Grant County Amateur

Hall of Fame members Boyd Toney (12) and Don Humes (11) have won more.

However, Varner knows that he cannot let up with the two toughest courses, Walnut Creek and Meshingomesia, still remaining.

"I just need to continue what I did today," Varner said. "Just the basics. 36 holes, anything can happen."

A staple of the Grant County Amateur in the early 2000's, Todd Chin participated in his first county tournament since 2016. Chin dominated the early part of the new millennium, winning the event in 2000, 2001, 2003, and 2005.

Chin began the weekend with a 69 (-3) at the Elks, before hitting a 68 (-4) at Arbor Trace,

putting him in second place at 137.

"I'm happy with it. Two rounds in the 60's is pretty good," Chin said. "Looking back, I left a lot out there today. I got ahead of myself playing the shorter yardage here at Arbor. I got ahead of myself and had to reel myself in on the back nine and start stringing some shots together, and I did. In the front, I was missing opportunity after opportunity, but I stayed patient. I hit the shots that were called for and I didn't force much. Then on 17 and 18, I finally got two putts to go, which really salvaged my round for me. I hung in, stayed patient, and turned in a decent score."

With an opportunity to win his first title in 15 years, Chin

just plans to focus on playing his game.

"I'm just going to try to tighten up my rounds a little bit," Chin said. "If I get out and practice this week, I will be focusing on that and going through the holes in my head and what I've got coming up."

Former Eastbrook star Lance Hoch, together with Peter De-Longchamp, rounded out the championship flight this coming weekend at Walnut Creek and Meshingomesia.

For the first time in the history of the women's portion of the tournament, there was only one female who signed up to play – Jenna Boucher, another former Panther standout.

Boucher, who is currently playing her college golf at Indi-

ana Tech, has won the last two women's titles. She finished the first weekend with an 83 at the Elks and an 84 at Arbor Trace.

"I definitely should have played better today, this being my home course," Boucher said. "I'm here constantly. I just couldn't make a putt from pretty much anywhere. I drove pretty well for the first part, but then I fell apart towards the end [because I was] getting upset about a lot of those putts. I was driving well in the fairway, and I had some nice chips that definitely saved me out there."

The third round will take place at Walnut Creek Golf Course on July 17, while the fourth and final round will be held at Meshingomesia Golf Club on July 18. Both rounds will begin at 8 am.



...continued from Page 6

Page 7

Former Eastbrook star Jenna Boucher, the tournament's lone female participant, getting ready to putt. **Photo by Sean Douglas**

Walk-off win

and RJ Holmes began the rally with back-to-back walks, before Eli Leak singled to load the bases.

Taeshon Caldwell, who struck out three batters the inning before to keep the game tied, hit a dribbler to third base, but a Firefighters' fielding error allowed Regnault to cross home plate, sealing the Lions triumph as the sun was setting over Lincoln Field.

"When they put the bat on the ball, they can win," Clark said. "This shows them that they can go against the better teams and better players in the league and come out victorious. They did exactly what they were supposed to do."

The Firefighters had plenty of chances to put more runs on the board over the course of the contest, but left 10 runners on, six of



Ah'lijeh Monday eyess home plate. Photo by Sean Douglas

which were in scoring position.

"We didn't capitalize on opportunities," Mitchener said. "We [left] runners in scoring position at second and third and [we left] base loaded, and we looked at pitches that we normally swing at. Tonight was pretty uncharacteristic of my play-

ers. They normally swing at those pitches. For some reason, they didn't have their heads in it until late."

After a scoreless first frame, the Firefighters opened the scoring in the second, as Micah Bryant tripled and later scored on a Lions' error for a 1-0 lead.

The Lions' Jayden John-

son answered in the bottom half of the second, going all the way around the bases after a misplayed ball in the infield went all the way back to the wall.

The Firefighters regained the lead in the top of the fourth, as Bryant collected his second hit and later scored on an error, but the Lions offense came alive in the bottom half of the frame, scoring three runs to take their first lead of the contest. RJ Holmes, the Lions' last batter, went yard to start the frame, and runs by Caldwell and Johnson put the Lions up 4-2 heading into the fifth.

The Firefighters continued to battle, tying the game at 4-4 on a Mason Bunch two-run home run in the top of the fifth, but they were held off the scoreboard the rest of the way. Caldwell

went on to strike out the side in the top of the sixth before the Lions walked it off on the Firefighters' final miscue.

Holmes and Johnson combined for two hits, three runs scored, and two runs batted in, while Aaron Mauller earned the win for the Lions, striking out six and allowing just two earned runs in four innings of work.

"I've got a couple on the team that like to stand up and try to take charge a little bit," Clark said. "[RJ] is a team leader. Jayden is another leader on the squad. Aaron, our pitcher, came in and did his job at the very beginning. We put Ethan in, and he did what he was supposed to do. And then our closer, Taeshon Caldwell, did a wonderful job against

this squad."

...continued from Page 6

While the Firefighters came out on the losing end, Bunch was tremendous in all facets. He went 2-for-2 at the plate with a run scored and two RBI, while also pitching the entire game on the mound, striking out 1.

"Mason didn't even play baseball last year. He sat out the entire season, but I got him to come back out this year," Mitchener said. "He's a fantastic ball player. He's a good middle infielder and a good hitter and a fantastic pitcher. He's going to be something special for us."

Gage Stickann finished the contest with a sacrifice fly, while Ah'lijeh Monday collected a pair of singles and Brayton Bauer finished 1-for-2 from the dish.

Sue Baker

multiple sports in the '60's, and she was successful in winning percentage in all four of them. That speaks volumes for what Sue Baker meant to girls' athletics at Marion High School in the '60's.

"You think about the leadership abilities of Tom Wilson and Todd Law and Moe Smedley and Art Caldwell, and here is another coach right there with them...who was successful at molding and shaping young girls into young women. That is why she belongs in the Hall of Fame."

Baker coached a plethora of tremendous female athletes during her tenure at Marion, including Connie Garrett, another Grant County Sports Hall of Fame who went on to have

an outstanding coaching ca-

reer in her own right.

After leaving Marion in 1968, Baker headed south to Texas, looking to continue her work, but she never saw her dream fully realized before her untimely death.

timely death.

However, five decades after her passing, the effects of Baker's work can be seen all over the state of Indiana. The girls' high school state basketball championships are held at Bankers Life Fieldhouse in Indianapolis. The volleyball state championships are held at Worthen Arena at Ball State University. The list goes on and on.

Pioneers like Baker helped lead the charge, and the foundation she laid is one that will stand the test of time.

...continued from Page 6

"The places that these championship matches and games are held for the girls are equal to where they are holding them for the guys, and that, in and of itself, is a testament to people like Sue Baker who fought the good fight and put down that pavement on the roadway to success for where we see girls' athletics today in high school sports," Mc-Cord said. "I think she would be pleased to see girls playing on the big stage in the big spotlight just like the guys."

