

Sports

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Union splits two games at Lanier Tournament; rain washes out Saturday

By Todd Forrest
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Gainesville - Whenever the Lady Panthers and Lady Rebels get together on the diamond, suspense won't be far behind.

Union County opened its 2013 season with a dramatic 3-2 win over Fannin County. The Lady Panthers got one in the sixth to tie things up, then put up the game winner in the bottom of the seventh.

Unfortunately, Union had to turn around and face a fresh Dawson County squad, who had yet to play.

Even with junior Crystal Busbee tossing a career-high nine strikeouts, the Lady Panthers couldn't duplicate their late-inning magic from the previous game and fell 2-0 to the Lady Tigers.

"I think both Busbee and Chambers pitched good enough to win on Friday, Union County Head Coach Jessica Stewart said. "They will both keep us in every ball game and competitive. We have to cut down on walks but other than that we need to give them more runs to work with."

Union went hitless with runners on base and stranded two in scoring position, with only one out in the sixth inning.

Against Fannin, the Lady Panthers came through early as junior Kelsey Nix smacked a two-out double to left-center. The opposite field shot, scored Crystal Busbee, who reached on an error and advanced to scoring position thanks to a sacrifice bunt by Madison Rich.

In typical rivalry fashion, Fannin answered with a two-out RBI single of their own in the second inning.

Freshman Laken Chambers walked the leadoff hitter before getting two Lady Rebels to bounce back to the mound. With two outs, the Fannin County went opposite field to tie the game at 1-1.

Fannin struck again in the third with a single and two walks, loading the bases. A wild pitch brought in the go-ahead run but Chambers settled down and got an infield pop-up and a grounder



Lady Panthers celebrate after freshman Lydia Arrowood scored the game winner in the opener vs Fannin County. Photo/Todd Forrest



Junior Kelsey Nix doubles to left-center, scoring Crystal Busbee to give Union an early lead against Fannin. Photo/Todd Forrest

wouldn't get another hit until the sixth inning.

With one out in the sixth, Chambers took matters into her own hands and singled up the middle. With freshman Kendra Tanner running for Chambers, Kelsey Nix drew a full count walk, putting the go-ahead run

on base. After a strikeout, junior Courtney Busbee delivered an opposite field bloop that dropped in for a hit, scoring Tanner and tying the game.

Chambers worked around a hit batter in the top of the seventh to bring Union back to the plate with a chance to win it.



Freshman Laken Chambers went the distance against Fannin and picked up the first win of her high school career. Photo/Todd Forrest



The Lady Panthers gather in right field after knocking off Fannin. Union had to turn right around and play Dawson. Photo/Todd Forrest

The Lady Panthers immediately put the pressure on Fannin, and the Lady Rebels finally cracked.

Union put two in scoring position with no outs after senior Allie Stroman went the other way for a single and freshman Lydia Arrowood reached on an

error. A wild pitch let the runners move up with leadoff hitter Crystal Busbee at the plate.

The junior shortstop smacked a hard grounder to third that resulted in Stroman being tagged out at third.

On the ensuing pitch, Arrowood broke for third, and with the infield playing in and the third baseman out of position to field the throw, the catcher sailed the ball over her head and into left field, allowing Arrowood to score the game winner.

Minutes after knocking off the Lady Rebels, Union faced a very good Dawson County team, who watched Union's comeback win from the bleachers.

The Lady Tigers put up one run in the bottom of the first after Union left two in scoring position in the top half of the inning.

A 6-4-3 double play by sophomore shortstop Karley Nix and Arrowood, limited Dawson to just one run in the third. With a 2-0 advantage, the Lady Tigers' deep pitching staff went to work and held the Lady Panthers at bay.

"Defensively we were very solid," Coach Stewart said. "We came up with a few big plays that we needed and only had a couple errors. Offensively we have to do a better job adjusting the second and third times through the line up. Fannin's pitcher threw off speed and outside and Dawson's threw hard and we had trouble with both."

Crystal Busbee threw a gem, a four-hitter and didn't allow a ball out of the infield until the sixth inning. But leadoff walks in the first and third inning led to the two Dawson runs.

In Union's final at bat, Chambers reached on an error and Kelsey Nix walked. A wild pitch allowed both to reach scoring position bringing the go-ahead run to the plate. Unfortunately, Courtney Busbee was unable to come up with another opposite field hit as the second baseman, snagged her pop fly.

On Saturday, Union was scheduled to play Commerce and Flowery Branch but rain brought the two-day tournament to an early end for the 21 teams involved.

Five-run sixth sparks Union's 8-1 win over White

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It was only a scrimmage, but an 8-1 win over a quality AAA squad can provide some much needed confidence for a young Lady Panther squad.

The 2010 State Champion Lady Warriors had a disappointing 2012 season, but playing in a brutal Region that includes six-time defending State Champ Buford along with Dawson County, wins are difficult for anyone to come by.

