

SPORTS

1B

The Kings Mountain Herald | www.kmherald.net

Wednesday, July 3, 2013

Off the Clock

Larry Sipe resigns after 12 years as clock keeper at Tar Heel games

The winningest men's basketball coach in the history of Kings Mountain High School has retired from another job.

Larry Sipe this week resigned as the clock operator for the University of North Carolina men's basketball games, ending a 12-year reign which began when his wife, Brenda, told former UNC coach Bill Guthridge that it was okay.

Sipe, who has been working basketball camps at UNC for 36 consecutive summers - and plans to continue in that role - said Guthridge asked him if he would be interested in the job.

"I couldn't just retire from basketball completely," Sipe recalled. "I told him I would have to ask my wife. He said, 'I've already talked to her and she said it's okay.'"

Sipe didn't get to keep the clock for Guthridge as he later resigned and Matt Doherty came in as head coach. Sipe spent two seasons with Doherty and the last ten years with Roy Williams, who led the Tar Heels to NCAA championships in 2005 and 2009.

Sipe said driving back and forth to Chapel Hill, especially for 9 p.m. games, was getting to be too much for him. On occasion he would spend the night with his daughter, Carrie, who lives in Chapel Hill, but driving back the next morning was still too tiring, he said.

Like coaching, keeping the game clock can be high-pressure and you really can't enjoy the game, he said.

But Sipe certainly enjoyed the friendships he made with coaches, players, press, ACC and Smith Center personnel, and others.

"Just seeing the things that go on before the 9 o'clock game is exciting," he said. "The preparation in the back, the press conferences at the end of the game, and folks in there cleaning up and disassembling. It's quite a production. I was very fortunate to do that for 12 years."

"I have no regrets," he added. "I wish I was a little younger and lived closer to Chapel Hill. Then the travel wouldn't be so hard."

Sipe has been around basketball and education for most of his life. As a youngster growing up in Cherryville he played basketball and other youth sports. In high school he played basketball for the Cherryville Ironmen, and after graduation he went on to Lenoir-Rhyne to get his degree and to UNC for post-graduate work.

He coached for several years at Washington High School in eastern North Carolina, where he coached Dominique Wilkins. He came to KMHS in 1983 and coached the Mountaineers to numerous conference championships. His 1990 team won the Western

NC Regional championship and played in the state 3A title game at the Dean Dome. Sipe's teams won 234 games in 18 years, breaking the longtime school record of the late Don Parker from 1944-1967.

Sipe will continue to teach drivers education at KMHS.

"That's to keep me busy," he said. "But it's like when I was coaching. After 33 years there's going to come a time when you know it's time to retire. After 12 seasons I know how tired I was the next day after a game, and it was time."

"I'm glad I had the opportunity," he added. "I made a lot of new friends and know how everything works there. The toughest thing about leaving was telling Angel Bitting, who is the director of the Smith Center, and Roy Williams. But I'll find something to occupy my time."

Doing driver's ed won't be as tiring as going back and forth to Chapel Hill several times a week. And Sipe said he intends to see a lot of basketball in the area - just not from the scorer's table.

"I went over and watched Gardner-Webb play a couple times last season and was really impressed with what they're doing," he said. "This will give me some time to see them play. I haven't seen Belmont Abbey play since LaVar Curry (one of his former players) graduated. I want to go see Davidson and UNC Charlotte play. I might go nights when Carolina's on TV."

No doubt, Sipe had to bite his tongue a lot while keeping the clock.

"When I was coaching sometimes you'd holler at the guy running the clock to make sure it was running on time," he said. "Herb Sendeck (former NC State coach) was the first one to say something to me, and Coach (Mike) Krzyzewski (of Duke) got on me one night. But that sort of comes with the territory. It's not a job where you can sit there and enjoy the game. I had the best seat in the house but it was also the most stressful seat in the house."

Sipe got to know former UNC coach Dean Smith when he was there as a grad student. When Smith learned Sipe was a coach he invited him to work his summer camps. He just finished his 36th summer.

"I'll still do the camps," he said. "They'll have to carry me out of there."

Sipe recalled seeing NASCAR driver Elliott Sadler at a UNC game one night and went over to introduce himself. "His little brother, Hermie, was there," Sipe noted. "He said, 'coach, don't you remember me? I was in your class at basketball camp.'

"I was able to meet a lot of great players through the camps," Sipe added. "Stephon Curry (former Davidson great and now with the San Francisco Warriors) was in my gym, and countless others."

"I've been in basketball a long time," he said. "Just think about it. Twelve years of school; I didn't go to kindergarten and it wasn't because I was too smart. They didn't have kindergarten back then. I started teaching in 1968, so that's...45, plus 12..." And then he thought:

"I don't even want to add it up!"

First place Mint Hill whips KM 14-1

Mint Hill solidified its hold on first place in the Eastern Division of Area IV with a 14-1, seven-inning victory over Kings Mountain Post 155 Wednesday night at Lancaster Field.

Thursday's game with Gaston Post 23 at Gastonia's Sims Legion Park was cancelled because of thunderstorms. KM was leading 3-1 when the game was called in the third inning.

KMHS teams, individuals receive Spring Scholar Athlete Awards from NCHSAA

Five teams and numerous individuals from Kings Mountain High School received Spring Scholar Athletes Awards from the North Carolina High School Athletic Association.

Teams recognized for an unweighted GPA of 3.1 or higher were baseball, softball, women's track, women's soccer and men's tennis.

