

Sports

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Henry, Young lift No. 6 Union County to 66-63 win at Murray Marevka leaves game early with injury, status for BOTS in doubt

By Todd Forrest
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Chatsworth - Houston Henry's 3-pointer at the buzzer, along with Maddox Young's game-high 18 points, helped the 6th-ranked Panthers (8-2, 4-1) survive Murray County's upset bid on Tuesday, Dec. 17.

After Murray tied the game at 63-63 with 31 seconds left and the shot clock off, Union County set up one final play when coach Corey Garrett took a timeout after bleeding the clock down to 12 seconds.

Murray used two quick fouls, leaving the Panthers just 8 seconds when Henry took the inbounds pass at the top of the key, and with nobody open, used a pump fake to get his defender in the air before pulling up and hitting from straightaway as time expired.

"I was supposed to swing it to Ethan [Hogsed] on the wing, but his [defender] came out too hard, so I had to shoot it," Henry said. "We're happy to come out of here with the win. This gym is a tough place to play; I'm just glad we got the win."

Union County, which lost junior Vince Marevka to a first-quarter concussion, trailed by as many as six in early the second half but rallied in the third quarter and built a 7-point advantage in the fourth before the Indians' late surge, which was aided by a 60% shooting clip from 3-point range in the fourth.

A Murray County try with 6:20 remaining cut Union's lead to 51-47. Baskets by Kaden Combs and Young had their team up 55-49 inside 5 minutes, but the Indians continued to answer down the stretch.

After Murray moved within 57-54, Hayden Hughes hit from the corner, bumping the margin back to a half-dozen, but the Indians answered with a triple, followed by a drive to the hoop that narrowed the lead to 60-59 with under three to play.

The two teams would trade misses for the next 80 seconds until Henry pushed the lead back to four by hitting from downtown at the 1:38



Senior guard Houston Henry needed every one of his 15 points to push Union County over the finish line at Murray County last week. Photo/Todd Forrest

mark. However, there was no quit in the upset-minded Indians with a raucous home crowd at their backs.

Murray knocked down two free throws on the ensuing possession and forced a Union turnover with 45 seconds left. With 31 seconds left, the Indians hit a turn-around jumper, setting up Henry's heroics on the other end.

The Panthers escaped with the win with Marevka in the back of everyone's mind. The junior forward suffered a scary injury late in the first quarter when he got airborne and contacted a Murray County player on the way down. The collision caused Marevka to get twisted up on his descent, sending him crashing to the floor onto the side of his head.

Marevka was taken by ambulance to a hospital in Dalton. His CT scans were clear, but he was diagnosed with a

concussion and is questionable for the Battle of the States Christmas Tournament.

Marevka's six first-quarter points helped Union build a 9-3 advantage out of the gates until Murray closed the quarter with a 10-2 run, then added a 3-pointer to start the second for a 16-11 lead.

Combs hit from the charity stripe, tying the game at 16, and a Hughes trey kept things knotted at 21-21. But Murray continued to bomb away from behind the arc, building a 28-23 lead until Young's triple had Union within two.

The Indians added another 3-pointer to take a 31-26 lead into the break, capping off a 4-for-9 second frame from long distance.

The Panthers faced a 34-28 deficit in the third, but Hogsed sparked Union's rally, scoring on a putback and hitting from downtown.

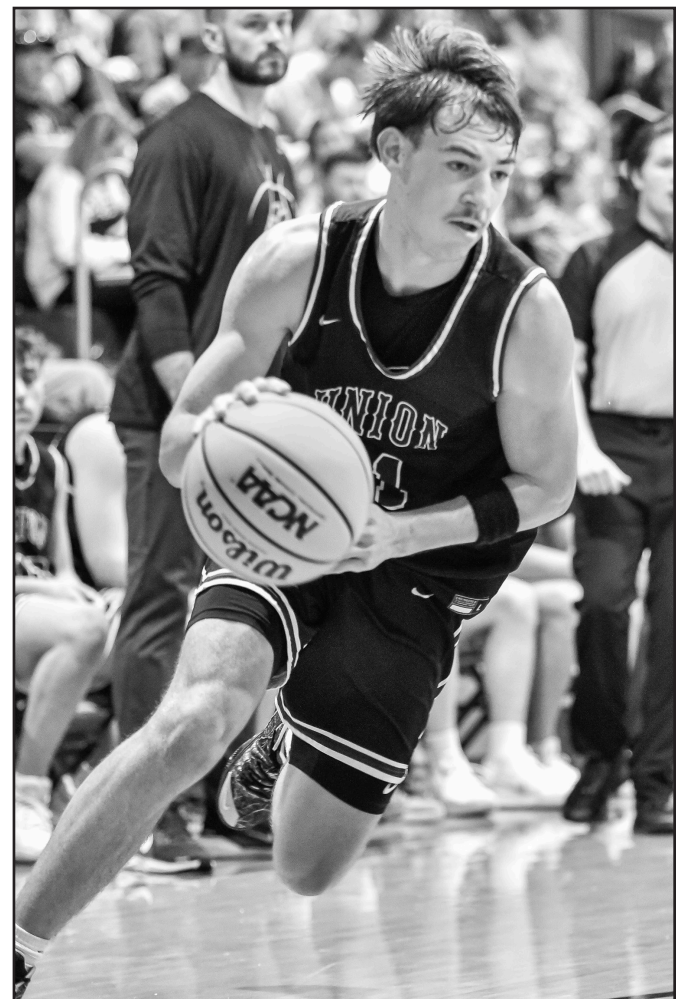
And later, with the Panthers trailing 37-35, Hayden Price leaked out off an Indians miss, allowing Young to hit him in stride for a game-tying layup.

