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\$159 Per Mo.

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| 98 TOYOTA RAV-4 4X4 | \$9,700 | |
| 96 GMC JIMMY SLE 4X4 | \$11,577 | |
| 98 HONDA CRV 4X4 | \$15,477 | |
| 98 TOYOTA RAV-4 4X4 | \$15,777 | |
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THE Tribune

Friday, August 31, 2001

Section B

Sports

Starting over

Devils open season today

As good as last year was — and it was one of the best in school history — it was history by the time of the first meeting for this year's members of Mooresville Senior High's varsity football team.

As high as this year's preseason hype has been, it hits ground zero — literally — when the Blue Devils kick off their 2001 season tonight (Friday).

"We were over that (last year's school-record 13-2 record that led to advancement into the state 3A class semifinals) by our first team meeting," stressed Mike Carter, entering his 13th season as the Devils' head coach. "We talked about our success in the past, and we made a little reference to last year, but we started working on this season from that point. All we did last year has nothing to do with what will happen this year. It's a new season. We told them we had to get beyond that."

"All that matters," he continued, "is what happens when the lights come on and you get on the grass. For us, it starts all over this week."

For Mooresville, that start begins on a strange field, as the Blue Devils renew acquaintances with a Forestview program they met for the first time in school history during the opening round of last year's state playoffs. That game resulted in a 35-19 triumph for the host Devils.

Tonight, Mooresville pays its first-ever visit to the Gaston County home of the Jaguars for the endowment season-opener for both teams. Kickoff time is set for 7:30 p.m.

"We can't go by last year," cau-



During a team gathering following last week's final scrimmage, Carter points his players in direction of this week's season debut

tioned Carter. "They've got a new coach, so we really don't have anything to scout them by. We're getting ready for a little bit of everything."

And, according to Carter, his crew is ready to start playing. Practicing since late July, the Devils have spent the past month engaging in three scrimmages within a less than two-week span, that segment of the preseason drawing to a close with the only home appearance among the trio against Ledford late last week. The coaching staff concurs that the squad has shown steady progress in all three controlled outings.

"We've gotten better in each scrimmage," assured Carter, who has guided each of his past six

teams and 10 of his 12 total into postseason play, "and that's a positive. Still, it's not a game. The kids are eager to get on the field and ready to be tested. You can just do so much to keep their interest in practice and in scrimmages."

One facet of the team's play that has continued to peek at Carter's own concern is the specialty team aspect, which by rule can't be tested under live conditions during scrimmages.

"For all teams, and us especially," cautioned Carter, "the kicking game is always a concern early in the season. We've haven't been tested under true game conditions. A lot of games are determined by the kicking game. I've always considered our specialty

How to get to Forestview

Going to tonight's Mooresville Senior High varsity football season opener?

Here's how to get from here to Forestview High School, site of the endowment season debut for both teams:

Take I-77 south to I-85 through Charlotte to Gastonia. Take the New Hope Road exit, which is on the right. At the top of the exit ramp at the traffic light, turn left. Follow New Hope Road past Eastridge Mall and approximately seven traffic lights to Garrison Blvd. Turn right on Garrison for about a

mile to Union Road at traffic light. Take a left on Union Road and go approximately seven miles. The school will be on the left.

It's the first regular-season meeting between the two schools, who met during last year's opening round of the state 3A playoffs. Mooresville won that game, 35-19, on its way towards reaching the state semifinals before completing a 13-2 season that stands as one with the most wins in a single season in school history.

Game time is set for 7:30 p.m.

See DEVILS, page 2B

Football is a relief for TE Bowles

David Bowles' mind will be on his Mooresville varsity football team's season-opener tonight (Friday) against Forestview.

His heart won't be. Bowles, a junior back-up tight end expected to see ample action in the debut, plans to give his Blue Devils his all when called upon for duty. He is to be forgiven, though, if his heart isn't entirely in the game.

While Bowles and the rest of his Devils get this season underway, the first-year varsity team member's dad, Jeff Bowles, remains listed in the intensive care unit at Baptist Medical Center in Winston Salem.

He is continuing his recovery from injuries suffered in an automobile accident a week after losing control of a van he was test driving for his employer, Bowles Automotive. The driver of the van was thrown from the vehicle when it ran off the road and careened into a wooded area.

"Between school and football," agreed the 6-3, 173-pounder who donned the number 24, "I've been able to stay busy enough to keep from worrying so much. It's great to have something to occupy my time while we go through this. I still try to go and see him just about everyday. He's still in bad shape, but he's not getting any worse. I guess that's a good sign."

