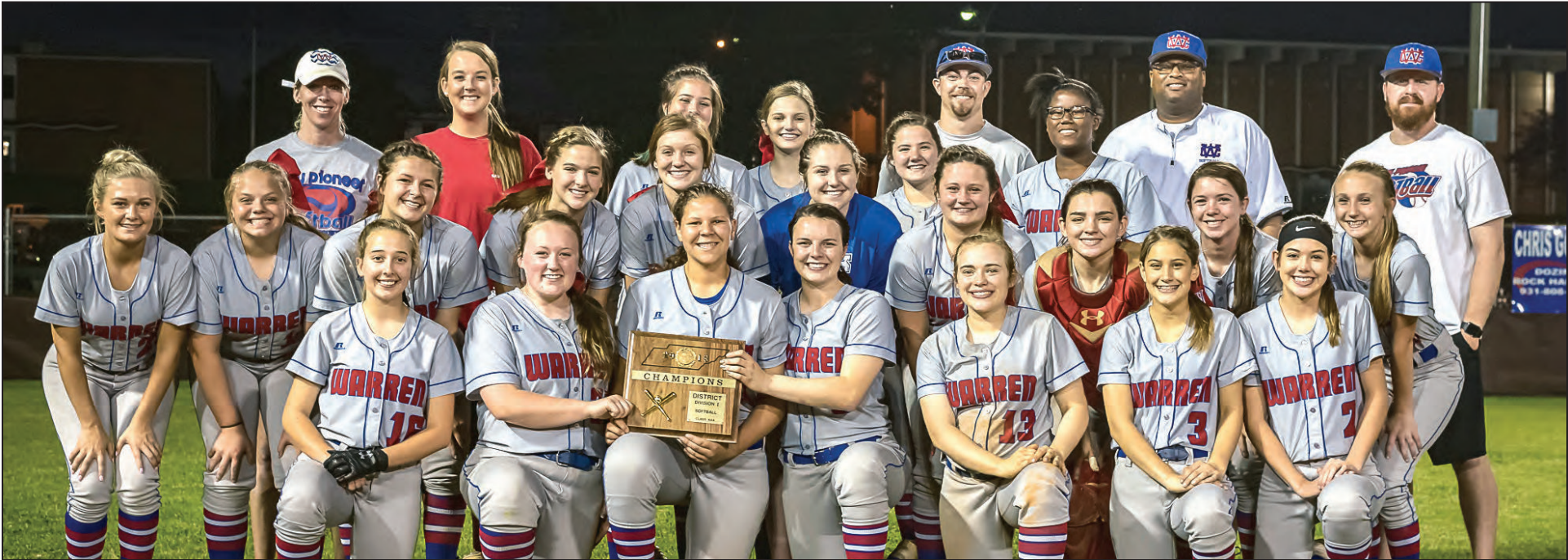


Historic victory



The WCHS softball team won the first district tournament title in program history Thursday. Members of the team are, front row, from left, Savannah Cox, Kyra Hillis, Lexie Chadwell, Hope Mullican, Emily Mikkola, Elia Atterson and Kaydee Rains. Second row, Kadence Ledbetter, Sadie Simmons, Ashton Whiles, Samantha Jennings, Rhealee Johnson, Marah Wanamaker, Bri Young, MaKenna Mason, Calyn Damon and Taylor Swan. Back row, coach Linsey Youngblood, coach Morgan Frye, Grace Rains, Hailey Wood, Maddie Cantrell, coach Cody Crouch, Cierra Martin, head coach Gooby Martin and coach Nick Cantrell.

Lady Pioneers win first tourney title

BY JEFFERY SIMMONS
Sports Editor for the Southern Standard
(McMinnville, Tennessee)

It's never a close call when the Warren County High School softball team makes history. The Lady Pioneers always send a statement.

Cookeville happened to be the recipient again Thursday.

Warren County claimed its first tournament championship in the 34-year history of the program, crushing Cookeville 17-2 a night after downing the Lady Cavaliers 15-9 to force a second game.

It was the second season in a row the Lady Pioneers won a title. Last season, Warren County took home its first regular season title, clinching with a 20-3 demolishing of the same Lady Cavaliers.

Coach Gooby Martin has overseen the program's growth the last four years, culminating in two titles. It's the type of progress he hoped would come when he took over in the summer of 2014.

"We work to get a little better each year. We want to continue growing our success," said Martin. "It's how we've built the program. I'm so happy for the girls, they've been so coachable the whole way."

Thursday's victory was bolstered by three players with the most experience,

as well as two who weren't around to celebrate last year's blowout.

Seniors Kyra Hillis, Hope Mullican and Lexie Chadwell all made impacts. Hillis finished 3-for-4 with two RBIs, including a run-scoring double in the first and ignited a five-run third inning with a RBI single to right.

Honored with the offensive player of the year award following the game, Mullican showed why she was a terror for opposing pitchers all season. Mullican started the scoring with a RBI double down the right-field line, part of a 2-for-5 night where the senior drove in three.

Freshmen Rhealee Johnson and Elia Atterson were equally as impressive.

Johnson earned the win by tossing three innings of two-hit ball, allowing just one run to a Cookeville lineup which had scored 39 runs in four previous meetings with the Lady Pioneers. Johnson also starred at the dish, going 2-for-2 with two RBIs. Johnson belted a triple in the first inning to put Warren County ahead 3-0, then followed with a shot off the center-field fence for a double in the third.

After playing sparsely through the season, Atterson made the most of her opportunity in the finals.

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Rhealee Johnson earned the victory in Thursday's 17-2 win over Cookeville.



A dominant season led to plenty of hardware for the Lady Pioneers. Awarded Thursday were, from left, Hailey Wood (District 6AAA player of the year), Hope Mullican (Offensive player of the year) and Emily Mikkola (Infielder of the year).



Coach Gooby Martin gets showered with water after leading the Lady Pioneers to the first tournament title in the program's 34-year history.

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