

Spring Football: Panthers to visit Chestatee for scrimmage on Friday

By Todd Forrest
North Georgia News
sports@nganews.com

Union County Head Coach Brian Allison and staff will be looking for answers on the offensive line and in the secondary this Friday night when they visit Chestatee for a spring scrimmage.

Recently approved by Georgia High School Association, several North Georgia schools have taken advantage of the opportunity to pickup some extra game experience in the spring.

However, this Friday's scrimmage won't be without a few differences to an actual game. According to Allison, there will be no kickoff or punt returns and the junior varsity will take over in the fourth quarter.

As for the goals of Friday night and the spring overall, Coach Allison and company are looking to fill positions that have been depleted by graduation.

The two areas hit the hardest are the offensive line and safety.

Up front, the Panthers must replace a pair of All-Region selections in guard Blane Brown and right tackle Tyler McConnell, as well as two additional starters in left tackle Dawson Groves and guard Zach Payton.

The lone returning starter among the front five is rising junior center Coleson Daniel.

"Our priority this spring is to get our offensive line headed in the right direction and finding the five guys that will give us the best chance to be



Rising senior quarterback Cole Wright participates in passing drills during spring practice last week. Photo/Todd Forrest

competitive," Allison said.

Union County also graduated both starting safeties - Zach Stone and Micah Gilbert.

"The same thing applies at safety," Allison continued. "The main thing is just finding the guys that can fill in at those spots."

Kickoff is scheduled for 7 p.m. at Chestatee High School.

Chestatee is located in Hall County between Gainesville and Dahlonega on Sardis Rd., off of Hwy. 60/Thompson Bridge Rd., just south of Mur-rayville.

The physical address is

3005 Sardis Rd., Gainesville, Ga. 30506.

Chestatee is coached by Shaun Conley, a former assistant to Coach Allison during his first stint at UCHS.

The War Eagles finished 4-7 in Class AAAA last season and return one of North Georgia's top running backs in Nick Lyles.

Last season, the 6-1, 200-pound rising senior rushed for 1,327 yards and 15 TDs, including a 96-yarder in the opener at North Hall.

Averaging 6.9 yards-per-carry, Lyles went over 100 yards in seven games and hauled in 15



Union County Offensive Line coach Neil Setzer and outgoing senior Blane Brown look on as linemen go through blocking drills during last week's spring practice. Photo/Todd Forrest

catches for 3 scores. His breakout performance came at Fannin County on Sept. 9th when he tallied 243 yards and 5 TDs on 17 carries.

Also returning to the Chestatee backfield is quarterback Storm Yarbrough, who threw for 1,719 and 12 TDs as a junior in 2016.

UCHS hosts Special Olympic Spring Games



Union County High School's Mike Colwell Memorial Stadium was the site of the Towns-Union Special Olympics' Spring Games last Thursday morning.

Dozens of volunteers from Towns and Union County schools assisted the athletes in a variety of events while hundreds of spectators filled the stands to cheer on the competitors as they gave their all on a humid spring morning.

Each year the Towns-Union Special Olympics host two sets of games - one in the spring and another in the fall while the two counties rotate as the host site.

All ages were represented in the games, which featured such events as the soccer ball kick, the softball toss, an assortment of walking / running competitions on the track, and lots more.

In Georgia, more than 27,000 Special Olympics athletes are registered and the Towns-

Union games are one of 500 competitions held across the state.

The mission of Special Olympics is to provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community.

BMTA Hike

BMTA hike, Friday May 26 - BMT in Cherry Log Mtn, Blue Ridge. 4 miles, easy to moderate. 2 hours on trail followed by lunch at Pink Pig. Contact Hike Leaders: Tom and Jane Keene at tkbmta@gmail.com or text 770-548-4935.

Chatuge Shores Ladies Golfers tee off 2017 season



New member Lee Cromwell follows through on a great drive. Tuesday, May 2, was the kickoff for the CSLGA summer season. The members were welcomed by the new

President, Loretta Hughes. One new member, Lee Cromwell, was introduced. Four foursomes played a scramble and three groups tied for first with scores of 74! Chef Claudia Renaldo prepared a scrumptious special welcome back luncheon. Several members were greeted as they returned to the mountains from their winter homes.

