

Softball: Lady Panthers season ends in first round of region playoffs

Union County softball fails to reach state tournament for the first time since 2008

By Todd Forrest
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For 10 days in late September it appeared as if the Lady Panthers had turned the 2017 season around.

A four-game Region 7-AAA winning streak had Union County in second place after dropping as low as sixth place just two weeks earlier.

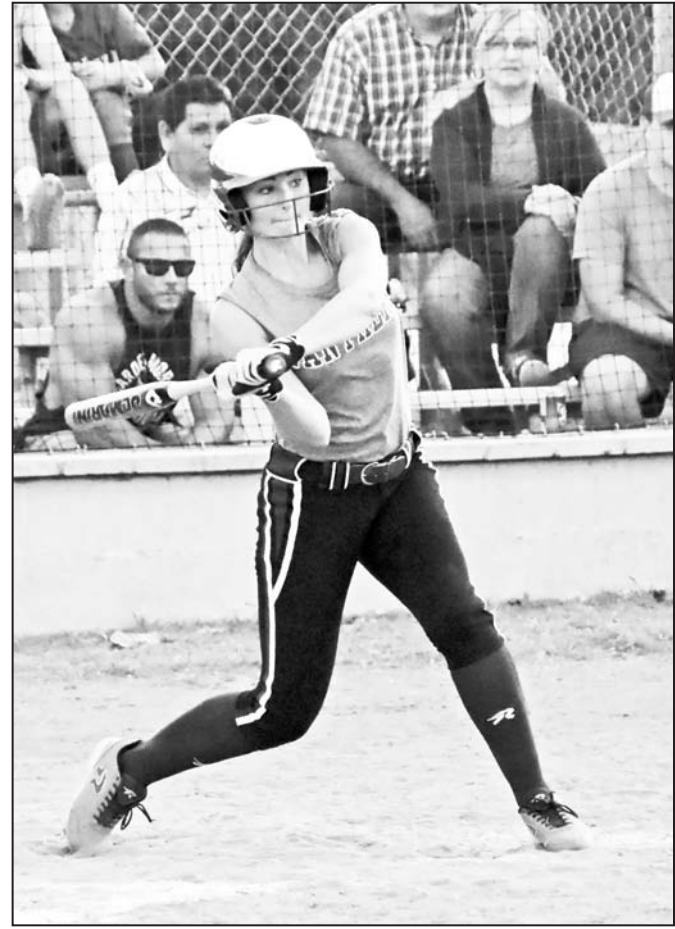
The Lady Panthers entered last week riding a three-game winning streak, just one-half game out of second. On Tuesday, they moved into second with a 13-4 win at Fannin County.

With one game remaining at Greater Atlanta Christian, a team Union County roughed up for 13 hits and nine runs during a 9-4 victory in Blairsville on Monday, Sept. 18. From the circle, Lawn scattered 6 hits and didn't allow an earned run during a complete game victory last month.

Fast forward to Thursday, Sept. 28 and the Lady Panthers were shutout 4-0 by GAC, propelling the Lady Spartans (7-5 in region play) into a second place tie with North Hall (7-5), a team Union (6-6) would've owned the tiebreaker over. The No. 2 seed in 7-AAA receives a bye into the region semifinals and an automatic state playoff berth.

As a result of the loss at GAC, the Lady Panthers fell into a three-way tie for fourth with Lumpkin and Dawson. When the region tournament seedings were released it was: 4) Dawson, 5) Lumpkin, 6) Union.

Since Dawson swept both games from Lumpkin, and Lump-



At Fannin, sophomore Mary Wischmeyer (left) was 4-for-4 with 5 RBIs and junior Aladriel Arnold (right) blasted a 2-run homer, scoring junior Maddie Sutton. Photos/Todd Forrest

kin swept both games from Union, the Lady Panthers were forced to take the sixth and final playoff spot.

On Saturday morning, Union County traveled to GAC for a best-of-three series with an opportunity to play its way into the region semifinals and the state tournament. But things didn't go as planned.

The Lady Panthers lost both games, bringing the 2017

season to a close with a record of 10-17 - the first losing season under head coach Jessica Stewart, who took over in 2006 and has compiled a record of 268-145 in 12 years.

