

Baseball: Greater Atlanta Christian, Murphy, NC overpower Panthers

Allison goes the distance in Union County's 4-3 win over Eagles Landing Christian

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Union County (7-15, 1-11) suffered a three-game sweep at the hands of Greater Atlanta Christian last week on the heels of an 11-2 loss to unbeaten Murphy, NC on Monday.

The Panthers did pick up their seventh win of the year on Thursday, a 4-3 victory over Eagles Landing Christian Academy. Sophomore left-hander Pierson Allison tossed his first career complete game, scattering five hits and five walks while giving up two earned runs over seven innings.

Panthers 4, ELCA 3 - The Chargers took advantage of leadoff walks in the first, second, and sixth innings to grab an early 2-0 advantage before Union County tied things up with two in the bottom half of the second on a Del Ruff two-run single.

Cole Davis reached with a one-out walk and Ean Harkins doubled to left, setting the table for Ruff.

Tied at 2-2, Allison pitched around a one-out single in the third and a two-out walk in the fourth, allowing the Panthers to grab a 4-2 lead thanks to a two-run single by RJ Banton.

Ruff was hit by a pitch and Alec Scott singled to right with one down. Following a line-out and a Logan Dyer walk to load the bases, Banton delivered a two-out, two-run single to center.

After a two-out single in the fifth inning was stranded by Allison, ELCA manufactured a run in the sixth with a leadoff walk, a sacrifice bunt, a passed ball, and an RBI groundout. Allison would slam the door in the seventh, however, with a 1-2-3 inning to secure the first complete game victory of his high school varsity career.

Banton finished 2-for-3 with 2 RBIs at the plate; Ruff went 1-for-1 with two RBIs and Harkins was 1-for-2 with a run. Davis, Cayden Rich, and Chayton Schafer each scored a run for the Panthers as the bottom half of the Union County lineup accounted for all four runs, two RBIs, and three of the five hits.

Panthers 2, Murphy, NC 11 - The undefeated and second-ranked Bulldogs used back-to-back homers in the third to open up a 5-0 advantage and seize control following two solid innings Davis.

With the exception of a solo-shot in the second, the senior lefty was sharp and kept the Panthers in the game until



Pierson Allison went seven innings vs ELCA. Photo/Todd Forrest

a four-run third put Union in a five-run hole.

After inducing a groundout to lead off the inning, a base hit and a dropped pop-up put two aboard for the first homer of the inning - a three-run blast to left. The ensuing batter wasted little time extending the lead as he sent the first pitch over the left field fence for a 5-0 lead.

Davis went on to retire the next five batters before giving way to Patrick Baggett to start the fifth.

The Bulldogs would tuck on two more in the inning with a leadoff triple and an error followed by a walk, hit batter, and a sacrifice fly.

Trailing 7-0, the Panthers stranded two in their half of the fifth after Scott singled and Baggett walked. Union County finally got on the board in the sixth when Schafer reached on an error and Hunter Kelley scored him with an RBI triple.

The Panthers comeback chances went from slim-to-none thanks to a four-run seventh. A one-out, two-run single made it 9-1, then a two-out, RBI double and an infield error added two more runs.

Union got a run in its final at-bat when Ruff reached on a fielder's choice and advanced to second on an error, allowing Banton to score him with an RBI single.

The Panthers finished with three hits and four walks while striking out 12 times. Baggett accounted for three of the free passes while the other was issued to Coleson Daniel.

Davis allowed four hits and four earned while fanning three over four innings. Baggett surrendered five hits, six runs -- three earned -- and two walks

during three innings of work.

Panthers 4, GAC 10 (Game One) - A six-run fourth spotted the Spartans a 10-2 lead, which was more than enough to take the first contest in the Region 7-AAA series.

GAC grabbed an early 4-0 lead with a run in the second and three in the third but the Panthers answered back with two in the bottom half of the third.

Rich, the starting pitcher, helped himself with a leadoff single then Schafer drew a walk. Allison -- courtesy runner for Rich -- stole a pair of bases putting runners at second and third for Baggett, who scored Allison with a sacrifice bunt.

With two down, Banton knocked in Scott -- courtesy runner for Schafer -- with a single to center, slicing the Spartan lead in half at 4-2.

After a groundout to open the inning, Rich ran into serious trouble in the fourth. Two walks, an RBI single, and an RBI double brought Harkins to the mound with a runner at first and his team trailing 6-2.

