

# Sports

## Hickory first Mountaineer victim in state playoffs

### Postgame

**PLAY OF THE GAME**  
After Hickory scored to cut Kings Mountain's lead to 10-7 with 8:00 left in the game, KM's Terrance Young returned the kickoff 26 yards to the 49-yard line to set in motion a 51-yard, 8-play scoring drive that iced the win.

**PLAYERS OF THE GAME**  
Terrance Young, return specialist, 11 and 56-yard punt returns and 22 and 29-yard kick returns; Zach Hopper, LB, 9 tackles and pass interception return for TD; Thomas James, 11 tackles, including sack and TFL; JT Putnam, 8 tackles and forced fumble; Anthony Dalton, fumble recovery; Tori Belcher, 5 tackles, including one sack and one TFL and constant pressure on Hickory QB; Michael Roberts, 23-135 rushing and 1 TD; Carlos Bell, 6-65 rushing. Jake Allen, P, 38-yd. Average; Edward Blackburn, PK, FG and 3 PATs.

**THE YARDSTICK**

	H	KM
First downs	13	12
Rushes/Yds.	37-164	41-227
Yds. Passing	140	51
Passes	7-20-1	5-17-0
Punts	7-32.4	5-37.6
Fumbles/lost	1-1	1-0
Penalties/Yds.	6-47	9-76

**RUSHING**  
KM - Michael Roberts 23-135, Joe Chambers 12-27, Carlos Bell 6-65.  
H - TJ Wimbush 19-113, Tyshon Chsholm 4-21, Trevin Parks 7-19, Tavish Johnson 3-9, Linberger Quai 2-3, Kevin Shelton 2-minus 1.

**PASSING**  
KM - Roberts 5-17-0-51. H - Shelton 6-19-1-104, Parks 1-1-0-36.

**RECEIVING**  
KM - Chambers 2-19, T. Young 1-15, Jacoby Giles 1-9, Devin Thompson 1-8. H - Parks 3-65, Shook 2-23, Shelton 1-36, Wilson 1-16.

**BY THE NUMBERS**

H	0	0	0	7	7
KM	0	0	3	21	24

**THIRD QUARTER**  
3:02 - KM - Edward Blackburn 29 FG, 76 yards, 12 plays. Bell 3 rushes for 28 yards, Roberts 26-yard run to Hickory 13.

**FOURTH QUARTER**  
9:53 - KM - Roberts 1 run (Blackburn kick), 2 play, 10-yard drive, set up by Terrance Young's 56-yard punt return to the Hickory 10 and Roberts' 9-plus yard run on first down.  
8:00 - H - Wimbush 13 run (Smith kick), 64 yards, 6 plays. Shelton 16-yard pass to Anthony Wilson, Wimbush 3 rushes for 41 yards.

3:25 - KM - Chambers 3 run (Blackburn kick), 51 yards, 8 plays, set up by Young's 29-yard kickoff return to 49, Bell 28-yard run to 18, pass interference against Chambers at goal line.  
2:33 - KM - Zach Hopper 40 interception return (Blackburn kick).

**NOTABLE**  
This was Kings Mountain's first victory over Hickory since 1944 (7-6). The Red Tornadoes defeated the Mountaineers in 1945, 1946, 1964, 2001, 2002, 2003 and 2004.

**THIS WEEK**  
Mooresville, Friday 7:30 p.m., John Gamble Stadium.

**NOTABLE**  
This is the 9th meeting between the Mountaineers and Blue Devils, but their first meeting in the state playoffs. The series is tied 4-4, with KM winning the last two, 20-13 in 1995 and 19-14 in 1996.

### Hunter Huss basketball game canceled

Kings Mountain High's winter sports teams will be in action during the coming week.

The basketball teams' scheduled games with Hunter Huss for Friday night had been re-scheduled for Saturday due to the state football playoffs, but now those games have been cancelled. They may be re-scheduled again for later in the season.

Kings Mountain will host Crest Monday night and travel to Ashbrook on Tuesday.

The Mountaineer wrestling team will open its season Friday at 6:30 in a tri-match at North Gaston. The Mountaineers' first home match is next Tuesday at 7 p.m. against Hunter Huss.

Kings Mountain's swim teams will host East Rutherford Thursday at 5:30.

### Mooresville here Friday for second round game

By GARY STEWART  
SPORTS EDITOR

Kings Mountain's Mountaineers host another traditional state power in the second round of the 3AA playoffs Friday at 7:30 at John Gamble Stadium.

Mooresville's Blue Devils, featuring a solid running game that will give KM's defense its toughest test yet, come to town riding high with a 9-3 record and a 21-17 victory over a good Sun Valley team.

As was the case last week, the Mountaineers will be renewing a series against a team they used to play in non-conference games. The two teams met for a four-game series in the 1960s, and again in the 1990s, with each team winning four games.

Just as was the case in the 90s, when the Blue Devils featured a spectacular running back named Corey Alexander, who went on to star at the University of South Carolina, they come to town this week with another star, Jjshaun Pinkston, who has rushed for 2,143 yards and an 8.7 per carry average, and 28 touchdowns.

Pinkston, who wears number 7, and quarterback Nathan Abraham, are just as valuable to the Mooresville attack as Joe Chambers and Michael Roberts (both 1,000-yard rushers) are to the Mountaineers. The Blue Devils are averaging 319 yards rushing per game and have a per-carry average of 7.5 yards.

"Pinkston is the best running back we've seen," says KM Coach Greg Lloyd, "He's one of the best in the state."

Mooresville is also the best team the Mountaineers have faced, Lloyd said, and will be hard to beat. But he's confident his players will rise to the occasion.

