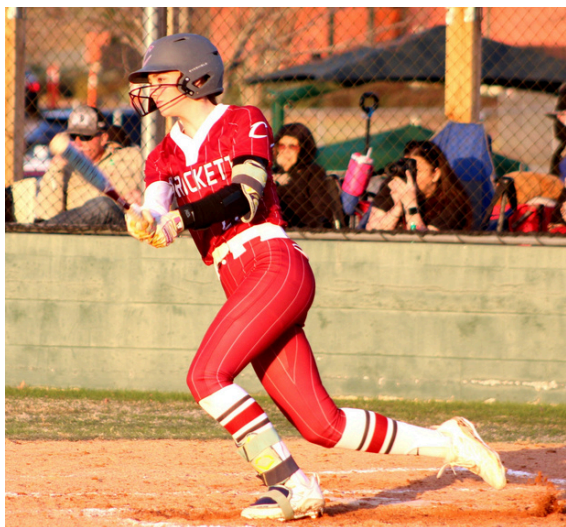


## LADY CAVS END SOUTHERN WARRIOR SOFTBALL CLASSIC TRIP WITH DOUBLEHEADER WINS



**Above:** Wesley Thornton hammered out six more hits Sunday, including a double and triple. (Photo by Ron Barry)

When they climbed on the bus to head for Murfreesboro this weekend to play in the prestigious Southern Warrior Classic, Coach Baron Jimmerson's Crockett County softball team was 13-0. But however unrealistic, if there were dreams of an undefeated season, they came crashing down when South Elgin (IL) smacked the Lady Cavaliers 14-0 in their opening game.

How would they respond, knowing that the event traditionally fields some of the best teams from several states and they would have five more contests to play before heading back to Alamo?

As it turned out – following a doubleheader sweep Sunday keyed by a pair of three-hit performances by Wesley Thornton – Crockett won three of those five matchups to salvage a 3-3 trip and improve its season mark to 16-3 heading into the resumption of district play Tuesday evening at Dyersburg.

The Lady Cavs built an 8-1 lead and then outlasted a late rally to defeat Benet (IL) Academy 9-5 Sunday morning as Thornton and Gabby Bursey each collected three hits, including triples. Then, in the noon follow-up, Thornton cranked out three more hits and Bursey, Nataly Amador, Maddie Haynes, and Emilee Chandler added two apiece as Crockett downed Batavia (IL) 11-2.

Sunday's first game started ominously for the Lady Cavs as Benet scored a run on two infield errors and was threatening more when the Redwings tried a double steal with runners on first and third. But catcher Maddie Teel gunned down the one headed for second and shortstop Thornton, after making the tag, returned the favor by firing back to Teel to catch the one from third at home plate.

Thornton immediately led off the bottom of the first with a lined triple to right and tied the game on a passed ball on the very next pitch. From there, Crockett added four runs in the second and three more in the fifth, the first uprising assisted by three Benet errors and the second highlighted by a run-scoring double by Haley Leforgee and a Redwing outfield miscue.

Anna Stallings picked up the pitching victory, limiting Benet to two hits and an unearned run through her five innings, striking out eight. The Redwings mounted a sixth-inning rally against reliever Emmalynn Medlin to narrow the margin by four runs, but Bursey tripled in a run in the bottom of the frame and Medlin easily retired the Benet hitters in the seventh to close out the win.

Sunday's second game was close (3-2, Crockett) for three innings until the Lady Cavs posted three-spots in both the fourth and fifth frames and two more tallies in the seventh, ensuring the 11-2 victory. In the fourth, Kiyra Liggins had a sacrifice fly and Bursey an RBI-single; in the fifth, Thornton followed hits by Chandler and Piper Smith with a two-run single and then scored on a passed ball.

To cap the scoring in the seventh, Nadia Turner drew a leadoff walk and Thornton singled, with both advancing on a passed ball. Tink Willis followed with a ground ball that was booted by the second baseman, allowing both baserunners to race home.

Medlin picked up the pitching win against Batavia, going the first four frames without allowing an earned run. Stallings closed it out the rest of the way with shutout ball.

Crockett will play two key road district games this week, facing Dyersburg Tuesday evening and Dyer County Thursday.



**Above:** Gabby Bursey went 3-for-3 in the first game (with a triple) and added two more hits in the second. (Photo by Ron Barry)



**Above:** Maddie Haynes stroked two hits and also drew a walk in Sunday's 11-2 win over Batavia. (Photo by Ron Barry)