

# LADY CAV SOFTBALLERS EARN #1 SEED FOR SARAH BETH WHITEHEAD TOURNAMENT BRACKET



**Above:** Piper Smith used her speed and ball placement prowess to get three hits and three RBIs as Crockett crushed Millington 18-0 in Jackson Thursday. (Photo by Ron Barry)

## By Ron Barry

Operating flawlessly thus far with just the right balance of experience and youth, the Crockett County Lady Cavalier softball team will enter bracket play in Friday night's Sarah Beth Whitehead Memorial Tournament as the #1 seed after completely dominating their two pool play opponents Thursday at the Jackson Sportsplex.

Coach Baron Jimmerson's crew demolished Millington 18-0 in just three innings in their first game and then gave the same treatment to South Fulton in their next one, routing the Lady Red Devils 14-0 to complete pool play without yielding a single run.

The annual tournament, a fund raiser for organ donation awareness, had to severely alter its structure this week with forecasts of storms and heavy rains expected to make Saturday a washout. So organizers cut pool play from three games to two and set up a Friday night bracket that is scheduled to crown a champion with a 9:00 game.

In the adjusted format, Crockett will not play again until 6:00 Friday, facing the winner of a 4:30 matchup between Brighton and South Fulton. Lexington, the #2 seed, will face the winner of Arlington and Huntingdon. The winner of a Bruceton vs. South Side duel will face #3 seed Chester County. The #4 seed, Adamsville, will round out the 6:00 games against the winner of Camden vs. Millington.

To win the title, Crockett would have to be victorious again in a 7:30 semifinal and then triumph in the 9:00 championship.

Jimmerson started freshmen at first base, third base, and left field against Millington, and the trio combined for five hits and four runs batted in as the Lady Cavs battered the Lady Trojans. But it was sophomore second baseman Piper Smith who had the biggest game, going 3-for-3 with three RBIs, a run scored, and a stolen base.

Crockett hitters collected four doubles in the contest, with freshmen Wesley Thornton and Maddie Haynes joining Madison Solis and Carmen Claybrooks in the extra-base-hit club. Haynes, Claybrooks, and freshman Madison Stitts all scored three times each for the winners, who plated six runs in the first, nine in the second, and three more in the third while pitcher Anna Stallings limited Millington to a hit and a walk over her three shutout frames.

The night's second game figured to be more competitive as South Fulton had just completed a surprise victory over Arlington on a walk-off grand slam, but Thornton and her teammates had other plans. The freshman slugger belted a two-run double in the second inning and a two-run homer in the third, leading a 14-hit barrage that buried South Fulton.

Thornton got help from senior outfielder Sadie Hoover, who knocked in three runs with a pair of doubles; senior shortstop Piper White, who was 3-for-3 with a double, two steals, and three runs; and Stitts, who was 3-for-3 with a double.

Another freshman, Emma Medlin, shut out South Fulton for two frames before turning the third inning over to Smith, who retired all three batters she faced.

Crockett enters Friday night's action with a 4-0 record in Jimmerson's first season at the helm.

**BASEBALL:** The Cavalier baseball team, which also won its first four games this spring, uncharacteristically blew an 8-0 lead and ended up on the wrong end of a 9-8 extra-inning decision to Chester County in a game played at South Gibson in Medina. The final six runs Crockett yielded were all unearned and spoiled a credible start by Brady Fronabarger, who had staked the Cavs to an 8-3 advantage when he left the mound after four frames.

The junior lefthander threw three scoreless innings and was within an out of a fourth when two hits built onto a previous single, infield error, and walk.

Carter Winders came on to pitch in the fifth for Crockett and, after a leadoff walk and a single, was the victim of three Crockett errors and an Eagle double, producing four unearned runs that cut the margin to 8-7.

Tyler Rathbun pitched a scoreless sixth for the Cavs, but in the seventh, Chester County tied the game with another Crockett error, a sacrifice bunt, a balk, and a two-out single. Through seven frames, seven of Chester County's runs had scored with two outs.

The Cavs left the go-ahead run at third base in the top of the eighth after a two-out double by Callan Willis and a wild pitch. In the bottom of the frame, the Eagles had a leadoff single, another Crockett infield error, another balk, a walk, and finally a game-winning single by Brooks Johnson.

Crockett had built an 8-0 edge through the first four innings as Winders drove in four runs with a two-run single in the first and another in the fourth and Bryson Vance collected a run-producing double. But the Cavs were blanked over the final four frames.

Winders, Karson Kail, and Preston Lambert all had two hits apiece for the Cavs, who fell to 4-1. They'll next play at Huntingdon at 6:00 next Tuesday night.

**MIDDLE SCHOOL SOCCER:** Damian Marquez scored a pair of goals in quick succession after Milan had cut a Cav to lead to 2-1, providing the major impetus for CCMS to record a 5-1 victory over the Bulldogs Thursday.

