

Sports

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Preseason: Lady Panthers rally past Fannin

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After a pair of lightning delays, Union County struck for two runs in the bottom of the fifth during a walk-off win over the Fannin County Lady Rebels in a time-limit shortened contest.

Fannin put a run on the board in the first and two runs in the third to take a 3-1 lead.

Union tied things up at 1-1 in the second before trimming the lead to 3-2 in the fourth. The Lady Panthers loaded the bases in their final at bat, leading to two runs after Fannin imploded courtesy of two wild pitches, two walks, and an error.

In the inning, junior Crystal Busbee got things going with a leadoff walk and reached second on a wild pitch. Freshman Laken Chambers lined a shot off the pitcher for a base hit, putting runners at the corners with one out.

Freshman Kendra Tanner pinch ran for Chambers and quickly stole second. With two runners in scoring position, junior Courtney Busbee reached on a Lady Rebel error, bringing in her sister Crystal for the tying run.

Junior Haylle King walked to load the bases for sophomore Maddie Garrett. However, Garrett didn't get a chance to win the game with her bat as Tanner scored the game winner on another Fannin wild pitch.

Junior first baseman Kelsey Nix provided Union with a pair of two-out RBI singles. Her first came in the second where she scored senior Allie Stroman, who walked.

In the fourth, she scored Stroman again, who had doubled to right-center.

Crystal Busbee worked a complete game from the circle for Union, surrendering six hits, a walk, a hit batter, while fanning two.

The Lady Panther pitcher allowed two hits in the first but suffered from a one-out error. She sat the Lady Rebels down in order in the second but a lead-off error, two singles, a walk and a hit batter led to two more Fannin runs in the inning.

Garrett's arm prevented the Lady Rebels from tacking on another run when the centerfielder cut down a Fannin runner at the plate for the first out.

The Lady Rebels managed a two-out single in the fourth and a two-out double in the fifth but Union was able to slam the door in both cases.

Chambers finished the day 2-for-3, Crystal Busbee went 1-for-2 with a walk and a run. Courtney Busbee walked and reached twice on errors. Stroman went 1-for-1 with two runs, a walk, and a double. King was 0-for-2 with a walk, freshman Lydia Arrowood reached on an error, senior Madison Rich had a sacrifice bunt, and



Freshman Laken Chambers singles in the fifth to extend the rally.



Junior catcher Courtney Busbee fires to first.



Junior Kelsey Nix with one of her two RBI singles during the game.

Tanner added a run. The Lady Panthers improve to 6-0 in Summer League action but have a tough road ahead as they host Heritage-Conyers, Gilmer County, and Fannin County on Tuesday.

Play begins at 2 p.m. when Union faces a tough Heritage-Conyers squad. At 3:30 p.m. Fannin County will get a crack at Heritage-Conyers. At 5 p.m. Fannin takes on Gilmer County before the Lady Panthers round out the day's action in a 6:30 p.m. meeting with Gilmer.

The Lady Panthers also hosted Towns and Fannin on Monday but results were unavailable at press time.



Tanner scores the game-winner.



Karly Nix



Crystal Busbee



Senior outfielder Allie Stroman goes opposite field.

Union County Summer League Softball pictures by Todd Forrest

Joe Collins



Tips from the Range

There is a dedicated area in the golf swing that will give you the feedback you need to better your swing and as a result enjoy your time on the golf course.

You can swing the club in any way you see fit, but if your movement isn't solid in this part of the swing, your will never hit the shots you know you are capable of. It is where the swing starts and stops with every swing of the club and it can assure you of a consistent swing with almost every effort if done correctly. The balance and center of your swing passes through this position every time and can be extremely affected if you move poorly. You hear a lot about it but rarely is it given the level of importance it should. Good ball strikers and solid competitive players know that a good or bad swing is born with? Proper Footwork. It is proper footwork that will make your swing work and help you maintain your center of gravity throughout the whole swing process. It is a very important component of consistent golf.

Go to a PGA tour event and don't be shocked if you see one or more players practicing with their shoes off. It is a great way to learn the feel of how the balance works from the start to the finish of any golf swing. The great Sam Snead would practice with his shoes off and it would help him play better. The pro know the benefit of proper footwork and you need to understand it too.

