

# Cross County improves at West Hall

By Todd Forrest  
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Oakwood - Union County traveled to West Hall last week and posted some of its fastest times of the season.

Cristian Garcia, Jacob Kelley, and Josh Weaver showed progress, both clocking in with season bests.

"I was pleased with the improvement I saw in both teams at the West Hall meet," Union County Head Cross Country Coach Jackie Hughes said. "Our times were better, and I felt that our effort was good. Cristian Garcia and Jacob Kelley paced us in the varsity boys race and turned in their best times of the year. Josh Weaver had an excellent race as well, and turned in his career best time."

The Panthers placed 18th out of 21 teams, coming in right behind Region 8AA's Riverside Military Academy (15th place) and Oglethorpe County (17th place).

Garcia led the Panthers with a time of 19:29, placing 56th overall. Kelley was 72nd at 19:56, Jakob Brown finished 101st at 20:51. Andrew Nelson was 106th with a time of 21:05, Jeremy Herum placed 109th at 21:12, while Ryan Rogers finished at 21:14 and Aaron Stafford checked in at 21:55.

On the girls' side, it was another stroll in the park for Emma Garrison as she picked up her third victory in three meets.

The Lady Panther sophomore finished with a time of 19:50, more than 44 seconds ahead of North Hall's Makayla Ellis.

She also bested last year's Class AAA State Champion, Kaitlyn Gearing from White County by more than two minutes.

"The girls also raced much better this week," Coach Hughes said. "Emma (Garrison) ran a very strong as well as very smart race. Even though it was fairly hot again, she looked much stronger than she did at Chestatee. All six of the rest of the varsity girls squad turned in their best times of the year as well."

The Lady Panthers



Emma Garrison (top) and Cristian Garcia have led Union Cross Country through its first three meets of the season. Photo/Todd Forrest

placed sixth out of 14 teams, defeating the only other 8-AA squad, Oglethorpe County by 120 points.

Rachel Todd came in 31st with a time of 24:18, Stephanie Busse was 35th at 24:47, Marissa Spaulding placed 57th at 26:01, and Anna Danek was 70th at 27:07.

Sage Royston and Hannah Quigley rounded out

Union's Top seven placed at 28:41 and 29:06 respectively.

Union County will now visit Murphy, NC on Wednesday.

"We now have a couple of weeks to continue working on our endurance while trying to improve our speed at some slightly smaller races," Coach Hughes said.

# Football: UCMS gets back on track

By Todd Forrest  
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Cleveland - Riding a two-game losing skid the Union County Middle School Panthers went to White County and came home with an important 30-20 league victory over the Warriors.

Despite an early rain shower Panthers jumped out to a 22-6 lead after the first quarter that held up through halftime.

The Warriors trimmed the Panthers' lead to 22-20 after three but Union put things away with a fourth quarter touchdown.

Cole Wright connected with Joe Miller in the first quarter for a score. Wright added two more scores on the ground, and Cole Dockery had a score.

Dockery, Wright, and Miller each converted a two-point conversion.

"We're improving but we still haven't put four good quarters together," Union County Head Coach Casey Jones said. "The win puts us in the driver's seat on our side of the league. We've got Lumpkin and Towns at home and if we win those, we get the top seed on our side and we will host the first round of the playoffs against the No. 2 team from the other side."

The other side of the league is Rabun County, North Habersham, South Habersham, and Wilbanks. Union's side consists of Lumpkin, White, and Towns Counties.

"If we get the top spot that is huge because we will probably play North Habersham," Coach Jones said.

The Panthers lost at North Habersham 15-14 on a failed two-point conversion, but Coach Jones is confident playing them at home will be the difference, if they meet again.

Union County hasn't played a home game since



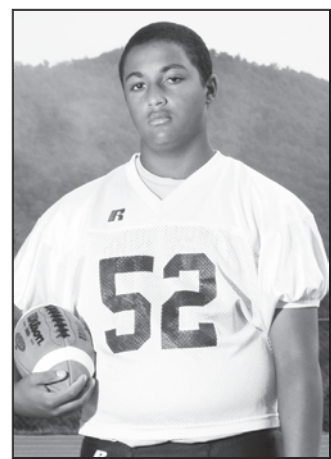
Austin Pattee



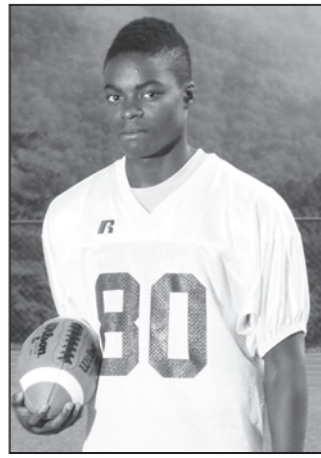
Cole Dockery



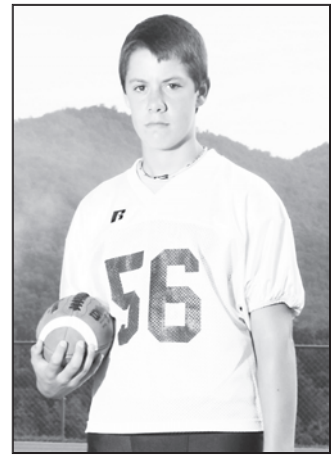
Cole Wright



R.J. Banton



Joe Miller



Coleson Daniel

Aug. 15th and is excited to be back in Blairsville for the last two games.

"We'll be glad to be home and if things work out the way I hope they do, we'll get the next three at home," Coach Jones said.

Up next for the Panthers is Lumpkin County, who visits Blairsville on Thursday at 4:30.

Union County will round out the regular season with a home contest against rival Towns County on Sept. 26th.

# MGC has first meet at Woodstock



The Mountain Gymnastics USA Level 4 squad (top) competed on Sept. 8th at Woodstock. Addieyn Dockery placed first on the vault and fourth on floor exercises. Evelyn McBride was second on the beam and first on the floor. Kaylie Kendall was fifth on the vault and Reagan Ledford was third on the bars. All the competitive gymnasts (bottom) will be in action later this year. Photos by Todd Forrest

## Mountain Gymnastics Center offering Saturday morning classes

Starting Sept. 7th, MGC classes are as follows: 9 a.m. - 10 a.m. Preschool (3-5 years). 10 a.m. - 11 a.m. Kindergarten-and-up. Boys and Girls. 11 a.m. - Noon Cheer/Tumbling. Call for opening: 706-745-3325



## Mountain High Hikers Hiking Club

Mountain High Hikers schedules two hikes each Tuesday, occasional specialty hikes, and regular trail maintaining trips - all in the beautiful mountains of Georgia and North Carolina. Check the website www.mountainhighhikers.org for schedule and meeting locations.

## Fish for Food Fishing Tournament

Matthew 25 Food Ministries presents "Fish for Food Fishing Tournament". 60 percent of tournament money goes to feed needy families in our area. The remaining 40 percent will go to tournament prize money. Prize money will be awarded for 1st Place, 2nd Place and 3rd Place and biggest fish. Actual prize amount will depend on number of entries.

Entry fee is \$50 per boat, the tournaments end in October, occurring the second Saturday of each month rotating between Lake Chatuge, Woods Grove Boat Ramp and Lake Nottely, Deaver Road Boat Ramp, from 7 a.m. - 1 p.m. Tournament schedule: October 12 - Lake Nottely. For contact information call David Crisp at 706-897-5347.