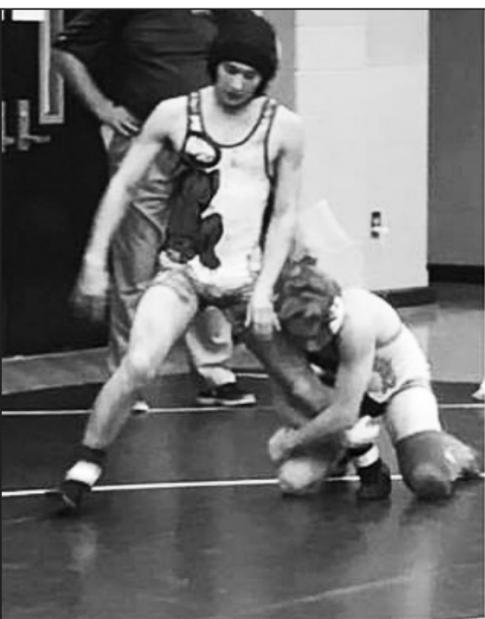


# Union County wrestling places 10th at Area Tournament



Union wrestling placed 10th at the Area Tournament, hosted by Fannin County last weekend. The Panthers had two wrestlers place: sophomore Issac Tritt took fifth at 145 pounds and senior Zach Peyton placed sixth at 220 pounds. "The boys gave everything they had. It is not how we wanted to end, but it will be an excellent starting point for next year," Coach Smith-Foot said.

## Bowling scores

Monday Night Men: Greg Whittenberg 225, 208, Andrew Haire 235, Brandon Hartness 257, 216, Jim Kidder 205, 212, Mel White 214, Bart Rodgers 214, Doug Tanner 248, 222, 210, Series 680, Taz Matetzschk 300, 232, Series 715, Walter Carpenter 215, Bonnell Thomas 202, Curtis Corn 267, 210, Series 650, Tim McVey 237, John Harkins 222, Randy Jones 200, Joe Teague 232, Derick Rice 232, 227, Tom Griffiths 203, 215, 213, Series 631.

Monday Night Ladies: Nell Rice 216, Joyce Trenton 199.

Young@Heart Seniors: Barry Rice 207, Bob Bischoff 263, Series 631, Bill Cox 201, Bryan Cuthbert 237, Mel White 211, Stanley Tyler 225, Claudia Harrison 208, Bob Landis 221, 217, Series 637, Peggy Kidder 202, Jim Kidder 227, John Delphino 214, Del Neiffer 203, Gene Langford 202.

Thursday Night Fun Mixed: Brandon Hartness 208, 203, Stanley Tyler 219, 204, Stacey King 201, Steve Brandt 232, Ray Everett 201, 203, Paul Lierd 226, 223, Series 645, Bill Lierd 201, Curtis Corn 227, Bonnell Thomas 233, Greg Whittenberg 235, 222, Series 652, Brett Hogsd 216, 213, 224, Shay Roberts 204, 205, 223, Series 632.

## BMT Hike

Hike: BMT Section 14 - TN 68 to Unicoi Gap via Buck Bald. 5.6 miles; moderate to strenuous. The first 45 min. is uphill, but your effort will be rewarded with lots of good views, history, and culture. Lunch will be at the Buck Bald picnic area, where you'll have a 360 degree view of the surrounding mountains. Unicoi Gap is near the TN/NC state line and is a site on the historic Unicoi Turnpike National Historic Trail. Shuttle is involved; the Coker Creek Visitors Center is on the shuttle route. Register with hike leaders Clare and Ed Sullivan at clare7982@gmail.com.

## Panthers... continued from 1C

East Hall jumped out to a 7-2 lead before the Panthers stormed back to take an 11-10 advantage. The Vikings would close out the first by scoring 7 of the next 11 points to take a 17-15 lead at the quarter's end.

East Hall continued to keep Union at an arm's length during much of the second frame with leads of 20-15 and 32-27 until Banton decided to take over late in the period.

Four straight baskets from Banton pulled Union within two at 37-35 with 44 seconds to play before the intermission.

A free throw by East Hall made it 38-35 but a floater in the paint by Candler Colwell pulled the Panthers within one at the half.

A mini-scoring drought to open the third put Union in a 42-37 hole until a steal by Wright led to a 3-point play. A put-back by Crawford Colwell and an lay-in by Banton knotted the score at 44-44.

