

# SOFTBALL, BASEBALL TEAMS FALL INTO DISTRICT TOURNAMENT LOSERS' BRACKETS



**Above:** Crockett outfielders Hannah Carter (left) and Sadie Hoover are all smiles after each of them made outstanding catches near the fence on long smashes by the Lady Hornets. (Photo by Ron Barry)

## By Ron Barry

Their backs are now against the proverbial wall – and the wall is three stories high.

If Crockett County's softball and baseball teams want to see their seasons continue beyond the district tournaments, each of them is going to have to win three games to stay alive. Any loss before a third win brings the 2024 spring campaign to a halt.

The Lady Cavalier softballers jumped to two early leads on the strength of a pair of home runs from senior catcher Lynden Cole, but a solid South Gibson lineup kept swinging the bats and managed a 7-4 opening-round triumph in the District 13-AAA Tournament at Medina. Play shifts to Dyer County in Newbern for the remainder of the event.

The Cav baseballers were shut out for the second time in the last 10 days by South Gibson's Jack Bradberry, dropping a 3-0 decision to the Hornets in their District 13-AAA opener in Newbern.

Barring weather postponements – and Friday's forecast has rain predicted for much of the day in West Tennessee – the baseball club will face Obion County at 4:30 in Newbern in an elimination game. Over on the softball field at 5:00, Crockett's softballers will also be facing Obion in an effort to keep their season alive.

A recap of Thursday's sports action, including Crockett's tennis teams in district tournament play in Medina...

**SOFTBALL:** The Lady Cavs' tournament opener couldn't have started more optimistically after a Piper White leadoff single, a run-scoring double just inside the left-field foul line by Destiny Foster, and a titanic two-run homer on a 2-and-2 pitch by Cole gave Crockett a 3-0 edge after the top of the first.

But the Lady Cavs missed a scoring opportunity in the second when they loaded the bases with one out, but a potential sacrifice fly by Foster was turned into a double play when Lady Hornet center fielder Mary Teague gunned down a Crockett baserunner at the plate to end the threat with Cole waiting on deck to hit.

South Gibson promptly tied it up in the bottom of the second when an infield error allowed a two-out baserunner for Hallie Allen – one of the best athletes in West Tennessee – and the SGC shortstop cranked a two-run homer after working a full count and then fouling off three pitches. Three straight singles followed to plate the frame's third tally before Crockett center fielder Hannah Carter thwarted an even bigger rally with a diving catch near the right-center fence of a long drive by Sydney Scott.

With the score now 3-3, Cole led off the Lady Cav third by working a full count and then blasting her second home run of the day – and 11th of the season – just inside the left field foul pole, putting the visitors back on top 4-3. Brooklyn Davidson answered that blast with one of her own to begin the South Gibson third, and only a nice running catch of an Allen drive into the right field corner by Sadie Hoover kept the game deadlocked at 4-4.

At that point – over the final four frames – Lady Hornet pitcher Hailey Stines began effectively changing speeds, and almost every Crockett batter was lunging off their front foot for the remainder of the contest. Cleanup hitter Kinleigh Lamb was the only Lady Cav to collect a hit over the final four stanzas.

"When you play a team as good as South Gibson," Coach David Barker said, "you're probably only going to get one good pitch to hit in an at-bat. And we were letting too many of those pitches go by without swinging, which then meant Stines was having us try to hit the pitches she wanted to throw. She changed speeds well, and we weren't getting a barrel on them."

Even so, Crockett again loaded the bases in the fifth with one out when Foster reached on an error, Cole was intentionally walked, and Lamb delivered her single. But a strikeout and groundout kept the Lady Cavs off the board again.

By then, South Gibson was back in the lead because Davidson followed a pair of fourth-inning walks with a line-drive double to the right-center gap, giving the hosts a 6-4 advantage. Scott doubled home the game's final tally in the bottom of the sixth.

Cole was the lone Lady Cav with two hits. Davidson and Teague accomplished the feat for South Gibson.

