

Race gives runners first look at NPC leaders

Lining up toe-to-toe put Mooresville Senior High's cross country runners face-to-face with those expected to serve as pacesetters within the first-year North Piedmont Conference.

Members of Mooresville's girls and boys teams joined those from all the rest of the first-year NPC members in a pre-conference meet that marks the only time all seven schools will be engaged in the same meet until the final league championship scheduled to be held later this fall.

Both MHS teams found out just how far - and fast - they still need to go.

In the meet held on host Statesville's home

MacAnderson Park course that will also serve as the site of the title run in early October, Mooresville's girls team fashioned a fourth-place finish and its boys squad posted a fifth-place showing, each of them having ample room for improvement.

"I think we can both get better," offered Scott Sarvis, head coach of both teams. "We know we have a lot of work to do. This gave us a chance to find out where we stand. I'd like for us to show some improvement when we all get back together again."

For the entire meet, Mooresville housed only one top-10 finisher, it coming in

the girls race. Amy Schneider clocked in ninth overall to top the team and account for its only finisher in the top 20 places overall.

As in all cross country meets, a team uses the combined overall placements of its top five runners to reach a team score.

The Lady Devils scored 114 points to finish fourth in a race dominated by winner Northwest Cabarrus. The latter placed all five of its scoring runners among the field's first 13, including the housing of its overall winner, to win top team honors by 11 points. West Rowan placed second, followed by Statesville. After Mooresville

was East Rowan, Kannapolis and North Iredell.

In addition to Schneider, others using their overall finishes to contribute to the team's scoring total included Allison Westmoreland, Laura Miller, Amanda Collins and Adrienne Lewis.

For Mooresville's boys team, the Devils' top finisher was Billy Barnhart, who finished 14th overall. The team's performance was hindered by the falling during the race of two runners expected to contribute to the team scoring this season. Neither of them managed to finish the three-mile course.

Others contributing to the team's scoring total included

Tyson Brown, Chris Stinnett, Matt McCall and Griff Lyerly.

Mooresville's boys scored 112 points to place fifth. Northwest Cabarrus completed the sweep, with East Rowan second, and Kannapolis third. West Rowan placed fourth, with Statesville and North Iredell rounding out the field.

Mooresville's runners are back in action this week, joining some of the same teams when engaging in the Northwest Cabarrus Cross Country Classic.

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Devils take first hit, despite higher rank

Loss ends win spree

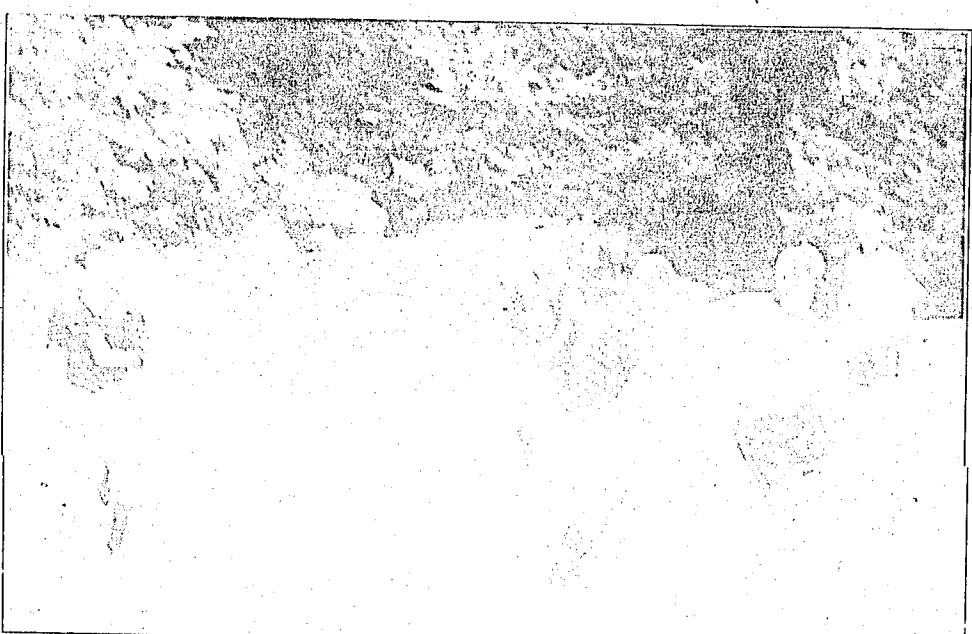
Mooresville's varsity soccer team's first presence in the state's 3A class poll and rise up the most recent area Sweet 16 high school poll didn't come without a price.

