

Sports

See the Sports Section at ngea.com

Lady Panthers close out regular season with back-to-back wins

Union earns opening round rematch with Dawson following victories over Lady Tigers and Lumpkin

By Todd Forrest
North Georgia News
sports@nganews.com

The Lady Panthers capped off a perfect week with their first win at Dawson County in six years to set up a Tuesday rematch in this week's Region 7-AAA Tournament.

The Lady Panthers and Lady Tigers will square off on Tuesday at Greater Atlanta Christian Schools in Norcross. Tip-off is scheduled for 4:30 p.m.

Last Tuesday, Union County stormed past Lumpkin 48-44 behind 16 second-half points from junior Bailey Daniel. At Dawson County on Friday, she once again led the way with 15 points in a 53-46 victory.

UC 53, Dawson 46
Dawsonville - Going into Friday, the Lady Panthers hadn't defeated their former Region 8-AA rival Lady Tigers since the 2011-12 season. Meanwhile their last win in Dawsonville came one season prior (2010-11) with Head Coach Jim Hughes at the helm. However, since the Lady Tigers moved up to Class AAA prior to the 2012-13 season, Union County had dropped seven-straight in the series, including the 2012 Battle of the States Championship and most recently, a home court, blowout loss earlier this season.

But during the second meeting, the Lady Panthers made it clear that loss was in the rearview and they would not roll over and provide the Lady Tigers with an easy-W for Senior Night.

Union led throughout the opening quarter and much of the second before Dawson closed the first half on a 9-0 run for a 26-21 lead at the intermission.

On top 15-13 after one, the Lady Panthers led 21-17 before a Lady Tigers' lay-in at the 2:18 mark of the second was followed by two more field goals and a trey, sending Union into the break trailing by five.



Junior Grace Wischmeyer (20) hit a go-ahead three and three clutch free throws at Dawson. Photo/Todd Forrest

Another three to open the third put the Lady Panthers in an eight-point hole at 29-21 but a driving lay-up by freshman Brooke Dockrey and a 15-footer from sophomore Jordan Rogers were sandwiched around a Dawson free throw, bringing Union back to within five at 30-25 with 4:08 left in the period.

Freshman Kait McCarter made it a one-possession game with a put-back and Dockrey connected on another mid-range jumper to trim the Lady Tigers' lead to one at 30-29.

With just under two minutes to play in the third, freshman Mary Wischmeyer came up with a steal, then knocked down a jumper from the elbow to put her team back on top and complete a 10-1 run.

The lead was short-lived, however as Dawson answered with a put-back on the other end but Grace Wischmeyer drilled a trey, then Andelin Hill closed the quarter with a 3-point play when she turned a Lady Tiger turnover into a basket-plus-one.

With Union leading 37-32 to open the fourth, Dawson

drove to the basket for two but Daniel responded with a pair at the charity stripe to preserve the five-point advantage. A minute later, Hill converted an offensive rebound into two points - opening up a seven-point Union advantage.

Daniel drove inside for two more and Rogers turned a Lady Tiger turnover into a deuce when she connected from the corner and gave her team a 45-34 lead with 4:42 remaining.

Consecutive Lady Panther turnovers allowed Dawson to pull within seven with 3:38 to play, then another Union miscue moments later resulted in two free throws for the home team.

After splitting the pair and cutting the Lady Panther lead to six, an errant Union pass handed the ball back to Dawson with under three minutes left. Fortunately, they came up empty on that possession and Daniel sank two free throws on the other end to open up a 47-39 lead.

Both squads would exchange turnovers and Dawson would misfire on a trey, but

Union was unable to seal the deal thanks to a miss on the front-end of a 1-and-1.

Another empty possession by the Lady Tigers was followed by another unsuccessful trip to the line by the Lady Panthers.

At the 1:25 mark and still up by eight, Union County came up empty on another 1-and-1 try but senior Ashley Fair came down with the rebound and kicked it out to Daniel, who drove to the basket for two.

Dawson hit 1-of-2 at the line with 1:00 left but the Lady Panthers went 0-for-2 on the other end. With 55 seconds remaining, Union fouled a 3-point shooter, sending the Lady Tigers to the line with a chance to cut the lead to six, but they missed all three attempts.

