

KMHS soccer team eyeing successful year

Kings Mountain High's second-year soccer coach Jean Constant expects to see much improvement in his Mountaineer team this fall.

According to Constant, KMHS is the only team in the Southwestern Foothills Conference which started practicing two months before the regular season. From the soccer players' registration to the soccer meeting at the end of the school year, Coach Constant built a program of evaluation to choose the most qualified athletes to play on the varsity team.

The team gathered 90% of the players registered to practice during the off-season, Constant said.

"We prepare winners for the future with a good JV team as the foundation of the varsity," he said. "Our goal does not reside only in the outcome of the game, more importantly in making the players winners in every area of their life."

The KM roster includes a good mix of young and more experienced players. Constant has three freshmen, two sophomores, four juniors and seven seniors.

Freshmen include Brian Kies, John Witherspoon and Chris Miller. Although they're young, Constant said they are very talented.

"They are excellent players and have demonstrated their technical ability in practice," he said. "Their attitudes always show that they take maturity as long as they develop in practice."

Kies is a mid/striker. Constant calls him an "excellent distributor and dribbler capable of beating any opponent defenders."

Witherspoon is a defensive-mid. Constant calls him "an excellent passer; his decisive pass can bring the attacking teammate to the nearest post."

Constant calls Miller "the simplest player" on the team. "He is quite composed whatever the position he receives the ball," Constant said. "He always finds a position to make a defensive pass."

Hellstrand is working hard to become the starting goal keeper, Constant said. "He has a personality which can intimidate any opponent," he said. "His distribution is perfect and his aggressiveness can turn away the opponent attacking player."

Galloway is a mid-striker. "He is capable of creating space by overlapping," Constant says. "He is an excellent passer."

The juniors are Chris Clearman, Hugo Barrios, Alfredo Nicassio and Josh Melton.

Clearman is a sweeper-mid and one of the team's toughest players, Constant said. "He is capable of making a recovery run of 65 yards long and 50 yards wide," he said. "He is one of the best shooters on the team. He was chosen

See Soccer, 9A

Mountaineers progressing in early pre-season drills

By GARY STEWART
Editor of The Herald

Although thunderstorms have cut short almost all of their practice sessions lately, Kings Mountain's Mountaineers are progressing well and looking forward to lining up against an opponent.

They'll get that opportunity Saturday morning when they participate in a multi-scrimmage beginning at 10 a.m. at Hunter Huss High in Gastonia.

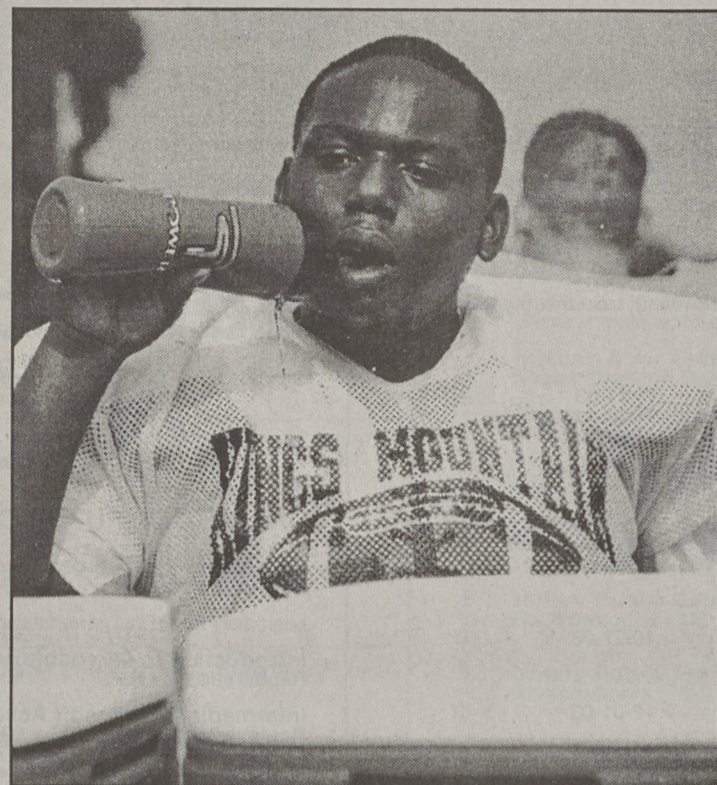
The Mountaineers will go against East Lincoln, East Burke, East Meck and Huss in "12-play" scrimmage situations; and then will battle the host Huskies in game situations.

Next Friday night, the Mountaineers will compete in the annual Cleveland County Jamboree at Burns High School, facing their traditional scrimmage opponent, Morganton Freedom. Shelby will battle Hickory, Crest will face East Rutherford, and Burns will meet the Chase Trojans.

Kings Mountain will open its regular season on Friday night, August 22 at home against East Gaston.