So now it's win or go home for the next three times Crockett takes the field in Newbern, beginning with the Obion matchup at 5:00 Friday – weather permitting. The Lady Cavs are 18-12-1 for the season.

**BASEBALL:** On April 23, South Gibson's Bradberry blanked the Cavs on five hits, with six strikeouts and no walks. Thursday afternoon in Newbern he was just as stingy, yielding just four hits and a pair of walks in shutting out Crockett again.

The Hornets averted a Cav rally in the first by turning a double play off a hard Carter Winders line drive to third after a walk to Reed Ingram and a double by Brady Fronabarger. But Gage Nesbitt snared Winders' screamer and picked Ingram off second for the third out, and Crockett never had two baserunners on at the same time for the rest of the game.

In the meantime, the Hornets struck for a pair in the third on a Tommy Baker single and stolen base, an RBI single by Tatum Crosser, and a double to left by Nesbitt. South Gibson tallied its final run in the sixth on a walk, a Landon Davis single, a passed ball, and an RBI groundout by Jackson Williams.



Crockett's Winders went the distance on the mound, yielding just five hits, but the Cavs' lack of offense negated the effort. Callan Willis was the lone Crockett player with two hits. They dropped to 11-10-1 on the season and must defeat Obion at 4:30 Friday if they wish to advance to the next round on Monday.

**TENNIS:** Crockett's girls could find themselves with a unique opportunity Friday in Medina if their top singles players can keep the magic going. Both Izzy Yearwood and Brennan Morris – playing in opposite brackets – posted two victories Thursday, and if each of them can win one more match, they'll play each other for the district's individual title.

Yearwood defeated Azarria Conerly of Jackson North Side 8-3 and then won a pressure-packed 7-5 tiebreaker for a 9-8 triumph over South Gibson's McKenzie Sherer to gain her semifinal berth. She'll face Chester County's Katie Lovelace, who knocked off players from Lexington and Haywood to reach the semis.

Morris bested Haywood's Jakyla Hughes 8-4 in her opener and then toppled Dyer County's Aylin Ramirez 8-3 to gain a semifinal berth. She's set to face Hardin County's Emma Austin, who has defeated players from South Gibson and Chester County to reach the semis.

On the boys' side of the bracket, Crockett's Jack Sanders won his first match 8-4 over Bryce Morris of South Gibson, but fell in the second round to Nathan Roach 8-3. The Cavs' Baker Jones and Miles McCarter won their doubles opener against Dyer County's Ryan DeSpain and Drayce Wright, but then dropped an 8-5 decision to Chester County's Lane Patton and Luke Melton.

Lane Hamilton (singles) and Adam Booker and Haydan Castillo (doubles) played first-round matches but did not advance for Crockett, as did Lady Cavaliers Ashley Boone and Miley Silva (doubles).

**SOCCER:** Crockett's top-seeded club learned its district tournament semifinal opponent will be Obion County after the Rebels defeated Dyer County 5-0 Thursday night. Coach Stan Jamscek's Cavs will be hosting the remainder of the tournament Tuesday and Thursday of next week at Cavalier Stadium.

Crockett will face Obion at 7:00 Tuesday following a 5:30 semifinal between South Gibson and Dyersburg.



**Above:** Senior catcher Lynden Cole hammers this pitch for a mammoth home run over the left-field fence in the first inning of Thursday's District 13-AAA Tournament game against South Gibson. (Photo by Ron Barry)



**Above:** You can't pitch in a district tournament game until your hair has been properly braided by your first baseman. Here Jayden Maddox (right) performs the honors for Anna Stallings. (Photo by Ron Barry)



**Above:** Crockett third baseman Gabby Bursey -- only a freshman -- is congratulated by junior Piper White after making a nice play from the hot corner. (Photo by Ron Barry)

**Right:** South Gibson catcher Camryn Hays applies this tag on a sliding Jayden Maddox to get an out call on a potential sacrifice fly, although it looks as though Maddox has quite a bit of leg in the home plate area ahead of the tag. (Photo by Ron Barry)

