

Unbeaten Blues, All-Stars to Meet Saturday

Final NBC Coastal Division Games Set for Weekend at Swinson Park

By RODNEY KEMP

THE VEHICLE CARRYING the NBC Coastal Division baseball tournament down the championship road is running smoothly but lacks clear knowledge of who should be driving. The tournament, being staged at Swinson Park near Morehead City, will wind to a close this weekend.

The Eastern Blues and Lenoir County All-Stars, both unbeaten, are in the front seat and Saturday's second game will determine which one grabs the steering wheel.

THE CHICOD Cowboys, Grifton Reds, Carteret Tides and Salter Path Braves, each with a loss, are crowded in

the back seat with the doors open. They may fall out at any of the hazardous curves ahead in this final weekend of tournament action.

The Blues' stopper, Dallas Arthur, will fling his south-paw serves toward the powerful bats of the All-Stars who have scored 33 runs on 33 hits, including 10 home runs, in their two tournament games.

THE BLUES ARE not powerless, however. Led by Paul Damren (six hits, including three home runs and eight RBI's), Braxton Piner (three hits, including one home run and two RBI's) and Ronnie Fulcher (a home run and five runs scored), they are primed to assault the All-Stars' pitching staff, which to date has given up 23 runs and 28 hits in two games.

Thus, a classic hitter-pitcher battle looms inevitably for the fans at Swinson Park. Arthur, noted for his toughness against good hitters, will certainly be tested to the limit by Monte Little (five hits, including three home runs and seven RBI's) and Bob Scott (six hits, with three home runs and seven RBI's) of the All-Stars.

SOLID DEFENSIVE play, a Blues' trademark, makes manager Wilson Davis's charges superior to the All-Stars. Because of the explosive nature of their offense, the All-Stars often fall victim to defensive lapses. In their two tournament games they spotted their opponents to 7-0 and 6-0 leads before coming on to win.

"They'll not spot Dallas any lead and then figure to power by it," said one of the many fans who have enjoyed the 12 games completed in this tournament so far.

FRIDAY'S FIRST GAME will feature Seashore Baseball League rivals, the Salter Path Braves and Carteret Tides. In Friday's nightcap, the Grifton Reds will play the Chicod Cowboys. For one of these teams to emerge as champions, they will have to win five games in four days.

All four teams will have to go with their pitching aces in do-or-die contests Friday night. Friday's winners will

(See NBC TOURNEY Pg. 4A)

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