

Sports

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UCRD: 14U Baseball, 12U Softball seasons end at State Tourney

Union County 14U baseball finishes third in State; 12U softball ends up fourth

By Todd Forrest
Sports Editor
sports@ngame.com

The two remaining Union County Recreation Department squads saw their seasons wrap up in each team's respective state tournaments last weekend.

The 14U Panthers baseball team placed third at the Dizzy Dean State Tournament in Ellijay over the weekend.

Both Union County losses came to Druid Hills by scores of 12-1 in pool play and 7-3 in the tournament. The two losses were sandwiched around a 12-0 victory over Paulding County and an 18-2 shellacking of Hall County.

In Carrollton, the 12U softball team was also in action, falling 5-4 to Gordon County and 13-2 to Murray County in pool play. The Lady Panthers would drop a 14-13 decision to No. 1 seed Heard County in the tournament to finish fourth.

Trailing 13-4 after three innings to Heard, Union County roared back with four in the fourth and five in the fifth to tie it up at 13-13.

Heard pushed across the game-winning run in the bottom half of the fifth after game was shortened from six innings due to the time limit.

Jaslyn Roberts tripled, scored twice and drove in four runs while Harmony Lindsey also tripled and knocked in three for the Lady Panthers.

Mikala Souther doubled and scored three times during a 2-for-3 day at the plate. Bella Moss, Aubrie Akins and Kaylee Deyton scored two runs apiece for Union County.



The Union County 12U softball team relaxes following its hard fought contest vs top-seeded Heard County at the State Tournament on Saturday afternoon in Carrollton.

Lily Helton and Aniston Howse added one RBI each. Ayla Stepp and Avery Hussion both scored a run. Zady Ludlum drew a walk and Brooklyn Brown reached on a fielder's choice.

In the opener, the Comeback Kids of the Union County nearly overcame a four-run deficit in a 5-4 loss to Gordon County.

Trailing 4-0 after two innings and 5-1 through four, the Lady Panthers rallied with three in the fifth to pull within a run.

That's as close as they would get, unfortunately, despite out-hitting Gordon 8-3.

Three of those eight hits belonged to Roberts, who finished 3-for-3 with two doubles, two RBIs and a run. She also pitched a complete game, three-hitter on the mound,

striking out four and allowing three earned runs.

Brown went 2-for-3 with a double. Stepp and Ludlum also doubled, while Akins was 1-for-3 with a single. Lindsey and Helton each drew a base on balls.

Game two saw Union fall behind 11-0 after three before eventually falling 13-2 to Murray.

Roberts and Helton were responsible for the Lady Panthers' only hits of the day. Lindsey and Helton supplied the RBIs while Moss and Roberts scored a run.

Moss also stole two bases, was hit by a pitch and reached on an error. Stepp and Deyton each recorded a walk.

About two hours northeast, the 14U baseball team was in the hunt for a state



The Union County 14U baseball team placed third in the State Tournament last weekend in Gilmer County. The Panthers were forced to play top-seeded Druid Hills twice in the first three games despite finishing pool play as the tournament's No. 3 seed

title at Clear Creek Recreation Complex in Gilmer County.

In the second game, Will Duncan, Isaac Cole and Tyler Loyd combined to fire a no-hitter in Union County's 12-0 win over Paulding County.

The trio combined to strike out 10 batters as the Panthers' offense scored three in the first, one each in the second and third, two in the fourth and five in the fifth.

Hunter Fleming scored four times on a triple and three walks; Chris Fletcher scored twice on a triple and a walk.

Cole, Loyd, Jace Vinez, Moses Stephens and Jace Totherow each walked and scored. Zach Raper also added a run for Union County.

During the 18-2 win over Hall County to open tournament play, Duncan got the start on the mound with

Fletcher and Raper entering in relief.

Fletcher also finished with three hits and four runs at the dish; Fleming scored twice with two hits and Cole scored three times.

Loyd tripled and scored; Stein Harkins and Duncan scored twice.

In the final game, Avery Mason, Vinez and Fleming scored Union County's three runs.

On the mound, Cole got the nod before giving way to Fleming and Fletcher in relief.

Druid Hills jumped out to a 6-0 advantage but the Panthers answered with all three of their runs in the third. Druid Hill tacked on a run in the bottom half of the sixth to bring the final count to 7-3.

Druid Hills would take

game one thanks to six-run fourth and a four-run fifth.

Scoreless through two innings, Druid Hills added two in the third and never trailed again. The Panthers got on the board when Mason singled and scored to trim the margin in half.

Druid Hills exploded for six runs in the fourth -- sending 10 batters to the plate.

The Union half of the fourth opened with promise with consecutive walks by Loyd and Totherow but they were unable to push across any runs.

Trailing 8-1, the Panthers surrendered four more in the fifth for a 12-1 score, ultimately ending the game after five innings when Union was unable to score in the bottom half of the inning.



Union County 14U baseball in action during the State Tournament on Saturday at Clear Creek Recreation Complex. Photos by Todd Forrest