

Sports

Volleyball star Shonda Cole to be inducted into KM Sports Hall of Fame

GARY STEWART
Sports Editor

(First of a four-part series on the 2011 Kings Mountain Sports Hall of Fame inductees. The meal and induction ceremony is Saturday, May 7 at 6 p.m. at Central United Methodist Church. Tickets are \$10 each and can be purchased by any member of the Hall of Fame committee).

There is very little that Kings Mountain's Shonda Cole hasn't accomplished on the volleyball court.

During her four-year varsity career at Kings Mountain High, she was a four-time All-Conference player, two-time State Player of the Year, and led the Lady Mountaineers to the State Championship.

She accomplished all of that while also becoming the school's all-time leading scorer in girls basketball and maintaining a 4.25 grade point average.

In four years at the University of South Carolina, she was a three-time All-Southeastern Conference choice and made the All-American team her senior year.

There, she broke almost every record in the book including:

- 703 kills her senior year, shattering the previous school record by 150 and becoming just the 14th player in NCAA history to top the 700-kill mark.

- 5.76 kills per game, beating the previous record by 1.54.

- 1,541 attacks, surpassing the old mark by 203.

- 37 kills in a 5-game set, beating the old record by five.

- 35 kills in a 4-game set in which the Gamecocks defeated nationally 6th-ranked Florida 3-1.

- 27 kills in a 3-game set against the University of Georgia.

And that was just her senior season.

For her career, Cole became the all-time USC leader in attacks with 4,181 and kills per game with 4.26. Her 1,775 kills rank second in school history and she finished 10th in total blocks with 305. Cole was also the only player in USC volleyball history to average at least 4.00 kills per game for three years.

During her brilliant senior season Cole was selected SEC Offensive Player of the Week three times and became the first South Carolina player to win the AVCA National Player of the Week accolades.

In addition to making first team All-SEC her senior year (after making the second team her sophomore and junior campaigns) Cole was named to the AVCA All-South Region team. She also made All-Tournament in four tournaments and was named MVP in Clemson's Big Orange Bash for leading USC to a 4-0 record and the championship.

Cole now plays pro club volleyball for Pinkin de Carozal in Puerto Rico, a team she helped lead to the world championship last season. The season lasts from January until early May. In

the summer and fall she coaches volleyball at Greenville, SC High School.

Contacted by phone in Puerto Rico, Cole said she is looking forward to playing volleyball for a long time, then going back to school to get a Master's Degree and hopefully coach on the college level.

Cole is in her fourth year in pro volleyball. She played in Spain one year before going to Puerto Rico.

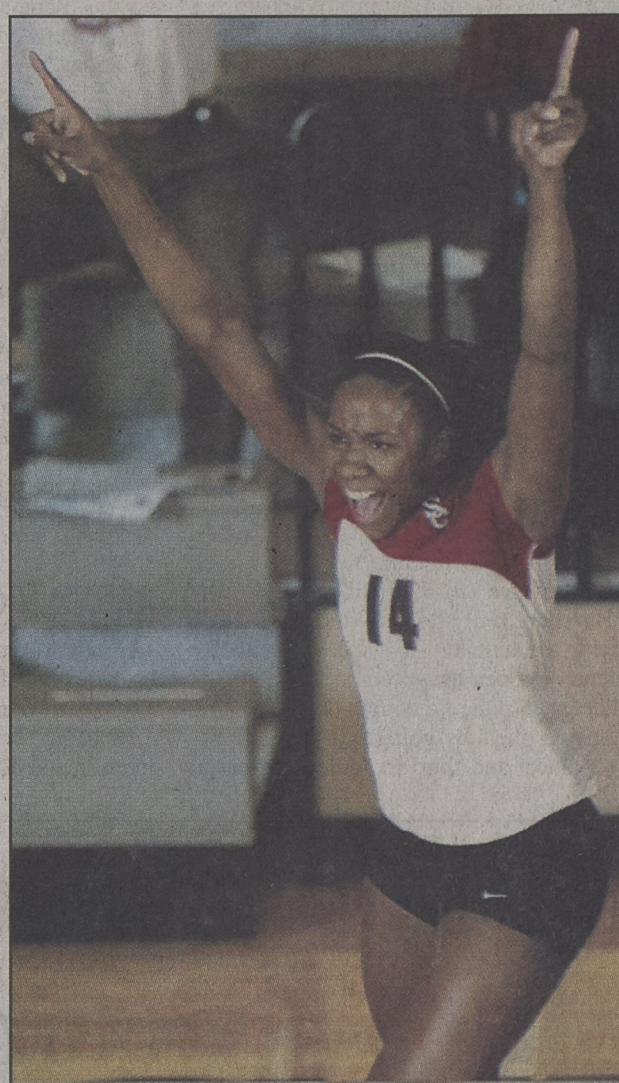
"It just doesn't seem possible that it's been four years since I graduated (South Carolina)," she said. "This year we're looking to repeat. I never thought volleyball would take me this far. I'm still learning every day and getting better and continuing to enjoy it."