With 1:16 left in the third, the Panthers went back inside to Banton once again, this time to even the score at 46-46. Banton scored his sixth straight point 29 seconds later to tie the game at 48-48.

Down by two, Union had a chance to tie the game before the end of the quarter but Crawford Colwell was hacked on a lay-up attempt and didn't get the call.

After three, Union trailed 50-48.

An East Hall basket to open the fourth put Union down by four by a driving lay-up but Candler Colwell pulled them back within two.

After the Viking scored on the other end, the Panthers missed a pair at the line - extending the missed free throw streak to five.

Union also had a potential 3-point play taken away when a basket-plus-foul was signaled by the referee before he reversed the call to a charge.

At the 4:41 mark, Crawford Colwell hit two free throws to end the struggles at the charity stripe. He hit two more with 4:15 to play but the Vikings continued to wear out the Panthers inside and went back on-top by four, 60-56 at the 4:06 mark.

Drake's 3-point play jump-started Union's 7-0 run on the ensuing Panther possession.

At the line, Union shot 12-of-18 for the game but all six of the misses came during the final 11 minutes.

**UC 54, North Hall 66**  
**Clermont** - Marty Kronz came off the bench midway through the third quarter and poured in 18 points over the final 10-plus minutes, but it wasn't enough to prevent the Trojans from capping off the season-sweep.

Kronz connected on 6-of-9 from the floor and 5-of-7 from long distance after Union fell into a 40-24 hole, despite pulling within five with a 5-0 spurt to open the third. Trailing 29-19 at the half,

Allison drained a corner-three, then Drake went into the paint for a deuce to make it a 29-24 game. However, the Trojans responded with a 15-0 run to open up a 44-24 advantage with 3:03 to play in the period.

Kronz nailed his first trey at the 2:32 mark of the third, but North Hall rattled off five-unanswered to take a 22-point lead until Kronz closed the quarter with a buzzer-beater trey.

Allison opened the fourth with two free throws and Drake drove to the basket for two - cutting the deficit to 17. Barrett drove the base line for two before Kronz hit from downtown with 5:44 to play.

The junior would strike again with another trey to pull Union within 14 at 56-42. After the Trojans misfired on the front-end of a 1-and-1, Kronz drove inside for two and the foul. The and-1 brought the Panthers to within 11 at the 4:37 mark, but they wouldn't get any closer.

North Hall hit 2-of-2 from the stripe and Allison followed that up with a perfect trip of his own to stay within 11. A Trojan 3-ball along with a lay-in put Union away with just over two minutes remaining and the score 63-47.

Allison scored on a lay-up, Wright took a steal coast-to-coast, and Kronz hit one more from beyond the arc to bring the final score to 66-54.

Behind Kronz's team-high 18 was Allison with 12 points and 4 rebounds.

Drake finished with 8 points and 5 boards. Banton scored 4 points to go with a team-high 8 rebounds and 4 steals.

Crawford Colwell, Wright, and Barrett each finished with 4 points.

Union fell behind 7-2 right out of the gates and were forced to play catch-up the entire game. Two free throws by Barrett brought the Panthers to within a point at 9-8, early in the second, but North Hall scored six-unanswered for a 15-8 lead.

Later in the period, two misses at the line for Union led to a Trojan basket on the other end to open up a 23-12 North Hall advantage.

Baskets by Drake and Wright pulled the Panthers back within seven but six of the next seven points belonged to the Trojans for a 29-19 halftime score.

Six different Panthers scored in the first half with Banton leading the way with four. Crawford Colwell had three, while Allison, Barrett, Drake, and Wright scored two each.

**UC 35, Lumpkin 60**  
**Dahlonega** - Following a devastating defeat to East Hall the night before, Union came out flat at Lumpkin - falling behind 32-12 at halftime, en route to a 25-point region loss.

The Panthers labored on the offensive end, shooting just 25-percent (10-of-40) from the floor and 23-percent (3-for-13)

from beyond the arc.

Union was also out-rebounded 44-to-26 while getting doubled-up on the offensive boards 21-to-10.

"We obviously played a pretty emotional game on Friday night, then had to go on the road and we just couldn't get anything going," Jones said.

The third quarter proved just as unkind to the Panthers as they managed only two field goals in the period, allowing the Indians to build a 23-point advantage entering the fourth.

