

Sports

See the Sports Section at ngame.com

Union County 10U and 12U Softball crowned State Champs

12U is never challenged at State Tourney; 10U rebounds from loss to survive Sunday marathon

By Todd Forrest
Sports Editor
sports@ngame.com

BOYNTON - As the weekend was drawing its final breath, Union County 10U Softball capped off a perfect Sunday for the Recreation Department's softball teams.

With temperatures already topping 90 degrees prior to the 11 a.m. start, Union County's 12U Softball team finished dismantling Hall County and were crowned State Champions by 1:15 p.m.

The 10U, however, took a little longer to decide.

With their fourth and final game of the day getting underway around 10 p.m., the Lady Panthers were finally awarded their State Championship trophies shortly after 11 p.m.

"Our team really fought hard all day," Union County 10U Coach Andrew Akins said. "The girls had to answer the bell several times. They were challenged but never gave up and it paid off."

But their championship wasn't without controversy as it was discovered that Rossville was using an illegal player when Union County filed a protest during the final game.

Following Union's 14-2 blowout of Villa Rica on Saturday, the Lady Panthers were scheduled to play the Rossville Explosion at 3 p.m. Sunday.

At game time, however, Rossville was a player short and would have to forfeit unless the 10th player showed up. (10U softball uses four outfielders so 10 players are needed to field a team)

More than 10 minutes after the game was scheduled to begin, the "player" arrived, the game was completed, and Union lost 4-3.

After falling to Rossville on Sunday afternoon, Union County dropped into the loser's bracket where they knocked off Villa Rica once again, this time by a narrower 10-7 margin.

The win set up a rematch with Rossville and the Lady Panthers took game one 7-4 in eight innings.

Unfortunately for Union, their only pitcher had reached her three-game limit for the day, leaving the Lady Panthers without any pitchers.

Forced to turn to an inexperienced hurler, Union found themselves trailing 4-1 after one inning of the final game. That's when the coaches decided to file the protest.

When the roster was examined, it was determined that the 10th player, who showed up prior to the first Union game, was added later to the official roster, due to her name being written in different colored ink and in another style of handwriting.

Upon finding the discrepancy with the roster, Rossville was disqualified, thus awarding the championship game to Union County via forfeit.

UC 14, Villa Rica 2 - Chevale Kinderknecht fired a four-inning no-hitter, recording all 12 outs by strikeout while scoring three runs and driving in one at the dish.

The Lady Panthers scored four in the top of the first but Villa Rica managed to hang around, trailing just 5-2 after two innings.

Following a scoreless third, Union exploded for three in the fourth and six in the fifth - ending the contest early and giving them a 14-2 victory.

Aubrie Akins and Lily Helton drove in four runs apiece while combining for five hits and three runs from the No. 2 and No. 3 spots in the lineup.

Ayla Stepp knocked in a pair of runs and MacKenzie Bohannon added one RBI.

Lacey Newton scored three times, Avery Hussions added two runs, while Zady Ludlum, Bella Moss, and Kyla Helton scored one run each.

Ella Akins was hit by a pitch and stole a base.

Rossville 4, UC 3 - The Lady Panthers got two runs in the first before Rossville stormed back to grab a 4-2 lead entering the fifth.

Union County added a run in the sixth but it wasn't enough as the Lady Panthers suffered their first loss of the postseason despite out-hitting the Explosion 7-0.

Kinderknecht struck out



Sierra Burnette with an inside-the-park, two-run homer in the first inning of the 12U Championship Game. Photo/Todd Forrest



Right-handed pitcher Chevale Kinderknecht started four games in the 10U tournament - three ended in no-hitters. Photo/Todd Forrest



Aubrie Akins rounds second during the first inning of Union County 10U's 4-3 loss to Rossville. Photo/Todd Forrest



Ila Bragg recorded the win for Union County during the 12U Championship Game. Photo/Todd Forrest

13, recording her second straight no-hitter, while not allowing a single pitch to be put into play.

