

Cross Country: Both Union teams place at region; State Championships Saturday

By Todd Forrest
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Helen – Union County Cross Country is sending two full teams to the state meet for the fifth straight year following a pair of top-four performances at the Region 7-AAA Championships last Thursday afternoon.

Racing at Unicoi State Park for the second straight year, sophomore Zoe Sanchez and senior Lance Underwood each paced their respective squads with a pair of second-place finishes. Underwood, who set a school record (16:06) at Unicoi earlier this month, crossed the finish line in 16:21, approximately 25 seconds behind first place Devan Crow of North Hall, who led wire-to-wire.

“I was trying to keep pace with (Crow) and run a sub-16 (minutes) but I couldn’t do that, so I was just trying to feel him out (Crow) and feel out the guy behind me,” Underwood said.

Freshman Luke Gambrell (17:04) turned in an eighth place performance and senior Timothy Murphy placed 18th with a time of 18:07. Junior Colby Ives (18:49) was 28th, sophomore Gauge Shumaker (18:52) was 29th, junior Milo Bauman (18:53) was 30th, and senior Gehrig Patterson (19:09) placed 33rd.

The Panthers took home third in the team standings, edging GAC and Lumpkin County, but trailing first place Dawson



Union County senior Lance Underwood crosses the finish line in second place at last week's region meet at Unicoi State Park. Photo/Todd Forrest

County and second place North Hall.

In the girls' race, Sanchez clocked in at 19:33 but it wasn't enough to catch Dawson County's Frankie Muldoon, who finished 22 seconds ahead in 19:11. Sanchez momentarily grabbed the lead over Muldoon during mile two but was unable to maintain her advantage.

“I was hoping I could get close to or beat Frankie (Muldoon) but that didn't happen today,” Sanchez said. “I actually passed her but she passed me back in the second mile.”

“I actually think this

year's race was a little easier (compared to last year as a freshman) because I didn't know what I was doing last time. I actually feel like I did so much better this year because I wasn't so nervous.”

While there was little doubt the boys would qualify for state thanks to a pair of top-eight finishes and three among the top 18, the girls' race wasn't without a bit of drama for head coach Paige Dyer.

“I knew our team had performed well enough during the season against region competition to make it to state



Union County sophomore Zoe Sanchez crosses the finish line in second place at last week's region meet at Unicoi State Park. Photo/Todd Forrest

but it's always a little nerve wracking until the race is over,” Coach Dyer said.

After Sanchez, the next Union County participant was 17th place Latty Ryals (23:04), followed by 18th place Sadie Underwood (23:05). As a result, Lumpkin County slipped into third place with three runners among the top 12, leaving Union in a battle for the final spot.

“The girls had an off race,” Coach Dyer said. “We should have been an easy third and with a good race, one of the top two teams. Lumpkin

absolutely had a good run and have improved all season.

“However, being out for a week at Fall Break always hurts our runners because they only get three practices in after being out for a full week before the Region race.”

Senior Emmi Schakat (23:42) came in 21st, holding off a pack of Fannin County Lady Rebels to secure Union's berth at state next weekend. Sophomore Lexie Ochoa (24:45) placed 30th, Destiny Orellana-Irvin (25:22) was 34th, and Jessie Holbrook (26:08) placed 37th.

Fannin would place five runners between 22 – 29 but it wasn't enough to catch Union County.

“I think having the experience under their belts definitely helps our team and hopefully can help us perform even better than last year at state,” Coach Dyer said. “We absolutely have the talent and being familiar with the courses helps also.”

East Hall's top five runners placed between 26 – 40; GAC didn't have enough runners to qualify for the team competition.

North Hall placed first and Dawson County was second in the girls' race.

The Class AAA State Championships will be held next Saturday at Carrollton High School. The boys will get underway at 9:30 a.m. with the girls to follow.

“Last year we finished 11th and 13th and if we perform like we have all year, and I know we can, both teams could make it into the top 10,” Coach Dyer said. Our goal is always to finish well.”

According to Sanchez, her goal for this Saturday's race is a top 10 finish. As for the senior Underwood, he's looking to go out with a top five at his fourth state meet. He also has some advice for teammates competing at state for the first time.

“My goal is the top five,” he said. “If I could say one thing to the young guys it would be ‘don't get scared at the starting line.’ There's going to be a lot of people. It's crazy and it can get really nasty with everybody bunched up right there.”