"They're the biggest team we've played," Lloyd noted. "They're bigger than R-S Central. They have a big offensive line. They have wins over some very good teams, including A.L. Brown. They're very good - obviously the best team we've played this year - and it will take a great effort to beat them."

While KM's main objective on defense is to stop Pinkston, the Mountaineers have to also key on Abraham. He is also a very fast runner and a passing threat.

"We have to slow number 7 down," Lloyd said, "and we have to score points. It will be hard to keep them from scoring. We need to keep our offense on the field."

Mooresville is strictly a two-platoon team. Wearing them down physically won't be as easy as it has been with some of the Mountaineers' opponents.

The Mountaineers will have to play very well in all three phases of the game.

"Obviously, running is their main thing," Lloyd said, "but they also have very good special teams. They have a good kicker and good punter. They're an all-around good football team."

Fans are encouraged to come early because the Blue Devils have a huge following.

"It's going to be a great football game," Lloyd said. "We'll be ready."



Gary Stewart photo  
Joe Chambers (22) runs up the middle for the Mountaineers.

## Break scoreless tie in 3rd quarter

**"Our defense bent but it didn't break. To hold a team like that to seven points was a fantastic effort."**  
Coach Greg Lloyd

By GARY STEWART  
SPORTS EDITOR

Kings Mountain's Mountaineers broke a scoreless tie late in the third quarter and went on to defeat Hickory 24-7 in the first round of the State 3AA playoffs Saturday night at John Gamble Stadium.

The game was postponed from Friday due to heavy rain and an accurate forecast for evening thunderstorms.

Although the field had some soft spots, it didn't bother either team as both turnovers of the game (a fumble recovery and pass interception by the Mountaineers) were a result of outstanding defensive plays by the home team.

Both teams failed on some scoring opportunities in the first half, but broke the tie in the third and fourth quarters. Kings Mountain had a drive deep into Hickory territory end with a bad snap on a field goal attempt and Hickory had two touchdowns nullified by penalties.

The Red Tornadoes also had a potential score snuffed out when the KM defense gang-tackled fullback TJ Wimbush inside the one, causing a fumble which Anthony Dalton scooped up and returned 29 yards out of danger.

Kings Mountain made some defensive adjustments at halftime (Hickory's only sustained drive in the second half was their only TD drive) and went to a two-back set in the third period to begin moving the ball better.

They also got three outstanding special teams plays to turn the game into a rout in the final minutes.

The Mountaineers broke the scoring drought with 3:02 left in the third period when freshman Edward Blackburn nailed a 29-yard field goal to culminate a 12-play, 76-yard drive.

Carlos Bell, who came in to join Joe Chambers in a two-back set, had three big runs for a total of 28 yards, and quarterback Michael Roberts got loose on a 26-yard run to the 13 yard line to set up the field goal.

Early in the fourth quarter, Terrance Young brought the big home crowd to life with an electrifying 56-yard punt return to the Hickory 10 yard line, setting up a one-yard sneak by Roberts and a 10-0 lead.

Hickory's offense, which had been



Gary Stewart photo  
Tori Belcher (32) rushes the Hickory Quarterback.

snuffed out since halftime by better coverage by the KM defense, came to life briefly and responded with a 6-play, 64-yard march that culminated with a 13-yard touchdown run around right end by Wimbush at the 8:00 mark.

Young answered again with a 29-yard kick return to midfield, and Bell followed with a 28-yard run to the Hickory 18 to set up a 3-yard touchdown run by Chambers and a 17-7 lead at the 3:25 mark.

The drive got new life when Chambers was interfered with on a pass at the goal line.

With the Red Tornadoes going to the air to try to pull off a miracle finish, Mountaineer sophomore line-backer Zach Hopper broke in front of the intended Hickory receiver and intercepted the pass and returned it 40 yards for a touchdown to close out the scoring.

Coach Greg Lloyd, who got his first playoff win with the Mountaineers after being eliminated in the first round last year at South Point, was highly pleased with his team's effort.

"All of the kids played hard," he said. "We played good in all three phases of the game. Our defense bent but it didn't break. To hold a team like that to seven points was a fantastic effort."

Hickory's defense was obviously geared to stop Chambers, who was limited to a season-low 27 yards on 12 carries. But the decision to go to a two-back set in the second half made Bell and Roberts more effective. Roberts finished with a game-high 135 yards in 23 carries and Bell finished with six carries for 65 yards, all of them coming on two second half TD drives.

"Our offense made some big plays in the second half," Lloyd said. "It was a good win and it's good for our momentum for the second round game."

The halftime adjustments helped both the offense and defense. In the first half, Hickory was very successful in its obvious game plan of keeping the KM offense off the field. But that was reversed in the second half, as KM's improved defensive play kept the Red Tornadoes off the field.

"We moved our corners up to tighten up on their receivers," Lloyd said, "and Anthony Dalton stayed on the fullback a whole lot better. I think they wore down a little, too. They were playing a lot of guys both ways."

Although Young, KM's leading receiver, was held to one catch for 15 yards, Lloyd said he played his best game of the year. His two kick returns, which set up scores, turned the game around.

"His returns gave us a short field," Lloyd said. "He did a nice job on all punts and kickoffs. When he got the chance to return some of them he made things happen. It was his best effort of the year. He had a great game."

"Carlos Bell made the most of his carries, too," Lloyd added. "He really gave us a spark in the second half. And Zach Hopper's interception and return was nice."

Lloyd credited Hickory's defense for stopping Chambers, but added the Mountaineers didn't take advantage of some passes the Tornadoes were giving them.

"They were giving us a little bit on the sides but we dropped too many passes (five)," he said. "We can't do that this week. I think we'll be ready this week."