Tuesday, May 9 saw the second play of the season. Sixteen players vied for individual points, based on pars, birdies, chips, and putts. The winners were as follows: 1st place - Judy Schmitt with 35 points; 2nd place - Kathy Steward with 33 points; 3rd place - Star Glock with 32 points (match of cards); 4th place - Nancy Outlaw with 32 points. The low putts award went to Judy Schmitt and the chip-ins to Nancy Outlaw and Sandy Jersey.

As seasonal residents return and new members join, CSLGA looks forward to a great year. All new players, of any skill level, are invited to join CSLGA. For further information, please contact Judy Schmitt (828-389-7095) or Loretta Hughes (rettah10@gmail.com). NT(May17,F2)SH

It is time for Football and Cheerleading

Sign-ups at the Union County Recreation Department begin May 1-June 23rd.



Ages 7-11

(Age cut off is April 30)

Sign up on-line at unioncountyga.gov



Go to park and recreation/youth athletic programs or at the Recreation Office located at 310 Wellborn Street

** For more information please call the recreation office at 706-439-6074**

Local dancers excel at Applause



L-R: Rilla Ricks, Aubrey Meier, Mai Lim, Dawson Mitchell

Covington GA, May 5, 2017- Students from NGDA's Performance Groups performed solos at Applause Competition and bringing home awards in several categories. NGDA would like to congratulate all the dancers who participated. Dawson Mitchell (Clay County), and Rilla Ricks (Union County) won Platinum medals for their solo routines, ballet and contemporary respectively. 5-year-old Aubrey Meier (Towns County), won a Platinum medal for her jazz routine and 3rd overall in her age group. Mai Lim (Towns County) won a Double Platinum award for her contemporary solo "Young

and Beautiful." North Georgia Dance Arts provides opportunities for ages 5-18 to participate in age appropriate Performance Groups, allowing dancers to gain valuable experience and feedback as they grow. NGDA is proud of each and every one of our dancers, whether recreational or competitive! Come see them all at our upcoming Recital, "Oh, The Places You Will Go!" on Saturday, June 3rd at 2 PM at the Union County Performing Arts Center. For choice seating, visit TutuTix.com/NorthGeorgiaDanceArts. Tickets are \$16 if purchased in advance, and \$20 at the door. NT(May17,A2)SH

Local dancers prepare for annual showcase

The students at Blairsville Dance Project are in the final preparations for their annual recital "History Repeating." The event is the culmination of 10 months of hard work and dedication.

"This is definitely a unique recital theme," said Angela Puleo, Studio Director. "Each class is reenacting either a famous moment or famous time period in history. Our goal this year was not only to teach a dance, but also to give the students a bit of a history lesson."

The audience will see dances representing the full spectrum of historical events, from the Ice Age and Ellis Island to Studio 54 and the British Invasion. Several of the dances, including "French Revolution," "Industrial Revolution," "Renaissance" and "The Salem Witch Trials" recently premiered at competition in Cherokee, NC where they won four First Place trophies.

"One thing we did differently this year was to give our students the opportunity to contribute to the choreography," said Brett Taylor, Lead Instructor. "Of course, the



"Radioactive" Dance Group

teachers choreographed the routines and taught the classes, but we let students contribute to the overall ideas. In some dances with the older classes, we would even give them an 8-count to write themselves or allow them to develop an acting part on their own that they would do onstage when not dancing. Since dance should be about more than just replicating steps, we wanted to give them a well-rounded stage experience."

The show will be held on Sunday, May 21 at the Union County Fine Arts Center.

Blairsville Dance Project, is located at 38 Merchant's Walk across from the Blairsville Police Department. BDP offers competition and recreational classes for ages 18 months-adult in ballet, tap, jazz, hip hop, lyrical, preschool dance, contemporary, acrodance and clogging.