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**Mike Butler**

**City Council**  
Ward 2

- Incumbent -

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## KM falls late to Chase, idle this week

Kings Mountain's Mountaineers jumped out to a quick 14-0 lead but a fresher and healthier Chase team stormed from behind in the second half to hand the home team its eighth straight loss, 40-28, on Senior Night Friday at John Gamble Stadium.

The Mountaineers welcomed the return of last year's leading rusher Xavier Johnson. Although operating at about 75 percent, Johnson played a good game with five catches



Kings Mountain quarterback Brandon Bell keeps for some of his 142 yards rushing in Friday's game with Chase.

for 46 yards, including a 7-yard reception on the first play of the game that started a 74-yard drive for a 7-0 lead.

But, as the Mountaineers' luck would have it, they lost their freshman wide receiver/defensive back Jake Merchant early in the second quarter but hope to have him back for their season-ending game Friday, November 8 at East Burke High in Connelly Springs.

Head coach Greg Lloyd was proud of his players for their effort.

"We played hard," he said. "We had a lot of players playing both ways and ran out of steam late in the game.

But we played harder than we have since the Burns game." Quarterback Brandon Bell was back to a hundred percent after having his first full week of hitting practice for a month. He played in the prior week's loss to R-S Central but was rusty.

"I felt sure going in that he would play a lot better," Lloyd said.

Bell accounted for 352 yards total offense (144 rushing and 208 passing) and scored on runs of 18 and 33 yards in the first quarter to give the Mountaineers a 14-0 lead.

After Merchant went down to injury while making a tackle, the Mountaineers lost some of their momentum and the Trojans came back to cut the margin to 14-7 at halftime and gained a tie with an early TD in the third period.

The game see-sawed back and forth, with one team scoring and then the other, but the fresher and quicker Trojans used the inside running of fullback Josh Wright and the outside keepers of quarterback Tyrell Boykins to take control in the fourth quarter.

"I thought we played solid defense in the first half," Coach Lloyd noted. "But we wore down and gave them a short field in the second half. We had some dropped balls that could have made the difference.

"But we didn't roll over and I was glad to see that. I felt much better after losing Friday than I had the pass several weeks. We played a lot better and I was happy with that."

Kings Mountain's passing game got a lift, not only from the return of Johnson but also the effort of senior Keeneh Dimetros who had been held without a catch for several weeks. He caught four passes for 39 yards. Tico Crocker caught five passes for 80 yards and gained 35 yards rushing on six carries to give the Mountaineers two players with over 100 yards total offense.

See KM, 3B



Kings Mountain's Kayla Bolt (5) returns a hard kill attempt against AC Reynolds in State 3A volleyball game Thursday night at Donald L. Parker Gymnasium.

## KMHS spikers defeat Reynolds, fall to St. Stephens in third round

Kings Mountain High's women's volleyball team made great strides this season, going three rounds in the state 3A playoffs before losing to an undefeated St. Stephens team which last night was playing for the right to go to Raleigh for the state championship game.

The Lady Mountaineers, who defeated Patton last week to break a two-year string of losing out in the opening round, soundly defeated a good AC Reynolds team 3-0 Tuesday night at Parker Gym to earn the right to meet St. Stephens for the third time this year.

The KM ladies were hoping the third time would be the charm against the Lady Indians, but fell 3-0 Thursday night at St. Stephens. St. Stephens (27-0) went on to defeat West Henderson 3-1 Saturday night to earn the right to meet undefeated Carson (33-0) last night for the Western Regional championship. The winner of that match will go to Reynolds Coliseum in Raleigh Saturday to face the winner of the Chapel Hill (22-8)-Cardinal Gibbons (26-0) game for the state title.

The visiting Rockets got the jump on the KM team Tuesday and held the

lead until a point by Mary Asgari gave the home team a 15-14 lead. The went on to win 25-19, 25-18, 25-20.

An adjustment by the Mountaineers after the first match was the key to the victory.

"Their number nine was their go-to girl and she was really killing us early," noted KM coach Ashley Pridgeon. "For the second set we adjusted by lining up Kayla Bolt so she would go head-to-head with her. Kayla did a great job of shutting her down and our entire team basically served them out."

See KMHS, 3B



Kings Mountain's Sarah Blalock sets up a teammate in Thursday's second round volleyball match with A.C. Reynolds at the KMHS gym. The KM ladies won 3-0 to advance to the third round against St. Stephens.

## Kickers in 3A playoffs Wednesday

Kings Mountain High's men's soccer team will play the 25th ranked team in the nation in the opening round of the state 3A playoffs tonight at 6 p.m.

The Mountaineers, a wild card from the SMAC, will travel to Marvin Ridge, which boasts an 18-1-1 overall record. Kings Mountain is 9-13-1.

"This is pretty exciting," said Mountaineer coach Dan Potter. "Our kids have worked so hard and it's really rewarding to get this opportunity."

While they're the underdog, the Mountaineers should get a boost from senior Jonmark Smith who has missed the last several games with a concussion.



Kings Mountain's Alex Reynolds runs after catching a pass in Friday's game with Chase at John Gamble Stadium.

## Kings Mountain Mountaineers Athlete of the Week



**Maddie Lutz**  
Women's Tennis



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