Ranked ninth in the state's 3A class and bumped up from their initial Sweet 16 ninth-place ranking to as high as seventh late last week, the Blue Devils were hit with their first loss of the season when appearing as that highly-ranked squad, never taking the lead in absorbing a 2-1 defeat against visiting Forestview.

With the loss, the team's first of the season, the Devils fall to the 4-1 mark in this their first season back under the controls of former head coach Steve Stith.

Mooresville headed into the season unranked but used a fast start to gain the attention of those who cast votes for Sweet 16 membership. The Devils won their first three matches before battling to that lone tie. They then followed up that draw with their fourth straight win before suffering the first loss.

Falling behind early to a



Feeling the heat provided by defender, Davis tries to steer clear of trouble with dribble

Forestview Jaguars team making its first and only appearance on the Mooresville schedule, the hosts were able to forge a tie on senior midfielder Preston Davis' first goal of the season.

After an apparent go-ahead goal logged by the Devils was nullified on an off-sides penalty, what looked to be the same scenario that unfolded for the visiting team inside a minute later stood up as the eventual difference in the game.

On the heels of the season's first loss, Mooresville heads into this week on tap to fill the final stages before the opening of first-year North Piedmont Conference play by participating in the Best of the West tournament being hosted by Hickory.

Though the Blue Devils are the only team in the field current-ranked among the state's top 10 in their respective classification, all four teams in the round-robin field either have been or are currently ranked in that

same Sweet 16 poll.

The Devils headed into the tournament table to open play against South Iredell, listed as sixth in that same Sweet 16 poll. Mooresville also plays host Hickory and closes out the stay with a match against Morganton Freedom.

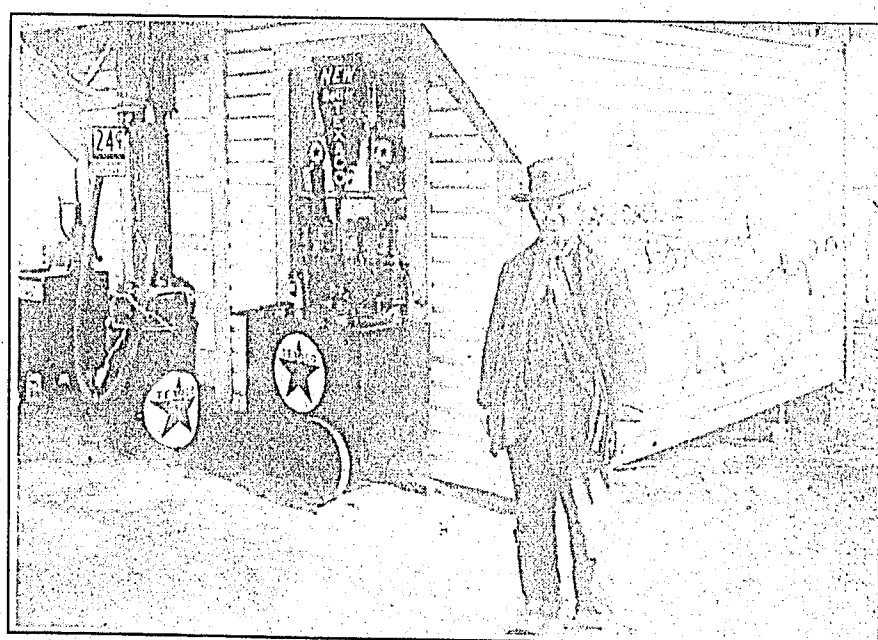
The Devils kick off inaugural NPC play with a match at Northwest Cabarrus Sept.

MHS' athlete of the week

As Mooresville's varsity football quarterback, senior Patrick Marsh, center, probably figured on earning the school's Athlete of the Week award as some point this season. Odds are, though, he didn't figure on getting it the way he did. In charge of orchestrating the Blue Devils' ground-oriented wishbone offense, Marsh set a career-high with four touchdown passes on an eight-of-nine night passing for a total of 106 yards in Mooresville's come-from-behind, 37-20, season-opening win over Forestview Friday night. Tossing another 47 yards into the mix rushing, Marsh emerges as the week's top athlete, as recognized with a plaque presentation from Ben Goins, right, with Edward Jones Co. Helping mark the presentation is Mike Carter, Mooresville's head football coach.



