

Amber Seeba now a Georgia Highlands Charger

By Todd Forrest
North Georgia News
sports@nganews.com

Union County Lady Panther third baseman Amber Seeba has selected Georgia Highlands College as the next stop of her softball career.

Seeba, the daughter of Kimberly Smith, played softball for four years at Union County where she won two Region 8-AA titles and played for a third.

During her senior campaign, Seeba secured the hot corner for the Lady Panthers where her glove and arm proved vital to the success of Union County. One of her most memorable moments was turning a triple play last summer on her traveling team. Seeba led the Lady Panthers in assists, throwing out 83 runners.

Not only was Seeba a defensive anchor for the Lady Panther infield, she proved she could handle herself at the plate. Thirteen walks was good for



Amber Seeba signs with GHC (middle) along side coaches and family.

second highest on the team, and if you remove all of Hannah Hughes' intentional walks from the equation, Seeba would be tops on the team.

Her 10 RBIs were fifth best on the team, while scoring nine times and posting a .641 OPS.

Since 1970, Georgia High-

lands College has served the citizens of Northwest Georgia and Northeast Alabama. Founded as Floyd Junior College, it now serves more than 5,700 students in the region, and now softball has become a reality.

"I picked Georgia Highlands because it was a new program and there wouldn't be

a lot of pressure," Seeba said. "I felt that I would benefit most at Georgia Highlands. I also loved the school and location."

Seeba will be around some familiar faces when softball season rolls around. Jefferson's Morgan McKinney and Lindsey Miles will join Seeba as a GHC Charger. McKinney was named the 8-AA Pitcher of the Year in 2012. Others from Seeba's State Tournament past headed to GHC are Buford's Jazmin Hawkins, and Rockmart's Brandi Hughes.

While continuing their education, Seeba and her fellow North Georgians will be looking to lay a solid foundation for the future of GHC softball.

"I plan on accomplishing many things," Seeba said. "I want to become a better student and improve in softball. After two years at Georgia Highlands I want to transfer into a bigger school and hopefully get the opportunity to continue to play while working towards getting an engineering degree."

Joe Collins



Tips from the Range

Last week we took a look at ball flight and what causes certain swings to hit it high or low. The basic cause of high and low shots is the arc of the swing but that is not the only determining factor for individual ball flight. Skilled players can have a steep arc and still hit it low and vice versa but normally the swing arc is the main determining factor.

A common known aspect which will affect ball flight is ball position at address. It is true that if you move the ball back of center in your address position it can cause you to hit it lower than you normally do, but did you know that moving the ball back also adds spin and takes away distance? It will!

Moving the ball back at address is a good way to adjust ball flight but it changes your swing dramatically. It requires practice to become accustomed to a new impact point which is very difficult to do without adding hand action. Improper hand action can destroy a good shot and cause all types of other problems. It is vital that you limit hand action to a minimum and allow the arms to rotate through impact. Arm rotation squares the club face correctly where as hand action adds inconsistency through impact.

Being able to adjust your ball flight is something that can enhance your game and get you out of some bad situations. Ever need to hit a shot out from under a tree to get back in play? Have you ever hit a normal shot into the wind and watch the ball rise and fall as it hits an invisible wall of air? Both of these situations require a low ball flight so let's look at the so called "knock-down" shot which is what moving the ball back in your stance creates.

Remember that to adjust normal ball flight height you need only to change the position of the front shoulder on the back swing; down under the chin more for a steeper arc and higher ball flight and higher in the backswing for a lower ball flight.

The knock-down shot is not a normal shot; it is a manipulated movement of the normal

swing. To hit a knock-down shot, you have to swing differently, so let's look at what is required to hit this shot effectively.

First, move the ball back in your stance so that the hands will be ahead of the ball at address. Try and maintain the hands ahead position throughout the downswing and on through impact. This will smother the ball and keep it low and also limit the amount of spin created by moving the ball back in your stance. If the hands break down and the club head gets in the lead on the downswing, there will be way too much spin on the ball due to the hitting effort of the hands. You will create more spin on the ball by moving it back in your stance but limiting the hand action reduces the extra spin effect.

Second, don't shift the weight to the back leg as much as you would on a normal swing but try instead to keep some weight on the front foot during the whole swing. This will promote a more active shoulder turn to build the needed energy it takes to accelerate through impact. Make sure you hit the ball first and don't allow the club to get into the ground before the clubface strikes the ball.

Many of you have seen Tiger Woods hit what he calls "the stinger" off the tee in many different situations and this is the same as a knock-down shot only with a wood or long iron. The advantage you get is not only a lower flight but this shot promotes deadly accuracy. It's okay to give up yardage for accuracy in many cases and that is his philosophy when using this shot. I have heard many good players say they feel like they are smothering the ball when they are hitting it well.