Grace Wischmeyer was perfect at the line - giving Union a 51-40 lead with 37 seconds to play. Following another Dawson missed three, she hit 1-of-2 for a 12-point advantage with just over 20 seconds left.

Dockrey hit 1-of-2 after



Junior Bailey Daniel penetrates into the paint for two of her 15 points during Union's win at Dawson County. Photo/Todd Forrest

a Lady Tigers trey made it a nine-point game. Trailing by 10, Dawson connected from long-distance as the buzzer sounded.

McCarter finished with 10 points for Union, Rogers added eight, and Grace Wischmeyer scored six, while Dockrey and Hill chipped in five each.

Fair had only 2 points but recorded team-highs in rebounds (10), steals (4) and blocks (2).

Mary Wischmeyer also finished with 2 points and Daniel led the team in assists with two.

The Lady Panthers finished just 2-of-16 from beyond the arc but Dawson failed to capitalize, only scoring 14 points in the second half until a pair of meaningless treys in the final 20 seconds.

On Tuesday, Union found themselves trailing with less than four minutes to play but that's when Daniel decided it was time to take over in the

final home game of the year.

A free throw from Fair cut the Lumpkin lead to one at 37-36 with 3:56 remaining, and following a missed-three on the other end, Daniel drove baseline, spun back into the paint and connected on the short jumper to put her team up for good.

On the ensuing possession, Lumpkin missed the front-end of a 1-and-1, and as Daniel raced the other way, she drove into the lane before kicking out to an open Fair, who sank the trey from the wing with 2:36 left.

Leading by four, Fair turned a Lumpkin turnover into a six-point Union lead. Still up by six, Daniel sank 2-of-2 at the line with 1:41 remaining to open up an eight-point advantage. She would later hit 1-of-2 to make it a nine-point game at the 1:11 mark.

Two Lumpkin free throws, a Lady Panthers' turn-

See Playoff Time, Page 5B

Panthers unable to hold lead vs Lumpkin; Dawson pulls away late

By Todd Forrest
North Georgia News
sports@nganews.com

The Panthers surrendered an 8-0 run over the final 66 seconds after leading Lumpkin County for most of the fourth quarter. As a result, Union dropped its fourth straight game by a score of 70-63.

The Panthers fell to Dawson County later in the week to finish sixth in Region 7-AAA, setting up a rematch with the No. 3 seed Tigers on Wednesday at East Hall. Tip-off is scheduled for 6 p.m.

UC 51, Dawson 58
Dawsonville - On Friday, the Panthers were unable to prevent a five-game skid at Dawson County as the Tigers pulled away late for a 58-51 victory.

Like the ladies, Union and Dawson split the regular season meetings and will settle things with a rubber match on Wednesday at East Hall.

Early on at Dawson, the Panthers led 9-6 on a basket from junior Crawford Colwell, then a trey from freshman Pierson Allison broke an 11-11 tie but the Tigers knocked down a free throw, and a minute later, went inside to even the score with a deuce.

Dawson stormed ahead in the second quarter with a 7-0 run before a jump hook by junior RJ Banton slowed the bleeding.

The Tigers led by as many as eight in the period on two different occasions but a steal by Allison led to a lay-in by junior Candler Colwell and a buzzer-beating lay-up from freshman Sawyer Drake, sandwiched around two Dawson free throws kept Union within six at the break, 31-25.

A Crawford Colwell basket to open the third was answered by a Tiger lay-up and a trey on the other end.

Dawson converted a Panther turnover into points for its largest lead of the night at 11.

But Union had an answer. Allison drilled a trey,



Freshman Pierson Allison drives inside and attempts an acrobatic lay-up. He led Union with 14 points at Dawson County and scored 10 points vs Lumpkin County. Photos/Todd Forrest

then Baenninger, who returned to action on Tuesday vs Lumpkin, also connected from downtown to pull the Panthers within five at 47-42 as the clock ticked under six minutes in the third.

On the ensuing possession, Dawson hit 1-of-2 at the line but Union continued to chip away. This time, a Crawford Colwell put-back trimmed the deficit to four but that's as close as they would get.

The Tigers hit 3-of-4 at the line over its next two possessions until Crawford Colwell went back inside for two - making it a 52-46 game with 1:14 to play.

Dawson went on to close out the Panthers by sinking all six free throw attempts over the final 50 seconds.