**Below:** Lady Cav designated hitter Destiny Foster doubled in Crockett's first run of the game after a leadoff single by Piper White in the opening inning. (Photo by Ron Barry)



**Above:** Karly Pigue kept the reserves fired up in the dugout throughout the game before making a pinch-hit appearance in the sixth frame for Crockett. (Photo by Ron Barry)







**Above:** Crockett shortstop Piper White tries to turn a double play as a sliding Annie Whittemore arrives at second base for South Gibson. White later made a terrific play from the hole at short after knocking down a bullet base hit and throwing out a Lady Hornet runner at the plate. (Photo by Ron Barry)



**Left:** As Lynden Cole rounds second base after her second homer of the game, she exchanges a mutual glance of respect with SGC shortstop Hallie Allen, who hit a home run an inning earlier for the Lady Hornets. (Photo by Ron Barry)

**Below:** Lynden Cole is adorned with the golden chain in the dugout after her second home run of the game, her 11th of the season. The Pensacola State signee drove in three of the Lady Cavs' four runs. (Photo by Ron Barry)



**Right:** Lady Cav second baseman Kinleigh Lamb hit this sharp single to left field in the fifth, but was the only Crockett player to manage a hit over the final four innings. (Photo by Ron Barry)



**Above:** Brennan Morris (left) and Izzy Yearwood pose with the results of the singles play brackets after Thursday's district tournament play. Both Crockett players are in the semifinals, in opposite brackets. (Photo courtesy of Sarah Kennedy)



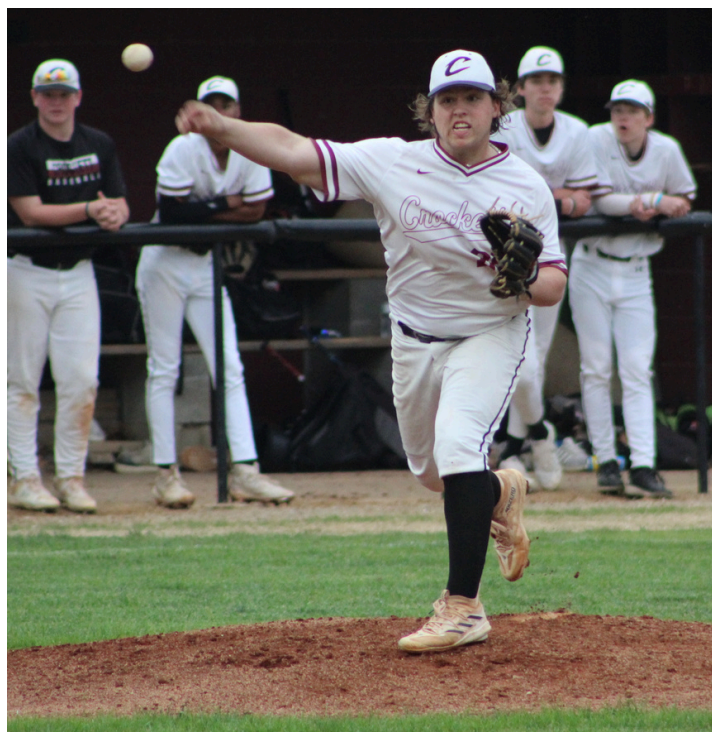
**Above:** Crockett's Izzy Yearwood has reached the semifinals of the district tournament with two victories Thursday, and enters Friday's play with a chance ... (Photo by Ron Barry)





**Above:** ... to play teammate Brennan Morris for the singles championship if each can win one more match. Morris won twice Thursday as well. (Photo by Ron Barry)

**Below:** Carter Winders went the distance for Crockett's baseballers on the mound in Newbern, but the Cav offense couldn't muster any run support against South Gibson's Jack Bradberry. (Photo by Ron Barry)



**Left:** Callan Willis was the only Cavalier diamonder to collected more than one hit in the 3-0 loss to the Hornets. (Photo by Ron Barry)