

Sports

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Upcoming Brannon Jones Memorial Camp: More than just football

By Todd Forrest
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Union County High School will once again be the site of the Brannon Jones Memorial Football Camp.

Following the overwhelming success of last year's inaugural event that drew nearly 80 athletes, camp founder Luther Jones is looking to broaden the focus in 2017.

The 2016 camp featured an emphasis on defense - due to the majority of instructors coming from that side of the ball - but Luther Jones says this year's edition will provide a can't miss opportunity for players of any position or skill set.

"This year I'm going to bring in guys for both the offense and defense, so it's really going to be more of a football fundamental camp," said Luther Jones, a Kennesaw State defensive lineman and son of the camp namesake Brannon Jones. "We'll break up into offense and defense and we'll also do some competitions. We'll start off with agility for the first half, then have lunch, then it will be all football for the second half."

He also wanted to stress that the camp is about teaching life lessons through football. Since the camp is in honor of his late father, it's very near and dear to his heart, and he wants each and every camper to realize that someone out there cares about them.

"It is a football camp so we want to go out there and get after it, but our biggest goal is to allow the kids the opportunity to ask questions," Luther Jones said.

"We want to love these kids and get to know them, let them get to know me and learn the story of my dad."

"The biggest thing for me isn't just football, but to let the kids know that they have someone to talk to if they ever need help with anything. It's



Approximately 75 campers braved the rain, heat, and humidity at last year's Brannon Jones Memorial Camp. Photo/Todd Forrest

about building relationships and letting them know they can talk, not only to me, but to any of the guys up there."

Joining Luther Jones as camp instructors will be 14 current NCAA football players, along with local coaches and two professional players.

The two pros at the camp will be Dante Blackmon of the Indianapolis Colts, who was also at last year's camp as a Kennesaw State Owl.

Recently, Blackmon became the first KSU football player to sign with an NFL team.

The other pro that will be on hand is Derrick Farrow - a former KSU Owl that recently signed with the Canadian Football League's Montreal Alouettes.

For anyone who is still on the fence in regards to attending the camp, Luther Jones is quick to point out that the opportunity to receive instruction from players in the professional and college ranks, doesn't come around very often - especially in the Northeast Georgia mountains.



Luther Jones instructs youngsters at the 2016 camp. Photo/Todd Forrest

"This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity," he said. "Not many people in this area will get the chance to train with current pro and NCAA athletes."

A few familiar faces that will be volunteering as instructors at the camp are coaches Justin Byers, Gabe Miller, Paul McBride and Mike Ross.



Campers of all ages took part at last year's camp. Photo/Todd Forrest

Also helping out are former Panther players Wesley Adams, Chase Barnett, Cody Davenport, Blake Gowder, Dawson Groves, Caylan Tanner and possibly more. Fore more details on the Brannon Jones Memorial Football camp, see the ad at the bottom of this page

Cole Wright discusses camps, recruiting, and his recent visit to West Point

By Todd Forrest
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Union County rising-senior quarterback Cole Wright has been busy.

Between summer workouts, 7-on-7 tournaments, camps, and recruiting visits, the month of June has taken the Panthers dual threat QB up-and-down the east coast.

However, the North Georgia News was able to catch up with Wright for an interview regarding his June 22 visit to West Point, where he toured the campus and met the coaching staff that recently sent a scholarship offer his way.

NGN: At this point, what schools have shown an interest in you?

CW: Army is the only offer but Furman is definitely showing some interest but they

haven't offered anything yet.

NGN: As for your Army visit, what was your impression of the coaching staff?

CW: I got to talk to the head coach for a little while but I spent most of the day with the offensive coordinator (Brent Davis) and they are awesome guys. They (coaching staff) came from Georgia Southern and they are all just great guys.

NGN: What have the coaches said about how you would fit into the triple option offense and what would the transition from a shotgun-spread style be like for you?

CW: (Army has) always been a triple option offense and I don't see that changing anytime soon. They could incorporate a few spread plays but they will always remain true to the option.

Being under center is definitely something different. I've never played under center,

but it's a great school and if I decide to go there I'll just have to learn to take snaps.

NGN: Have you had a chance to look at the depth chart with the coaches and have they given an idea on how soon you could see the field?

CW: I didn't see all of (the depth chart) but I know their starting quarterback is a senior. They did tell me that even if I didn't play quarterback, they could find a position for me. They're going to give me a chance at quarterback but told me I could play receiver, cornerback, or safety.