Union regained the lead when Young returned his own miss, then knocked down two free throws for a 41-37 advantage.

Murray fired back with a 7-2 spurt to grab a brief 44-43 edge until Young's step-back jumper from the baseline, and Henry's layup on the break handed Union a 47-44 lead after three.

Young opened the fourth with an up-and-under lay-in off the drive and Hughes made it 51-44 with a putback at the 7:03 mark.

Young ended with 8 boards, 3 assists and a steal to go with his game-high scoring performance. Henry finished with 15 points, a game-high 9 rebounds and 8 assists. Hughes



Following a slow start in Chatsworth, senior Maddox Young scored 16 of his 18 points over the final three quarters. Photo/Todd Forrest

had 11 points, 4 rebounds and 3 steals. Hogsed had 7 points, 5 boards and an assist. Combs went for 7 points, 4 rebounds and an assist. Marevka had a rebound and a steal to go with his 6 points. Price added 2 points, a rebound, an assist and a steal. Holden Payne had 2 rebounds and one assist.

Lucas Smith led Murray County with 14 points. Jaiston Duff had a game-high 12 assists.

The Indians finished 11 for 29 (38%) from 3-point range and 6 for 7 (86%) at the line. The Panthers were 7 of 25 (28%) from deep and 3 of 8 (38%) at the line. Union County outscored Murray 40-16 in the paint and out-rebounded the home team 36-28 overall and 16-10 on the offensive glass.

Up next: Union County faces Coosa (Rome) in the first round of the Battle of the States Christmas Tournament at 2:30 p.m. on Friday, Dec.

27. Coosa, from Class A (D1), enters the tourney with a 4-4 mark and suffered a 64-40 loss at Fannin County on Dec. 16.

The winner/loser of Union vs. Coosa will draw the winner/loser of Hayesville, NC vs. Rabun County on Saturday, Dec. 28.

The final day of the tournament is Monday, Dec. 30.

The Panthers look to defend their 2023 Battle of the States Crown after winning the tournament for a record fourth-time.

Union County and Rabun County have squared off in each of the last two boys' BOTS title games with Rabun winning and 2022 and Union coming out on top in 2023.

"We have Coosa first and we're taking it one game at a time," Henry said. "Hopefully we can get a win, then get a win in the second game and make it back to the championship game for the third straight year."



Junior Vince Marevka scores inside for two of his 6 first-quarter points. Marevka led Union in scoring until leaving late in the first with a concussion. Photo/Todd Forrest



Sophomore Ethan Hogsed came off the bench to score 7 points, including five early in the third, rallying Union County from a 31-26 halftime deficit. Photo/Todd Forrest

UCMS 8th grade girls win championship for second straight year

Eighth grade finishes undefeated over two years of middle school

By Todd Forrest
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Union County's 8th grade finished off an incredible three-year run with a 45-24 victory over Fannin County in last week's league championship game at UCMS.

Miya Totherow led all scorers with 13 points on 5-of-10 shooting (1 for 2 from 3-point range).

Hailey Marshall had 12 points, 8 rebounds, 8 steals, 4 assists and blocked a shot.

Two years ago, the Lady Panthers brought a state championship back to the Union County Recreation Department in 12U basketball. A year ago, they capped off an undefeated 7th-grade season with a league title.

This season, as 8th graders, Union County completed a perfect regular season then notched a 56-25 win over Gilmer in the league semifinals on Monday, Dec. 16.

Two days later, Union County overcame a slow start to pull away from Fannin County in the league title game.

Kamryn Brown scored 8 points in the win over the Rebels. She added 3 steals, 2 blocks, a rebound and an assist.

Bristol Davis had 8 points and 2 steals. Scout Henry finished with 2 points, 7 assists, 5 boards and 5 steals. Elle Munn had 2 points; Mya Jordan had an assist.

Other team members include Clara Davis. The team is coached by Casey Jones.



