

SPORTS

# Bulldogs bite KM 4-3 in nine

Josh Drewery's two-run single in the bottom of the ninth inning lifted Burns to a key 4-3 win over Kings Mountain in a Southwestern Foothills 3A Conference game Friday night at Burns.

The win gave the 8th-ranked Bulldogs sole possession of second place with a 4-1 conference record, and dropped KM to third with a 3-2 mark.

It was the second come-from-behind one-run win for the Bulldogs over the Mountaineers. Burns erased a 2-0 deficit with three runs in the bottom of the sixth inning to beat the Mountaineers 3-2 in the recent Shelby Easter Tournament.

Kings Mountain built an early 2-1 lead on the strength of back-to-back home runs by Josh Hendricks and Tyler Leach in the third inning. It was Hendricks' fourth home run in the last two games and sixth for the season. He also had three singles to go 4-for-5.

Leach pitched the first four innings for the Mountaineers but a shoulder which has been bothering him recently tightened up and he had to leave the mound. He had given up only two hits and struck out six.

The Mountaineers led 3-2 going into the bottom of the seventh inning. But Burns got a single, two bunt singles and a bases-loaded walk to tie the game and force extra innings.

Drewery pitched the first seven innings for the Bulldogs and was replaced by Wayne McDonald, who held the Mountaineers hitless over the final two innings.



**Kings Mountain's Josh Hendricks went 4-for-5, including his fourth home run in the last two games, in Friday's 9-inning loss to Burns. Hendricks smashed three home runs in last Tuesday's victory at Hickory.**



**KMHS basketball players Antonio Feaster and D.J. Byrd, center, sign with Mayland Community College as Mayland coach Rob Brendle, left, and KM coach Danny McDowell, right look on. Back row, left to right, are KMHS principal John Yarbro, Feaster's mother Tabitha Scott, Feaster's father Gary Feaster, Feaster's stepmother Cheri Feaster, Byrd's father Allen Byrd, and KMHS athletic director Dave Farquharson.**

## KM's Byrd, Feaster sign with Mayland Community College

By GARY STEWART  
Editor of The Herald

Kings Mountain High basketball players Antonio Feaster and D.J. Byrd Friday signed to play basketball at Mayland Community College in Spruce Pine.

Mayland is coached by Rob Brendle, who coached Gastonia's Victory Christian Academy to two national championships before taking over as head coach of the Mountain Lions.

Mayland plays in the six-team Western Tarheel Conference which includes Caldwell, Catawba Valley, Central Carolina, Forsyth and Surry community colleges. The league is a member of the National Junior College Athletic Association.

Byrd and Feaster led the Mountaineers to a surprising fourth place finish and state playoff berth this past season. During their junior year they helped the Mountaineers win the Southwestern Foothills 3A Conference and Sectional championships.

Byrd, a 6-6 center, was a two-time All-Conference player and was named the team's best all-around player. He was the second leading scorer and rebounder.

He started on SWFH championship teams his sophomore and junior years, helping lead the Mountaineers to the Sectional titles and Western Regional berth each season.

He averaged 12.9 points and 9.1 rebounds per game.

Feaster was a part-time starter his junior year and a full-time starter this past season. He made the All-Conference team as a senior and was the team's leading scorer and rebounder, averaging 15.4 points and 12.3 rebounds per game.

Both players say they will stay at Mayland for two years and then transfer to a four-year school.

Byrd and Feaster checked out Mayland after their high school coach, Danny McDowell, told them that Brendle was interested in signing them.

"We went for one day and practiced with the team," Byrd noted. "The reason I decided to go was that I knew some people that play there and Antonio's going."

Brendle has several Gastonia products on his team, including Alan Littlejohn of Hunter Huss and Darius Sanders and Tavian Tate of Ashbrook.

"They've got a good team from what I've heard, and I'm looking forward to going there," Feaster said. "I haven't seen the campus yet."

Coach McDowell feels both Mountaineers will be excellent additions to the Mayland team.

"Those guys will fit in well," he said. "By playing the tough non-conference schedule that we played over the years, when they go into college there's

going to be some kids that can play but they can play with them. When you play a tough non-conference schedule you're going to play against good Division One and Division Two players."