Less than seven minutes into the game, Jaaziel Perez tallied for Crockett. With 13:14 remaining in the opening half, Jose Aguirre added a Cav goal for a 2-0 edge.

Just two minutes later, Milan netted a shot to trim the margin to 2-1, but Marquez scored twice to boost the advantage to 4-1 at the intermission. Caleb Ferguson added the final Crockett goal six minutes into the second half.

CCMS, coached by Jonathan Grajeda and Graham Mayfield, managed 11 shots on goal in the contest to just two for Milan. The Cav defensive backfield stopped the majority of Bulldog rushes, leaving goalie Henry Mayfield to only have to make a single save.



**Left:** Freshman outfielder Wesley Thornton got the first two starts of her varsity career Thursday and responded with four hits and six runs batted in. Seen here sailing for third on the throw after doubling, Thornton hammered a home run in Game 2 against South Fulton. (Photo by Ron Barry)



**Right:** Madison Stitts slides home to score in the romp over Millington Thursday. Stitts was another freshman who had a big offensive day for the Lady Cavs, who earned the tournament's #1 seed for bracket play. (Photo by Ron Barry)

**Below:** While the Crockett bats were booming against Millington, the Lady Trojans' bats were not, thanks to the one-hit shutout pitching of Anna Stallings, seen here getting the pitch call from the dugout. (Photo by Ron Barry)

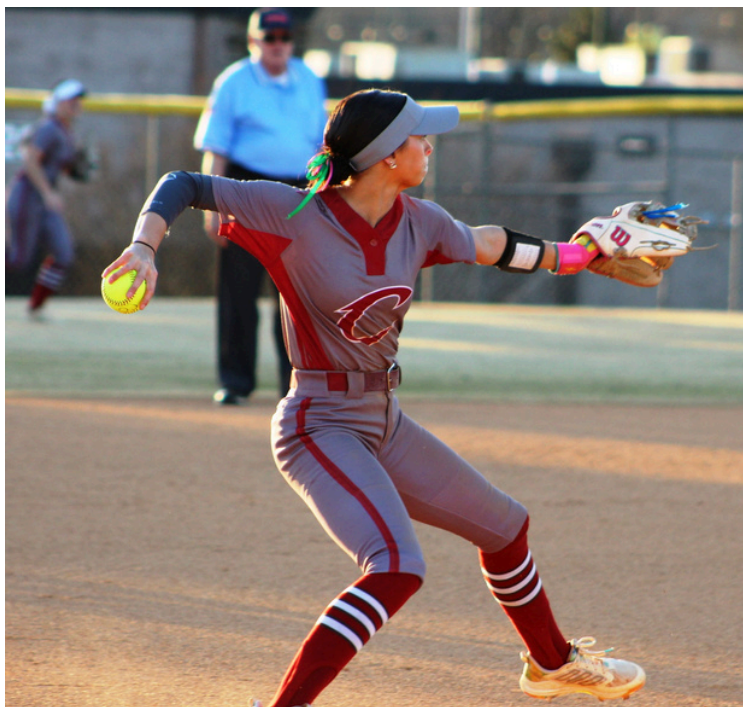


**Above:** Senior outfielder Sadie Hoover -- who's always having a good time while she plays -- laughs it up with Coach Baron Jimmerson after reaching third base during a rally. Hoover knocked in three runs in Game 2 Thursday. (Photo by Ron Barry)



**Below:** Carmen Claybrooks waits in the on-deck circle for her next chance to hit in Crockett's 18-0 demolition of Millington Thursday. Claybrooks scored five runs in the Lady Cavs' two wins. (Photo by Ron Barry)





**Above:** Shortstop Piper White fires to first to almost double off a baserunner after snaring a sharp line drive in the first inning of the 18-0 rout of Millington Thursday. White had three hits and scored three times in the win over South Fulton. (Photo by Ron Barry)

**Below:** Crockett catcher Madison Solis signals to the dugout to recycle the pitch call during Game 1 of the Sarah Beth Whitehead Memorial Tournament Thursday in Jackson. (Photo by Ron Barry)



**Below:** Gabby Bursey got the start at second base in Game 2 vs. South Fulton and collected a hit in two at-bats. (Photo by Ron Barry)



**Left:** Another Crockett freshman, Maddie Haynes, gets ready to run after slamming a double against the Lady Trojans of Millington. (Photo by Ron Barry)

**Below:** Coach Baron Jimmerson used several pinch-hitters in the third inning against Millington, including freshman Fallon Beard, who fouled off a couple of tough pitches before working a walk. (Photo by Ron Barry)

**Right:** The biggest hit of the night for the Lady Cavs came from Wesley Thornton, who belted a two-run homer against South Fulton and had four RBIs in the game. (Photo by Ron Barry)