Rossville took advantage of a dozen walks and used aggressive base running (nine stolen bases) to generate just enough offense to hold off Union County.

Helton finished 3-for-3 with two runs, a triple, and an RBI; Aubrie Akins was 2-for-3 with a run and Stepp went 2-for-3 with one RBI.

Ludlum walked and went 1-for-2; Bohannon was 1-for-3 with an RBI and Hussion finished 1-for-2.

UC 10, Villa Rica 7 - Holding a slim 7-6 advantage through four innings, Union scored three in the fifth then held Villa Rica to one run in the bottom half of the frame.

Once again, Kinderknecht proved unhittable, striking out 15 batters but Villa Rica scored each of its runs via base-on-balls.

Stepp and Bohannon combined to finish 6-for-6 at the plate with three runs, three doubles, and three RBIs.

Helton went 2-for-3 with two runs and two RBIs; Kinderknecht finished 2-for-3 with two runs; Aubrie Akins turned in a 1-for-2, two-RBI performance; Ludlum finished 1-for-3 with a run and an RBI.

Newton was 1-for-2 with an RBI; Hemphill stole two bases and scored a run; Moss drew a walk.

UC 7, Rossville 4 (8 inn) - Trailing 3-2 through three, Union tied it up in the fourth when Bohannon singled and scored.

Still tied after six innings, Union went down 1-2-3 in the top of the seventh. In the Ros-

ville half of the inning, the Explosion used a walk to put the winning run on third with no outs. With their season hanging by a thread, Kinderknecht responded by striking out the side to keep the Lady Panthers alive.

The momentum carried over to the Union half of the eighth as they scored three times, beginning with a Newton single.

With one down and Newton still on first, Aubrie Akins gave the Lady Panthers the lead with an RBI triple, then Helton made it a 5-3 game with an opposite field single.

Ludlum followed with a double, putting two in scoring position for Stepp, who brought home two with a double to right field.

Rossville got one run back in the eighth with a two-out single but that's all they could muster and Union forced one final game for all the marbles.

UC win by forfeit - A Kinderknecht single and an Aubrie Akins double gave Union an early 1-0 lead.

However, Rossville used three walks and three doubles to grab a 4-1 lead. With runners on

second and third and only one down in the bottom of the first, the Lady Panther coaching staff filed a protest.

And the rest is history.

12U: UC 20, Gordon County 0 - Sierra Burnette and Georgia Patton combined for a three-inning no-hitter as the offense exploded for 20 runs in round one.

The Lady Panthers pounded out 16 hits while scoring six in the first, four in the second, then five in both the third and fourth innings.

Ellie Hernandez finished 3-for-3 with four RBIs while coming a double short of hitting for the cycle.

Jewel Massey went 2-for-3 with a double, three runs, and three RBIs. Kyla Mullanack was 3-for-3 with three runs, two doubles, and two RBIs.

Reese Kelley tripled, scored three times, and drove in a pair. At the plate, Burnette was 2-for-2 with two runs, two RBIs, and a double. Meanwhile, Patton walked and scored twice.

Jaycee Seabolt turned in a 2-for-3, two-RBI performance. Ila Bragg was 1-for-2 with a double, a run, and an RBI.

the circle, combining for seven strikeouts while allowing five hits over five innings.

At the plate, Kelley and Kyla Mullanack each went 2-for-3 with two RBIs. Kelley also homered and scored three runs; Kyla Mullanack doubled and scored twice.

Burnette finished 3-for-3 with three RBIs and two runs while needing only a triple for the cycle.

Seabolt went 2-for-2 with a double, two runs, and an RBI. Massey also finished 2-for-2 with a triple and an RBI. Jordane Mullanack singled and knocked in one; Kennedy scored and was hit by a pitch; Akins walked twice and scored once; Hernandez drew two walks.

UC 14, Hall County 3 - The Lady Panthers sent a clear message that they meant business in the title game.

Union scored four in the first, five in the second, and four in the third to make quick work of Hall.

Bragg got the win from the circle, working three innings and striking out four before giving way to Burnette in the fourth.

