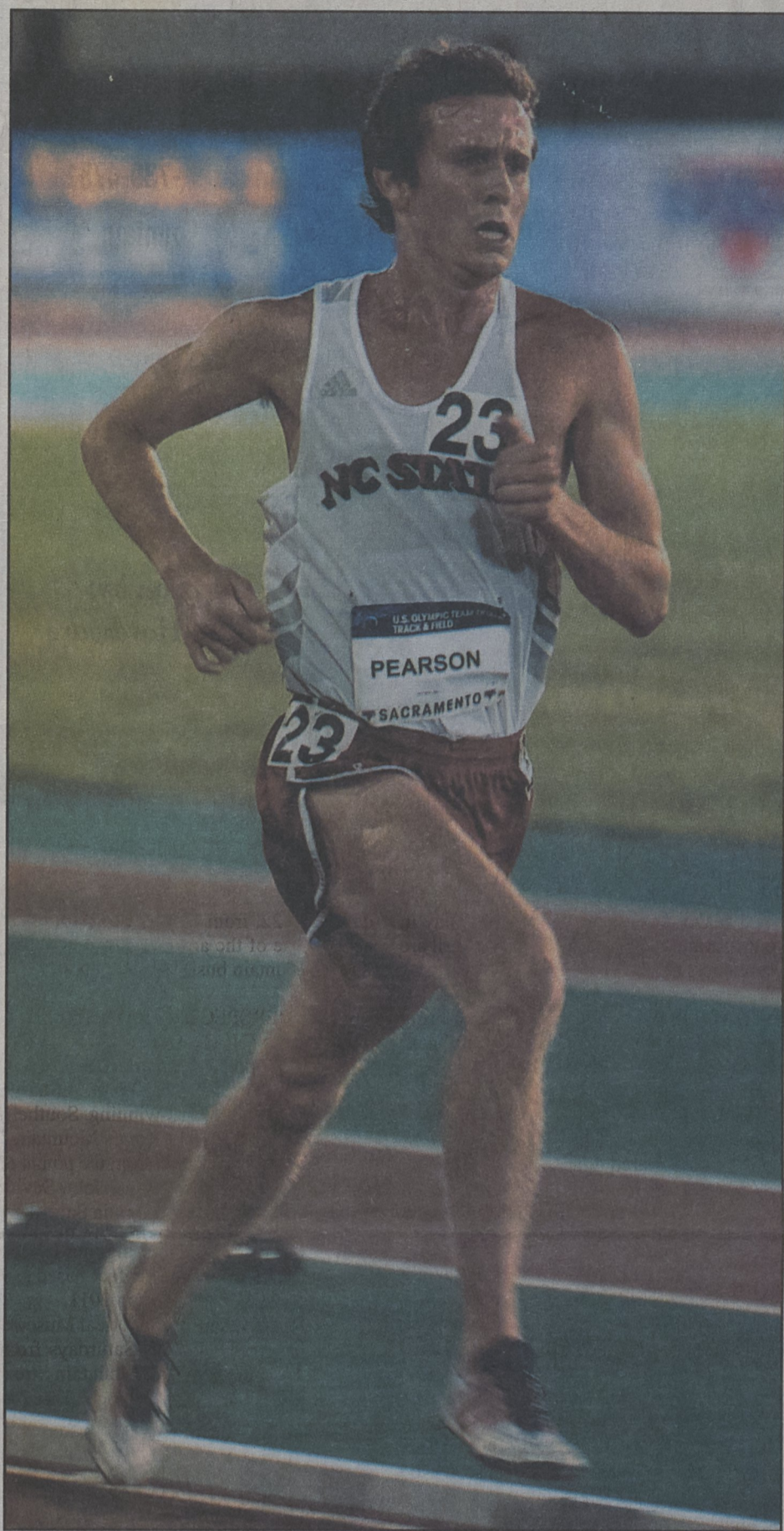


## All-American runner Chad Pearson going into Kings Mountain Sports Hall of Fame



Chad Pearson was an outstanding track and cross country runner at Kings Mountain High School, a two-time All-American at NC State University, and ran professionally. He is now the interim coach at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

(Third in a four-part series on the 2014 Kings Mountain Hall of Fame inductees. The ceremony will be held Saturday, May 3 at 6 p.m. at Central United Methodist Church. Tickets are \$15 and are available at The Herald, from Hall of Fame committee members and at the door.)

Chad Pearson is proof that the best athletes are made when no one is looking.

Inspired early in life by his cousin, John Foster, and in high school by Coach David Farquharson, young Pearson was doing most of his running during the early-morning hours when others were still in bed.

His hard work paid off with several championships on the high school and collegiate level. He became a two-time All-ACC and All-American at NC State University and is now the interim head track and cross country coach at UNC-Greensboro.

Going into his hometown Hall of Fame is a "great honor," Pearson says. As a youngster, he knew of Kings Mountain's proud sports tradition and often thought how nice it would be to someday join that group of elite athletes.

"When I was running at Kings Mountain High School I often thought that would be a great honor," he said. "I hoped that one day I would have a career that would warrant this."

Some of his fondest memories here were early Saturday mornings when his cousin, John Foster, would take him to runs and meets.

"We would get up before anyone else," Pearson recalled. "He wouldn't come to the door. He'd tap on my window because my parents (Cheryl and Ronnie Pearson) were still asleep."

"He has always been really supportive of me. He's the one that made me fall in love with running. Those memories are priceless. His son, Collin, is involved in track and cross country at Kings Mountain High now. Hopefully, he will follow in my footsteps."

Pearson said he will never forget his first high school cross country meet at Crest, where he held the lead at the halfway point, took the wrong route and had to reverse his tracks, and still finished second.