The knock-down shot is a very important shot to have and can be mastered with a little practice. It can even be used in chipping if you are trying to run the ball a long distance to a back pin on a deep green. It is crucial that you learn this shot before you try and apply it to a handicap qualifying round so practice this technique and watch the ball flight start low and stay low.

Next week we will look at what it takes too hit the ball higher which is actually easier than trying to hit it low. Good luck and I will see you on the course!

Swimmers prep for State with Gainesville meets



Ribbon winners from last meet. Left to Right: Lindsey McCann, Anna Knight, Tanner Gay, Ansley Garrison, Nicole Gautieri.

By Todd Forrest
North Georgia News
sports@nganews.com

The Union County Swim Team had six first place finishes at the Riverside Military Academy last month. Sophomore Nicole Gautieri picked up first place in the 50-yard Freestyle and the 100-yard Freestyle.

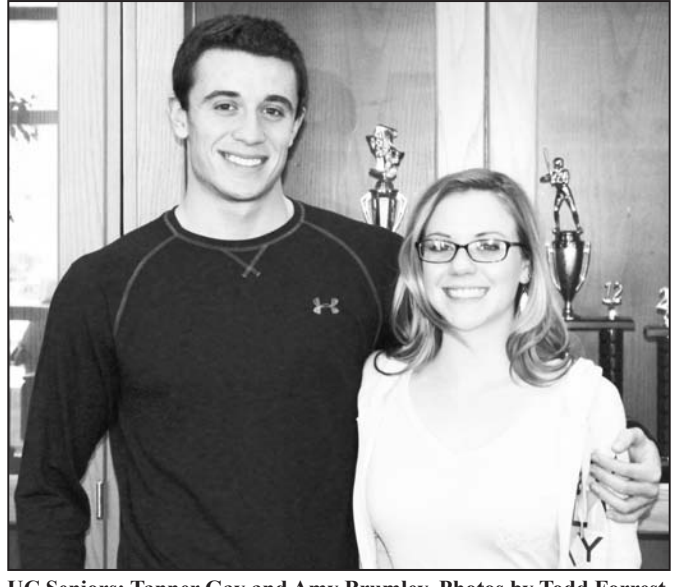
Austin Norton finished first in the 500-yard Freestyle, Senior Tanner Gay was first in the 100-yard Breaststroke. The boys and girls each clocked in first in the 200-yard Freestyle Relay.

Others placing for

Union County was Azaleah Harkins who set a school record when she came in second in the 200-yard Freestyle event. Junior Anna Knight was second in the 50-yard Freestyle and the 100-yard Backstroke, and Gay finished second in the 100-yard Breast stroke, setting a new school record in the process.

The boys' 200-yard Medley Relay team took third place, Brennen Wilkes was third in the 50-yard Freestyle, and Junior Lindsey McCann came in third in the 100-yard Breaststroke.

Harkins, Norton, Joseph Mancuso, Amy Brumley, Lacey



UC Seniors: Tanner Gay and Amy Brumley. Photos by Todd Forrest

Hedger, and Christian Garcia all recorded personal bests at the Riverside Meet.

Last weekend, Union County returned to Gainesville and took part in the Falcon Invitational.

Gautieri finished third in the 50-yard Freestyle, second in the 100-yard Freestyle, and helped lead Union to fourth in the 200-yard Freestyle Relay along with freshman Ansley Garrison, McCann, and Knight.

On Friday Union's Swim Team will travel to Georgia Tech University where Gay will compete in his third State

Meet. "My first year at state I finished towards the bottom but last year I was 28th and I'm hoping to keep moving up in the rankings," Gay said.

Gay will take part in the 200-yard Freestyle Relay, 50-yard Freestyle, and 100-yard Breaststroke.

Joining Gay on the 200-Yard Freestyle will be Mancuso, Norton, and Wilkes.

"We've been preparing for a long time and we're ready," Gay said. "My best event is the 50-yard Free but I'm most looking forward to the relay where I can swim with my teammates."

Lady Panthers fall at Rabun, still tied atop 8-AA

By Todd Forrest
North Georgia News
sports@nganews.com

Tiger - Last week Rabun County Head Coach Dee Dee Dillard used the *North Georgia News* as motivation.

The coach pinned the newspaper article regarding Union's 41-40 victory over the Lady Cats to the locker room bulletin board to fire up her team.

With the game not counting towards the Region standings, Rabun, who had the night off on Tuesday, took advantage of the extended rest, the emotions of Senior Night and an "inspiring" newspaper clipping to take a 54-38 victory over the Lady Panthers.

Whatever the means, in the end, the culprit for Union's loss was turnovers and a 12-2 fourth quarter run that put the Lady Panthers away.

Rabun converted six Union turnovers into 11 points during a 24-16 Lady Cat advantage at the half. The halftime score was identical to the score after two quarters of the previous meeting. This time the Lady

Panthers were unable to work their second half magic.