Proper footwork is dependent on being in the correct set-up. It is very important to be the right distance from the ball at address so that you do not have to lean in and reach for the ball to get the club behind it. This lean will place your balance on the forward part of the feet and make it impossible to move correctly. It is vital for your weight to pass through the ankle to the ground and not on the front of the foot. If the balance in the feet is proper, you will feel a tightening in the hamstring muscle located in the upper back of the rear leg. Concentrate on "sitting" down in this muscle and stay there. The great Ben Hogan said, "I feel like I'm sitting on the edge of a bar stool and staying there until after impact." This is a perfect example of how it feels to stay within your center of gravity on every swing.

What is the proper way in which to work the feet? I am glad you asked me that! Here it is. First, you must work the feet in a way that promotes a good athletic move through the ball. It should be a balanced move that builds acceleration from the top of the swing and on through impact so that the arms will extend through the hitting area and on into the follow through. It should feel slightly like you are reaching for the ball at impact from the back of your center of gravity. Keeping the knees relaxed and bent until shortly after impact really helps with this especially if you are having balance issues.

Next you must focus on keeping the feet in touch with the ground. The soles of your feet must stay connected to the ground in order for the swing to be in control. Everywhere I go I see golfers swinging to hard and losing contact with the ground. Many good moves at the ball are spent before impact because of poor footwork. The left heel will leave the ground and the front inside big toe will load up on weight during the back swing and the only thing left is the over the top sling with a lot of hands on the downswing.

Allow the front foot to roll in slightly and move your weight to the back leg with a solid back foot that is flat on the ground or possibly a little heavy on the outside edge of the shoe but not disconnected from the ground at all. Keep the feet grounded until the arms and club have moved through impact and this will ensure that your swing is controlled with the big muscles and that is very important for proper distance. The big muscles move slower than the small muscles so give your swing time to work and be patient out of the top.

Proper footwork will level your swing and focus your attention to swinging within your own power. You will be reminded time and again that your balance needs attention by maintaining correct foot placement and positioning throughout the swing.

Go ahead! Take your shoes off! Stay awhile, and practice barefooted to learn the correct feel of what your connection to the ground should be. Learn to feel the correct feeling in your feet when you play. Your swing will immediately become more controllable and will now perform within your individual ability. You must swing within your own control or you will be forced to use your hands and then the trouble will start.

Good luck and I will see you on the course!



Haylle King



Lydia Arrowood



Madison Rich



Maddie Garrett throws out a Fannin Co. runner at the plate.

Blairsville PTO, INC.

1st Annual S.O.S. Glow Golf Tournament
(Support Our Schools) 4 Person Scramble

Friday, July 26

Butternut Creek Golf Course
Blairsville, GA

Awards for:

Top Gross Foursome • Top Net Foursome
2nd Place Net Foursome • 3rd Place Foursome

Incredible Raffle Prizes & Putting Contest

Registration: \$75 per player • \$300 per foursome

Registration starts at 4 p.m.

Tee Off @ 5:30 p.m. • Dinner/Raffle @ 8 p.m.

Glow Golf Begins @ 8:45 p.m.

Awards at Conclusion of Play!

Player 1: _____ Handicap: _____ Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Player 2: _____ Handicap: _____ Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Player 3: _____ Handicap: _____ Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Player 4: _____ Handicap: _____ Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

MUSA registration underway

Mountain United Soccer Association is ready for Fall Soccer.

Registrations are currently being accepted. Forms have been mailed to players who have participated in previous seasons.

Forms are also available by visiting the league's website: www.mountainsoccer.org.

In Blairsville, Cott Beverage is our community host for the soccer fields. In Hia-

wassee, the fields at the Towns County Fairgrounds are utilized through the cooperation of the local recreation department. The league is grateful for their commitment and support.

The fall season will begin in early September. Anyone who is interested in playing needs to register promptly. In some cases space is limited.

MUSA is a volunteer run organization and is also a 501C3 nonprofit. Any and all donations are directed to the

youth player. Field Sponsors, Sign Sponsors and Team Sponsors are always needed.

If you are interested in supporting the youth soccer players in our community through sponsorship and/or donation, please contact the association.

For additional information contact the league at 706-994-4351, m.usa.soccer@gmail.com or visit us on the web at www.mountainsoccer.org.

Mail form & payment (check/money order) to

Blairsville PTO

P.O. Box 1059

Blairsville, GA 30514

or email registration info to blairsville_pto@ucschools.org



For more information on the tournament call 706.935.5322 or email blairsville_pto@ucschools.org.