As of press time, no stats were available from Saturday.

Back in August, Union County lost starting centerfielder Ellie Garrison to a broken arm, forcing the Lady Panthers to move infielder Braden Poteete to

centerfield.

Two weeks later, junior first baseman Bailey Rayfield suffered a season-ending injury, further reshuffling the lineup.

Before going down after 10 games, Rayfield was third on the team with a .379 average, second in on base percentage at .471, and fourth in RBIs with five.

As for Garrison, the junior outfielder was leading the team with a .667 slugging percentage

when she was injured prior to game eight. She was also tops on the team with 7 runs scored and one home run.

Her .333 average was third on the team, as was her four RBIs.

Coach Stewart tried three different players at first before settling on freshman Hannah Patton, who was previously at shortstop when Poteete went to center.

Union County used four

different shortstops and first basemen this season and just when they seemed to find some chemistry defensively, the bats went cold in the season finale at GAC.

The Lady Panthers used just three seniors this season: Jillian Lawn, Katelynn Hodges, and Braden Poteete. They will get Garrison and Rayfield back from injury but finding a replacement for Lawn in the circle will be the biggest question mark of 2018.

Lineup	AB	R	H	RBI	BB	K
Katelynn Hodges	4	2	3	0	0	0
Maddie Sutton	2	3	2	1	2	0
Jillian Lawn	1	0	0	0	3	0
Skyler Ludlum	0	3	0	0	0	0
Aladriel Arnold	2	3	2	3	1	0
Mary Wischmeyer	4	1	4	6	0	0
Kristen Poteete	0	1	0	0	0	0
Aubree Pack	4	0	2	2	0	0
Hannah Patton	3	0	0	1	0	0
Madeline Tanner	3	0	1	0	0	0
Braden Poteete	3	0	0	0	0	0
Miranda Lockaby	-	-	-	-	-	-
Totals	26	13	14	13	6	0

Pitching	IP	#P	S%	H	R	ER	K	BB	HR
Jillian Lawn	5.0	35	.886	1	4	0	5	1	0
Totals	5.0	35	.886	1	4	0	5	1	0

Batting
2B: Katelynn Hodges, Aubree Pack, Maddie Sutton, Mary Wischmeyer
3B: Mary Wischmeyer
HR: Aladriel Arnold
TB: Aladriel Arnold 5, Katelynn Hodges 4, Aubree Pack 3, Maddie Sutton 3, Madeline Tanner, Mary Wischmeyer 7
RBI: Aladriel Arnold 3, Aubree Pack 2, Hannah Patton, Maddie Sutton, Mary Wischmeyer 6
SF: Aladriel Arnold
ROE: Braden Poteete

Tri-County Racing report

By Blake Lynch
North Georgia News

Brasstown, NC - Tri-County Racetrack hosted its 14th Annual Tarheel 50 and it was a fun night of racing and here are the results.

Pony - First place was No. 00 Adam Brooks; second place was 10 Barry Cross; third was 32 Franklin Burk; fourth was 55 Jamie Cross and fifth was 15 Ryan Crawford.

Tarheel 50 - First place was a battle between Shawn Chastian and David Payne and it was on the final lap when Payne passed Chastian in the middle of Turns 3 and 4. Chastian came under Payne right in front of the flag stand and X15 Chastian was the winner. Second was No. 8 Payne; third was 7M Donald McIntosh; fourth was 1C Kenny Collins, and fifth was No. 17 Kurt English.

Modified Street/Beginner 602 - First place was No. 44 Bobby Elkins; second place was 93 Crandall Turner; third was 88 Ricky Smith; fourth was 34 Greg Sudderth, and fifth was 4 Jacob Parris.

Street Stock - First place was No. 99 Jim Twiggs; second place was 14 Charles

Devin Jr; third was 01 Jacob Lynch; fourth was 76 Justin Barnes, and fifth was J69 Jim Weller.

Crute/ Limited - First place was No. 7 Jason Deal; second was 12R Galen Robbins; third was 17 Brett Shook; fourth was 27 Avery Breedlove, and 5th was 1 David Conley.