Early on, the game was what you would expect between two of the most decorated programs in North Georgia.

At least until the fifth inning. That's when the wheels fell off for the Lady Warriors.

Leading 3-1 entering the bottom of the fifth, sophomore Maddie Garrett led off the inning by reaching on an error. Junior Hallye King and senior Allie Stroman also reached on errors.

With the bases full, freshman Lydia Arrowood reached on a fielder's choice. Junior Crystal Busbee brought in a run on an infield single. Senior Madison Rich singled to right, bringing in another run.

Freshman Laken Chambers bounced back to the pitcher, who went home for the force out. Fellow freshman, Maddie Horinek ran for Chambers, the pitcher, bringing junior Kelsey Nix to the plate. The lefty placed a double to right-center, clearing the bases and blowing things open at 8-1.

Chambers got the ball and worked seven innings and after allowing a double and a single to open the second, the freshman settled down and retired 16 of the last 18 hitters, surrendering only a single and a walk.

The Lady Panthers gave Chambers an early lead when junior Crystal Busbee led off the bottom of the first with a single back up the box. Senior Madison Rich was hit by a pitch. Kelsey Nix and junior Courtney Busbee both drew walks, moving Crystal Busbee to third, where she scored on a wild pitch.

White County got the run back in the second thanks



Junior Kelsey Nix clears the bases with a sixth inning double.



Freshman Laken Chambers and Coach Cagle high-five following her RBI single in the fifth inning. Photo/Todd Forrest



Junior Crystal Busbee scores Union's first run after a wild pitch in the opening frame. Photo/Todd Forrest

in the third inning when Chamber singled to right to open the inning. Garrett would eventually bring her around with a two-out single to left.

The Lady Panthers tacked on another run in the fourth when Crystal Busbee reached on a one-out single to left. Rich moved her into scoring position with a bunt, allowing Chambers to bring her home with another two-out single.

The freshman pitcher threw a four-hitter with three strikeouts and allowed two walks and an earned run.

Crystal Busbee finished with a 3-for-5 day, scoring three times. Rich went 1-for-2 with an RBI, a run, a sacrifice bunt,



Freshman Laken Chambers and Coach Cagle high-five following her RBI single in the fifth inning. Photo/Todd Forrest



Junior Crystal Busbee scores Union's first run after a wild pitch in the opening frame. Photo/Todd Forrest

and was hit by a pitch. Chambers helped her own cause with a 2-for-4 day, scoring twice and driving in one. Kelsey Nix was 2-for-3 with 3 RBIs, a double, and a walk.

Courtney Busbee drew a first inning walk, Garrett was 1-for-4 with an RBI and a run. She also reached on an error. King finished with a 2-for-4 game, doubling in the third and singling in the sixth. She reached on an error and later scored in the fifth.

Stroman walked and reached on an error. Horinek drew a pinch-hit walk and Arrowood reached on a fielder's choice.

Horinek sisters place first and third respectively at A.J.G.A.

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L-R: Ally and Maddy Horinek with their A.J.G.A. trophies.

On July 25th and 26th the Atlanta Junior Golf Association held their summer ending golf championships at the Chateau Elan golf course in Braselton.

Maddie Horinek, a freshman at Union County High School, took home the third place trophy in the 18-Hole Club division with rounds of

88 and 87.

Two days later Ally Horinek, Maddie's younger sister, took first place in the 9-Hole Classic Championship with rounds of 46 and 49.

Both girls play golf and softball on their Union County School teams.

2013 UCHS Softball schedule

Aug. 13th: vs North Murray 5 p.m.
Aug. 19th: @ North Murray 5 p.m.
Aug. 22nd: @ Rabun County 6 p.m.
Aug. 23rd: vs Walnut Grove (@ North Georgia) 5 p.m.
Aug. 24th: @ Oglethorpe County (DH) 1 p.m.
Aug. 27th: vs Jefferson 5 p.m.
Aug. 28th: @ Jefferson County
Aug. 31st: vs Greene County (DH) 12 p.m.
Sept. 5th: vs Rabun County 6 p.m.
Sept. 6-7th: @ Oconee County Tournament TBA
Sept. 10th: @ Social Circle (DH) 4 p.m.
Sept. 11th: @ White County 5:30 p.m.
Sept. 12th: @ Jefferson 6:45 p.m.
Sept. 16th: @ East Hall 5:30 p.m.
Sept. 19th: vs Washington-Wilkes (DH) 4 p.m.
Sept. 24th: 1st Round of Region Tournament TBA
Sept. 28-30th: 2nd Round of Region Tournament TBA
Oct. 5th: Region Championship TBA

Mountain Gymnastics registration

Fall Registration for Gymnastics, Preschool, and Tumbling Classes has begun. Classes began the week of Aug. 5th.

Stop by the gym to sign up for a class. See our schedule at www.mtngym.com or call (706)745-3325.