Burnette would work a perfect inning with two strikeouts as the Lady Panthers ended the game -- via mercy rule -- after just four innings.

Kelley set the tone from the top of the order, scoring four times during a 2-for-3 day that included a double and two stolen bases.

Kyla Mullanack drove in three and scored three times while finishing 2-for-3 at the dish. Burnette homered in the first, scored three times, and knocked in two during a 3-for-3 performance.

Seabolt went 2-for-2 with two RBIs and a triple; Patton was 1-for-2 with two runs and two RBIs; Massey finished 1-for-2 with a run and an RBI; Hernandez drove in three while going 1-for-2 at the dish.

Jordane Mullanack was a perfect 2-for-2 with an RBI and two steals; Kennedy also turned in a 2-for-2 performance; Akins was hit by a pitch and scored a run.

As for the future of Union County's two State Champions, it's uncertain (as of this writing) whether the teams will participate in the Dizzy Dean World Series.

Summer Charity Ride for The American Legion Post 121, American Legion Riders

Date: 30 June 2018; start location: 78 Old Blue Ridge Highway, the American Legion Post; pre-registration is open. Please forward and email to SMSTRATMAN@LEGIONPOST121.ORG. You will receive a confirmation email that you are registered. Questions, please email SMSTRATMAN@LEGIONPOST121.ORG. Registration day of event will open at 9:45 a.m., 6-30-2018. Kick stands up at 11 a.m. Rider: \$25, couple: \$40. Lunch included for the price above.

The ride will be approximately three (3) hours with rest stops planned. There will also be a 50/50 drawing after the ride, tickets for the drawing will be \$5 each. Proceeds assist ALR with donations to the American Legion Scholarship Fund. Come ride and let us have some fun.

The American Legion is the largest and one of the oldest and most inclusive of all Veteran's organizations worldwide. Due to its large size, it has more influence with Washington officials than most other veteran's groups. The American Legion is a patriotic veteran's organization devoted to mutual helpfulness. It is committed to mentoring youth, advocating patriotism and honor, and promoting strong national security, and continued devotion to our fellow service members and veterans.

Most military veterans are eligible to join the American Legion. You have to have served on active duty for at least some



Register for ALR Charity Ride of your service. You have to have served during certain periods of time, but those periods are very expansive.

If you are a military veteran of any service and are interested in experiencing the type of camaraderie that you experienced during your time in the military, you can join. You can call Commander Mike Ayers (678) 378-4663 or Adjutant Jack Waters at 813-334-7235. Our meetings are on the third Tuesday of each month except December at the Major Leon Donovan Veteran's Center at 78 Blue Ridge Street. The meetings start at 6:30 PM. Prospective members are welcome to just come to a meeting. The more members we have, the more clout we have when our representatives go to Washington.

Also, the more members we have, the more we can do to help veterans who need a hand up from a comrade.

Submitted by Stephen Stratman

Football and Cheerleading Registration



Football and Cheerleading Registration opens at

the Union County Recreation Department



May 7, 2018 - June 29, 2018.

Ages 7-11 as of April 30th

You may register at the Union County Recreation office located at

310 Wellborn Street or online at unioncountygga.gov.



Please call 706-439-6074 with any questions.

Union County FFA Annual Car Wash

When:
June 30th 10 am- 2pm

Where:
Union County Agriscience Center
22 Lovell Dr. Blairsville, GA 30512

Trout stocking sites week of June 18-22, 2018

Fannin: Big Creek, Hemptown Creek, Hothouse Creek, Rock Creek, Toccoa River, and Toccoa River Tailwaters of Lake Blue Ridge (below the dam)
Lumpkin: Etowah River and Niblewill Creek
Union: Cooper Creek and Toccoa River
Note: Information is subject to change. Please call the hatchery at 706-838-4723 for questions. Stay up-to-date with stocking and events through Facebook www.facebook.com/chattahoocheeforestnfh. The hatchery also provides trout for the state. Please contact Georgia DNR for information on sites stocked by the state.