



# LAKE PAN RUN CLUB HOSTS 5K

By Khloe Baker  
(Fifth grader and Run Club member at Lake Panasoffkee Elementary)

At the end of last year, the Lake Panasoffkee Elementary Run Club hosted its first ever 5K event at Lake Panasoffkee Elementary School.

There were over 75 participants taking part in the event. The club is led by Spencer Miller and students were thrilled to have him set up the 5K.

The course was a mile loop on campus that each runner had to run three times. They used colorful bracelets for the loops to help

keep up with how far they had run. To prepare for the event, running club members ran 40 minutes each day, two times a week. And also, before and after running, they stretched.

Miller recruited the community to help him make the day successful. He asked for, and got sponsors, to create a special day. Publix was the main sponsor, providing resources for beautiful medals and healthy snacks for the participants of the 5K. South Sumter High School students were also a great help at the race. They arrived very early to mark

the course and stayed on the course during the 5k to make sure the runners did not get off track.

Students ran, but so did parents and other staff members. Everyone had a great time! Also, many participants learned from the race, by learning it is okay to not win first, and it was all just positive energy during the whole entire race. Students ran together to stay motivated and encouraged to keep going. We were very appreciative of Mr. Miller being able to start the running club.



Kennedy and Khloe Baker

# RUNNING CLUB AT LPES



Phoenix Moore.

By Phoenix Moore, Fifth Grader and Run Club member at LPES

Twice a week, starting in September, about 50 kids at Lake Panasoffkee Elementary School stayed after school to run, and sometimes other staff members would join them. On Mondays and Thursdays, Mr. Miller, the boss of the club, would help students reach their goals and try to improve their running.

They started week one only running for 18 minutes, but by December they were running for 40 minutes! A lot of people struggled with the heat in the beginning, as it was in the 90's

most days. Even though it was so hot, they still got through it. The temperatures were much better suited for running in November and December. Run Club gives you a great feeling! Sometimes there were ups and downs, but people were still happy. The Run Club benefitted students by helping them with other sports, and by helping with pace and speed. To wrap up the season, there was a 5k that students and staff and family members ran in. Mr. Miller made the experience amazing!



The Lake Panasoffkee Elementary School Run Club members.



Hunter and Robert Thomas, father and son ran together.



Fans gathered around the course to show their support.



Olivia and Liam Akana.



Bremer Labruyere, Amelia Amo, Lorelie Davin and Henley Sizemore after the 5K.



Principal Tara Wells and teachers, Melissa Akana and Elizabeth Jarrett, were at the finish line to time runners and hand out medals.



Josue, Maria, Davi and Janet Amaral ran as a family.



Patrick and Richie Dinkins.



Owen and Jeff Richard



Jaxon Oden coming in after the first lap.



Event coordinator Spencer Miller and some of the students, on the run.

# Schools & Sports

## In baseball, Raiders the team to watch

## Wildcats winning with discipline and determination



Articles and photos by Jasmine Garcia

The South Sumter Raiders baseball team is off to a strong and exciting start this season, posting a 3-1 record and showing early signs of a competitive and determined squad. With big performances at the plate and resilience in close games, the Raiders are proving they are ready to compete.

South Sumter opened Friday, Feb. 6, with a dominant 12-2 win over the Dunnellon Tigers. The Raiders' offense came alive early, setting the tone for what has become a trend this season aggressive bats and smart base running. On Feb. 11, they hosted Trinity Catholic Celtics in a high-scoring battle that came down to the final moments. Despite a tough 16-15 loss, South Sumter showed heart and fight, refusing to back down in a back-and-forth contest.

The Raiders bounced right back the next day, defeating Bishop McLaughlin Catholic Hurricanes 8-7 in another close matchup. Their ability to respond after a difficult loss

speaks volumes about the team's mindset. On Feb.13, South Sumter once again faced Dunnellon at home and delivered another statement win, 12-1, showcasing both strong pitching and explosive offense.

Two senior leaders have played a major role in the team's early success. James Boone leads the team in home runs with two already this season and has crossed the plate a team-high nine times. His power and ability to get on base have sparked the offense. Alongside him, Gabe Sabiona has been a consistent force, leading the team with seven hits, eight RBIs and three doubles. His clutch hitting and run production continue to drive the Raiders forward.

These two seniors not only produce on the field but also set the tone with their leadership and experience. With momentum building and key players stepping up, South Sumter baseball is shaping up to be a team to watch this season.

The Wildwood Wildcats boys basketball team is proving once again why their program is so highly respected across the state. With an impressive overall record of 23-5, the Wildcats have battled their way into the Regional Finals, showing heart, discipline and determination every step of the way.

On Feb. 5, Wildwood tipped off Round 4 of the playoffs against the Chiefland Indians and delivered a dominant 73-39 victory. The Wildcats controlled the game from start to finish with strong defense and unselfish offense. Just two days later, they faced Williston Red Devils in a hard-fought matchup. Despite a strong effort, Wildwood came up just short in a close 70-64 loss. Instead of letting that defeat define them, the team used it as motivation.

On Feb. 14, the Wildcats bounced back in a big way against the Hawthorne Hornets, earning a convincing 64-41 win. Their energy, focus and teamwork were on full display as they punched their ticket to the regional finals.

Leading the charge all season has been standout guard Tico Smith, who averages the most points per game and leads the team in assists. His ability to score and create opportunities for teammates makes him a constant threat on the court. Alongside him, Azzyron Johnson has been a force in the paint, leading the team in rebounds and blocks. His defensive presence and toughness give Wildwood a major advantage inside.

Under the leadership of head coach Adier Feliciano, the Wildcats have built a culture of excellence. Coach Feliciano's dedication and belief in his players have helped shape this team into a disciplined and confident group.

Now, with a rematch against Williston set for Feb. 21 in the regional finals, Wildwood has its eyes on redemption and a championship opportunity. The Wildcats have already shown they belong among the best. With their talent, leadership and determination, this team continues to make their school and community proud.

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## Raiders flag on the field

This past weekend, the South Sumter Raiders girls flag football team made a powerful statement on the field. In a friendly scrimmage against a local Wildwood competitive team, the Raiders showed exactly what they are building this season toughness, teamwork and confidence. Although the Wildwood

team was not affiliated with Wildwood Wildcats, they brought strong competition and intensity, giving South Sumter a great opportunity to sharpen their skills.

From the first snap, the Raiders played with energy and focus. Their offense moved the ball efficiently, while the defense communi-

cated well and made key stops. Every player contributed, proving that this is not just a team with talent, but a team with depth. The scrimmage was more than just practice — it was a preview of what's to come.

South Sumter continues to grow stronger each time they step on the field, and this week-

end was another example of how serious they are about making this season special. With momentum building, the Raiders now turn their attention to their next matchup at home on Tuesday, February 17, against OTC. If this scrimmage was any indication, fans can expect an exciting and competitive season ahead.

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