"I felt like that spurred everything on," he said. "My junior year I finished second in the Regionals but I was like a deer in the headlights. I didn't know a thing about the competition. I was second by five or six seconds, but really that's something I've never forgotten."

His memories of meets pale in comparison to his memory of his coaches and teammates along the way.

"It was just exciting being around a great group of guys and coaches at Kings Mountain High School," he said. "I had several different cross country coaches. I'll never

forget Coach Farquharson. He was a big help to me. I would meet him at the track after most everyone else was gone. I would be out there doing repeats. He invested a lot of time in what I was doing. He made me a dedicated distance runner. I was blessed to have him there. He was a great coach.

"Some mornings I would go out there before school and I would see him coming down Phifer Road in that little Volkswagen bug of his. He'd come out there and help me workout."

Pearson won numerous championships at KMHS and was runner-up in the NCHSAA 3A cross country meet as a junior and a two-time runner-up in the 3,200 meter run. He ran for one year at UNC-Asheville (1999) before transferring to NC State.

"Coming out of high school, I was not that great of an athlete and I thought that would be a good place for me," he said. "I qualified for the World Crosscountry Championship and got to travel to Portugal on a team that featured three All-Americans. That really jump started everything I wanted to do as a runner."

In his three years at State, he and the Wolfpack enjoyed tremendous success. Pearson was:

- All-ACC and All-American in 2001 and 2003.
- ACC individual runner-up in 2001 and 2003.
- 35th in the 2001 NCAA championship.
- 22nd in the 2003 NCAA cross country championships.

-Member of the 2000 Junior National Cross Country Squad.

He qualified for the Olympic Trials, where he finished eighth. The top three runners make the team.

"Coming out of college I knew that was a long-shot," he said. "But it was a great honor just running along with the best runners in the country."

Pearson ran professionally for two years on the Adidas team and won the 10K national championship. He began experiencing knee problems and went back to NC State to be a graduate assistant for two years.

"I got out of coaching for a while," he noted. "I had a Masters in biology and thought I wanted to be a dentist. But I went the coaching route."

He was a volunteer assistant at UNC-Charlotte before being hired as an assistant at UNC-G last year. Now, he is interim head coach and hopes to be named permanent head coach at the end of the season.

With conference, regional and national tournaments coming up, Foster hopes his teams will be busy until mid-June. The national championship is slated for mid-June in Eugene, Oregon.

"It's hard to qualify for that, but we hope to get some of our athletes out there," he said.

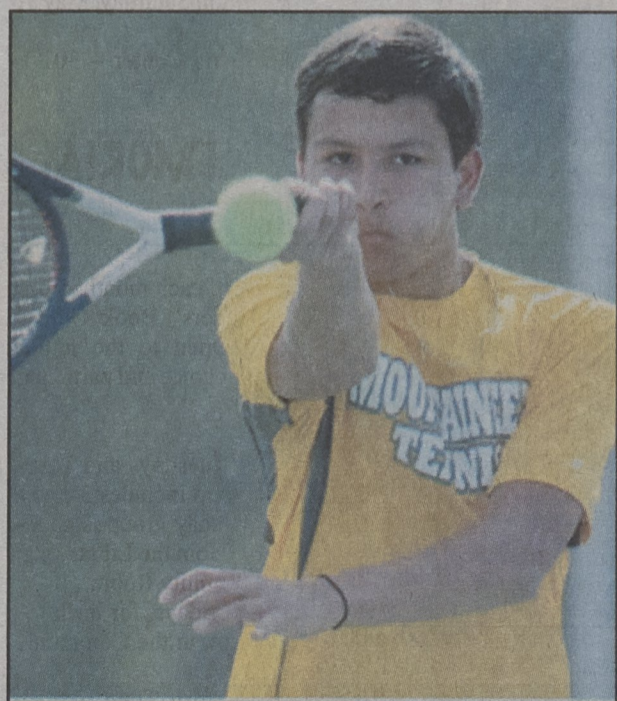


Photo courtesy Shelby Star  
Kings Mountain's Isiah Cole returns a shot in last week's tennis match with Shelby.

## KM netters beat Shelby for SMAC crown

Kings Mountain High's tennis team knocked off perennial SMAC champion Shelby 7-2 last week to nail down the conference championship in just their first

season in the new league.

The Mountaineers ran their record to 7-0 in the SMAC and 9-0 overall. They play in the SMAC tournament today. This was

the Mountaineers' first conference championship since 2008 and broke The Golden Lions' 50-match winning streak.

The Mountaineers won

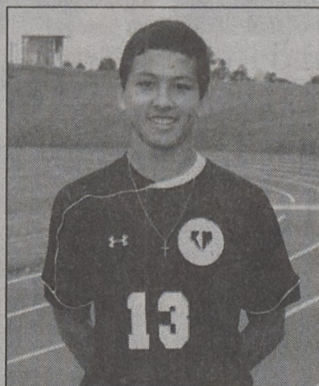
four of the six singles matches and swept the three doubles matches.

Most of the matches were close but all but two of

See KM, 3B

### Kings Mountain Mountaineers

Athlete of the Week



Isiah Cole  
Tennis

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### Our Teachers Are TOPPS



Dawn Wetherell  
KMIS Teacher  
of the Week!

Mrs. Wetherell is the school's Curriculum Technology Coordinator and has more than eight years experience in teaching. The Elyria, Ohio, native and graduate of Ohio's Ashland University said "The best part of teaching is learning from the students." Wetherell holds a patent on a modified wheelchair called the Slide&Go she helped develop. She and her husband Brian have four children, two grandchildren and a boxer-bulldog mix named Buddy. "Life has taught me not to panic, remain calm, pray, and trust in the Lord," Wetherell said.

The Teacher  
And Parents  
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