

BASEBALL/SOFTBALL SPOTLIGHT

7-C

Pitching and defense deep for Greene Co. softball team

Nearly every starter returns for Lady Cats this season

By RUSSELL TURNER
Herald Staff

One of the big reasons GCHS was able to have success last season was the ability to pitch and make big defensive plays when it counted most. That was a big key in the second half of the season as the Cats came on top in several 1-run games.

With all but two starters back for the 2020 campaign, it's no wonder Coach Tyler Barham sees his defense as the Lady Cats' strong suit.

"I surely hope we can make some big strides offensively," Barham said. "But, I don't think there is any doubt that our strength is our defense."

"We have a lot of experience, particularly on the infield, and are athletic all over the field. Plus, we have three returning pitchers that I believe can put us in a position to win games."

The only infield position not returning a starter is first base and it is being staffed by a senior in whom Barham says he is very confident. Leading the way is junior Kat Garrett at shortstop. Garrett was a team leader last year with a .922 fielding percentage.

Garrett is sandwiched between returning starters at third and second base. Sophomore CharLee Meadows, an All-Region player the past two seasons, holds down third base, while senior Destiny Eubanks returns at second base. Both were right behind Garrett with .919 and



Photo by Russell Turner / Herald Staff

Greene County junior pitcher Hannah Hillman is shown delivering a pitch against D'Iberville last weekend. Hillman, who is the top returning pitcher from a year ago, is part of a 3-deep rotation for GCHS this season, along with sophomore Charleigh Stewart and freshman Taylor Brewer.

.919 fielding averages last year, respectively.

"Kat is a great defender," Barham said. "She is athletic, with a strong arm, and is one of those players that can make tough plays look routine."

"CharLee has really bought in at third. She is slowly working into a more vocal leader and works well with others, particularly on defense. Destiny is very solid defensively and works well with Kat in the middle infield. All three played basketball together and they have great chemistry."

Across the diamond at first is senior Olivia Eubanks, who has been a real journeyman for Barham over the years, moving around the field to fill needs. This season the move was to first and Barham

believes it was a great fit for Eubanks and the team.

"Olivia is one of our co-captains on the team and she really holds her own at first," Barham said. "She has experience at the position having played there when she was younger and the transition has been good. She has really good situational awareness too."

The Lady Cats look solid behind the plate as well with junior Tiana Caver as a returning starter. She was strong at the spot last year and made big strides in the offseason, according to Barham.

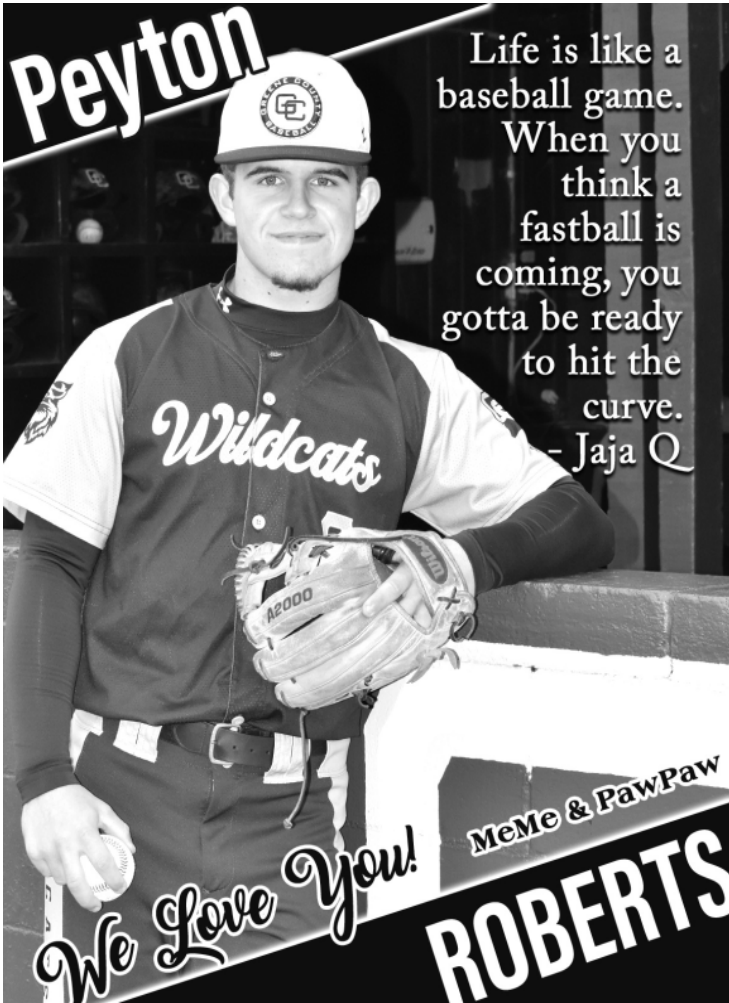
"Tiana will be our field general in her second full season behind the plate," Barham said. "She has worked hard and gives us the ability to keep runners in check."

The outfield will be a little more of mixed bag with a host of players expected to contribute and rotate between positions. Senior Kayla Mazzocchi will be the leader at center field, while junior Hannah Hillman will hold down left field when not in the pitching circle.

Junior Brooklyn Lee and sophomore Hayley McCardle are competing for playing time in the outfield and are both

See DEFENSE

Page 8C



Some slams aren't so grand. When bad luck strikes, it's good to know that you've got a local team of Farm Bureau Insurance agents on hand to help, with real answers and fast claims service. Get Real Auto, Home, and Life Insurance. Get Farm Bureau Insurance.



Get Real Auto-Home-Life

Proud Supporters of GCHS Athletics



Greene County Farm Bureau

812 Main St.
Leakesville, Mississippi 39451

www.msfbins.com

(601) 394-2801

Member Since 1911



Photo by Russell Turner / Herald Staff

Junior catcher Tiana Caver is shown swiping a tag against a D'Iberville baserunner in the Lady Cats' loss to the Warriors last Saturday. Despite the effort, the runner was safe on the play.

LET'S GO WILDCATS

Hit a Home Run this Season
Shop with us for Good Service,
Better Products
& GREAT PRICES!

Automotive
Hand Tools
Paint Shop
Power Tools
Outdoor Power Equipment

Electrical
Hardware
Plumbing
Sporting Goods

Revette's, Inc.
State Line, MS (601)848-7902

Good Luck Wildcats

PAID FOR BY FRIENDS OF DENNIS DEBAR, JR.

FIGHTING FOR YOU

I am proud to represent my friends & neighbors as your Dist. 43 State Senator. I appreciate your trust & support as I continue to represent you & your interests in Jackson.

My family & I wish all our area's student athletes great success this year as they represent their schools & our community on and off the playing fields.

Dennis DeBar
State Senator - Dist. 43