

SPORTS



Kings Mountain Middle School's Patriots finished 14-1 overall and won the Tri-County Conference championship with a 14-4 win over Crest. Kneeling, left to right, Clay Kerns, Brent Stevens, Kyle Bell, Jeffrey Howell, Joe Chambers, Cody Austin and Dillon Smith. Standing, Coach Monty Deaton, Zach Hayes, Tyler Ross, Mitchell Hinson, Brantley Blalock, Johnathon Allen, Chris Williams, Coach Peter Thompson, Rai Robinson, Ryan Doty and manager Tyler Dixon.

## Patriots win Tri-County crown

Kings Mountain came back from two early deficits to defeat Crest 14-4 Thursday in the Tri-County Conference championship game at Crest.

The Patriots of Monty Deaton and Peter Thompson closed out the season with a perfect division record and a 14-1 overall mark. Their only loss was to Crest in a game in which five KM starters were out because of a school trip.

Crest grabbed a 1-0 lead in the first inning and led 4-2 after three. But after that it was all KM as the Patriots scored two runs in the fourth, four in the fifth, three in the sixth and three in the seventh.

Jeffrey Howell went the distance on the mound, scattering eight hits and striking out eight.

"I am real proud of the kids," said Coach Deaton. "They played well. Their hard work since the beginning of the season paid off for them."

Kings Mountain grabbed a 2-1 lead in the third inning on singles by Brent Hunt and Brantley Blalock, an error and Howell's sacrifice fly.

After Crest regained the lead at 4-2, the Patriots tied the game with a pair of runs in the fourth on two errors, a hit batsman, sacrifice fly by Ryan Doty and a single by Hunt.

The Patriots scored four runs in the fifth to take an 8-4 lead. Cody Austin had a double and Howell, Tyler Ross and Rai Robinson each had a single.

A single by Blalock and doubles by Howell and Ross extended the lead to 11-4 in the sixth inning, and KM closed out the scoring in the top of the seventh on a 3-run home run by Blalock.

Kings Mountain tuned up for the championship game by winning a pair of lopsided games against Pumpkin Center and Burns to end division play.

Against Pumpkin Center,

KM rolled to a 24-3 win. Howell pitched the first four innings to get the win. He gave up only three hits and fanned 11. Doty pitched the final inning and struck out one.

Kings Mountain scored five runs in each of the first two innings to put the game away early. In the first, KM followed an error with hits by Austin, Ross and Robinson and a home run by Jonathan Allen.

In the second, Blalock singled with two outs to get things started. Austin followed with a single, Howell a triple, Ross a single and Robinson a double.

KM added three runs in the third to take a 13-1 lead. After two errors, Austin singled and Howell doubled, Ross had a sacrifice fly and Robinson added a single.

The Patriots increased their margin to 21-2 in the fourth, scoring eight runs on a home run by Blalock, doubles by Howell and Allen, singles by Robinson, Joe

Chambers, Doty and Dylan Smith, and a sacrifice fly by Ross.

The Patriots added their final two runs in the fifth on Blalock's home run, a triple by Howell and double by Doty.

Howell and Robinson finished with four hits each, Blalock and Austin had three each, Ross, Doty and Allen two each, and Chambers one.

Kings Mountain rebounded from an early 2-1 deficit to defeat Burns 23-2.

Allen went the distance to get the pitching win.

Blalock, Howell and Hunt led the hitting with three hits each. Austin, Ross, and Robinson added two hits each and Williams, Kyle Bell, Doty and Chambers had one apiece.

## Mounties win SWFH in track

Kings Mountain won the Southwestern Foothills Conference men's track championship Wednesday and Thursday at Hickory.

The Mountaineers compiled 161 points to 109 by Crest. Three-time defending champion Hickory was third with 78 points, followed by Fred T. Foard 68, R-S Central 64, St. Stephens 62 and Burns 8.

Sidney Goode paced the Mountaineers with first place finished in the long jump (21'2") and the triple jump (42'2").

Johnny Phillips won the high jump (6 feet even) and Antwan Ross, Javon Potts, Derrick Marable and Martrice Love won the 800-meter relay in 1:31.83.

R-S Central won the girls title with 189 points, followed by Hickory 121, Crest 71, St. Stephens 67, KM 51, Foard 38 and Burns 2.

The only winner for Kings Mountain was Alex Pharr, who won the long jump with a jump of 15 feet even.



KM Wildcats received a bid to the National AAU Tournament in Sarasota, FL after winning the AAU NIT Tournament in Concord this weekend. The Wildcats defeated three Charlotte teams, including the Royals 2-0, Scorpions 11-2 and Pirates 6-4 in pool play and went on to defeat Catawba Valley Storm 11-9 in the championship game on Sunday. Pictured, left to right, front row Kyle Bell, Caleb Henderson, Rai Robinson. Second row Brantley Blalock, Joey Starnes, Danny Vliet, Jeffrey Howell, Dillon White, Tyler Ross. Coaches are Ray Robinson, Todd Blalock and Scott Howell.



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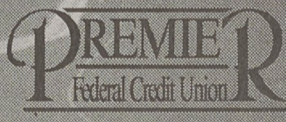
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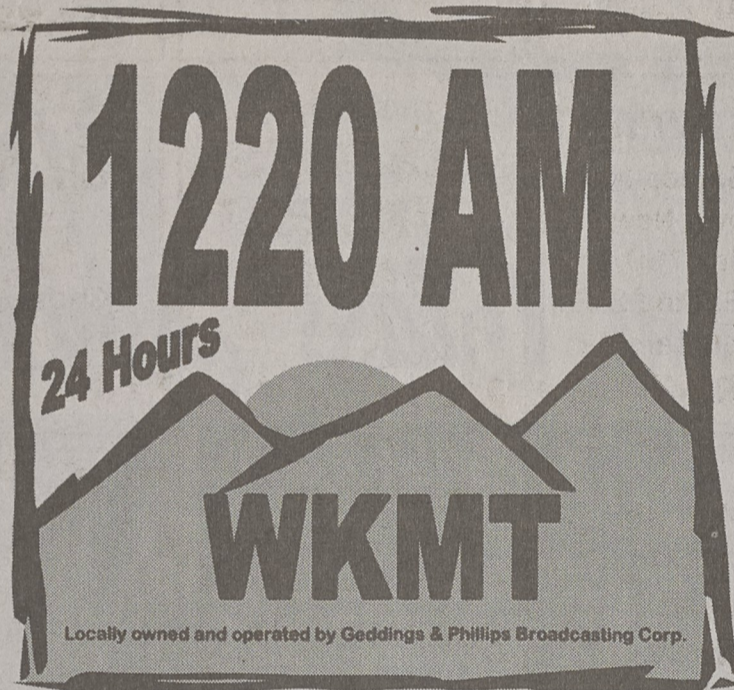
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