

Sports



GARY STEWART/HERALD
Jeffrey Howell went the distance on the mound as Kings Mountain edged defending SWC champion East Rutherford 3-2 Tuesday night at Lancaster Field.

Mountaineers beat R-S 5-1; set up battle with Chase

By **GARY STEWART**
Sports Editor

Brantley Blalock went the distance on the mound and Dillon Smith ripped a bases-loaded triple in the sixth inning to lead Kings Mountain's Mountaineers over R-S Central 5-1 Monday night in Rutherfordton.

The Mountaineers, 3-1 in the SWC, were scheduled to close out first round action last night at Burns and will host first place Chase Friday at 7 p.m. at Lancaster Field.

The Mountaineers went up 1-0 in the top of the first inning when Brian Brown walked to lead off the game and scored on a two-out double by Jeffrey Howell.

The game then turned into a pitcher's duel between Blalock and Jim Spangler of the Hilltoppers. Kings Mountain broke the game open in the top of the sixth, when they

loaded the bases on singles by Blalock, Howell and Tyler Ross. With two outs, Smith sent Spangler's first pitch to deep center field to clear the bases and put KM on top 4-0.

Christian Pfaff came on to pitch for R-S and KM stretched its lead to 5-0 in the top of the seventh when Chris Allen scored on a wild pitch. R-S scored its only run in the bottom of the seventh on a triple by Dylan Hipp and a KM error.

Blalock finished with four strikeouts while Spangler and Pfaff sent ten Mountaineers back to the dugout with the bat on their shoulders. R-S went down in order in the second, third, and fifth innings.

Blalock, Howell and Smith had two hits each for the Mountaineers. Cody Austin and Ross had one hit each. Hipp had two of the Hilltoppers, five hits.

Mountaineers edge East Rutherford 3-2

By **GARY STEWART**
Sports Editor

Jeffrey Howell went the distance on the mound and Rai Robinson clubbed his fifth home run in six games to lead Kings Mountain's Mountaineers to a 3-2 Southwestern 2A/3A Conference win over defending champion East Rutherford Tuesday night at Lancaster Field.

The Mountaineers never trailed but missed a golden opportunity to break the game open in the bottom of the sixth, when they loaded the bases with just one out but couldn't score.

Howell scattered eight hits and struck out seven but served up home run pitches to Tripp Hodge and Garrett Brooks.

Dakotah Thomas went the route for the Cavaliers. He gave up seven hits and struck out seven.

The loss was the second straight for the Cavaliers, who had dropped a 12-2 decision to Chase four nights earlier. The perennial state power had opened its conference season with a 14-2 win over R-S Central.

It was the second straight win for the Mountaineers, who opened with an 11-inning, 3-2 loss to Chase but bounced back with a 6-

4 win over Shelby.

Robinson opened the bottom half of the second inning with a first-pitch home run over the left field fence, but Hodge countered with a solo shot with two outs in the top of the third.

The Mountaineers took a 3-1 lead with two runs in the fourth. Robinson reached base on a fielder's choice and scored on Tyler Ross, double to the gap in right-center. Ross later scored on Brent Hunt's double to about the same spot.

Brooks sent an 0-2 hanging curve over the left field fence to open the East sixth.

Robinson opened the KM sixth with a sharp single to center. After Ross walked, Dillon Smith sacrificed the runners to second and third. KM proceeded to load the bases when Hunt reached first on an infield error, but Thomas fanned Chris Allen and got Brian Brown on a grounder to second to get out of the inning.

Jordan Mabe reached base on an error with one out in the seventh for East, but KM ended the game on a short (Austin) to second (Hunt) to first (Robinson) double play.

Robinson finished with 2-for-3 and two runs scored for the Mountaineers. Brooks and Hodge had two hits each for the Cavaliers.



GARY STEWART/HERALD
Kings Mountain's Tori Glass slides into third with a triple in Tuesday's game with Shelby at the KMMS field. KM won 12-0.

Lady Mountaineers shutout Shelby 12-0

By **GARY STEWART**
Sports Editor

Kings Mountain scored five runs in the first inning and Lea Zwick retired the first eight Shelby batters in order as the Lady Mountaineers rolled over the Lions 12-0 in a SWC softball game Tuesday at Lancaster Field #3.

Ten Mountaineers went to the plate in the bottom of the first and those five runs were all Zwick needed to nail down the win.

Zwick used pinpoint control and an impressive change-up to keep the Shelby batters off stride. Anika Jones finally broke up

the perfect game with a double with two outs in the third inning.

Meanwhile, the Lions pitchers and defense couldn't do anything with the sharp hitting of the Mountaineers. KM added two more runs in the second for a 7-0 lead and tacked on five more in the third to go up 12-0. The game was called after 4 innings on the 10-run mercy rule. Several Shelby errors and wild pitches aided the Mountaineer cause.

Hayley Hoyle had three hits to pace the KM attack. Megan Hoyle had two hits and Tori Glass added two hits, including a triple. Kelisha Goodson and Taylor Faris also had triples.



Photo by GARY STEWART
Meagan Reynolds had a big game for Kings Mountain High's soccer team in Monday's 9-0 SWC win over Chase.

KM blanks Chase

Wins conference opener

By **GARY STEWART**
Sports Editor

Kings Mountain High's eighth-ranked women's soccer team blanked Chase 9-0 in its opening SWC game Monday at Chase.

KM wasted little time getting on the board as Ramey Kerns scored off a crossing pass from Meagan Reynolds two-and-a-half minutes into the match. Megan Loftin made it 2-0 four minutes later off another assist from Reynolds.

Reynolds then added two goals off an assist from Ashley Witherspoon, and a goal kick, to

make it 4-0 at halftime.

"Our girls really played a nicely played match as they were very unselfish and knocked the ball around to everyone," said Coach Dan Potter. "A match like this is a real morale booster as all players contributed and played nearly half the match."

Kerns got the second half underway with a goal from 18 yards out. Alex Edwards made it 6-0 off a pass from Kerns. Victoria Greene slid a left-footed shot into the net off a pass from Witherspoon. Elizabeth Latimore scored her first goal of the season off an assist from Courtneigh Bungardner. The final goal came from Witherspoon off a pass from Edwards.

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GARY STEWART/HERALD
Will Dixon teamed with Chaney Barnes for an exciting 11-9 win over Forrest Thurmond and Thomas Miller which helped Kings Mountain edge R-S Central in a big SWC 3A tennis match Tuesday.

Netters edge R-S Central

Kings Mountain won the last two doubles matches to edge R-S Central 5-4 in a SWC tennis match Tuesday, March 24.

Singles
Michael Martin (RS) d. Chaney Barnes 3-6, 6-4, 11-

9; Matt Gray (KM) d. Zeke Stephenson 7-6 (9-7), 6-2; Davis Phanthalack (KM) d. Cory Lowery 6-3, 4-6, 10-7; David Schafter (RS) d. Will Dixon 6-0, 6-1; Tanner Deaton (KM) d. Matt Bond 7-5, 6-3; Forrest Thurmond (RS) d. John Rabb 6-1, 6-1.

Doubles
Martin/Stephenson (RS) d. Gray/Phanthalack 10-4; Barnes/Dixon (KM) d. Thurmond/Thomas Miller 11-9; Deaton/Daniel Christenbury (KM) d. Lowery/Schaffer 10-5.