The final frame turned out to be Union's highest scoring quarter (13) of the night, but they were still outscored by Lumpkin (15).

In the early going, the Panthers took a 3-2 lead when Crawford Colwell sank a trey from the wing, but it was short-lived as the Indians answered with a three of their own for a 5-3 advantage at the 5:22 mark.

Lumpkin stretched its lead to 7-3 following a two-minute-long scoreless stretch by both teams but Allison sank a corner trey with 1:16 to play in the quarter.

An Indian basket made it a 9-6 after one but Drake opened the second with a dribble-drive for two.

It would be all Lumpkin from that point on as they outscored Union 23-4 over the remainder of the half, thanks in large part to five treys - four coming from senior guard Zach Pulley.

"All of his threes were contested," Jones said. "He was just on fire and we weren't able to recover after that. We were just flat."

Crawford Colwell finished with 9 points and 8 boards, Drake also scored 9 points while handing out 2 assists.

Allison had 8 points on 2-of-3 shooting from downtown while Wright, Barrett, sophomore Britt Waller, and junior Tim Murphy scored two each.

On the bright side, the Panthers will get a rematch with Lumpkin on Tuesday night in Blairsville with leading scorer Lawson Baenninger expected to return for the first time since getting injured on Jan. 3.

On Friday night, the regular season concludes at Dawson County where Union County still has an outside shot at finishing as the No. 4 seed in the region if it wins both games this week.

Tuesday night's varsity contests will tip at 6 p.m. with the boys to follow. On Friday night, the girls will get underway at 7 p.m. in Dawsonville.

Union County will host the Region 7-AAA Semi Finals, finals, and consolation games.

The opening round games will be hosted by the No. 2 team, which will be either GAC or East Hall. Right now, those two are tied for first with one loss each, and barring an upset, the top two seeds will be determined by a coin toss.

## NASCAR 2017

By Gerald Hodges/the Racing Reporter

### Stewart And Schatz; Two Hard Racers

Tony Stewart will retain his role as car owner in NASCAR, but will not participate as a NASCAR driver. That doesn't mean he has hung up his driving helmet. No, just the opposite. He plans to run at least 71 races in open wheel and sprint cars in 2017, and many of them will be against his own teammate, Donny Schatz, driver of the No. 15 TSR-Curb Agajanian in the World of Outlaw Series.

Schatz, a 39-year-old Fargo, North Dakota native has created his own dynasty in the World of Outlaw Series by winning eight series titles. When he took the checkered flag at the end of the 2016 season, he had compiled 229 WoO "A-Feature" wins.

"I appreciate everyone's kind words," Schatz said. "It's very overwhelming. Twenty times I've stood on this stage as a World of Outlaw. I would never have guessed that would be the case back in 1997 when I came out here. Back then, I don't know what I was thinking, but somehow I won the rookie of the year and to this day it's still my most prized possession. Here we are 20 years later and it still hasn't all quite sunk in. What has sunk in is the importance of the people you are surrounded by. I am standing here as an eight-time champion because of the organization Tony Stewart has built and continues to refine. It is nothing short of incredible. It's a huge honor for me to be a small part of this team's success."

Donny's dad also drove sprint cars, but in 1977, he went into the truck stop business, and that pretty much put an end to his driving. Donny was bitten by the racing bug and by the age of ten was behind the wheel of a go-kart.

"You look back on that now and you remember how excited you used to be when the vehicle left the house and you had everything loaded and how nervous you got when you pulled into the track," said Schatz. "Everything you did was an absolute blast. Some days you wish this level of racing (World of Outlaw Series) was a little bit more like that. But it's a little different when you get money involved."

"You have to love racing in order to survive. I think from the first time I sat in a seat I was drawn to racing. Sitting in a sprint car made chills go up and down my spine. The biggest problem I had in wanting to drive a sprint was my age. None of the tracks would allow a fourteen-year-old to race."

Occasionally he was able to get out on the track during a hot-lap session. In 1993, while still in high school, he was allowed to make his first start in a sprint car race at Missouri State Fairgrounds in Sedalia, Missouri.

In January 1997, Schatz joined the World of Outlaws and won Rookie of the Year in his first season, but his first WoO victory didn't come until 1998. He won many big races during the next eight racing seasons, but it wasn't until 2006 that he claimed his first WoO title. He won the title a second time in 2007, and teamed up with Tony Stewart Racing in 2008.

