

Wildcat Nine Opens Today

WILMINGTON — Defending Eastern 4-A Conference baseball champs, Coach Leon Brogden's New Hanover Wildcats open the 1963 diamond season Saturday at Jacksonville against the Jacksonville High Cardinals. Game time is 1 p.m.

"With only one regular starter back," Coach Brogden said, "we face another building program in baseball, and right now there's a wide open fight for starting positions."

Senior outfielder Jimmy Wolfe is the only returnee who saw regular action for the Wildcats last

season. However returning seniors Joe Mallard and Lou Kovacs and juniors Butch Bradley and Larry Williams were top reserves in 1962.

Other seniors on the squad include Larry Woolard, Robert Jordan, Bill Cauley, Bill Alexander, and Charles King. Other juniors out for the Cat nine are Tim Duncan, Frank Shepard, Bill Hutson, Darrell Kohel, John Rackley, Fab O'Brien, Randy Harritan, Sandy Symmes, and Linwood Perry.

Sophomores working with the team include Jim Burriss, Buddy Gore, Wayne Johnson and Marty Farrow.

Brogden said about 22 candidates reported Monday when the New Hanover club held its first outside practice. The team was kept inside Tuesday because of the wet weather, but practice was held outside each day after that.

Beaufort Club Gets Praise For Defense

NORTH SURRY 57 - BEAUFORT 56

By GRADY ELMORE

WINSTON-SALEM — Coaches assembled here for the State Class 2-A high school basketball tournament could easily organize a mutual admiration society, and players and spectators would want to join, too.

"That Smithfield-Stedman game (opening the semifinals Friday night) should be some game," observed Beaufort Coach Tom McQuaid beforehand. Stedman demonstrated excellent balance in its opening win (60-43 over Siler City, although that game saw subpar performances by both teams.

"Smithfield doesn't believe in letting the other team have the ball," said McQuaid, referring to the Red Devil's ball-hawking and rebounding displayed in their opener (53-43 over Northwest Guilford).

Beaufort's great comeback performance in its 39-37 win over Clyde A. Erwin High of Buncombe County, and North Surry's hustle and skill in toppling Gates County by 63-59 gained those second-game semifinals foes a host of admirers, too.

"The best high school defense I've ever seen," East Carolina Coach Wendell Carr declared of Beaufort's man-for-man and full-court press. Carr, the ex-Wake Forest player recently named EC head cage coach, is a native of that noted basketball hotbed, Indiana, and has seen a lot of schoolboy play.

Defense Is Game.

"Defense is basketball," McQuaid declared during a chat with Stedman coaches Leon Brock and Buck Hall. After Beaufort's rally from 16 points behind midway of the third quarter, Hall, who is head football coach and assistant to Brock in basketball, pointed out that a minimum of mistakes and ability at the free throw line are important ingredients of high school play, too.

"We (he and Brock) kept track and only marked down one mistake all night against Beaufort — a pass that was intercepted," Hall said.

The Seadogs only missed one free throw each half, (then one after the final buzzer by Johnny Hassell in which he didn't even bother to look at the basket before the game was over), but

Johnny, last of four straight Hassells instrumental in Beaufort's feats of the last five years — he's a brother of Wake Forest junior Butch and cousin of Carolina's soph Pud and freshman Ray — "played his best game of the season," McQuaid said after the win Thursday night. There is another one on the way, however — Kent, brother of Pud, who is a seventh-grader. . .

Gates County coach Johnny Perry admitted after his team's defeat that it had come up with a "poor performance." He added: "If we had played like that before, we wouldn't be here."

Just getting here sometimes is an accomplishment equal to any success achieved in State tourney play. Frequently a team's best play seems used up in its conference or district meet. And rarely does any team here not show first-game butterfingers or jitters to some degree.

Stedman was four points behind Tabor City with 39 seconds to go in the first round of the District Four tourney, but won by five points.

Smithfield experienced a slump during regular-season play and finished tied for third place, but nipped Clayton by a point in overtime in the tournament finals.

Beaufort was down 3-16 at Jones Central in one game, but unfinished unbeaten.

Gates County found itself quickly behind 0-10 to Plymouth there in the Albemarle Tournament finals, but made it up in a hurry. The GaCos only survived by five points a first-round tourney game against a team that had won just one conference contest, but then bombed Plymouth by 17 points.

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