NGN: How do you feel about the location (upstate New York) and playing in cold weather?

CW: It's far away but the opportunity is just too good to pass up. As far as playing cold weather, that's just something I'll have to adapt to.

NGN: What qualities in a school and/or coaching staff

is most important to you and will weigh the heaviest in your decision?

CW: I want a degree that will go a long way, and a degree from West Point would really stand out. When people see that, it's guaranteed to get you in the door almost anywhere. But really, as long as it's a quality school, I'm open to going anywhere.

NGN: Since the 7-on-7 tournaments ended a few weeks ago, what else has been going on, football-wise?

CW: I went to the Mercer camp and it went really well. I only got to stay for a couple of days but I won the long distance throw (67 yards) and the accuracy (competitions).

They said they really liked me and would keep in touch. I haven't heard anything from them since the camp, but it was only a few days ago.



Union County QB Cole Wright with Army offensive coordinator Brent Davis during his visit to West Point.

MUSA Fall Registration



Registration is open for boys and girls ages 4-16.

You may register online at www.mountainsoccer.org. Registration deadline is Aug. 9. Players registered after deadline will incur a late fee and will be placed on roster waiting list.

Volunteer coaches also are needed. Questions: email: musa.soccer@gmail.com

NEW Start Smart Basketball Program

Union County Recreation Department
2017 Start Smart Basketball Program
Ages: 3-5



Beginning this fall, Union County Recreation Department will now be offering Start Smart Basketball! Your child can learn the beginning fundamentals of the sport of Basketball in a fun and safe-noncompetitive setting.

All Start Smart sports beginner programs are led by a highly qualified Program Director for Union County Recreation Department.

**Session One Registration begins on July 5, 2017 and ends August 3, 2017 at the Recreation Office (310 Wellborn St.) Registration can be completed in person or online! If you have any questions, please contact Jennifer at (706) 439-6074. *Season runs from September 5 through October 12 with 15 sessions.

Trout stocking sites week of June 26-30, 2017

Fannin: Hemptown Creek, Hothouse Creek, Rock Creek, Sugar Creek, Toccoa River, Toccoa River Tailwaters Below Lake Blue Ridge Dam and Wilsco Creek.

Gilmer: Boardtown Creek
Lumpkin: Cane Creek, Clay Creek, Etowah River and Nimblewill Creek
Murray: Holly Creek
Union: Canada Creek, Cooper Creek, Suches Creek and Toccoa River

Note: Information is subject to change. Please call the hatchery at 706-838-4723 for questions. Stay up-to-date with stocking and events through Facebook www.facebook.com/chattahoocheeforestnfh. The hatchery also provides trout for the state. Please contact Georgia DNR for information on sites stocked by the state. NOU5.F5ICA

Warriors Veterans Outreach Golf Tournament September 8th

On September 8th the Warriors Scholarship Fund will sponsor a golf tournament to benefit the Warriors Veterans Outreach Organization. The tournament, a four person best ball scramble will be at the Old Union Golf Course. Lunch will be served prior to the shotgun start.

Cost of the match is \$55 per person or \$220 for the team. All proceeds will be donated to the Veterans Outreach and the Warriors Scholarship Fund.

The Veterans Outreach is an organization that exists to help veterans of our com-

munity that have problems with health, building wheelchair ramps, rent payments and assisting Veterans finding employment. There is never a cost to the Veteran for these services. Most of the costs of providing these services are donated by the membership and helpful friends. The work and material are also donated.

The Warriors Scholarship Fund raises money to sponsor graduating Seniors that are attending Military Programs such as the ROTC in Dahlonega. \$500 per semester is given to qualified students.

Brannon Jones Memorial Football Camp

When: July 15, 2017; 10am-3pm (registration at 9)
Where: Mike Colwell Memorial Stadium (Union County football field)
Who: Any athlete that wants to improve their skill
How much: \$20 for pre-registered athletes. \$30 for day of athletes
(pre-registration ends July 4)

*Every athlete that pre-registers with payment will receive a t-shirt, everyone else will receive a water bottle.
**Snack lunch will be provided

This camp will be coached by current and former NCAA football players alongside coaches from the surrounding area.

Must have paperwork and copy of insurance to participate
Contact Luther Jones at (706) 897-7041 or email acs76377@uqa.edu to receive paperwork