

Sports

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Horinek and Godwin's 180 at Sectionals sends Lady Panthers to State

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Waycross - The Lady Panthers golf team can be added to the long list of Union County High School athletes who have reached the State Tournament during the 2013-14 school year.

The Lady Panthers finished tied for fourth with a score of 180 at last week's State Sectionals match, held on The Lakes Golf Course at Laura S. Walker State Park in Waycross.

Fellow Region 8-AA foes Rabun County and Jefferson placed ahead of Union at Sectionals with Rabun posting the day's low score - a 169.

Toombs County placed second with a 176, Jefferson came in third at 177, while Union and Bremen each checked in with a 180 - two strokes ahead of Lovett and St. Vincent's Academy, who also qualified for State.

Now the Lady Panthers can turn their attention to Augusta. No, not to that Augusta course, but to the GHSA Golf State Championship, presented by E-Z Go, to be held on May 19th at Pointe South Golf Club in Augusta.



Union County Lady Panthers: (L-R) Kacie Godwin, Maddie Horinek, and Lydia Gray are all smiles after placing fourth to secure a berth in State.

Union County punched its ticket to State thanks to a team-low 86 by Maddie Horinek and a 94 from Kacie Godwin.

Lydia Gray also shot a 102 and Autumn Johnson fired a 124 for the Lady Panthers. Both will join Horinek and Godwin, along with 68 other golfers from across the State in Augusta.

Other scores from Sec-

tionals were eighth place Greater Atlanta Christian with a 192, ninth place Berrien with a 198, and 10th place Armuchee with a 202.

Horinek's 86 was good enough for a fourth place individual performance as well.

Rabun County's Molly Vinson, Toombs County's Brook Nusall, and Greater At-

lanta Christian's Elizabeth Mizell were atop the leaderboard, all with 83's.

Now the 10 teams from Sectionals will join the other six teams who earlier qualified for State by winning their Region.

Social Circle secured their spot in State when they edged Rabun by a stroke to win the Region 8-AA match last



Union County Lady Panther Autumn Johnson at The Lakes Golf Course in Waycross.

month. Vidalia from 2-AA, Monticello from 4-AA, Bowdon from 5-AA, Wesleyan from 6-AA, and Calhoun from 7-AA, all locked up a spot at State during their respective Region matches.

The 16 golf teams and the eight individual qualifiers will meet at Pointe South, a

course developed on a beautiful tract of rolling terrain, featuring eight lakes, mature pines, dogwoods, and over 4,000 azaleas. From the back tees (blue), the par 72 course measures 6,460 yards, with a rating of 70.1 and a slope of 119. The front tees (red), measure out at 4,807 yards with a rating of 67 and a slope of 107.

Special Olympic athletes shine during Towns-Union Spring Games

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Hiwassee - Mother Nature came through for the approximately 75 athletes who took part in the 2013-14 Special Olympics Spring Games at Towns County High School.

The athletes, ranging from 7 years old to 57 years old, took part in a variety of events. The 50M walk/run, the 100M walk/run, the softball throw, the standing long jump, and soccer events such as the distance kick and the kick-and-run.

Towns-Union Special Olympics committee member Becky Tracy issued a thank you to the following. Their support played a tremendous role in this year's Spring Games: McConnell Baptist Church for providing lunch for the athletes. St. Clare's Episcopal Church for their generous donation. The BRMEMC for providing tents. Rodney Anderson, the emcee for the games. Rhonda Colwell and Union County High School's ECCL for providing volunteers.

"This community support for this event and the number of athletes have grown a lot over the years," Tracy said. "Last year, we added the adults. Before then, they weren't able to participate. We also have a lot more organizations wanting to help us out. The Kiwanis have been a big help."

The games were emceed by Rodney Anderson. Anderson is a local hero, a paralyzed veteran who has competed in the National Veterans Wheelchair Games and was selected for the World Games in 1999 as part of Team USA. He traveled to New Zealand and won a gold medal in javelin and two silver medals for shot put and discus. He made the 2000 Paralympics team and traveled to Sydney, Australia, to compete. He served as a source of inspiration to all the athletes that he came to know that day.

The athletes were entertained before the events began by Jimmy the clown. He had everyone laughing all the way to their event.



Union County's Special Olympic athletes circle the track at Towns County High School during the 2013-14 Spring Games. Photo/Lowell Nicholson



Emcee Anderson with Becky Tracy

Through the power of sports, the Special Olympics allow people with disabilities to discover new strengths, abilities, skills and successes. The athletes find joy, confidence and fulfillment on the playing field and in life. They inspire people in their communities and elsewhere to open their hearts to a wider world of human talents and potential.

According to Tracy, one thing she will always remember about these 2014 Spring Games is a pair of Union County brothers getting to compete together.



Evan Crisler connects during the kicking for distance competition on the TCHS football field.

"Preston Nation is a first time athlete, who just happens to be a senior," Tracy said. "He got to compete alongside his brother Dylan, for the first time."

When all the smoke has

cleared and the dust has settled, all competitors are to be commended. The Special Olympics motto says it all. "Let me win. But if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt"



In one of the most memorable scenes of the day, the students and faculty at Union County Elementary School welcome back the Union County's athletes with cheers and lots of high-fives.



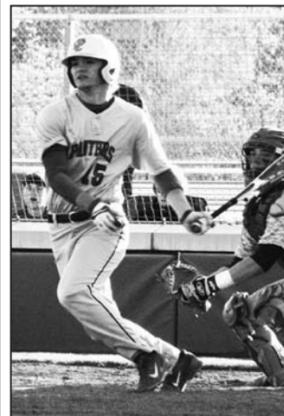
Somerset Rabb takes time away from the competition to hang with the Special Olympics' No. 1 fan, Union County High School Principal John Hill.

Ms. Jones' class: 2013-14 Battle Ball champs



The North Georgia News would like to congratulate Misty Jones' 2nd grade class for winning the 2013-2014 Union County Primary School Battle Ball Tournament. Photo/Todd Forrest

Everett and Sisum pick up First Team All-Region honors



Lane Everett

Senior Lane Everett and junior Jake Sisum were selected as First Team All-Region by 8-AA's coaches. Everett was selected as a pitcher and as an infielder. Sisum was picked as a utility player/designated hitter.

Four Panthers made the Second Team: sophomore first



Jake Sisum

baseman Joe Mancuso, junior third baseman Jackson Burks, junior shortstop Hunter Hughes, and sophomore outfielder Josh Daniel.

Three Union County juniors were named Honorable Mention: catcher Chase Barnett, outfielder Robert Prunier, and pitcher Tyler Odom.