

# Kings Mountain Herald

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## Wrestling for Hospice



EMILY WEAVER/HERALD

Crowds rally around “The Masked Ranger” 7th grade social studies teacher David McDonald in the main event of the 5th Annual Anderson Brothers Tag Team Classic at KMMS Friday night. The event raised hundreds of dollars for the KM Hospice House.

## Win for Hospice and ‘Rock-N-Roll’

By EMILY WEAVER

Editor

The bleachers in the Kings Mountain Middle School gymnasium shook with excitement Friday night at the 5th Annual Anderson Brothers Classic Tag Team Tournament. Feet stomped, hands clapped, chants and cheers bounced off of the walls. Signs were raised and flags were waved. It wasn’t exactly a riot and this wasn’t Wisconsin, but this crowd sure was fired up.

And why not? They were about to witness wrestling for the sake of a good cause, in honor of great legends, in the wake of new heroes, and the reincarnation of wrestling the way it once was before incessant profanity stung the ears and vulgarity shocked the eyes.

The event, attended by a few hundred people, including dozens of families, helped raise more than \$700 for the Kings Mountain Hospice House.

### Legend lives on

For five years now this tag team tournament has been held in memory of Gene Anderson and in honor of the Anderson Brothers noted as one of the greatest tag teams to take the pro-wrestling arena.

“Brothers” Gene and Lars Anderson stomped onto the scene in their maroon- and gold-striped boots as the “Minnesota Wrecking Crew” in the ‘60s. The colors of their trademark boots were the school colors of the University of Minnesota, where they attended college.

In 1968, the crew was joined by a new “brother” Ole Anderson (Rock Rogowski). Gene and Ole Anderson went on to take tag team wrestling to new levels during their NWA World tag team title reigns in the 1970s. They won the NWA World tag team title eight times.

Gene Anderson has since retired to the great arena in the sky. His “brothers” Ole and Lars have hung up their boots. But they are not forgotten. Their legendary moves, rivalries and “take no prisoner” attitudes live on in the hearts of many fans and wrestlers who remember those “glory days” of wrestling.

And they remember other greats – some of which are still flipping around in the ring today. The Rock-N-Roll Express (Ricky Morton and Robert Gibson) took the world of pro-wrestling by storm in the ‘80s, with their signature double dropkicks, mullet hair-dos and bandanas tied around their calves. Morton and Gibson reunited at the event and showed the crowd they still have what it takes.

In a match for the coveted Anderson Brothers trophy, they double dropkicked Mr. No. 1 (George South) and defeated the Ragin’ Bull (Manny Fernandez), both legends. The Rock-N-Roll Express was declared the winners and hoisted the trophy high.

### Special guests

George South, leader of the Exodus Wrestling Alliance, who puts on the Anderson Brothers Classic tournament, said that it was special to have the Rock-N-Roll Express and the Ragin’ Bull in the ring Friday night. All three men have wrestled the Anderson Brothers several times in the past.

And for South and his son George South Jr. (who is also a wrestler), having the Rock-N-Roll Express there was special in another way. When his son was growing up, the Rock-N-Roll Express was his favorite tag team, South said. “He had a mullet haircut like Ricky Morton.”

He took his son to see the Rock-N-Roll Express when he was about four or five years old and took a picture of him being held by Ricky Morton. George South Jr., now 22 years old, brought his first son, Dallas, to the match Friday night for the same thing.

Three generations – George South, his son and grandson – posed for a picture with the Rock-N-Roll Express. South admits that it was an emotional moment for him. Like his son, he grew up idolizing those great wrestlers in the ring.

“There’s no telling where I would have ended up if I hadn’t turned the television on at a young age and saw pro-wrestling,” he said.

### See how The Masked Ranger fared in the ring with the Sheik, 1B

It inspired him and in many ways, changed his life. South remembers going to see his first live match at the old Park Center in Charlotte. The center used to host wrestling every Monday night. South remembers holding on to his first ticket and arguing with the usher, who tried to take it.

“I did not want to give my ticket up,” he said.

For him, his first real favorite in the ring was Paul Jones – a good guy...before he turned bad and then good again. South followed along with him and on Friday night, like his early mentor, he wore a red, white and blue jacket just like Jones once wore.

Other special guests, included the NWA’s Bunkhouse Boys and NWA Referee Tommy Young. George South Jr. with partner Lewis Moore, took on the Nature Boy (not Ric Flair) and Star Rider in a bout for the trophy. The Bunkhouse Boys took on Jerry Briscoe and Jimmy Jack Funk Jr. But the final match for the title win came down to the Rock-N-Roll Express and the tag team of Mr. No. 1 and the Ragin’ Bull.



photo by DICK BOURNE/ [www.midatlanticgateway.com](http://www.midatlanticgateway.com)

The Rock-N-Roll Express double dropkicks Mr. No. 1 George South in the championship match for the Anderson Brothers trophy.