Union County's 8th grade girls collected more hardware on Wednesday, Dec. 18.



Hailey Marshall ended with 12 points, 8 rebounds, 8 steals, 4 assists and a block during Union's title game win over Fannin. Photo/Todd Forrest



Miya Totherow vs. Fannin County. Photo/Todd Forrest



Kamryn Brown



Bristol Davis during the first quarter vs. Fannin. Photo/Todd Forrest

No. 4 Murray County's 18-0 run sinks Union County in Region 7-AA action

By Todd Forrest
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Chatsworth - No. 4 Murray County (11-0) scored the first 18 points of the second quarter to break things open in a 63-38 win over No. 10 Union County (6-4, 2-3) on Tuesday, Dec. 17.

The Lady Panthers kept things close for 8 minutes, trailing 9-7 after one, but the Indians pulled away in the second, taking a 31-12 lead into the half.

Ariel McCarter finished with a team-high 11 points, 5 rebounds, 5 assists and 2 steals. Hope Taylor, who came off the bench while dealing with an illness, finished with 9 points, 6 rebounds and 2 blocks.

Senior Aubrie Akins spotted Union County a 2-0 lead before 9-straight from Murray. The Lady Panthers closed out the period with 5 straight, courtesy of a McCarter 3-pointer and a Taylor deuce.

Murray's 18-0 run to start the second dropped Union County into a 27-7 hole with under two minutes left in the half until Taylor scored on a putback. Later, down 31-9, Mady Adams split two free throws and Regan Trlica hit a jumper with time winding down, moving the Lady Panthers within 19 at halftime.

McCarter scored on the baseline to start the third but Murray's ensuing 9-0 run built a 40-12 margin with just over 4 minutes left in the period. Trlica and Adams moved Union back within 21 near the 2-minute mark until the Indians out-



Ariel McCarter led Union County with 11 points in last week's loss at No. 4 Murray County. Photo/Todd Forrest

scored the visitors 8-2 to close the quarter up 50-23. Akins finished with 8 points, 9 rebounds and a steal. Trlica had 6 points, 3 steals, 2 assists, a rebound and a block. Adams went for 6 points and 3 rebounds.

Sloane Dyer finished with 4 boards; Nomi Nelson and Ragan McCarter had a rebound and a steal each; Tatum Fisher pulled down one rebound.

Murray County junior Callan Ledford led all scorers

with 27 points. Senior Bayleigh Winkler had 14 points.

Up next: Union County faces Coosa (Rome) at 1 p.m. in the first round of the Battle of the States Christmas Tournament on Friday, Dec. 27. Coosa sports a 4-4 record and recently lost 60-20 at Fannin County.

The Union vs. Coosa winner/loser will face the Rabun County vs. Hayesville, NC winner/loser on Saturday. The final round of the tournament is Monday, Dec. 28.

2024 30th Annual CHRISTMAS TOURNAMENT OF THE STATES

DEC 27-28-29, 2024

CONSOLATION BRACKET

DAY 1
12/27/24

Hayesville High, NC

DAY 2
12/28/24

DAY 3
12/30/24

9 10:00 AM

W5

10 1:00 PM

W6

GIRLS

DAY 1
12/27/24

DAY 2
12/28/24

DAY 3
12/30/24

WINNERS BRACKET

4:00 PM

7 4:00 PM

12 7:00 PM
CHAMPION

Polk Co., TN

3 10:00 AM

6 1:00 PM

8 7:00 PM

4 7:00 PM

Towns Co., GA

11 4:00 PM

3rd Place

L7

L8

Bottom Team in Bracket is Home Team and Will Wear White Uniforms

10U Girls soccer go undefeated



The Union County 10U girls soccer team finished the year undefeated. The girls had 73 goals, 33 assists, 19 saves and only 5 goals scored on them. Every player had more than one goal. And we had 6 shut-outs! The Gunners worked hard together and NEVER stopped wanting to learn and develop more skills! We feel blessed to have represented Union and look forward to next season.

Head Coach Jared Burdine. Assistant Coach Sabrina Jackson and Tom Miller. Players: Lillian Anderson, Justyna Barwick, Eliza Burdine, Charlotte Burdine, Bristol Erwin, Haley Livingston, Maddox Miller, Sutton Miller, Makayla Stinton and Lana Kate Williams.

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DAY 1
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Hayesville High, NC

DAY 2
12/28/24

DAY 3
12/30/24

9 11:30 AM

W5

10 2:30 PM

W6

BOYS

DAY 1
12/27/24

DAY 2
12/28/24

DAY 3
12/30/24

WINNERS BRACKET

5:30 PM

7 5:30 PM

12 8:30 PM
CHAMPION

Polk Co., TN

3 11:30 AM

6 2:30 PM

8 8:30 PM

4 8:30 PM

Towns Co., GA

11 5:30 PM

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