One thing that is much different in Puerto Rico is the weather. "There's not very much winter unless I'm home," she said. "It is very hot here but the island is beautiful and it has been a real blessing to do this."

Cole said there are ten teams in the division that her team plays in and they play close to 30 games during the regular season. "We usually play two or three games a week, and then the tournament," she noted.

Cole said she has enjoyed her three-year coaching stint at Greenville High. She served as JV coach and varsity assistant her first two years before being named head coach last year. Her team finished third in their Region, but lost five starters and will be rebuilding.

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Shonda Cole

Former KM player Blair on NIT championship team at Wichita St.

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Gabe Blair, who played on two conference championship teams at Kings Mountain High School in the early 2000s, was a member of the Wichita State basketball team that defeated Alabama 66-57 last week to win the National Invitational Tournament.

Blair, a 6-8 senior forward, averaged 6.6 points and 6.6 rebounds per game for the Shockers, who are coached by former Wingate University coach Gregg Marshall. He played in 36 games and started 15.

Blair got into early foul trouble in the championship game and scored four points and picked up four fouls.

Blair played for Danny McDowell at KMHS and then one season at Hope Christian Academy. He played two years at East Carolina before transferring to Wichita State.

The Shockers finished the season with a 29-8 overall record...

Kings Mountain sophomore relief pitcher Jeff Howell picked up his third save of the season Saturday in Gardner-Webb's 10-7 win over VMI in Lexington, VA.

Howell entered the game in the eighth inning after the Keydets cut the score to 10-7 and had the tying run the plate. Howell got that batter on a fly out and then retired the side in order in the ninth.

Howell has a 2-1 record with three saves in 17.1 relief appearances. He carries a 3.63 earned run average and has struck out 27 batters.

Kings Mountain fans have the opportunity to see two former Mountaineers in action Friday, Saturday and Sunday when the Bulldogs host Charleston Southern in a Big South Conference series. Games are scheduled for 6 p.m. Friday and 2 p.m. Saturday and Sunday at John Henry Moss Stadium.

Kings Mountain's Cody Austin is having a good freshman season for CSU. He is hitting .297 with 11 hits, 10 runs and five RBIs in 37 times at bat and is also playing solid defense at second base. Austin went 2-for-5 with three runs scored in a 14-4 victory over Furman last Wednesday...

Kings Mountain senior Morgan Childers lost a heart-breaker Saturday to A-Sun leader Jacksonville. Childers went 10 innings with the Dolphins winning 3-2.

Childers scattered nine hits and struck out 16 batters. She has a 23-4 record and a 1.30 ERA. She has struck out 283 batters in 161.2 innings.

The Spartans host the University of South Carolina Wednesday at 5 p.m. at Cyrill Stadium on the Upstate campus...