Early on it looked as if Lady Luck belonged to the Lady Panthers when Union overcame a 6-0 deficit to take a 10-9 lead when Lauren Zollinger banked in a long trey as the first quarter horn sounded.

Union didn't put any points on the board until the 2:41 mark when Brooke Maddox scored on a lay up. Zollinger followed her up with two from the stripe, 21 seconds later. With Rabun ahead 9-4, Hannah Hughes connected from long distance before Zollinger found the bank open at the buzzer.

The second quarter opened with a Carly Adams lay up, giving Union a 12-9 advantage for their final lead of the evening.

A 10-0 Lady Cat run gave them a 19-12 lead when a jumper by Hughes and a lay in by Shawna Brown were sandwiched around a Rabun free throw and a trey. The Lady Cats sank another from the line for a 24-16 halftime score.

Union posted a team-high 17 points in the third quarter but Rabun finished with 18.



Lisa Nalasci scored 6 points and had 5 boards. Photo/Todd Forrest

Zollinger and Hughes scored 5 each with Lisa Nalasci adding 4, Jeanelle Arnold had 2, and Brown went 1-for-2 at the line.

Zollinger capped off the quarter with a driving bank shot at the buzzer getting Union within 9 entering the fourth.

An early trey by Brown made it a 42-26 Rabun advantage but the Lady Cats closed on a 12-2 run for their 16-point win.

Zollinger finished with 10 points, 5 rebounds, and 4 assists.

Hughes also scored 10 points.

Nalasci finished with 6 points and 5 boards, Brown had 6 points and 2 blocks. Arnold had 2 points, 8 boards, and 4 assists. Meanwhile Maddox and Adams scored 2 each.

Union County is still tied for first in 8-AA and can snatch the No. 1 seed with a Rabun win over Greene on Thursday, followed by a Union win at Washington-Wilkes on Saturday.

Panthers prevail...continued from Page 10A

Coyne grabbed 12 boards and 4 points.

The Panthers will visit Riverside Military on Tuesday at 6 p.m. before hosting Jefferson for Senior Night on Friday at 7 p.m. The Panthers will then travel to Washington-Wilkes on Saturday.

The Region 8-AA Tournament will tip-off next week and Rowe is hoping the momentum from Rabun will carry

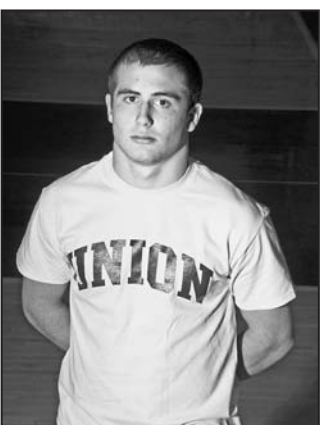
over into this week and the postseason.

"Rabun was definitely a big win because we haven't always been close here in the past," Rowe said. "It's a boost for us and one of our biggest wins of the year. We played well as a team tonight and it should carry over into next week. We expect to play well against Riverside, just like we did the last time."

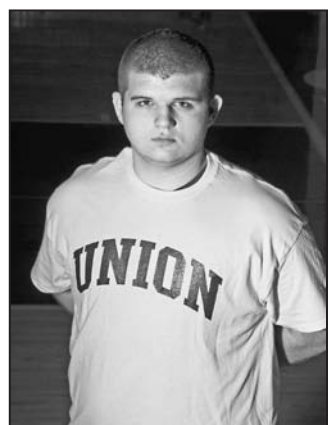


Zach Odom went 5-for-6 from the line at Rabun County, including two huge free throws with nine seconds left. Photo/Todd Forrest

Brewer, Barnett place; qualify for Sectionals



Chase Barnett



Keith Brewer

Norcross - Union County took 7th place at its first Area Tournament and had seven placers. Guess who is going to sectionals: "Big Cat" Keith Brewer, a senior at 285 pounds and sophomore Chase Barnett at 182 pounds.

Union had three in the Semi Finals and seven in the Semi Consuls.

The State Sectional Tournament will be held this weekend in Dublin.

Congrats Chase and Keith.

NEW! Now being offered... Get in shape this season with the Fitness/Kickboxing class now being offered by the Blairsville School of Dance Thursdays at 6:30

Blairsville School of Dance
706-897-2042



Mountain Area Christian holds its Senior Night



Left Photo: L-R Coach Steve Shamblin (athletic director), Senior Cheerleader Callie Sharkey, and Junior Madison Kelley. Coach Shamblin presented Callie with roses. Madison presented Callie with a megaphone that had been signed by all the cheerleaders. Right Photo: Will Harbin presenting roses to his mother, Lyn Harbin. Coach Wade Taylor presented Will with a basketball signed by all the basketball players. MACA routed Trimont last Tuesday night as they honored their seniors.

