KM golfers third in SWC tourney

Kings Mountain High's golfers finished third in the annual Southwestern 3A Conference championship tournament Monday at Rutherfordton.

The Mountaineers held the lead after the first round last week at Kings Mountain Country Club, but Forestview came on strong in the final round to take the championship with a 615 total. R-S Central finished second at 620, followed by KM 625, East Rutherford 629, South Point 651, North Gaston 682 and Burns 696.

The third place finish was good enough for the Mountaineers to qualify for next Monday's Western Regional Tournament at River Bend Golf Club in Shelby. The top three teams and top four individuals from the Regional tournament will qualify for the State Tournament May 14-15.

"I am really pleased with our performance in the tournament," said KM Coach Kevin Moss. "We are playing very consistently right now. We averaged a score of 78 from our top four scores for each round and hopefully we can continue our consistency in the regional tournament."

Josh Etters and Chad Bridges led the Mountaineers with 156 totals. Etters shot a 79-77 and Bridges shot 74-80.

Chris Jolly shot a 80-78-158, Justin Etters 79-81-160, Gray Howard 83-78-161, and Sam McGinnis 87-80-167.

### Girls basketball camp at KM High

Kings Mountain High girls basketball coach Kevin Moss will be running a Future Stars

Girls Basketball Camp July 9-13 from 8 a.m.-12 noon at the KMHS gym.

Students in grades 2-8 may participate. The cost is \$50 and includes a basketball, T-shirt, handbook and certificate. Trophies will be awarded to outstanding campers and winning times in the obstacle course.

For more information, call Kevin Moss at 704-734-5677.

### Basketball camp set at KM High School

The Kings Mountain High School basketball camp will be held May 28-June 2 from 8 a.m.-12 noon. Boys and girls in grades 2-8 are eligible, and the cost is \$50.

Each camper will receive a basketball, t-shirt, handbook and certificate. Trophies will be awarded to outstanding campers and obstacle course winners.

Applications are available from P.E. teachers in the Kings Mountain elementary schools or by calling Coach Danny McDowell at 704-734-5647 ext. 26 from 8 a.m.-3 p.m. (ext. 77 after 3 p.m.)

Deadline for applying is May 11.

### Pitchers combine for no-hit 17-2 win

Kristyn Funderburke and Morgan Childers combined for a no-hitter to lead the Kings Mountain Lightning 12-under girls softball team to a 17-2 win over the Lethal Ladies in the Charlotte NSA tournament last weekend.

Funderburke got credit for the win.

Childers was the winning pitcher in a 9-3 victory over the Wizards.

For the tournament, in which KM won two games and lost two, Funderburke struck out 14 batters and Childers fanned seven.

Childers and Natalyn Blanton led the team in hitting with .545 averages. Holly Myers hit .500, Funderburke .375, Brittney Thornburg .333, and Amber Millwood .200.

The KM team plays this weekend in the Hendersonville tournament.

### Bar H rodeo, festival set in Boiling Springs

The 14th annual Bar H Championship Rodeo and Country Festival will be held May 11-12 at the Bar H. Arena in Boiling Springs. The festival begins at 6 p.m. each day and the rodeo begins at 8 p.m.

Admission price includes both events. Friday, May 11 is senior citizens day and senior citizens will be admitted at a child's price.

The rodeo is sanctioned by the Southern States Professional Rodeo Association. Contestants will be competing on award winning livestock and for championship points in bareback bronc riding, calf roping, cowgirls' goat tying, team roping, cowgirl's barrel racing, and bull riding.

Flint Hill Baptist Church youth will be the main sponsor and will man the concession stands.

The rodeo will include a tribute to God and Country, hilarious clown acts, a trained horse act, daring bull fighting clowns, and the first wild hog race. The country festival has something for everyone, including numerous activities at no additional charge.

For more information call 704-434-2866.

### Cheerleader registration set at KM City Stadium

Registration for Kings Mountain Optimist football cheerleading will be held Saturdays May 12 and 19 from 11 a.m.-3 p.m., and Monday

and Tuesday, May 21-22 from 6:30-8 p.m. at City Stadium.

Registration fee is \$200 and includes uniforms and other necessary equipment and items.

Experience is not necessary and there will be no tryouts. All persons who register will cheer for Optimist Club football teams and perform at halftime of games.

For more information on cheering and coaching, call Joanie Mosier at 730-0709 after 5 p.m.

### Legion baseball cranks up Saturday

Kings Mountain American Legion Post 155 will hold its first baseball meeting Saturday at 3:30 p.m. at the Kings Mountain High School field.

All players interested in playing, should attend. Practice will begin next week.

### Mark's Martyrs win Tuesday night crown

Mark's Martyrs defeated Ducks R Us two games to none Tuesday night at Dilling Heating to win the roll-off for the Tuesday Mixed Duckpin League championship.

Mark Abernathy led the winners with a 133-149-282. Zeke Rybczyk added a 135-119-254 and David Jaroszewski bowled a 142-100-242.

Greg Evans led Ducks R Us with a 139-151-290.

### Tommy's advances to championship match

Tommy's Them defeated Dead Weights two games to one Thursday to advance to the championship round in the roll-off for the Thursday Night Duckpin Bowling League championship. Tommy's will face the Half Timers tonight at Dilling Heating.

Zeke Rybczyk led Them with a 120 line and 352 set. Ed Philbeck added a 119-345 and Tommy Barrett had a 121-336. Mark Abernathy led the Dead Weights with a 170 line and 372 set, and Bonnie Warren added a 115-330.

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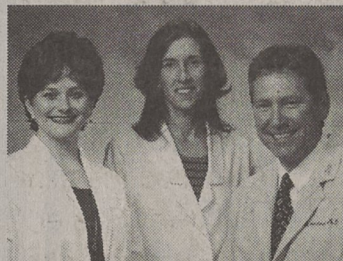
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Lisa Sisk, Karen Rushford and Steven Chamberlain, MD



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