

LADY CAV RESILIENCE SHINES IN BOUNCE-BACK WIN OVER JACKSON SOUTH SIDE



Above: Lady Cav junior Anna Stallings tossed a two-hitter and overcame four walks by striking out 11 as Crockett improved to 5-1 on the season. (Photo by Ron Barry)

By Ron Barry

There is a brand new animal science barn under construction for Crockett County Middle School, just beyond the left-field fence of the campus softball field where the high school team plays.

It's a safe bet that Wesley Thornton is going to dent that thing several times before she graduates.

Crockett's amazing freshman got the Lady Cavs off on the right foot Monday evening, crashing a two-run homer in the first inning to set the tone for an 8-2 victory over visiting Jackson South Side in a game that clearly demonstrated the resilience of Coach Baron Jimmerson's club.

Coming off a 15-0 drubbing by Brighton in the quarterfinals of the Sarah Beth Whitehead Memorial Tournament at the Jackson Sportsplex Friday night, no one was quite sure how the Lady Cavs would respond – especially since they had gone into the Brighton game as the tournament's top seed after blanking their two pool play opponents.

Those questions remained in the top of the first Monday when South Side quickly loaded the bases with one out on a hit batsman, a walk, and an infield error on a bunt. But Crockett pitcher Anna Stallings struck out the next two Lady Hawks to wiggle out of the frame unscathed, and it didn't take long for the hosts to seize the lead.

With one out, Hannah Carter reached on an error when her bunt down the third base line was mishandled. The speedy outfielder stole second, but was still there after a strikeout. That brought up the freshman Thornton, who crushed a 1-and-2 pitch over the left-field fence for her second home run of the young season.

It stood up until the top of the third, when a two-out, full-count walk led to a South Side rally. A long double to left and a sharp single to right deadlocked the score at 2-all, with Stallings again getting a much-needed strikeout with the go-ahead run at third after a couple of stolen bases.

Stallings struck out the side in the fourth – on her way to 11 for the game – to right the Crockett ship defensively. Her teammates would reward her efforts in the bottom of the inning.

After Thornton lined out to center – on a ball hit every bit as hard as her home run – Sadie Hoover drew a walk, taking second on a groundout. Gabby Bursey then drew another walk, and Madison Solis was hit by a pitch to load the bases with two outs.

Jimmerson sent another freshman, Emmalynn Medlin, to the plate to pinch-hit. When the count quickly reached 0-and-2, the next delivery bounced in the dirt to elude the catcher, and Hoover beat the tag on the toss to the plate for a 3-2 Lady Cav advantage. Medlin – with at least some of the pressure relieved – then drilled a scorched liner to right field for a two-run single, pushing the Crockett margin to 5-2.

Although allowing another walk, Stallings cruised through the Lady Hawk fifth, and her teammates again provided some insurance runs. With one out, Thornton blasted a line-drive triple into the right-field corner and came in to score when Hoover delivered a full-count base hit to center. She took second on a wild pitch, third on a groundout, and then scored for the second time in the contest on yet another South Side wild pitch.

Now nursing a 7-2 edge, Stallings sandwiched another walk with three more strikeouts in the Lady Hawk sixth. In the bottom of the frame, Solis was hit by a pitch for the second time, and Fallon Beard – another Crockett freshman – ran for her, taking second on a passed ball during a strikeout. Beard advanced to third on a groundout and scored the game's final run on a single by Carter.

Stallings retired the side in order in the top of the seventh to complete a two-hitter and boosting the Lady Cavs' season record to 5-1. Jimmerson adjusted his defensive lineup a bit in this one, moving Thornton from left field to second base, Piper Smith from second to first base, and Carter from center to left as Bursey was inserted in center.

“We have a very young team overall,” assistant coach Will Rigby said. “We need to improve our consistency. We’ve been very good in the games we’ve won and very bad in the one we didn’t. But we knew these girls could bounce back from the Brighton game.”

Piper White joined Thornton with two hits and also stole a pair of bases. Hoover and Solis also reached base twice.

Next up for the Lady Cavs is a road game Tuesday at Chester County at 5 p.m. They’ll play at Westview in Martin on Friday in another 5 p.m. duel.

Crockett’s baseball team will face Huntingdon Tuesday at 6 p.m. in a road contest before returning home for a Friday tilt with Lexington at 4:30.

MIDDLE SCHOOL SOCCER: Crockett continued its winning ways on the middle school pitch, holding Trenton without a single shot on goal in capturing an 8-0 triumph.

Lucas Morales got the scoring started with a goal just five minutes into the game. Jacob Marquez then took a pair of assists from Jaaziel Perez to net two quick goals before Perez nailed one himself to make it 4-0. With five minutes left in the opening half, Easten Stephens tallied to push the margin to 5-0.

In the second half, Damian Marquez booted in a couple of goals before Morales ended the scoring with his second of the game, coming directly off a corner kick with 13 second remaining.

MIDDLE SCHOOL TENNIS: While his very inexperienced team fell to Union City Monday, Coach Doug Wede was impressed with the perseverance his squads showed, forcing several matches into extra sets and newcomer Penn Mann battling to a tiebreaker loss.

Crockett scored two wins in girls doubles. Hannah Wede and Addison Milby posted a 6-2 victory, and Charlee Lewis and MaLeah Maben recorded a 6-4 triumph. Union City is coached by former Crockett Countian Angie Conley, and Wede rated the Tornadoes’ playing level as “strong.”

The teams will face off again Thursday at Union City.

MIDDLE SCHOOL BASEBALL: John Robert Thornton and Ben Gilpin combined to pitch a no-hitter as the CCMS Cavaliers went on the road to defeat Obion County 8-0 Monday. It comes on the heels of another 8-0 no-hitter that Cole Summar threw against Dyersburg in the Cavs’ previous outing.

Crockett will play Obion again at home Thursday evening.



Above: Crockett freshman Wesley Thornton smashes a home run over the left-field fence to give the Lady Cavaliers a 2-0 first-inning lead over South Side Monday. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Wesley Thornton is greeted at home plate after belting her second homer of the young season Monday against Jackson South Side. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Emmalynn Medlin -- another Crockett freshman -- delivered a key two-run single in a pinch-hit role, boosting Crockett's lead to 5-2 in the fourth inning. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Right: Hannah Carter also singled in a run for Crockett after recording a stolen base earlier in the game. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: Senior Madison Solis continues to provide solid catching performances behind the plate. She also aided the offense Monday by getting hit by pitches twice. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Left: Senior outfielder Sadie Hoover posted a rare accomplishment Monday: scoring twice on wild pitches. She's signaled safe here on the first one, breaking a 2-2 tie in the fourth frame. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: In the sixth inning, Sadie Hoover did it again, sliding in before the throw from the backstop can reach the covering pitcher. Hoover also singled home a big insurance run. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: This is one of the two stolen bases swiped by Crockett speedster Piper White, who watches her South Side shortstop counterpart make a diving catch of the throw to second. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Pitcher Anna Stallings ducks out of the way as Crockett third baseman Madison Stitts -- yet another freshman -- throws out a Lady Hawk baserunner on this bunt attempt. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: Piper Smith fiddles with her visor in preparation for another defensive inning at first base. Smith moved over to first Monday as Coach Baron Jimmerson made some position changes. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Below: Wesley Thornton rocketed this pitch into the right-field corner for a triple in her final at-bat, giving her seven total bases for the contest. (Photo by Ron Barry)

