

# CHS baseball looks up

By Nick Herman  
Sports Editor

Last year's Clinton baseball season was a learning experience under head coach Tom Fortman. Coming in from Baltimore as the new head coach, Fortman said he experienced more of a culture shock than he had expected.

Now, with the team having spent a year under his tutelage, the Red Devils are hoping they can get back into postseason contention - with the help of some of the JV players who have moved up following a strong 2018 season.

"This a team of ballplayers who just want to get at it, and if the rain stops and the seas ever part, they are anxious to show what they've got," Fortman said.

Through the early part of practice, Fortman said the senior leadership has been huge. Caleb Riddle, Chance Ewell and Griffin Fuller have taken charge in the dugout, and combined with a group of young players who are champing at the bit to win, Fortman said he's excited about where the team may end up.

Ewell, a senior, is expected to lead the pitching staff and to keep the team in a host of contests this season. Another pitcher, Blake Smith, moved up from JV and will also be a regular hurler.

"His bulldog mentality will be a huge motivator for the rest of the team that backs him," Fortman said of Smith.

Riddle is expected to be a steady pitcher for the Red Devils and will also be one in the field. On the mound Riddle simply throws strikes, but he will also be counted on as a position player.

That Red Devils' defense is led by a few versatile players. Griffin Fuller is expected to play in center, while senior Qua Quarles, Nick Perkins and Konnor Richardson all are back in the mix for outfield playing time. In the infield, Ewell and Riddle will help proved leadership as seniors, and Kimon Quarles comes back after playing shortstop in the second half of his freshman year.

Fortman also said he's excited about Judson Watkins, who be behind the plate at catcher.

"Having not played since youth ball, he has jumped in nicely and

continues to improve everyday," Fortman said of his catcher.

When Clinton is at bat, the team will look to Quarles to start the charge from the lead-off position. Riddle is a solid hitter with "high baseball IQ," while Richardson and Griffin Fuller will fill out the middle of the lineup. What Fortman indicated, though, is that his team is more of a small-ball team, and not one to rely on the long ball.

"We will be a team that passes the baton - get on, get him over, get him in," Fortman said. "That is how we will compete this year."

The Red Devils face a new region with the departures of Chapman and Broome, two teams that made the playoffs a year ago. Union County and Emerald are in with traditionally strong teams, and Mid-Carolina looks to repeat at the top of the region. Clinton is back after losing nine seniors, while Woodruff lost 10, and Newberry hopes to bounce back after a tough season a year ago.

Clinton was picked to finish tied for fourth with Union in the pre-season vote, but Fortman is confident that his team will "make some noise" this season - and if the team buys in to the right attitude of doing what it takes to get the next run across throughout the season, a surprising finish might not be out of reach.

"This team has the potential to be something special with focus, determination, and the right bounces," Fortman said.

**Roster:** Kimon Quarles, Davis Wilson, Nicholas Perkins, Konnor Richardson, Austin Long, Noah Reece, Chance Ewell, Jayden Argo, Judson Watkins, Qua Quarles, Griffin Fuller, Caleb Riddle, Jaylin Alexander Skyland Holsonback, Brett Loftis, Blake Smith, Glavin Alexander.

**Clinton 4, Southside Christian 2 (Tuesday):** At the Hub City Classic in Spartanburg, Kimon Quarles and Jaylin Alexander had two hits each and Caleb Riddle went all five innings contested, helping the Red Devils picked up the victory.

Riddle allowed seven hits and one walk, striking out three.

Clinton then lost to Union County Wednesday, 13-2.

# PC men suffer critical loss to Gardner-Webb

By Nick Herman  
Sports Editor

The Presbyterian College men's basketball team failed to clinch a first-round bye in the Big South Tournament when it lost to Gardner-Webb Wednesday, 78-70, and now face a critical game today (Saturday) to avoid a potential first-round tournament game Tuesday at the Templeton Center.

PC fell to 9-6 in the Big South, tied with G-W for fourth place with one game to go against Charleston Southern. If PC wins today, it will guarantee itself a top-five finish - and a bye to Thursday's quarterfinals. A loss would guarantee PC would fall out of the top five, and would force the team into a first-round contest against an opponent to be determined.

Gardner-Webb led by as many as 20 points late in the first half before PC rallied to within two points with about two minutes to go in regulation - only to see the rally come up short.

Adam Flagler had 16 points to lead PC (17-13), while J.C. younger had 14 points and Francois Lewis added 12 points and eight boards. PC's cause was done in by a poor 3-point shooting performance, hitting just 9-of-32 attempts.

