



Line coach Kevin Cruise watches as linemen go through blocking drills on the first day of hitting practice Saturday. AT RIGHT, Junior linebackers Jacob Miller (32) and Alex Reynolds (5) go head-to-head on goal line situations during football practice at Kings Mountain High School.



Senior receiver Phillip Quinn holds onto the ball during Saturday mornings practice session at KMHS.

BELOW: KM defensive back, Jose Sappia, stops a runner from crossing the goal line during Saturday mornings practice session at KMHS.



Players learn to take a hit and hang on to the football during practice Saturday morning.



Line coach Kevin Cruise watches as linemen go through blocking drills on the first day of hitting practice Saturday.

Mountaineers open football practice with hard hitting and lots of experience

Kings Mountain's Mountaineers had a good first-day of hitting practice Saturday and will face some stiff scrimmage action this week before opening their regular season at home on Friday, August 17 against East Rutherford's Cavaliers.

The coaches greeted 48 varsity players on what was a cooler than normal August morn, and for the most part head coach Greg Lloyd was pleased with what he saw.

"It was a good first day practice," he said. "It was really good to get through it healthy for the first time in a while."

For the past several years, the Mountaineers have had at least one key player go down to injury during the first hitting session. This time, no one was injured.

The Mountaineers' summer and conditioning programs paid off as most of the players reported in excellent shape. That, and the fact that the Mountaineers have 18 returning players that started at one time or another last year, gives the sixth-year head coach reason to be optimistic.

"We have experience at key positions, including quarterback," he said. "That's always good."

Dashan Guest, who was slated to be a starter last year before being lost for the season after two games, and sophomore Tico Crocker, who is up from the JV team, both looked good running the ball.

Barring key injuries, the Mountaineers' spread offense should present a lot of problems to opposing defenses. Clark, who goes into the season with just over 2,000 career yards passing, should threaten Michael Roberts' record of 3,921 yards.

Returning receivers Trevin Torres, Phillip Quinn and Donterius Simmons looked good catching the ball as well as newcomers Crocker and Xavier Johnson.

Many of the returning line starters, linebackers and defensive backs reported in tip-

top shape and were enjoying hitting each other. Linebackers Alex Reynolds and Jacob Miller had an exceptional practice, often going against each other in tough hitting drills. Defensive backs Jose Sappia and Cur-

Lineup for Friday night's annual Cleveland County Jamboree at Crest High School.

- 6 p.m. - Burns vs. East Lincoln.
- 7 p.m. - Shelby vs. AC Reynolds
- 8 p.m. - Kings Mountain vs. Northwestern
- 9 p.m. - Crest vs. Northern Guilford

tis McNamara did the same.

Returning line starters also had a good practice, including center Wilson Rikard and guards Cody Griffith and Nick Postell. The Mountaineers will be counting on Douglas Edgerton, Mason Fleisher, Chaz Gamble, Zack Hayes, Graham Keeter, Julian Coulter and others to provide a lot of starting time and back-up on the offensive line and Travis Oates, Dion Murray, Landon Keeter and Kaniel Hopper to take up the slack from losing two starters on the defensive front.

"Having an experienced quarterback returning is always good, and getting Guest back will help us a lot," Coach Lloyd said.

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photos by GARY STEWART