

Larry Sullivan's

SPORT SIDE

A Red-Letter Week For The Vikings

Touching All The Bases: When South Iredell High School goes about its business of compiling information for its sport archives, this is a week that will definitely stand alone.

This is the case, as the Vikings entered this week as one of the few not only within the immediate area but across the state able to boast of having a pair of teams in a pair of different sports representing them in North Carolina High School Athletic Association postseason play.

Heading into the week, South Iredell's varsity soccer team, fresh off the successful defending of its Foothills Athletic Soccer Conference title, was slated to entertain Monroe Parkwood in a first-round, 1A-2A-3A playoff match. As the three-time FASC champions, the Vikings, who have suffered but a single league loss in the past two seasons and have suffered just over a handful since the sport of soccer was first fielded at the school four years ago, entered the match as heavy favorites.

Last year, South Iredell followed an undefeated regular-season within league play by advancing into the state's second round before being eliminated by eventual state champion Charlotte Catholic.

As outstanding as the school's soccer team, and entire program as well, as been and continues to be, don't be surprised if the Vike booters take a back seat to campus-wide excitement over the recent accomplishments of the SIHS football crew during this a most memorable week.

For what amounts to the first time in the long and enriching sports history of the school, South Iredell will be represented in the state high school football playoffs this week.

This comes about as a result of the dramatic, 167-vanquishing of the visiting Wilkes Central Eagles Friday in a game that underlined what prep grid action is all about.

Heading into Friday's contest at Viking Valley, both teams knew what the season-fine meant. To the winner, the FAC's third and final postseason berth. To the loser, a long trip home and a few thoughts as to what might have been.

It was the Vikings, who would have indeed been forced to take a long walk back to the dressing rooms had they suffered the loss, who did the celebrating, as they cornered a 10-0 lead at the half and used the second of their two huge defensive plays to score their only points of the second half to down

Wilkes and earn the right to advance into the playoffs for the first time in the school's history.

In addition to becoming the first crew of Vikings to prolong their football season, this year's team also gets a chance most other teams only wish they had. Earlier in the year, South Iredell had its two-game winning streak snapped by a Central Cabarrus team, 6-2. Central Cabarrus, whose team is also known as the Vikings, finished its season Friday by downing Northwest Cabarrus to win the South Piedmont Conference crown.

This week, the two Vike clans get back together once again, as it is Central Cabarrus where and against whom South Iredell will make its initial playoff appearance Friday night. A lot of teams relish another shot at a team that beat it sometime during the season. That at South Iredell's gets it.

And that may be another reason for South Iredell's faithful to cherish this special week. It is one that should definitely stand out when rehearsing the school's sports history. But why wait until then. For Vikings and their fans, that week is here now, and they're all sure to appreciate while it's going on as well as remember it when it passes.

Reflections Of A Season Past: Admittedly, it was another one of those not-so-good seasons for Mooreville Senior High's football Blue Devils. With their 7-6 loss to Bessemer City in Friday's home and season finale, the Devils once again managed but a pair of wins within the Southern District VII Conference and fell well short of the five victories needed to sew up one of the three available postseason bids.

As a result, when looking back over the campaign, there are few highlights. But they are there, it just takes a little digging.

Mooreville opened the season with a chilling overtime victory over visiting Mt. Pleasant. It was the first of two extra-seasons won recorded by the locals this season, making them one of the most prolific OT teams around. That's a plus.

Additionally, Mooreville registered one of its four wins for the season over an opponent that this week is bound for the playoffs. It came via a 13-7 dusting off of host West Rowan in the season's third contest. West Rowan went on to finish third in the South Piedmont Conference and the week meets Foothills Athletic Conference champion North Iredell in a first-round playoff bout.

When casting our eyes over the season past, one fact continues to stare right back. The Devils relied on an abundance of underclassmen, especially at the skilled positions. By season's end, we were quarterbacked by a freshman, after a season-ending injury to our regular junior starter, and a fellow ninth-grader provided us with most of the excitement we received. Freshman Nathan White, called on to replace 11th-grader Chris Sherrill, proved he has varsity talent as quarterback, while fresh John Pinkston may have stepped into the school record book by returning a kickoff 95 yards for a touchdown.

Despite the loss of 13 seniors, nearly all of whom were called on for double-duty on offense and defense, the likes of our talented youngsters give us enlightened hope for the immediate future.

Hey, Newton-Conover, Maiden, and Bunker Hill can't have state top-10 calibre teams every season, as was the case this year. What goes around, comes around, and our time is near.

So don't dwell on just the sad notes from this past season. Touch on the promising areas. From the looks of things, we're due more of the latter and less of the former in seasons to come.

It's Now Off To The Playoffs: South Iredell wasn't the only one that settled a postseason issue with a victory Friday night. As a result of the season's final regular night of play, all three berths in each of the two area leagues of most concern, the FAC and SD-7, were decided once and for all.

In addition to the Vikes earning the right to christen their postseason life with a second visit this season to Central Cabarrus, two other FAC teams are slated for duty this weekend, one of them taking care of business at home.

North Iredell, successful in its bid to become Iredell County's second straight team to ramble through the regular-season unbeaten, stays at home to host West Rowan of the SPC. Statesville, which despite a 5-5 overall record still finishes as the official runner-up in the FAC, continues its storied life as an annual playoff participant as the Greyhounds travel to meet Big Six Conference champion West Caldwell.