D.J. Laster had 23 points to lead Gardner-Webb, while Jose Perez had 14 points and 12 boards. David Efanayi added 19 points as the Bulldogs avenged a 103-101 loss in early February.

**Women's basketball Hampton 82, Presbyterian 68 (Tuesday):** Hampton held a 32-10 edge in points in the paint and outscored PC 34-21 in the fourth quarter, pulling away from the Blue Hose at the Templeton Center in Clinton.

Salina Virola had another double-double for the Blue Hose, picking up 20 points and 14 rebounds. Tess Santos added 15 points off the bench, all on 3-pointers, and Kacie Hall had 11 points, five assists and four steals.

Four Pirates scored in double figures, led by Laurens

Vanarsdale and Kaylah Lupoe, who each had 17 points.

PC (5-21 overall, 3-12 Big South) visits Longwood today (Saturday).

**Baseball PC 9, N.C. Central 3 (Wednesday):** Nick Guimbarada homered, had two hits, and drove in three runs, while Jimmy Marcelli had three hits and Johnny Cook picked up two hits and scored twice, leading PC to its second victory of the season.

Eric Miles won his first game of the season, allowing a run on five hits and eight strikeouts in six innings.

PC (2-5) hosted a weekend series with Brown, which wraps up Sunday.

**Softball No. 8 Georgia 7, PC 1 (Wednesday):** Kiley Cross had two of PC's three hits in a loss to nationally-ranked Georgia, which moved to 15-1 with the victory.

PC (4-8-1) got its lone run in the first when Jonnie Petree led off by reaching on an error, and eventually scored on a fielding error with two out.

PC played in the Madeira Beach (Florida) Tournament this weekend.

**Women's tennis Winthrop 7, PC 0 (Wednesday):** The Blue Hose could not break through for a point in their match with the Eagles in Clinton, coming closest to a point at No. 4 singles.

In the No. 4 singles match Beth Taylor rallied to force a third set, but ultimately lost 6-2, 4-6, 12-10 to Rafaela Santos.

PC visits Lipscomb on March 9, and follows with Arkansas State, in Nashville, on March 10.

**Golf PC men:** The Blue Hose took 13th at the Wexford Plantation Intercollegiate, using a final-round 295 and finished with a two-day total of 911 at Hilton Head Island.

Weston Sanderson tied for 40th (227) to lead the Blue Hose, while Cole Patterson tied for

45th (229), Charlie Tate tied for 58th with Brody Boston, who shot a college-best 71, and each golfer shot a three-round 232.

Charleston Southern won the tournament with a team total of 876, while Memphis' Brad Bawden won the individual medalist honors at 212 (-4).

PC plays at the ECU Intercollegiate, starting today at the Brook Valley Country Club in Greenville, N.C.

**PC women:** At Kiawah Island, PC tied for 27th with a three-round 920. Maiken Bing Paulsen led with a three-round 224, tying for 55th place.

Paulsen had five birdies and seven pars over her last 14 holes, rallying after going 4-over her first four holes of the round.

Julie Hillestad tied for 86th (227), Ann Elizabeth Gore tied at 142nd (234), and Serina Combs tied for 149th (235).

**PREPS Baseball**

**Laurens splits (Tuesday):** The visiting Raiders took on the Greenville Red Raiders to open their season, and came away with a 1-1 day. Greenville won the opener, 8-2, before Laurens won 10-3 in the nightcap.

Laurens was held to four hits on offense in Game 1, with Jalen Bragg hitting a solo homer. Tanner Smith took the loss in relief, allowing four runs (all unearned) on one hit and five walks. Smith struck out one.

Game two featured a Laurens attack that had 10 hits, including a double and three runs scored by Tanner Smith. Aidan Pridgen had three hits, and Bragg had two hits, scored twice and drove in two runs in two official at-bats.

Bragg won in relief of Heath Bragg, allowing one hit in four scoreless innings. Bragg walked two and struck out four.

**J.L. Mann 4, Laurens 1 (Wednesday):** Laurens was held to three hits in the loss, while Jalen Bragg doubled and drove in the team's lone run.

**Soccer**

**Clinton 7, Ninety Six 0 (Wednesday):** Parker Duncan had three goals and J.P. Snelgrove had two, while Luke Mann and Patrick Nelson scored once each, lifting the Red Devils.

**Wednesday score:** Clinton girls 3, Laurens 0.

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