Sophomore relief pitcher Brantley Blalock of Kings Mountain has yet to figure into a decision with the Lander Bearcats. He has worked 15.1 innings in 11 appearances. He has a 5.87 ERA and 10 strikeouts...

Former Mountaineer and East Rutherford pitcher Ryan Leach is 0-2 in seven appearances at UNC Wilmington. He has worked 27.1 innings with 16 walks, 14 strikeouts and a 6.26 ERA...

His teammate, former Post 155 pitcher Andrew Harnage, is 1-1 in 16 appearances and 7.2 innings of work. He carries a 3.68 ERA...

Lenoir-Rhyne outfielder Rai Robinson of Kings Mountain is hitting .222 with six hits and two RBIs in 27 at-bats.



GARY STEWART/HERALD

Kings Mountain's Cameron Harris competes in the high jump in last week's track meet at KMHS.

Boys 2nd, girls 3rd in track meet

Kings Mountain's boys finished second and the girls third in a six-team track meet last week at John Gamble Stadium.

South Point won the boys meet with 185 points, followed by KM 171, Forestview 128, North Gaston 28, Hunter Huss 23 and East Rutherford 0.

Forestview won the girls meet with 192 points, followed by Huss 99, KM 98, North Gaston 49, East Rutherford 47 and South Point 38.

Cameron Harris was a double winner for the KM boys, taking the discus (145'7") and shot put (45'10"). Kaven Swann finished third and Jake Lancaster fifth in the discus, and Matt Turner was fourth in the shot.

Shelton Watson won the 400 meter dash (52.97), Trey Edgerton ran third and Jordan Ford fifth.

Tim Hines won the long jump (21'1") and the 4 x 200 relay team also ran first (1:32.63). KM ran second in the 4 x 400 (3:45) and 4 x 100 (43.81) and third in the 4 x 800 (10:08).

Larry Smith was second in the triple jump (39'10") and Brian Johnson was fourth.

Harris finished second (5'4") in the high jump and Smith was third (5'2").

Hines was third in the 100 meter dash (11.22). Anthony McDonald was third in the 200 meters (23.54).

Steven Byrd was fourth in the 300 hurdles (47.63) and Chavrick Phillips was fifth (49.20).

The Lady Mountaineers' only victory came in the 4 x 400 relay.

Brittany Poeng finished second in the triple jump (28'4") and third in the high



GARY STEWART/HERALD

Kacey Cordell, left, and Radhika Patel of Kings Mountain compete in the 100 meter dash in last week's track meet at Gamble Stadium.

jump (4'4"). KM's 4 x 200 and 4 x 800 relay teams ran third, Kacey Cordell was third in the 300 hurdles and Alyssa White was third in the 1600 meters (6:41).

Aneisy Cardo was third in the pole vault and 3200 meter run.

Chelsea George, Cordell and Radhika Patel finished fourth, fifth and sixth respectively in the 100 meter hurdles.

Annamarie Fulbright was fourth in the 1600 meters, Shakiyah Stephens was fourth in the shot put, Key-

atta Leach was fourth in the 200 meter run and Adrienne Green was fourth in the high jump.

Fulbright was fifth in the 300 hurdles. Cardo and Fulbright ran fifth and sixth, respectively, in the 800 meter run.

1980 KMMS Baseball team to eat at Big E's

The 1980 Kings Mountain High baseball team will gather for a meal Saturday, April 16 at 6:30 p.m. at Big E's Barbecue on York Road, Kings Mountain.

All team members and managers are urged to attend.

For more information call Coach Barry Gibson at 704-860-2662 or Lyn Hayes at 704-739-5993.

The team will be inducted into the Kings Mountain Sports Hall of Fame on Saturday, May 7 at 6 p.m. at Central United Methodist Church.

Forestview at KM today

The Forestview at Kings Mountain High baseball doubleheader scheduled for Tuesday was rained out and will be played today.

JV action begins at 4:30 and the varsity game begins at 7 p.m.