"The reason I started driving for Tony isn't because we didn't have good equipment," said Schatz. "We had the best.



Donny Schatz in 2016. Winner of eight World of Outlaw championships.

But the entire racing team and operation was a family affair. All my family had obligations outside racing. They had over three hundred employees, and a couple of businesses that had to be taken care of. Everyone wanted to go racing, but it reached a point where they couldn't.

"When Tony called, it offered everyone an out: My parents could take care of the business and still get away to go racing. The family no longer needed to worry about what the race team's needs were. I said O.K. to Tony in order to free my family and myself from many of the every day details encountered by the race team.

"I went from a family owned operation, to driving for someone else. It was Tony's team. He had the equipment, and he hired me to drive. He hired the crew chief and other employees. He also had sponsors in place. My role became that of a driver, not someone who wears fifty different hats.

"For me it was the best of both worlds.

"Now, some people think our team operates with a lot of engineers and the latest technical machinery, but that's not true. I guess in his NASCAR operation Tony utilizes them, but we still have to figure things out for ourselves.

"He lets us do the job. He doesn't step on our toes, but we all know that we have to perform on the race track. He takes care of the people, but at the end of the day, we all know it's a business."

Since 1999, Schatz has spent time during the winter months, racing sprint cars in Australia. His success "Down Under" has been remarkable, as he's won a number of major events both in the World Series Sprint car tour and major events at Sydney Speedway. As a result, he's created quite a following.

"Believe me, racing is a lot of fun, but it's not for everyone," continued Schatz. "It's something that takes its toll on you. If you are going to beat up and down the road like I have my whole life, you miss out on a lot of things."

"I've got a daughter that just turned eighteen. When you focus on trying to be good at racing and you're traveling, you can't call in sick. If you miss a race, you miss a chance of winning a World of Outlaws championship."

During the past four seasons, Schatz has expanded his racing to include Dirt Late Model

competition. He earned victories in North Dakota in each of the last three seasons. He also made his World of Outlaws Late Model Series debut in July 2014 and competed in both the Knoxville Late Model Nationals Bad Boy Buggies World Finals in each of the last two seasons.

He and his wife, Erica, live in Fargo, N.D., with their daughter, Savanna. Schatz is a licensed pilot and spends a great deal of time working with his parents in their family truck stop businesses in Fargo and Minot. He is also enjoys hunting and snowmobiling.

### NASCAR CONTINUES TO MAKE CHANGES

NASCAR announced last week that it is revamping how it will award points during races.

Under the new system, races will be divided into three segments, with drivers earning points on how they finish in each segment. The goal is to make the racing and competition more meaningful throughout the entire race, rather than just the final laps.

Races will now consist of three stages, with the top-10 finishers in each of the first two stages awarded bonus points. At the end of each stage, there will be a caution period in order to allow added television commercials. The final segment will conclude the race as usual, with the winner receiving 40 points, down to the 40th-place finisher, who earns one.

What else is in the works?

Last week, Lee Spencer NASCAR.com senior writer reported that NASCAR was considering shortening the race weekend for teams.

They are looking at one-day shows for all three of the top touring series, including the newly named Monster Energy Cup Series. When Brad Keselowski was asked whether the driver's council is behind the decision, he replied, "I think the whole sport is. We're trying to be smart with our time, especially with late starts. Because you don't get home to see your family until two, three in the morning if you're on a race team, so you lose part of Monday, too. You have to find a way to get that day back and tie it all together. If you move qualifying closer to the race, you get that day back which is so important to everyone's quality of life in this sport."

The Associated Press reported that Carl Edwards is considering making a run for a seat in the U. S. Senate in 2018.

In an e-mail, Edwards said, "I believe firmly in the principles that the U.S. was founded upon. If I could help, I definitely would consider it." He went on to quote Gen. Douglas MacArthur: "No man is entitled to the blessings of freedom unless he be vigilant in its preservation."

On a different note, the average ticket price for a Cup race at an International Speedway Corporation track was \$90.12, an increase of 5.4 percent.

**Racing Trivia Question:** How many points races are in the 2017 Cup Series schedule?

**Last Week's Question:** Who was the winner of the 1959 Daytona 500? Answer: Lee Petty.

You may contact the Racing Reporter by e-mail at: hodges@race500.com. NTFEB12201CA