

Sports

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Ross basketball camp focuses on fundamentals, hard work

By Todd Forrest
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When Union County Head Boys Basketball Coach Casey Jones walked into the Union County High School gymnasium he couldn't believe his eyes.

With an incredible turnout of 51 campers, more than doubling last year's camp there was ten basketball teams worth of young men and women, eager to improve their all-around game.

"This camp will make you better but it's not going to make you great," Jones told the youngsters on the camp's final day. "What will make you great is taking these things you learned at the camp and spending countless hours doing them over-and-over."

The camp is the Allan Ross Fundamental Camp, conducted by 2008 Union County graduate Michael Ross. It is named for Michael's father, the late Allan Ross who held a basketball camp by the same name until he passed away just days after UCHS' graduation in May of 1997.

Following in his father's inspirational footsteps, Michael stayed true to the spirit of his dad's coaching philosophies, while adding his own proven techniques.

"From a basketball standpoint, (we focus on) fundamentals - getting these kids ready for middle school and high school," Michael Ross said. "That is something that my dad taught Coach Jones, Coach (Kevin) Hughes and they taught me, and Coach (Corey) Garrett what they did to him, and we're just



(Left to right) Ross and coaches awarded two campers for being the hardest working among the 51 eager young athletes who attended the camp. Photos/Todd Forrest

trying to continue that legacy. "From another standpoint, we want to let these kids see the high school guys, build that relationship with them and see them come out and support the guys and strengthen that program."

With Coach Hughes joining Coach Jones and Michael Ross taking turns addressing the crowd, telling stories about their playing days and what Union County basketball means to them, one would think that this camp was all about the U. Union that is.

However, Towns, Fannin, and White Counties, Hayesville, NC and other teams were represented at the camp, and each one of the coaches told the campers to, "insert the name of their own school each time one of the coaches refers 'Union County basketball.'"

This year, Michael Ross,

who made it very clear that he's "not a trophies-guy," and the coaches handed out awards for the "Hardest Worker."

"I told our players and coaches on day-one, 'I want you to look for the player who is going to work the hardest, the players who's going to be a great team mate, and we're just looking for a character guy. We have a bunch of kids that are gonna get baskets, they're really good at dribbling and I think that's great, they should take pride in that. But we want the kids who are the glue, who will not only be great players, but great people.'"

With the assistance of Union County's high school players, one-on-one instruction wasn't a rare commodity.

"The high schoolers are very involved," Michael Ross said. "They run the stations and it's been awesome to see them develop their



own leadership skills."

Michael Ross had a reputation as one of the most of the feared players in North Georgia while at UCHS. In his four years of varsity, the Panthers averaged 18 wins a season, including a 22-4 mark in 2006-07 - his junior season and Coach Garrett's senior year.

Michael owns the school record with 49 points in a game and shares the record for most treys in a game with 9 - which he did twice in less than a month in 2005.

After a brief coaching stint at UCHS in the early 1980's, Allan Ross returned to Union County in 1992 to coach middle school basketball. In 1994, he was named Head Boys Basketball Coach at UCHS where he was handed the reigns of a struggling program.

Following a one-win campaign in 1994-95, the program showed signs of life in 1995-96



Campers received plenty of one-on-one instruction. Photo/Todd Forrest

with five sophomores starting for the Panthers. In his third year at the helm, Allan Ross' vision began to

bear fruit as Union County racked up 21 wins and finished first in the 8-A North Sub-Region.

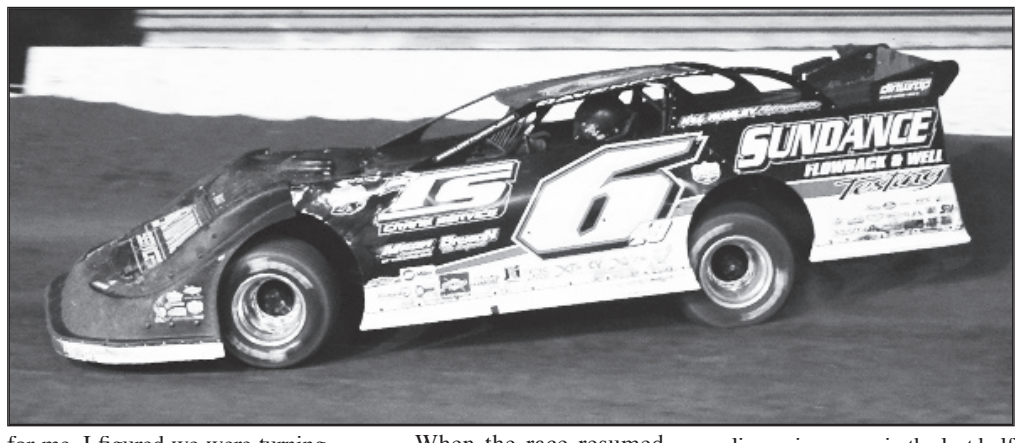
Davenport races to wins in Tennessee and Kentucky, sweeps Lucas Oil Weekend