In the 2A SD-7, Newton-Conover capped its undefeated season Friday and will remain at home this week to entertain North Wilkes, at 4-6 one of the few teams with an overall losing record to make the postseason party. Bunker Hill, whose Bears lost only to NC this season, will be on the road to take on host Mitchell County, which finished at 8-2. Maiden, the pre-season league favorite whose Blue Devils dropped two of their last three games to settle for third place, also hit the playoff trail, one that will take them to 9-1 Starmount.

All season long, members of the respective conferences have been battling against each other. Now is the time for them to combine efforts and start pulling for the respective league members still keeping their banners flying high.

Berg Best In Tribune Grid Contest

Louise Berg stood alone among last week's contestants in the Mooreville Tribune's high school and college football contest.

Berg did so after turning in the top entry in last week's competition, one that missed only one of last week's 12 games.

As a result, Berg, who guessed wrong on only the Wake Forest-Duke game, is the winner of this week's grand prize \$12 cash award, as she was the only one turning in such a near-perfect record card.

Berg becomes the next-to-last, first-place winner of the season, as the appearance in this week's edition marks the final run of the 10-week long contest, sponsored by a host of Mooreville area merchants and businesses.

Berg also becomes one of the few first-place champions who did so on their own accord and with no tie-breaker forced to be used.

However, the tie-breaker more than earned its keeps this week, as it was used to determine both the second and third place cash winners.

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Bessemer City's visiting Yellow Jackets edged the Blue Devils, 7-6, as the Southern District VII Conference members combined for only 13 points.

Scoggins predicted 15 points would be tallied between them, while 55 winner Nelson, of Troutman, guessed a total of 33 points would be scored.

Others who also missed only two games, but who were farther than 20 points off with their total point guesses, included Jimmy Lewis and P.L. Drake.

In addition to Bessemer City, the list of winners from last week's game reads like this: South Iredell, East Lincoln, North Iredell, West Rowan, Salisbury, Penn State, Clemson, Appalachian State, West Virginia Tech, Wake Forest, and Virginia.

The last contest of the season appears in this week's edition.

Contestants may enter as many as three contests per week, but only one per player will be considered for a cash prize.

All contest entries must be received no later than 3 p.m. Friday.

The second and final drawing for a \$25 savings bond will be held Nov. 20. Everyone who has turned in a contest entry is eligible for the drawing.

The Yellow Jackets have now won the last three games in succession against the Blue Devils, with two of the games being decided by a single point and the other being forced into double-overtime before the Jackets emerged as winners.

It was a fitting close to the Blue Devils, who were forced to rely on a host of youngsters during the latter stages of the season.

In Friday's game alone, four freshmen were listed as starters, including two in the offensive backfield.

"We're disappointed in a way," shrugged Steve Young, who closed out his fifth season as the

Mooreville head coach, "that the season turned out like it did. We wanted this to be a good year, especially for our seniors, but it didn't turn out that way. If a couple of things here and there during the season had gone more our way, we definitely could have finished with a winning season. Looking ahead, the future does look better for us because so many of our younger players were forced to get some experience."

Friday night, the spotlight cast its brightness on a pair of those youngsters manning key positions, and the freshmen responded favorably.

The scoring connection, which came at the 4:27 mark of the third period, culminated in a six-play, 62-yard drive, highlighted by a 15-yard TD pass to senior tight end and Tod Alexander.

The lead stayed that way through intermission before Senior High pulled to within a point on White's 24-yard TD pass to senior tight end and Tod Alexander.

The clubs were even on turnovers with four each, Mooreville getting the three turnovers on the interception but returning the favor by throwing four passes into Jacket arms.

Both teams hurt themselves with penalties, as the Blue Devils were backed up a total of 90 yards by yellow flags, while Bessemer City was whittled for 75 yards worth of mistakes.

"I feel like we had some opportunities," summed up Young, "both of offense and defense, but we couldn't take advantage of them. That's pretty much the way it was for us this season."

And with that, the Blue Devils quietly and without fanfare closed out their 1987 football season.

For the girls, they were paced at the meet by Jenny Satterfield, a two-spot performer who fashioned an eighth-place finish overall.

Satterfield was limited to her outings during the season because of her membership on the varsity soccer team.

Finishing behind Satterfield for the team was Monica Teeter, who placed 20th in the 200-meter overall.

Other finishers for the Lady Devils were: Yoko Blackwelder, a freshman finishing 24th; Michelle Wright, another two-spot player who placed 28th; and Kathryn Teeter in 33rd; Tracy Coran in 40th; and Karen Humphrey in 46th.

The third-place finish statewide caps what coach Scott Sarvis termed "a very fine season" for the girls team.

Sarvis is also the coach of the boys cross country teams, which placed 11th in the field of 26 teams.

The Devils were once again captained by their strongest runner all season in Terry Gwyn, who placed 14th overall with a time of 17:30 for the 3.1-mile course.

Other finishers for Mooreville included Chad Moore 55th, Chris Malz 90th, Mark Ingram 97th, Stan Price 107th, David Neill 136th, and Chad Phillips 151st.

Participation in Saturday's state meet brought a close to the cross country season for the Mooreville teams.