Fourth-year head coach Dave Farquharson welcomes back numerous starters to this year's team, as well as some talented newcomers. The main thing lacking right now is a lack of hitting because of the weather.

"We got to practice about an hour Monday before the storm drove us off," he said. "We got a good little bit of hitting in, but we're going to work through the rest of the week and adjust our schedule so we can get a better



GARY STEWART / HERALD
John Gwinn takes a water break on a hot practice day at Kings Mountain High School.

look and better evaluation of the players."

What little bit he's seen was impressive, Farquharson said.

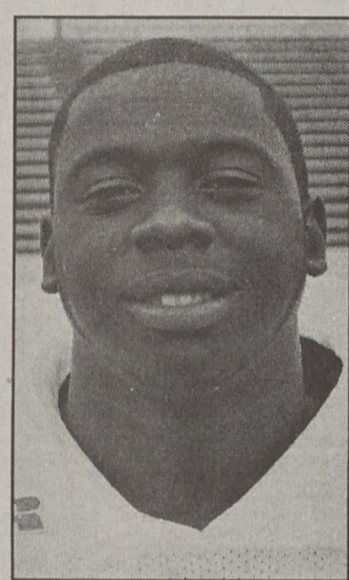
"We haven't scrimmaged yet," he said, "but I think we're going to adjust our schedules to make sure we get that in the rest of the week."

Farquharson said the line-ups are beginning to take shape. Mountaineer fans will see some differences in the team's offensive scheme and will also see a lot of players playing on both offense and defense this year.

Farquharson said the latter is necessary because the team doesn't have a huge number of experienced players, but he added that a lot of the younger players have been impressive and should progress to the point that they can come in and give the team some quality playing time.

"The two platoon is not necessarily going to be a thing of the past with us," Farquharson said, "but we sat down and took a look

GARY STEWART / HERALD



All-Conference linebacker Orlando Curry will also be playing tight end for the Mountaineers this year.

this spring and at the coaches clinic, and worked our depth charts and looked at kids we've got and where they can fit in. With the numbers and level of talent we've got playing kids both ways is something we just have to do right now."

The Mountaineers had their starting backfield

almost completely wiped out through graduation, but they have one of the most experienced lines in the Southwestern Foothills Conference. Wilder Clark, an All-Conference guard, guard Drew Gibson and tackles Sam McGinnis and D.J. Perry are all returning starters, and Josh Yon should step right into the center position without any trouble.

All-Conference linebacker Orlando Curry, a college prospect, will also take over the tight end position where he will be an excellent blocker. Farquharson said he will also figure in the team's passing game.

Montrell Banks, a running back/defensive back last year, will take over the quarterback chores and Aaron Bolton, a starting corner back last year, will move into the tailback slot in KM's multiple offense. Jeremiah Adams, who was called up to the varsity late in the year last year, will be the full-back.

Kings Mountain will operate out of three offensive sets - the traditional one-back, the Pro I and the split back.

Defensively, Farquharson said McGinnis and Wes Dixon will be at the ends, and Gibson and Clark at tackles. Curry and Josh Eters return at inside linebackers and Tyson Byers and Chris Patrick will be the outside linebackers. Corners Bolton and Grayling Elliott, and Banks at safety, are all returning starters in the defensive backfield.

Kings Mountain has good size and speed overall, Farquharson said, and a good attitude.

"I think one of our strengths is that our kids are excited," he said. "They're excited about the new coaches and the direction we're going. We're playing kids both ways and letting them know that we believe in them getting the job done."

Lightning competes in world tourney

Kings Mountain Lightning recently won two of six games in the NSA World Series in Charlotte.

The KM team lost three games in a row before bouncing back to win two of its final three.

In the opening round, the Lightning fell to the Lady Cats of Duluth, GA 6-1. Morgan Childers had two hits and Brittney Thornburg and Laura Weigel added one each.

KM fell to the Extreme Edge of Nashville, TN 4-3. Jessica Yarbrow, Kristyn Funderburke, Morgan Childers and Alicia Jimson had a hit each.

KM fell to the Extreme of Illinois, 6-1. Yarbrow had two hits and Thornburg, Kala Buchanan, Courtney Tate, Amber Milwood and Tianna Whitaker had one each.

Childers struck out six and Tate had two hits and five RBI to lead the Lightning to a 10-7 win over Orion Hunter of Virginia Beach, VA. Funderburke and Thornburg also had two hits and Yarbrow, Childers, Buchanan and Milwood added one each.

Funderburke hurled a 3-hitter as the KM team won 4-1 over the Ohio Valley Dynamite from Indiana. Thornburg and Milwood had two hits each and Yarbrow, Childers, Buchanan and Weigel had one each.

In their last game, the KM team fell to the Missouri River City Lightning 3-2 despite a

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