During McDowell's five years as head coach, the Mountaineers went to battle against some of the best 4A teams in Charlotte and surrounding counties.

"People don't realize it, but Byrd and Feaster used to go up against TaTae (Roebuck, 6-7) and Gabe (Blair, 6-9) in practice on a daily basis. There won't be anybody in junior college that they won't be able to handle," McDowell said.

McDowell sees a family-type atmosphere at Mayland, just as Byrd and Feaster experienced at Kings Mountain.

"It's a close-knit group like we had here," he said. "Everybody knows everybody. They won't be overwhelmed by a large university where you go in and have a social security number. They will go in and know the teachers and get one-on-one counseling. At a big school you wouldn't have an advisor that you could talk to one-on-one anytime you want to. That's the biggest thing that will help them."

"And in basketball they've already been through the war. They've played against good kids all the way through. I'm really excited for them."

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### RUSTY

From 1B

slumped off a little late in the year.

His power was evident and caught the eye of major league scouts. In a game at Liberty University, he didn't start but came on in the eighth inning when Liberty put in a left-hand pitcher. Bumgardner hit a towering home run over the right-center field fence, and came up again in the ninth inning and hit a long home run over the left-center field fence.

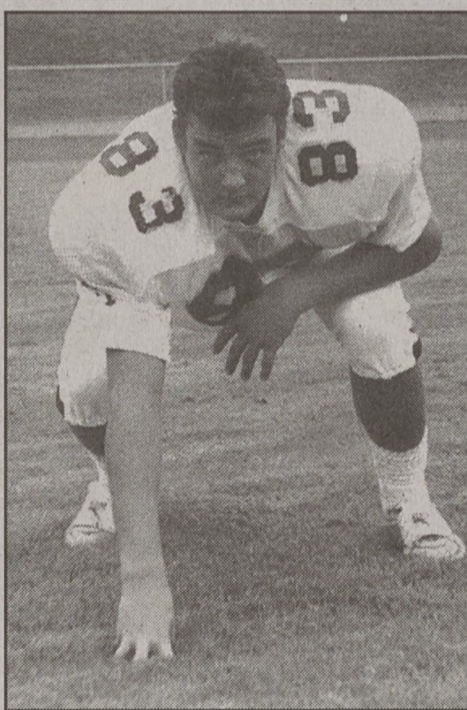
That performance actually is what prompted the Marlins to sign him.

A scout, who at the time was with the Angels, was at the game and tried to get the California team to draft Bumgardner. They didn't. In the meantime, the scout (Ty Brown) joined the Marlins and came to Kings Mountain to sign Bumgardner.

The Marlins had only two farm teams that first season, a Rookie League team in Kissimmee, FL and one in Pennsylvania. Bumgardner played for the Florida team.

Playing softball has taken Bumgardner all over the United States, and he has played exhibition games in Canada. There is a possibility that his team will play in Japan.

Going into the Hall of Fame is special, Bumgardner said, not only because it's in his hometown but



**Rusty Bumgardner was a lineman on KM's 1986 championship team.**

because he joins a group that includes his father, Bud, who was a longtime volunteer assistant baseball coach at KMHS. Bud was inducted posthumously 10 years ago.

"I am just very excited," he said. "I'm elated to be going in, not so much representing myself but representing Kings Mountain and all the teams and

players and coaches. That's who this is really all about. I wouldn't be where I am without a very good supporting cast, all the way from high school through college and even in playing the level of softball I'm playing now.

"It is also an honor to go in and be in this with the caliber of people that's already there, especially my father."

Bud and Rusty were companions in coaching with the 1989 state championship Mountaineer baseball team that will also be inducted into the Hall of Fame. Both were volunteer assistants to Bruce Clark, and Rusty also assisted Clark with the '93 state championship team at KMHS.

Bumgardner also was an assistant coach for the 1998 KMHS football team, which won a school record 14 games and played for the state championship.

Bumgardner will be inducted by Coach Mahaffey.

"If my father was alive he would definitely do it," Bumgardner said. "I've thought about all the coaches that I have been with. It's an honor to go in with Coach (Denny) Hicks, who coached me in football, and an honor to go in with Paul Brannon, who I coached and played with, and the 1989 team which is Coach Clark and the rest of the young men that played on that team."

Next Week - Paul Brannon

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