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Racing, racers help fuel golf event

Lake Norman High School is still a little less than a year from opening, but it's already receiving a huge push towards the starting line.

It's coming courtesy of the racing industry in general, and some select racers specifically, involved in helping provide support for an upcoming golf benefit aimed at generating proceeds that will be used to help cover expenses for a number of school-related needs.

The Larry McReynolds Celebrity Golf Tournament will be held Oct. 16 at Mallard Head Country Club, off Brawley School Road. Recruiting is underway now for both golf participants as well as sponsors.

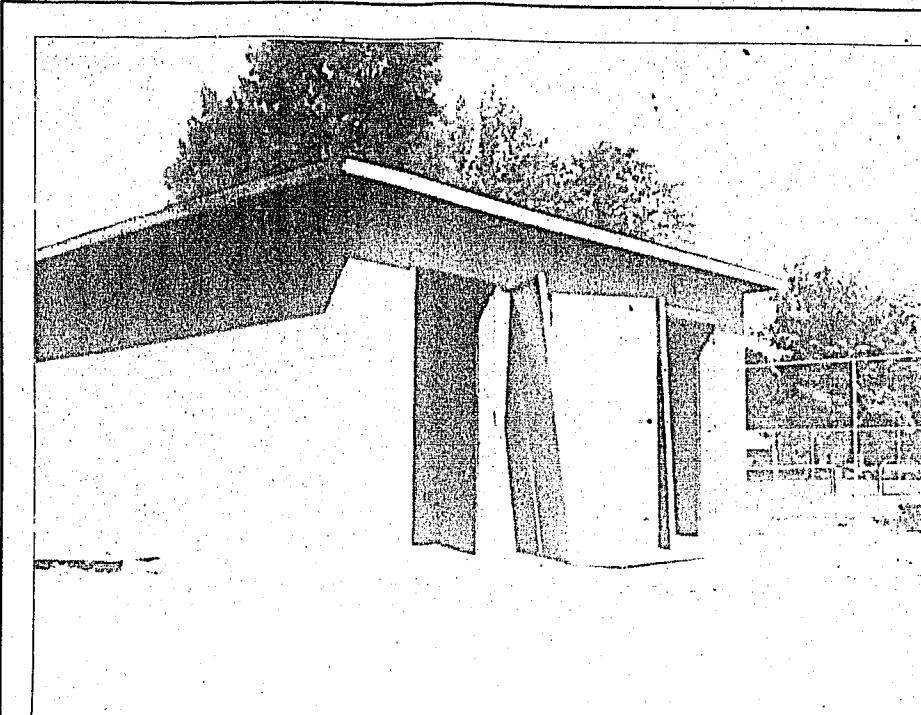
Play that Tuesday will get underway beginning at 9 a.m. In addition to the tournament's namesake, others involved in the sport of stock car racing who have already committed to participate include Johnny Benson, Joe Nemecek, Kenny Wallace, Ernie Irvin, Mike Wallace, Randy Lajole and Brett Bodine. Others are expected to be present as well.

Cost of playing is \$125 per person, all of it completely tax deductible. For the fee, players will receive a continental breakfast, gift bag, a round of golf with a celebrity refreshments during play, dinner, involvement in an autograph session, and availability for prizes.

While seeking players, the event is also receptive to any and all area businesses that might want to secure sponsorships. They are available for \$250, it, too, completely tax deductible.

Monies received from the hole sponsorships will go to help raise funds for Lake Norman High School band uniforms and instruments, auditorium seating, furnishings for the media center, guidance area, administrative area and student commons, baseball and softball field lighting, concessions/press box for baseball, softball, soccer and tennis complex, and a school sign on N.C. Highway 150.

For more details on any tournament information, contact Jeff Lavole, at 704-663-3060 or 336-669-1324.



Facility a match for tennis courts

In the past, little love has been lost when those participating in and attending high school and middle school tennis matches on the courts adjacent to the Mooresville Middle School campus have to respond to nature's calls. It usually involves walks towards the facilities situated in the Mooresville Stadium to answer them. As of early next month, perhaps no more. As early as later this month, use of this new bathroom and storage building facility is expected to be ready for use. It stands behind the two upper courts at the six-court layout and will feature male and female bathroom utilities as well as a nine-by-18 foot storage room for tennis-related equipment. A water fountain will also be installed. With some material being donated and some workers also volunteering their services, cost of the building will be at a minimum, with its use expected to satisfy a growing need. Mitch Abraham Construction is overseeing the building's erection.