Athletes recognized for having a weighted GPA of 3.5 or higher included:

Mary Asgari, Jamie Bagwell, Lyndsey Barnes, Carsyn Bolin, Nina Bounpheng, Sarah Bradshaw, Artaysia Brooks, Faythe Brown, Erin Calhoun, Haley Camp, Erica Carpenter, Hannah Chapman, Reagan Childers, Tionia Crumpton, Mary Dellinger, Kimberley Farris, Annamarie Fulbright, McKenzie Gibbons, Kristian Goins, Lauren Gould, Adrienne Green, Emily Harris, Ceikayia Haynes, Emily Hester, Gwendolyn Hopper, Courtney Johnson, Jada Mauney, Sydney Morris, Cassie Morton, Tichina

Parker, Radhika Patel, Mekeijah Pettis, Mikayla Price, Mary Robinson, Betzaira Saenz, Johanna Scism, Sarah Scism, Molly Short, Trista Sikes, Madeline Skeith, Jamie Slater, Sara Smart, Mackenzie Smith, Kathryn Terry, Destiny Wood, Hannah Wyte;

Alexander Austin, Devin Ayscue, Colby Bailey, Robert Baker, Tyler Batchler, Nicholas Bolin, Will Boyles, Joshua Brucker, Cameron Bullock, Nicholas Chanthavong, Michael Cole, Michael Cooke, Baron Crawford, Colby Crisp, Tico Crocker, Jason Dawkins, Kenneth Dimetros, Jacob Edmondson, Andrew Estridge, Collin Foster, Alex Grooms, Devin Heath, Zachary Hegler, Tyler Herndon, Devin Hullender, Vincent Lewis, David Lovelace, Donnie Malaythong, Brent Martin, William McGill, Gregory McGinnis, Jacob Miller, Andrew Moore, Jordan Moore, Rielly Neal, Tanner Orders, Arrick Rithiphong, William Ruffalo, Zackery Saldo, William Sellers, Carver Warren, Tyler Wells, Will Wilson and Jack Zyble.



Kings Mountain catcher Addison Stinnett can't quite catch up to a sliding Tanner Muse as he scores in Friday's American Legion game at Lancaster Field.

Post 155 plays Hickory in first round of playoffs

Kings Mountain Post 155 was swept by the Gaston Braves 9-2 and 7-5 to end the regular season Friday night at Lancaster Field.

The losses left Post 155 with an 8-7 Eastern Division record and 8-9 overall mark heading into the first round of the Area IV playoffs at Hickory.

The best-of-five series will continue Thursday night at Kings Mountain and Friday night at Hickory. If a fourth game is necessary it will be played Saturday night at KM; and if a fifth game is needed it will be Sunday night in Hickory.

The KM-Hickory winner will advance to the second round playoff series against the winner of the Gaston Braves-Rutherford County series.

The Braves scored three runs in the top of the first inning and were never caught in the opening game of Friday's twinbill.

KM southpaw Alex Grooms settled down after that and held the Braves scoreless over the next two innings. He retired the first two batters in the fourth before an error produced a run, followed by a two-run home

run by Thomas Nantz for a 6-0 Braves lead.

The Braves' lead went to 7-0 in the fifth on a double by Nate Buchanan, single by Jarke Hopkins and a sacrifice fly by Tanner Muse.

Kings Mountain's only run came in the bottom of the fifth when Addison Stinnett walked and later scored on a single to right by Jhaqui Adams.

Kings Mountain managed only five hits with Adams providing a pair of singles. Addison Stinnett had a double and Hunter Stinnett and Daniel Barrett each had a single.

Game two was back and forth with Post 155 holding a 5-4 lead when thunder clouds began moving in going into the bottom of the fourth. The Braves were the home team and came in and scored three runs off Dallas Conner to win the game. With one out in the top of the fifth and lightning dancing in the distance, the umpires called the players off the field.

The slim KM lead looked good when Conner retired the first two batters in the bottom of the fourth. But Hopkins beat out an infield

hit, Nantz walked and Justin Williams laced a double to left to tie the game. Andrew Locklear followed with a two-run single to left for the winning runs.

The Braves broke a scoreless tie in the bottom of the second when Muse and Aaron walked and Muse later scored on a wild pitch for a 1-0 Braves lead.

It didn't last long, though, as Adams sent a two-run home run over the left-center field fence with Addison Stinnett aboard for a 2-1 KM lead in the top of the third.

The Braves answered with an RBI single by Locklear and a two-run home run by Lawing to take a 4-2 lead in the bottom of the third.

KM regained the lead at 5-4 in the top of the fourth on singles by Hunter Stinnett and Colby Crisp, followed by a run-scoring single by Cameron Bullock to cut the margin to 4-3; and a two-run single by Adams for the 5-4 lead.

Adams was KM's only player with two hits. He had a single to go with his home run. Kevin Mills, Hunter Stinnett, Crisp, Bullock and Will Wilson added a hit apiece.

Crank it up!



Bring on your best for a chance to win the Kings Mountain Herald

ICE CREAM CRANK OFF



Join us July 20 at Kings Mountain's Beach Blast Celebration. All proceeds will go to Relay for Life. Help us fight cancer, have a great time and win bragging rights to the best freezer of ice cream in this area! Pick your category, fill out the registration form on Page 3 of today's newspaper, crank up your freezer and join the fun!



The Green Banana Project...

that things will look better when those bananas are ripe!

Kings Mountain Herald