

KM To Battle Shelby In Season Finale Friday

SPORTS

Kings Mountain's Mountaineers close out one of their most disappointing seasons in history Friday night when they travel to Shelby to take on their arch rivals in an 8 p.m. contest.

But the Mounties, 2-6 in the Southwestern 3-A Conference and 3-6 overall, could turn that season of disappointment into one of remembrance by upsetting the highly favored Golden Lions.

Shelby carries a 5-3 conference record and 6-3 overall mark into the contest. The Lions have long been out of the running for the SWC championship but they are one of the most improved teams in the conference.

The Mountaineers, Coach Dan Brooks feels, will have to

generate some offense and do a good defensive job on Shelby's outstanding backfield in order to pull the upset. Kings Mountain's offense has scored only one touchdown in the last five ballgames and has been held to under 100 yards total offense the last two weeks in shutout losses to Chase (26-0) and R-S Central (28-0).

Shelby, on the other hand, has improved game by game and last week completely outclassed an East Gaston team which was regarded as a conference contender. The Lions won that game 35-13 with senior halfback Harvey McSwain scoring three touchdowns and gaining 311 yards rushing.

"McSwain is the quickest back

in the conference," says Brooks. "He broke an 85 yard touchdown run on the first play against East Gaston and scored two other times on long runs. We'll have to contain him."

The Lions' starting backfield has played together for three years. Giving McSwain plenty of help is fullback Scott Bonner and quarterback Chuck Spangler, a good passer and runner.

Two of the Lions' three losses have been close. They dropped a one-point decision to Burns in

overtime and fell to R-S Central 17-16 on a last-second field goal. Their other loss was a 21-0 decision to Crest.

"They're the healthiest they've been all year," says Brooks, "and they're getting better as they go along. They must have really played well against East Gaston. I thought East Gaston was one of the best teams in the conference when we played them."

Brooks, who is playing the youngest team in the conference, says he doesn't plan anything special for the Lions. "We're just going to try to work harder on our scheme," he said. "I think we can play well against them. We're capable of beating them if our players can convince themselves of that fact."

Brooks expects Shelby to throw the ball a lot. "Spangler's a good passer," he said, "and they have some good receivers in McSwain and Derrick Miller."

Thinking of that possibility, he called up sophomore Chris Champion from the jayvee team to help the Mounties out at the cornerback position.

The secondary was picked on last week by Troy Harris of R-S Central, who led a well-balanced Hilltopper offense in a 38-0 victory in the Mounties' final home game.

That game, however, wasn't as one-sided as the score indicated and Brooks praised his players for giving one of their best efforts of the year.

"We played real hard," he said. "You can charge that loss to me because we tried to do some things different and they didn't work."

Brooks said he felt the Mounties could upset the Hilltoppers by knocking their receivers off stride and pressuring the quarterback.

"We thought they were doing a lot of things on timing," he said. "We couldn't knock the receivers off stride and we couldn't play the option pitch like we thought we could."

R-S Central set up its first two touchdowns on big plays (a 75-yard pass and 50-yard run) and the final two scores were set up by fumble recoveries deep in KM territory.

"If we had played the whole game like we did the second half, it could have been different," he said. "We accomplished what we wanted to do in the second half. Their only score came after a fumble at our 14."

"We probably played the best overall team we've played," he

FIRE REPORTS

Kings Mountain Fire Department answered two fire calls Monday, both resulting in smoke damage. Firemen responded to a call at 3:52 p.m. at Patrick Mill on Railroad Avenue and to a call at 9:05 p.m. at Parkdale Mill on Railroad Avenue.

TOYS FOR TOTS

Kings Mountain Fire Department will again sponsor the Toys for Tots Christmas project. Any persons with good toys to donate to needy children should call the fire department at 739-2552 or drop the toys by the department

Final Week Of Regular Season

It's Time To Go Folks; Fearless Picks EG, SP

By FEARLESS

Well, ol' Fearless bids you a fond farewell this week, his final as your favorite writer and football forecaster.

It's been fun and it's been fruitful. After a 10-2 mark last week, it brought the Great One's season mark to 66-24.

Our only backfires last week were East Gaston over Shelby and Cherryville over Fred T. Ford.

I've not been "perfect" this year. But I have been "terrific." Perfect is an awesome word. It denotes something that we may not even recognize when we see it or have it. I suppose it follows that first you must get better before you can get perfect. Boy! I'd love to be perfect this final week.

It looks like East Gaston will have to play the role of spoilers Friday when the Warriors entertain Burns.

Burns and Crest are tied for the Southwestern 3-A Con-



ference lead, each team with 7-1 records. Crest plays at R-S Central. Should Burns win, Burns goes to the state 3-A playoffs at Lincolnton. Should Burns lose and Crest win, Crest goes to Lincolnton. Burns beat Crest during the regular season, 7-3 and would thus get the playoff berth.

East Gaston was in great shape until they lost a 20-7 halftime lead to Crest and lost, 21-20. Then Shelby denied East Gaston any chance for the playoffs when they lost to Shelby last Friday, 34-13, and Crest beat North Gaston, 22-6.

East Gaston can finish at 6-4 with a win over Burns Friday.

South Point, after winning the state title a year ago, is now 4-4-1 after a 35-0 win over East Rutherford at home last Friday.

The Raiders host Chase Friday in their finale and they need a win to keep coach Jim Biggerstaff from having his first losing season in 12 years at the South Point helm. However, even more important, a South Point victory over Chase would give Coach Biggerstaff his 100th Red Raider coaching victory. His South Point teams are now 99-25-6.

Let me tell you a few funnies before we get into our Fearless predictions.

I was on a voyage one summer and the ship was about to sink. I said: "Woman the lifeboats! Woman the lifeboats!"

A guy next to me said: "You don't 'woman' the lifeboats!!"

I replied: "You fill your lifeboats and I'll fill mine!"

I remember the good old days when the still, small voice within us used to be called conscience instead of transistor radios.

The big loss to Shelby has to hurt East Gaston. Burns knows they've got to win. Burns has won three overtime games, looked flat against North Gaston, then the Bulldogs were upset by Chase. I believe East Gaston will win Friday, 14-10.

South Point will play their best game of the season Friday. That's the prediction. They know what's at stake.

Prediction is for a 14-7 Red Raider win.

Congratulations to Von Harris for his team's 9-0 season thus far and a berth in the state 3-A playoffs. I predict the Wolfpack will finish 10-0 with a 27-7 win Friday over Newton-Conover.

And here's how I see the other games:

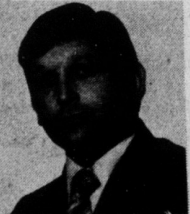
Hunter Huss 14, Ashbrook 13; Bunker Hill 20, Bessemer City 13; North Gaston 13, East Rutherford 12; Shelby 26, Kings Mountain 6; Maiden 14, East Lincoln 7; Bennettsville 20, Clover 18.

See you next year, folks! It's been absolute fun and I hope you've enjoyed this column.

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went on. "I thought before the season that R-S had the best team in the conference and I still think that. Harris is the best quarterback in the league. Had we done some things outside earlier in the game, it would have been different."

Brooks praised the play of several players, including senior cornerback Tony Rainey, who made nine individual tackles; tackle Jim Barringer, who made seven tackles; James Rikard at

linebacker, William Short at safety and Trent Hullender at quarterback.

"I see some positive things," he said. "It's been a tough year. We all make mistakes. The players have made them and I've made them. Maybe we've had some people hanging around that drug some of the younger people down, and they're not around anymore. I could see that it hurt some of them to lose Friday."

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