Saturday openers on tee

Tee 'em up!

That's precisely what all six teams -- three apiece within a pair of age divisions -- making up the Mooresville Midget Football League's family of Southland Football League members will be doing this weekend.

All will also be doing so on the road.

Of the half dozen entries, all but two will be making their respective debuts on the same field.

The Midget and Pee Wee Division MMFL Hornets and Terminators will both see first season play on the field at Bessemer City High School Saturday. That same day, the Midget and Pee Wee level Warriors will be opening their season at Bandys.

This weekend kicks off a seven-week-long season that will take them into the late stages of October. Then, based on their respective performances through that period, each will also engage in

the SFL's day-long postseason competition that will bring the league's campaign to a close.

At Bessemer City, both sets of Hornets will be facing division counterparts from West Lincoln, with the Pee Wee versions taking the field first, followed by the older Midget squads. Later that afternoon, the two teams of Terminators will tee it up against foes from Dallas.

Meanwhile, at Bandys, both crew of Warriors will tackle opponents from Boger City, against with Pee Wee play preceding the Midget play.

All six teams will be making homefield debuts the following weekend, with Saturday afternoons serving as regular SFL play dates and times. All MMFL home games will be held in the Mooresville Stadium.

Sept. 15, initial home appearances will find the Terminators meeting

Sherrills Ford, and the Hornets squaring off against brother teams from the Warriors.

As a result of having the largest contingent of teams of any SFL program, the MMFL will be hosting a total of five home engagements. All local teams will be members of the SFL's West Division.

Other home dates for MMFL teams are Sept. 22, Oct. 6, Oct. 13 and Oct. 20.

At the close of regular-season play, teams finishing in the top five positions within the West Division will line up against counterparts from the East to settle overall SFL bragging rights.

Unlike in past seasons, when play has gotten underway as early as 9 a.m., regular-season games will be held in the afternoons. Annual Bowl Day festivities, this year being held at Bandys Oct. 27, will revert back to the 9 a.m. starting time.

'Cats pad best win streak

Davidson now stands alone.

The Wildcats, with what was projected as a preseason weakness showing surprising strength, spotted visiting Valparaiso an early touchdown lead before storming from behind with the rest of the game's scoring to polish off a season-opening, 24-7 win and own outright the nation's longest Division I winning streak.

Coming off the first unbeaten, 10-0 record in over 100 years of football at the school, Davidson used the home opener to extend its overall winning streak to 18 games dating back to the early stages of the 1999 season.

The Wildcats entered this season tied with Robert Morris for the most consecutive wins but used their triumph coupled with a loss by the latter to now stand alone. The victory also allowed first-year head coach Mike Toop to open his career with the Wildcats with a win.

For all practical purposes, the home team's defense, depleted by the loss of six starters and a unit expected to struggle early, tossed a shutout. The only Valparaiso score came when the Crusaders picked off a Davidson pass and returned it 37 yards for a touchdown in the first quarter.

From that point, the defense stiffened, limiting the guests to 73 total yards, five first downs and forcing a pair of

turnovers. In the rushing department, the 'Cats kept their guests to just 17 net yards. The defense also registered four sacks covering 32 yards.

Offensively, after the early hole, Davidson regrouped. Quarterback Paul Nichols shook off that early miscue to finish with 183 yards passing on a 17-of-30 performance, highlighting the effort on a 66-yard connection for a tying score with Mike Tarver.

Freshman running back John Leverett also made an impressive debut, rushing for 83 yards and scoring on TD runs of 11 and one yards. His 11-yard scamper came after Davidson extended a drive on a fourth-and-two situation when Tarver ran for 27 yards on a fake punt play.

Also for the hosts, Randall Hardy snared a career-high 10 passes for 94 yards. The current 18-game win streak is tied for sixth longest in Division I-AA history with Eastern Kentucky, which also won 18 straight in 1982-83.

The Wildcats will attempt to extend the streak to 19 straight on the road at Jacksonville this weekend in the first game carrying new Pioneer Football League clout for both inaugural year entries. A victory would tie the Wildcats with Duquesne for the fifth-longest win streak ever in I-AA.