The Region 7-AAA boys top seven runners from Unicoi (top). Underwood is second from the right. The Region 7-AAA girls top seven runners from Unicoi (bottom) Photos/submitted



The Union County Cross Country teams and coaches prior to last week's region meet. Photos/Todd Forrest

UC basketball opens at home Friday, Nov. 17

2017-2018 Basketball Schedule

| Day | Date | Opponent | Location | Varsity | JV |
|-----------|---------|----------|----------|--------------|------------|
| Friday | Nov. 17 | Gilmer | Home | 7:00/8:30 | |
| Tuesday | Nov. 21 | Towns | Away | 7:00/8:30 | 4:00/5:30 |
| Tuesday | Nov. 28 | Rabun | Away | 6:00/7:30 | 4:15 Boys |
| Saturday | Dec. 2 | Towns | Home | 6:00/7:30 | 3:00/4:30 |
| Tuesday | Dec. 5 | Fannin | Away | 6:00/7:30 | 4:15 Girls |
| Friday | Dec. 8 | Rabun | Home | 7:00/8:30 | 4:00/5:30 |
| Friday | Dec. 15 | N Hall | Away | 7:00/8:30 | 4:00/5:30 |
| Monday | Dec. 18 | Andrews | Home | 6:00/7:30 | 4:15 Boys |
| Tuesday | Dec. 19 | Gilmer | Away | 6:00/7:30 | 4:15 Boys |
| Thursday | Dec. 21 | Pickens | Home | 7:00/8:30 | 4:00/5:30 |
| Wednesday | Dec. 27 | TBD | Towns | TBD | |
| Thursday | Dec. 28 | TBD | Towns | TBD | |
| Friday | Dec. 29 | TBD | Towns | TBD | |
| Tuesday | Jan. 2 | E Hall | Home | 6:00/7:30 | 4:15 Girls |
| Friday | Jan. 5 | Lumpkin | Home | 7:00/8:30 | 4:00/5:30 |
| Saturday | Jan. 6 | Andrews | Away | 2:00/3:30 | 12:00 Boys |
| Tuesday | Jan. 9 | Dawson | Away | 6:00/7:30 | 4:15 Boys |
| Friday | Jan. 12 | Fannin | Home | 7:00/8:30 | 4:00/5:30 |
| Saturday | Jan. 13 | GAC | Home | 6:00/7:30 | 3:00/4:30 |
| Tuesday | Jan. 16 | Pickens | Away | 6:00/7:30 | 4:30 Girls |
| Thursday | Jan. 18 | White | Home | 6:00 JV Boys | |
| Friday | Jan. 19 | GAC | Away | 7:00/8:30 | 4:00/5:30 |
| Tuesday | Jan. 23 | N Hall | Home | 6:00/7:30 | 4:15 Boys |
| Friday | Jan. 26 | E Hall | Away | 7:00/8:30 | 4:00/5:30 |
| Tuesday | Jan. 30 | Lumpkin | Away | 6:00/7:30 | 4:15 Girls |
| Friday | Feb. 2 | Dawson | Home | 7:00/8:30 | 4:00/5:30 |

8U Panthers Super Bowl bound



The 8U Panthers are going to the Super Bowl at Fannin County High School vs the Chestatee War Eagles. Players and coaches: #00 Lassiter Windsor, #1 Haze Burnett, #2 Brandon Lynch, #3 Kamren Daniels, #5 Gracian Sabo, #7 Dailon DeFalco, #8 Ethan Hogsed, #9 Graham Crosby, #10 Brayden Ball, #11 Alan Godinez, #13 Kamden Kendrick, #17 Nolan Gooch, #18 Karter Conley, #20 Easton Shumaker, #21 Austin Hughes, #22 Jaxon Thoterow, #23 Kevin Kilpatrick, #27 Arthur Galindo, #28 Bentley Rich, #31 Kingston Jones, #34 Isaiah Stepp, #40 Jax Dillinger, #41 Tate Harkins, #44 Chetley Cox, #47 Richard Kelly, #48 Gunner Franklin, #88 Micah Wallace. Coaches: Levi Kendrick, Kevin Conley, Rusty Cox, Derick Dillinger, Kevin Kilpatrick, and Jacob Lynch.

By Blake Lynch
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

Gainesville - The 8U Panthers took on the Fannin County Rebels at West Hall High School and it was a great game.

The opening kickoff was recovered by No. 31 Kingston

Jones and the first touchdown was also made Jones.

Minutes later Jones scored another touchdown followed by a touchdown from Lassiter Windsor for a 20-0 lead.

Union County would hold on to its 20-0 advantage the rest of the way and are heading to the Super Bowl.

Kickoff is 1:30 p.m. Sat-

urday at Fannin County High School. Come out and support your 8U Panthers.

Meanwhile, the 10U Panthers took on the Dawson County Tigers and it was a tough game as Union County's season has come to a close with an impressive 7-1 record.

These guys are ready for next season to go at it again.