Tazewell, Tenn. - On May, 29th, Blairsville's Jonathan Davenport took the lead on lap 35 from Scott Bloomquist and led the rest of the way to win the Toyota Knoxville 50 on Friday Night. It was Davenport's third Lucas Oil Late Model Dirt Series win of the season, and came before a record crowd at Tazewell Speedway.

Davenport held off a hard charging Bloomquist in the closing laps to score a popular victory in the K&L Rumley, Longhorn Chassis. Defending series champion, Don O'Neal, Steve Francis, and Owens completed the Top-5.

"That was pretty exciting, wasn't it," said the winner in Lucas Oil Victory Lane as the crowd roared wildly in saluting his come from behind victory. "I just love running here! I couldn't wait to get here today, and to top it off, my dad was here to watch us run. He rarely gets to come to the races, so it was great to get the win for Rumley and my dad."

"That top groove came into it. We struggled for several laps to get going. I was below the line I wanted to run several times and finally got up against the wall and the car took off, there was plenty of grip up there. A lot of the guys seemed to stick to the bottom and middle and that left the door open



for me. I figured we were turning lap times considerably quicker than anybody. This Longhorn Chassis was just unbelievable, what else can I say? This is the first time Kevin and LeRoy have been here. I want to thank TS Crane Service, Sundance Services, Sundance Flowback Well Testing, and Mega Plumbing of the Carolinas."

Bloomquist took the lead at the start of the feature and quickly bolted away from the field. A red-flag came out on lap five for Series Point Leader, Earl Pearson Jr. who flipped several times in turn number three. Pearson escaped uninjured from his car, but his brand-new Black Diamond Chassis was severely damaged.

When the race resumed, Bloomquist continued to show the way with Francis running in second. Shortly after, Francis later saw his teammate O'Neal sweep by him to take over second. All eyes quickly locked in on Davenport as he was rapidly picking multiple cars at a time.

Bloomquist, O'Neal, and Davenport waged had a tremendous battle for the lead with Davenport taking second just past the halfway mark. Davenport then tried for five laps to get by Bloomquist, finally completing the pass for the lead on lap 35.

"I don't know where he came from," said Bloomquist, referring to Davenport. "I could feel

our line going away in the last half of the race, I should have moved up to the top quicker than I did. He [Davenport] was around me before I realized it."

UNION, KY - One day later, Davenport dominated the Lucas Oil Late Model Dirt Series-sanctioned Ralph Latham Memorial main event on Saturday Night at Florence Speedway. Davenport led all 50 laps in his K&L Rumley Racing; Longhorn Chassis to win for his first ever victory at the 1/2-mile oval.

With less than five laps to go, Pearson, drove around Bloomquist to claim second. Bloomquist finished third, followed by Landers and Francis rounding out the top

five.

"I have never run well here," said Davenport in Lucas Oil Victory Lane. "I haven't been here since 2012, when I ran for Rookie of the Year on the Lucas Oil [Late Model Dirt] Series tour. Obviously, this is first time here in this Longhorn car, and it was just flawless. I ran the top for most of the race, and then on that restart, I decided I was going to go low, and the next thing I knew Scott [Bloomquist] was right beside me, so I quickly went back to the top."

"They have changed the track some since I have been here. After the rain, they had this afternoon, the track was super fast. Beating Scott in that heat race was really big for us to get the outside front row starting spot. "I would like to thank all of my sponsors: TS Crane Service, Sundance Services, Sundance Flowback Well Testing, and Mega Plumbing of the Carolinas; without all of them we couldn't do this, that's for sure!"

"I am still sore today from the barrel roll we did at Tazewell last night," said Earl Pearson Jr. following his runner-up performance. Thanks to Ronnie Stuckey for building such a safe racecar. The cage held up like it was supposed to. To come out here tonight and run as well as we did, I just can't thank this Dunn-Benson Ford team enough.