Allison led Union with 14 points and 2 steals. Crawford Colwell had 12 points, 8 boards, 2 assists, and 2 steals. Baenninger added 11 points and 6 boards.

Candler Colwell finished with 6 points and 6 rebounds. Banton had 4 points to go with 2 steals.

Junior C. Wright added a deuce, 3 boards, and a steal. Fellow junior Marty Kroz would knock down a late three for the Panthers.

UC 63, Lumpkin 70
After suffering a one-

sided loss in Dahlonega just 72 hours prior, it was Union's turn to welcome the Indians to town with fourth, fifth, and sixth place on the line in the Region 7-AAA standings.

With leading scorer Lawson Baenninger back in the lineup while playing their final home game of the regular season, the Panthers meant business from the get-go, jumping out to a 17-12 lead after one - thanks to a 6-0 mini-run to close the period, highlighted by a breakaway lay-in by sophomore Coleson Daniel at the buzzer.

During the first, the duo of Banton and Crawford Colwell were an unstoppable force. Banton posted 6 points and Crawford Colwell scored five.

Candler Colwell would open the second with a perfect trip to the line to extend the Union lead to seven.

Leading 19-14, the Panthers came up empty at the line but Baenninger crashed the boards on the next Union possession to give his squad a 21-14 advantage.

Following an Indian trey, Baenninger drilled a 15-footer for a 23-17 score.

The next two baskets belonged to Lumpkin as they pulled within two at 23-21, but Candler Colwell drove inside for two, and Allison an-



Junior RJ Banton chases down a loose ball during the first half of last Tuesday's game with Lumpkin County. Banton finished the game with 12 points, 4 boards, and 2 steals. Photo/Todd Forrest

swered an Indian deuce with a 3-ball from the wing.

Both teams continued scoring at will as Lumpkin cut the Union lead to two before Candler Colwell penetrated into the paint for two more.

Behind 30-26, the Indians scored five-unanswered to take their first lead since it was 12-11 with 3:15 left in the first. But it wouldn't last as Crawford Colwell fed Allison on the fast break and the freshman converted.

Then, Candler Colwell decided he would get in on the up-tempo play when he swiped an Indians' pass at halfcourt and turned it into a lay-up, giving Union a 36-33 with under a minute to play in the fourth.

But once again, Lumpkin had an answer. They went inside for two, forced a stop on the defensive end, drew a foul on the Panthers, and hit 1-of-2 at the line to even the score at 36-36.

With time winding down in the second, another Union big man beat the clock. This time, sophomore Britt Waller scored in the paint for a 38-36 halftime lead.

A deuce and trey was how Lumpkin opened the fourth to go ahead by three.

Crawford Colwell and Banton went to work inside on consecutive possessions to put the home team back up 42-41.

Then, Crawford Colwell converted a turnover into points when Candler Colwell recorded the steal and fed Crawford for two and a 44-41 advantage.

Two free throws by Allison and a short jumper from Crawford sealed the 8-0 run - allowing the Panthers to take their largest lead of the night, 48-41 with 3:51 left in the third.

Lumpkin would respond with another 5-0 spurt to get within two until a corner-trey from Allison gave Union a 51-46 advantage.

With 20 seconds left in the third, the Indians went inside for the hoop-and-the-harm. The free throw made it a 51-49 game after three.

After Lumpkin tied things up at 59-59 early in the final frame, Candler Colwell attacked the basket for two.

Two minutes into the fourth, Baenninger found Banton inside for a lay-in to break a 53-53 tie.

The pattern would continue as Crawford Colwell broke a 55-55 tie and Banton

broke a 57-57 tie. But Lumpkin would break from the trend with a trey and the lead at the 4:44 mark.

Baenninger penetrated for two and the Panthers were leading once again as the clock wound under four minutes.

A little over a minute later, the Indians regained the lead as the teams went back-and-forth. As the two-minute mark approached, both squads exchanged turnovers then Union missed a trey and Lumpkin came down with the board.

With less than 90 seconds to play, Candler Colwell picked the pocket of the Indian ball handler and went coast-to-coast for the go-ahead lay-up.

Unfortunately that would be the final points of the game for Union as Lumpkin closed with an 8-0 run, beginning with a basket in the paint just shy of the one-minute mark.

Down by one, the Panthers turned it over and Lumpkin went up three with just under 30 seconds left.

A missed trey by Union

See Panthers, Page 5B