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SPORTS

Tyree finishes two tight ones on the road—Bears dominate Trinity at home

By **Greg Moore**
Banner Sports Editor

The Butler County Bears came in to last week losing three straight; however, Coach Bo West and his young team turned three straight into wins in order to get back to .500 baseball before getting district opponent Grayson County on back-to-back nights to start this week's ball. Thursday and Friday, the Bears will finish the week with Hopkins County Central and Todd County Central at home.

Opening last week on the road at Whitesville, the Bears were propelled by a five-run second to cling to a 6-5 win over the Trinity Raiders, who got two in the first and tried to rally late in the contest. Duncan Tyree came on in relief to save the game, 6-5, getting the final two outs in the bottom of the seventh. The junior pitcher struck out a batter and tagged out the final Raider baserunner, who was trying to steal home for the potential tying run.

Senior pitcher, Malacki Murphy earned the win for the Bears, his third of the season. The southpaw went six-plus before turning it over to Tyree. He struck out four and walked four while sprinkling seven hits throughout. Of the five runs scored against Murphy, none of them were earned. The Bears had four costly errors in the game.

8th grade shortstop, Thomas Embry had two hits, a run, and a RBI to lead the Bears offensively. Holding down third base on defense, junior Justin Castlen raked in two runs on a single. Tyree, who drew two walks, plated twice on the evening, also. Freshman Sam Hyatt drove in a run on a line drive to center to score one and scored on Castlen's single. Castlen, Murphy, Brayden Clark, and Mason West all stole a base, too.

Trinity returned the favor and came to Morgantown on Tuesday. Unfortunately for them, they could not get out of the third before being down, 11-0. The Bears took full advantage of six Raider errors and six base knocks. Again, BC stole four bases and were



▲ PHOTO | GREG MOORE
Garrett Phelps set to deliver a pitch to a Whitesville Trinity Raider.

patient at the plate, collecting seven base on balls after having six the night before.

Leading off, Embry collected three of those walks and scored each time. Castlen, Brycen Mode, and Garrett Phelps all drove in two apiece. The Bears got doubles from Mode, Murphy, Colt Akers, and two by Phelps. Phelps also dominated on the bump; he went the five innings giving up only two singles while fanning four. He did walk one and hit a couple in the 12-0 shutout of the Trinity Raiders.

Friday, at Metcalfe County to end the busy week, Castlen, Phelps, and Tyree all singled in the opening inning. The Hornets made a costly error in the first that allowed two runs for the visiting Bears. Mode and Murphy picked right back up in the top of the second by driving in runs as the Bears took an early, 4-0 advantage.

Castlen was cruising, retiring five of the first six he faced, three via strikeout. But after the Hornets scored one, they worked some counts and drew a couple more walks, before a single to center scored two more runs. After a miscue on the single, Phelps hit cutoff man, Embry, who tried a throw out a runner at home, but Mode finally fired to third where Will Amos applied the tag to retire the third out.

Tyree, who leads the Bears with 1.21 ERA and 1.04 WHIP, got the call to relieve



▲ PHOTO | GREG MOORE
Brycen Mode shown here working the leather for the high strike.

Castlen in the bottom of the third. Tyree had 1-2-3 innings except the fourth and seventh innings. He would give up two one-out singles in the fourth before whiffing the second and third outs with runners stranded at first and second.

Butler County got an insurance-run in the top of the sixth; Phelps singled home Mode, who stole second after reaching on an error on a tough ball hit to third. It was very much needed. The leadoff batter in the seventh, doubled to right and moved to third on a ground out. He scored on a passed ball to make it 5-4, but Tyree bowed his neck and finished off the last two Hornets by strikeouts, again.

Tyree's impressive five innings only took him 62 pitches, 45 of which were strikes. He sent eight Hornets packing back to the dugout and did not walk a batter. Tyree also had a single and a double at the plate along with Phelps, who also enjoyed a two-hit night. Phelps, Mode, Akers, Castlen, and Embry all swiped bags, too.

Again, the Bears will host the Storm of Hopkins County Central on Thursday night and the Todd County Central Rebels (7-12) on Friday night, 6pm start times. The Storm are around even baseball, an 8-9 record; whereas, the Bears will look to revenge a 9-2 loss to the Rebels early in the season, end of March.

Lady Bears pile up 13 hits in Border Battle—Hosting AC-S and Greenwood



▲ PHOTO | GREG MOORE
Taylor Smith finishing her swing on a Lady Hornet pitch.

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After dropping two, one-run, extra-inning nail biters plus another contest, the Butler County Lady Bears played Franklin-Simpson (13-11) in Greenwood's Border Battle on Friday night to end the week. They came out victorious over the Lady Cats in a 7-6, third versus fourth region affair. The Lady Bears out hit the visitors in the box score, 13-8, but F-S tried to make up the difference with two long balls.

After one of those gave the Lady Cats a 2-0 lead in the top of the first, the Lady Bears rallied to score four of their own on five singles and hit batter in the bottom half. However, Franklin-Simpson was not going away quietly. They plated a run in the fourth, before BC answered with two more of their own.

Leading 6-3, going into the fifth, Butler County brought Miley Franzell in relief for starting pitcher, Mia Thomas. When it looked like Franzell was going to get out of the fifth unscathed, an error with two outs opened up another opportunity for the Lady Cats, who took full advantage, scoring two more runs, making it 6-5.

Madison Clark tripled with one out in the sixth. Clark's courtesy runner, Raelynn Nicewinter, was a much needed insurance run when Franzell hit a clutch, two-out single to score her. Franklin homered to start the seventh. However, Franzell got three fly balls to find centerfielder Addison Miller



▲ PHOTO | GREG MOORE
Parker Willoughby blocking the pitch in the dirt.



▲ PHOTO | GREG MOORE
Madison Clark hustling down the line to beat the throw.

before two singles could do any further damage.

Five Lady Bears, Miller, Thomas, Franzell, Clark, and Karrington Hunt, collected two hits in the game. Nicewinter, Hunt, and Parker Willoughby all scored twice for the Lady Bears with another courtesy runner, Shelby McDaniel, who ran for the pitcher throughout, plating the other run. Clark and Franzell both drove in two runs while Lydia Brown, Jenna Tomes, and Thomas were credited with an RBI, each.

The 7-6 victory was the third win of the season for Butler County. The team shows improvement daily and will battle for a couple more weeks in regular season play to help be prepared to bring home their fourth straight district title, which is legitimately possible. The 3-15 squad will continue to play high-quality opponents; most every

remaining opponent for the Lady Bears are above the .500 mark or close to it.

Thomas received the win in the circle, going four strong. She only gave up three hits and two walks while striking out one. Thomas was charged with three earned runs before turning it over to Franzell, who had thrown over 20 innings during the week. Franzell persevered to give up only three runs on five scattered hits and two walks in the last three innings of work. She was only charged with one earned, though.

Butler County hopes to build on the win over Franklin-Simpson by getting revenge on Whitesville-Trinity in a rematch where the Lady Bears gave up a big lead late in the game. That was the only game first of this week, but come out and support the girls hosting Allen County-Scottsville (12-11) and Greenwood (18-8) on Thursday and Friday nights starting at 6pm