In addition to serving as a reserve tight end in Mooresville's wishbone offense that uses that position as a key blocker as well as an outlet for several pass plays, Bowles is also a member of the

See BOWLES, page 2B

Lots of 'new' on football field

Surrounded by the new, Mooresville Senior High's football program hopes to return to the old during the season that gets underway tonight (Friday).

Coming off the most distinguished varsity single-season success in school history in terms of wins and coupled with an ongoing uncanny performance at its junior varsity level, Mooresville enters a new era as a charter member of a newly formed 3A class conference and with nearly half of its opponents appearing on the schedule for the first time.

The Blue Devils, 13-2 a year ago to set a single-season record for the most wins overall, kick off their 2001 season with an endowment game tonight against first-time, regular-season foe Forestview, whose Jaguars may still appear familiar. That's so as the same two teams met in last year's opening round of the state playoffs, a game won, 35-19, by the Devils.

It was that win that came as part of Mooresville's fourth-round advancement into the postseason, reaching the West state finals before bringing its season to a close. The playoff wins, all at home, came as the Devils made a program-record 10 appearances on their home Mooresville Stadium field.

That, though, was then.

Tonight's debut opens a season that finds Mooresville aligned with the newly-formed North Piedmont Conference, a seven-team group that features only one carry-over from the Devils' former Western Piedmont Conference. Joining Senior High from that previous circuit as a NPC member is North Iredell.

Other first-year NPC teams feature Statesville, Northwest Cabarrus, East Rowan, West Rowan, and Kannapolis.

As it the case during the high school football season, Mooresville will meet each other NPC member once this season. Of the total of six league games, Senior High will play three of them at home, including two of the regular-season's final three games.

Each NPC contest will carry additional meaning this season, as only two state playoffs bids will be available in a league many experts are considering to be one of the strongest in all of the state's 3A class. Of the members, Mooresville and West Rowan each emerged as respective conference champions last year, both meeting in the state's quarterfinals round, while Kannapolis remains a perennial state playoff participant and is already listed as the favorite within the NPC this fall.

Tonight's opener starts a four-

week stretch of non-conference games for the Blue Devils, two of them taking place at home and the second of those which will mark the celebration of annual homecoming festivities.

For the season, Mooresville will play five of its 11 games at home, closing the season with traditional Senior Night events in the finale.

With the exception of this week's debut, Mooresville's junior varsity team, winners of all 10 of it games last season and riding a tidal wave of wins resulting in a current 27-game win streak and a 37-1 record dating back to 1995, will play the same opponent as the varsity unit only a day earlier and at the opposite site.

All varsity games carry 7:30 p.m. starting times, while jayvee games feature 7 p.m. starts.

Starting with tonight's opener, Mooresville's varsity football schedule, with home games in all caps, follows:
Aug. 31...FORESTVIEW
Sept. 7...ALEXANDRIA
Sept. 14...DAVIE COUNTY
Sept. 21...SOUTH ROWAN
Sept. 28...NORTHWEST CABARRUS
Oct. 5...SOUTH IREDELL
Oct. 12...EAST ROWAN
Oct. 19...NORTH IREDELL
Oct. 26...KANNAPOLIS
Nov. 2...WEST ROWAN
Nov. 9...STATESVILLE

S. Iredell has to surrender opening win

When is a win not a win? When it's not won legitimately. South Iredell's varsity football team found that out first-hand earlier this week.

After informing the North Carolina High School Athletic Association of their use of an ineligible player during Friday night's season-opening, 21-14 upset win over West Rowan, the Vikings have been forced to forfeit the win.

Tim Sturdivant, a transfer student from Mooresville Senior High in his second year at South Iredell, failed to inform the Vikings coaching staff that he was a fifth-year senior, having previously used his four years of high school eligibility under NCHSAA rules. He spent the first three years at Mooresville before transferring to South Iredell last year. Sturdivant also played basketball for the Vikings, earning all-Iredell County recognition.

"He met the age requirement, he met the promotion standards, and he passed all his grades," revealed Don Sparks, South Iredell's athletic director and also an assistant football coach. "It was just an oversight. He didn't tell anybody. He knew it was his fifth year."

Kent Millsaps, South Iredell's head football coach, found the issue at question when sifting through personal paperwork while still celebrating the endowment win over the weekend. He contacted the NCHSAA to report his findings. The penalty was the forfeiting of the win.

"It was a clerical error," noted Millsaps, who told his players of the findings earlier this week. "It was one of those freak accidents that slip through the system. We had no clue. He probably played 20 snaps, but he was not a factor in why we

See LADY DEVILS, page 2B

See VIKINGS, page 2B