Another walk was followed by a hit batter, a bases-loaded triple, and an RBI double for a 10-2, GAC advantage.

Davis and Kelley opened the bottom of the fourth with back-to-back singles. A sacrifice bunt by Candler Colwell moved them into scoring position for Harkins, who made it a 10-4 game with a two-run single to right.

Harkins would go on to work three scoreless innings, yielding just one hit and one walk but the offense was unable to put a dent in the Spartans six-run lead.

Harkins finished 2-for-2 with two RBIs at the dish while allowing three hits and three earned in 3.2 innings on the hill.

Rich allowed seven hits and seven runs -- four earned -- in 3.1 innings of work; he also



RJ Banton led Union with four RBIs last week. Photo/Todd Forrest

went 1-for-1 with the bat.

Daniel went 1-for-2 with Union's only extra-base hit, a leadoff double in the second. Jackson Colwell also recorded a base hit while Allison scored twice and Jonathan Everett scored as a pinch runner in the fourth.

Panthers 7, GAC 12 (Game Two) - NORCROSS - The Spartans out-slugged the Panthers in a contest that saw 20 hits and 19 runs between the two squads.

GAC's Pirmin Prechbuhl went yard twice during a 3-for-4, five RBI performance. With Union already trailing 6-2 in the fifth, Prechbuhl smacked a three-run homer to left; then he gave his team a little more breathing room in the sixth when his blasted a two-run shot to make it a 12-7 game.

Meanwhile, Harkins continued to rake, going 2-for-4 with a double, two runs, and an RBI. Banton doubled and scored during a 1-for-3 outing; Daniel also doubled and scored while finishing 1-for-4.

Down 2-0 in the fourth, Davis tied things up with a two-run single, scoring Harkins and courtesy runner John Mancuso.

GAC would answer with four in the bottom half of the inning, then add four more in the fifth.

Union County refused to go away, putting up a 5-spot in the sixth, trimming the margin to 10-7. Banton reached on an error to lead off the inning then back-to-back doubles from Daniel and Harkins resulted in a run. Following a Kelley base-on-balls, Jackson Colwell brought home Daniel and Harkins with a base hit.

A Candler Colwell single made it a 10-6 game then an Alec Scott fielder's choice tacked on another run. Unfortunately, the inning would come to an abrupt end when a line-out back to the pitcher resulted in an inning-

allowed three hits and one earned over three innings but four unearned runs were the difference.

Ruff entered in the fourth and tossed the final three innings, giving up six hits and six earned runs.

The Panthers scored three in the fifth on three walks, a base hit, a sacrifice fly, and an error. Dyer put Union on the board when he brought home Candler Colwell with a fly ball to left, then a two-run error off the bat of Daniel scored Baggett and Schafer, who was running for Scott.

The last three runs came with the Panthers down to their final out. Schafer and Allison each drew a walk and scored via an infield error off the bat of Harkins. Everett made it an 11-6 game with an RBI single - scoring Harkins.

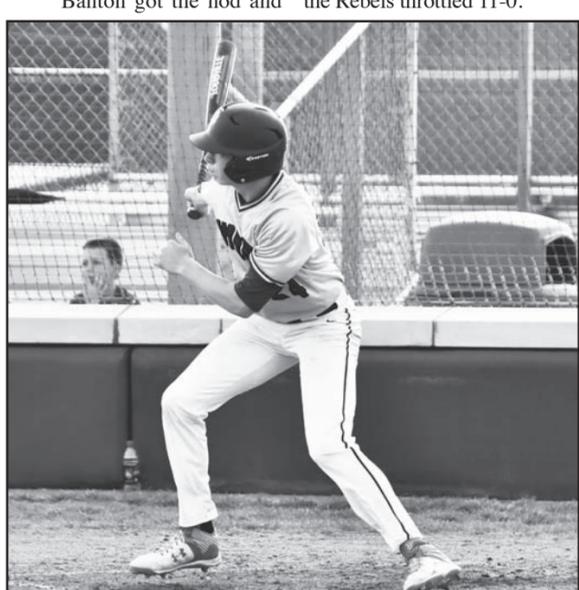
Everett finished 1-for-3 with a walk and one RBI. Dyer went 1-for-1 with a walk and an RBI; Scott was 1-for-3; Schafer scored twice while Allison, Harkins, Baggett and Candler Colwell added one run apiece.