Graham cashes in at event

Mooresville's Robert Graham was among a number of North and South Carolina professional fishermen to earn a slice of the payoff pie during an event held in Michigan earlier this month.

Graham, a South Iredell High School graduate and current professional angler, received a cash prize of \$2,800 for his top-40 finish in the Michigan Citigo Bassmaster Tour attraction held near Detroit.

He placed 38th in the field to earn a share of the pot.

South Carolina's Davy Hite, a former BASS Masters Classic champion, placed first in the event, winning that spot's top prize of \$110,000. Also, among in-state anglers to also place in the field included Lexington's David Fritts, Raleigh's Chris Elliott, and Gastonia's Chris Baumgardner.

Vikings dealt first defeat on the field by Hounds, 21-3

A similar start led to anything but the same results for South Iredell's varsity football team Friday night.

Generating an early score on their first possession similar to what took place during their startling upset of heavily-favored guest West Rowan a week earlier, this time that field goal in the game's first three minutes stood up as the Vikings only lead and lone score in an eventual, 21-3 defeat at the hands of cross-county rival and county seat resident Statesville.

Though it was the Vikings' first loss suffered this two-week-old season on the field, it was actually the visitors' second official defeat. South Iredell was forced to forfeit its opening, 21-14 triumph over West Rowan after revealing it used an ineligible player during that contest.

As a result, the Vikings, in their first season ever as members of the state's 4A class, field an official 0-2 record as they head into this weekend's play.

"We should have played much better," lamented Kent Millsaps, South Iredell's head coach. "Statesville's got a good defense, but that's no excuse for us to execute. Mentally, we weren't prepared to play it wasn't the same team that was on the field last week. We weren't as hungry."

Initially, however, it appeared as though the Vikings would feast early. The guests opened the game by surprising the home team with the recovering of an onside kick 10 yards into Statesville territory. The opening drive that reached the Greyhounds' 10 ended on kicker Marshall Hitchcock's 32-yard field goal. In the season opener, a touchdown on the game's opening possession provided the Vikings with a lead they would never relinquish.

Such would not be the case, however, in week two. Statesville countered with a scoring play on its first play following the kickoff to take a 7-3 lead. The deficit grew to the 14-3 margin when the hosts punched home the only scoring of the second period. A couple of key penalties and offensive breakdowns leading to a quarterback sack hindered South Iredell's only scoring threats of the half.

A humble set up the Greyhounds' final score, it coming in the third period, that shoved the score out to its final 18-point difference. South Iredell was able to mount several charges throughout the final half, digging as deep as Statesville's 25-yard line on three different occasions but coming up empty on each drive.

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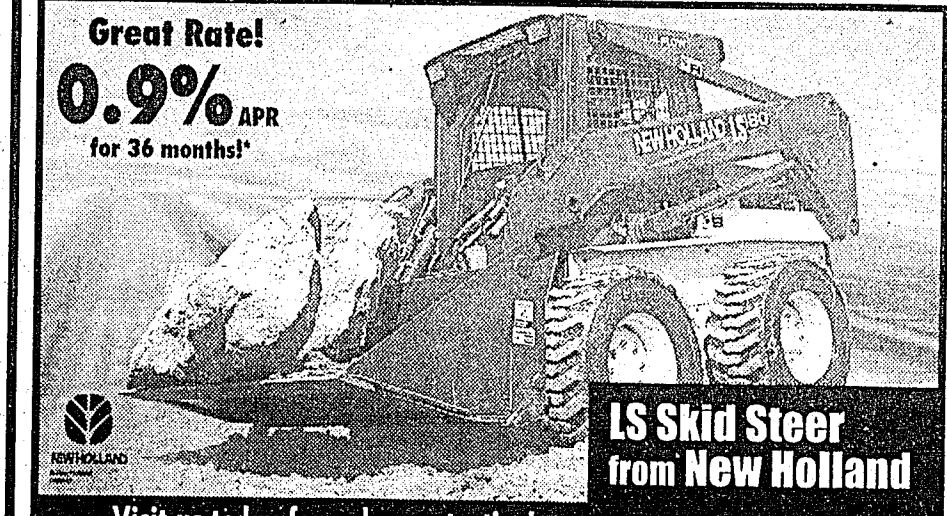
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