"Everybody racing up front gave each other plenty of racing room. Scott could have cut me off coming off of four when I went around him, but he raced me clean. I'm so thankful to Lucas Oil Products, Midwest Sheet Metal, Sunoco Race Fuels, Moree's Enterprises, and Ohlins."

Bloomquist had one shot at passing Davenport for the lead after the final restart of the race, but could not clear him. "Our car fired really well on that last restart and he changed the line he had been running. I was able to pull alongside of him, but he shot right back by me. Congratulations to him again; that's two nights in a row he has gotten the job done. I want to thank Reece Monument Company, Mark Martin Automotive, Crop Production Services and everyone who has come on board this year."

Trout fishing tournament

Young Cane Lodge is sponsoring a Trout Fishing Tournament on Saturday, June 6th. \$20 entry fee per person; sign up at Young Cane Lodge from 6-7 a.m.; weigh-in at 3 p.m. Must follow state laws and regulations; 8 fish limit; any free flowing public trout streams; open to the public; no posted property; no ponds; fish must be kept on ice; 50% pay back. NJun3,23/CA

Apply electronically for quota hunt

As of Monday, June 1, sportsmen and women can apply electronically for quota hunts including adult/child, deer, alligator, waterfowl, dove and many others, according to the Georgia Department of Natural Resources' Wildlife Resources Division.

"We are especially pleased to bring hunters a new system this year that improves and streamlines

the application process," says John Bowers, Chief of the Game Management Section with the Wildlife Resources Division. "This system, which debuts June 1, allows applicants to use their existing license purchase account - so there is no separate quota application system requiring customers to remember a different user name or password."

Trout stocking sites week of May 25-29, 2015

Fannin: Rock Creek, Toccoa River, and Toccoa River Tailwaters (below Lake Blue Ridge Dam)
Lumpkin: Etowah River and Nimblewill Creek
Murray: Holly Creek
Union: Cooper Creek
Note: Information is subject to change. Please call the hatchery at 706-838-4723 for questions. The hatchery also provides trout for the state. Please contact Georgia DNR for information on sites stocked by the state. NJun3,28/CA

Hatchery construction and closure to visitation update

Mr. Kelly Taylor, Deputy Hatchery Manager at Chattahoochee Forest National Fish Hatchery, announces that the final phase of construction at the hatchery is set to begin June 1st. The temporary closure of the hatchery to visitation will continue. The closure also includes the hatchery parking lot which provides access to Rock Creek. Other access areas will remain open. Stocking will continue on all streams as usual with the exception of Rock Creek which will be stocked downstream from the hatchery only. For further information as to when the hatchery will re-open to visitors and other updates, please contact the hatchery at 706-838-4723 and/or "like" us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/ChattahoocheeForestNationalFishHatchery. NJun3,28/CA



Jamey Mull, Animal Caretaker, in the construction area

Local XC runners shine at Wounded Warrior 5K



Local cross country runners at the Wounded Warrior Color Run 5K - the 2nd annual fund raiser in Blue Ridge held on March 16th. Last year they raised over \$5,000. The girls swept the 14-19 age group! (L-R): 1st place - Stephanie Busse; 2nd place - Raphaëla Alemán; and 3rd place - Kelli Poteet. NJun3,28/CA

UCHS Basketball Camp June 22-25

Union County High School is hosting a basketball skills camp for boys and girls K-12th grade. The camp will begin daily at 8:30 a.m. and end at 11:30 a.m. Every camper will receive a camp t-shirt. There will be an awards ceremony on Thursday at 11 a.m. The cost for each camper will be \$60. You may bring this form and money on June 22nd, or mail this form and money to David Tucker at 106 Sherwood Ave., Box 26, Calhoun, TN 37309, for more information call (423) 336-3045.

Instructors are: David Tucker - Union County Panthers Head Girls Coach; Junior Tucker - Walker Valley High School; Mindy Cox - Niota Elementary School; Jon Tucker - Polk County High School; Brooke Maddox - UCHS graduate; and Ray Stone - Tennessee Wesleyan Basketball.

Activities will include: ball handling drills, dribbling drills, shooting drills, offense and defense instruction, contests, 5 on 5 play, 3 on 3 play, and one on one play. NJun3,23/CA

Camper's Name _____
Grade _____ Shirt Size _____
Do you have health insurance on this child? Yes _____ No _____
Emergency Contact _____
Phone # _____
Parent Signature _____ Date _____

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