Front Wheel Drive - First place was No. J3 Josh Deese; second was 56 Colton Berrong; third was 56x Jason Berrong.

Tri-County did a special award for most passes and here are the winners: 01 Jacob Lynch and 14 Charles Devin Jr tied in the Street Stock so they split the money.

In the Pony it was 32 Franklin Burk and Jonny McClure, and in the Super Late it was 86 Jeff Nuebert and 7G Craig Greer.

Next Event will be this Friday and Saturday night with the Monster Trucks, Tuff Trucks and racing.

Bowling scores

Monday Night Men: Doug Tanner 229, Taz Matetzsch 209, 209, Derick Rice 225, Dallas Lloyd 221, 203, Jim McCreary 236, 225, 202, Timothy McVay 226, 202, Bart Rogers 214, Greg Wittenberg 206, 214, Stanley Tyler 279, Brandon Hartness 232, Jay Burrell 214, Tony Lynch 225.

Young @ Heart Seniors: Mel White 200, 222, 210, Gene Langford 203, 227, Ron Wingate 232, Pam Bierce 203, Bob Bischoff 200, 225, John Delphino 212, 214, Series 621.

XC: Sanchez, Underwood, Union girls all place first at Banks

By Todd Forrest
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Homer - Union County's Zoe Sanchez took down 71 runners in the girls race while Lance Underwood outran 105 competitors in the boys race to record first place finishes at Banks County last week.

Sanchez's performance led the Union girls to first place in the team standings over Banks County, Lumpkin County, Madison County, Oglethorpe County, Rabun County and Stephens County.

The Union boys placed second against the same field.

Underwood was first with a time of 17:43. Luke Gambrell, Colby Ives, Guage Shumaker, and Timothy Murphy rounded out Union's top five spots, followed by Milo Bauman and Gehrig Patterson.

As for the girls, Sanchez was followed by Latty Ryals (5th), Lexie Ochoa (7th), Emmi Schakat (9th), and Destiny



The Union County seniors are less than a month away from their final region meet. Photo/Todd Forrest

Orellana-Irvin (14th) to round out Union's top five.

Sadie Underwood and Jessie Holbrooks came in sixth and seventh, respectively, for

Union County.

Up next is the Unicoi race in Helen where Union will get a look at the Region 7-AAA course prior to the region meet

later this month. They will also see where they stand against the top teams in the region when they visit Unicoi on Thursday at 4 p.m..

Union County Youth Football: 10U Panthers improve to 5-0

By Blake Lynch
North Georgia News

The 10U Panthers took on the Dawson County Tigers and it was all Union County.

The first touchdown was by Conner Schuknecht then Cade Dockrey did the rest. Dockrey scored on a 76-yard quarterback keeper and added two touchdown passes.

The Panthers held on 20-14 Panthers to improve to 5-0 on the season.

The Offensive Player of the Game - Cade Dockery. Defensive Player of the Game - Jack Sparks.

The 7th Grade Panthers took on the Dawson County Tigers and this game proved to be an upset loss for the Panthers.

But there was some nice plays made by the Panthers. First, Darin Patterson ran back an 80 yard kick off return for his second kick return touch-



Union County youth football photo by Blake Lynch.

down of the season.

Then Griffin Young scored on a 45 yard receiving touchdown. Finally, with under a minute to play, Stien Harkins stripped the football and took it to the house for the Panthers. However, the Panthers came short in this one 50-18.

The Panthers are now 2-3 on the season.

The Offensive Player of the Game - Darin Patterson.

Defensive Player of the Game - Stien Harkins.

The 8U Panthers took on the Chestatee War-Eagles and it was a rough one for the Panthers as no touch-

downs were scored by Union County.

In the end they came up short 12-0. The Panthers are 3-2 so far on the season.

Offensive Player of the Game - Cade Combs.

Defensive Player of the Game - Bo Brown



American Legion Golf Tournament

The American Legion is having a golf tournament on Thursday, October 12 at 10 a.m. Join fellow Veterans and supporters for a day of fun and golf at Chatuge Golf Course. Cost is \$55 per person. Call 404-295-6462 for more info.