Looking ahead - Union County was scheduled to visit Rabun Gap in a non-region contest on Monday before resuming Region 7-AAA action at Fanning County on Tuesday. First pitch is set for 5:55 p.m.

The series concludes Friday with a doubleheader in Blairsville beginning at 5 p.m.

The Rebels are 13-10 overall and 8-7 in region play. They are coming off a three-game sweep of Lumpkin County and are currently riding a five-game winning streak dating back to the East Hall series, where they won two straight after dropping game one.

Fanning lost two-of-three to GAC, was swept by North Hall, and took two-of-three from Dawson County. Another common opponent is Gilmer, who the Rebels throttled 11-0.



Ean Harkins drives in two with a single vs GAC. Photo/Todd Forrest

Alex Kiernan of Blairsville finishes college basketball career

Blairsville's own Alex Kiernan has finished her college basketball career at Berry College. Alex is a multi-position shooting guard/forward for the Berry College Vikings. Kiernan was named Captain this year and is known for her hustle, as well as her 3-point shooting. The guard had a career high 17 points during an upset against the conference leader Oglethorpe University, including five 3-pointers. Kiernan played all four years for Berry and loved getting to play with her teammates.

Kiernan played high school basketball for Mountain Area Christian Academy. While there she was named All-state two times, won 2 State Championships, and racked up over 1,000 points, under Coach Steve Shamblin.

Alex is a marketing major and plans to work in the sports marketing field upon graduation. She has worked at Berry all four years in the sports and recreation departments performing marketing and other duties.

Alex attends Northside



Alex Kiernan

Church in Rome, GA, and appreciates all their support especially Pastor Phil Wade, the Team's Character Coach. Kiernan would like to thank all her teammates, family, friends and supporters for all they poured into her over her basketball career. She is especially thankful for God's faithfulness. N(Apr11Z17)CA



Following the win over ELCA, both teams come together at the pitcher's mound for a moment of unity and prayer. Photo/Todd Forrest

S.A.F.E. to host Annual S.A.F.E. Kids Fishing Derby

Mark your calendar, Towns and Union counties families for a fun filled day on Saturday, May 19, 2018, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.! S.A.F.E. (Support in Abusive Family Emergencies) will be hosting the First Annual S.A.F.E. Kids Fishing Derby at Nottely Marina, located at 86 Doucette Circle in Blairsville.

The S.A.F.E. Kids Fishing Derby will be a music filled fun event! Enjoy yummy food, make friends, and do some fishing. There will be on shore fishing games to entertain younger children. Elementary and middle school kids will win awards for the tiniest fish, the first catch, the ugliest fish, the prettiest fish. There will also be four S.A.F.E. Fishing Derby awards for the biggest fishes caught.



Lunch plates will be available for sale as well as other fun snacks and beverages. There will also be a raffle for a Six Hour Jon Boat Rental and a Family Paddle Day Raffle. This is a free event and parking is also free. Adults must accompany children.

Other highlights of the day will include representatives from the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and Lake Nottely Improvement Association.

To help provide information about conservation

and preservation (if you're not going to eat it, don't kill it), event officials will immediately weigh, measure and evaluate each fish caught, and take a photo of each young sports enthusiast and the fish caught. If families wish to keep their catch, they are welcome to do so. If not, the fish will promptly be returned to the water.

S.A.F.E. thanks the following local businesses for providing prizes and for sponsoring this event: Cook's Country Kitchen; Hughes General Store; Ingles, Blairsville; Lake Chatuge Marine; and Nottely Marina Paradise Bait & Tackle.

Additional event sponsorships and prizes are welcome, and needed! All proceeds from this event benefit S.A.F.E. www.SAFEServices.

org. Donations are tax deductible. To make an event donation, call or text 404 664-1328.

The Mission of S.A.F.E. (Support in Abusive Family Emergencies) is to provide support, advocacy, and emergency shelter to victims of domestic abuse, child abuse and sexual abuse, regardless of gender, and to heighten community awareness of such abuse in Towns and Union counties.

The S.A.F.E. Kids Fishing Derby event is a great opportunity to socialize and to celebrate the fact that school is almost over. So, "Y'all" come!

Submitted by
Deb S. Curlette, Ph.D.,
President, S.A.F.E.
Board of Directors