# Lady Panthers survive Rabun scare; can't get past Social Circle in 8-AA finals

Darlington visits on Wednesday as Union hosts first round of State for fourth time in five years

By Todd Forrest North Georgia News sports@nganews.com

Social Circle continues to have the Lady Panthers' number after they defeated Union 7-5 in last weekend's Region finals.

Earlier in the week Union (26-6) needed three games to take care of Rabun County and earn the right to take on Social Circle the defending Region Champions, for a shot at the 2014 Region title.

On Saturday the Lady Panthers traveled to Social Circle and fell into a big hole right off

Union got a run in the top of the first but the Lady Redskins put up 6 runs of their own in the bottom half of the first. After three innings, it was 7-2 but the Lady Panthers got one in the fourth and two in the fifth to make it 7-5 but were unable to get any closer.

Now Union will host Darlington (12-18), the No. 3 seed from Region 7-AA. The winner will face the victors from the (No. 4 5-AA) Manchester at (No. 1 6-AA) Wesleyan series. In order to earn the right

to host the first round of State, the Lady Panthers had to take care of Rabun County. Prior to last Tuesday, Union County Head Coach Jessica Stewart had never lost to Rabun County, and after Union dominated game one 11-0, it appeared as if the Lady Panthers would sweep the home doubleheader. Unfortunately junior sec-

ond baseman and defensive MVP Karley Nix was hit by a pitch and was lost for the season with a broken hand. To make matters worse the Union County bats went ice cold in game two and Rabun forced a third and deciding game three with a 1-0 victory.

It wasn't until the sixth inning of the third and final game of the best-of-three series before Coach Stewart and the Union County faithful could finally breathe a collective sigh of re-

Despite an overpowering performance from sophomore



Lady Panthers found themselves

locked in a heated battle for the right to face Social Circle in the Region 8-AA title game.

Union was able to find some breathing room thanks to a 2-run fifth inning that extended the Lady Panthers' lead to 3-0 but the knockout blow came in the sixth inning via Maddie Garrett. With a runner aboard, the junior cleanup hitter lined a shot into deep left-centerfield that grazed the top of the fence on its way to the parking lot where it connected with a pickup truck, giving a literal meaning to the phrase 'insurance

Sophomore ace Laken Chambers was as close to unhittable as possible during series but the Lady Panthers still required all three games to fend off an upstart Lady Wildcats squad. In the three games combined Chambers allowed just four hits and one unearned run, including a pair of bookend one-hit shutouts in right-hander Laken Chambers, the Union's game one and game three a sacrifice fly that brought in the

After a 12-day layoff, the Lady Panthers' bats immediately roared back to life with a 6-run third inning during an 11-0

"I was very impressed with the way we hit Rabun County's pitcher in the first game," Coach Stewart said. "She throws pretty hard and we were able to jump on her early and put 6 runs on the board off the starter. I was afraid that not seeing live pitching in a week and a half might effect us at the plate some but the girls reacted great and came through in game one with 10 hits."

Game two was a different

The Lady Wildcats were outhit 5-2 but managed to eek out a 1-0 victory. A one-out double in the fourth inning proved to be the difference maker as Union made matters worse with a passed ball, allowing the runner to reach third. Five pitches later the run scored on only run of the game. In the fifth, freshman Jillian

Lawn reached on an error but was left stranded.

In the sixth, sophomore Lydia Arrowood reached on a leadoff walk, senior Courtney Busbee later singled with two outs and senior Kelsey Nix also singled but junior Maddie Garrett, who reached on a fielders choice, was called out on a questionable call at the plate.

The Lady Panthers went down 1-2-3 in the seventh and game three was set for the next

"In game two our girls seemed too relaxed after scoring 11 runs and kept looking for another teammate to get the job done," Coach Stewart said. "I got concerned in the fifth when we couldn't put any hits together with runners in scoring position. We still out hit Rabun 5 to 1, we just couldn't do it with runners on. Rabun was excited as the game went on and played harder

in this particular game than us. We had an opportunity where Nix hit a single with Garrett on second to tie the game but it was bang-bang play and it went in Rabun's favor.

blew things open in game three, Lawn connected on a bases loaded single to stake Union to a 1-0 lead after two innings.

singled and scored on a single from senior Hallye King. Earlier in the inning, Courtney Busbee walked and scored thanks to an infield single by sophomore Kendra Tanner. In the sixth, Chambers

reached on a fielders choice and with freshman Logan Seabolt taking her place as the courtesy runner, Garrett took the first pitch of her at bat out of the park. In the 11-0 victory in game

one, Kelsey Nix went 2-for-3 with

2 doubles, 4 RBIs, and a run. Gar-

rett finished 2-for-2 with a double,

2 runs, and 2 RBIs, Courtney

several common opponents with Darlington. North Murray lost 8-3 to Dade County while Darlington Before Garrett's homer split with Dade (L 9-4, W 10-1).

Coosa knocked off North Murray 10-6 while Darlington defeated Coosa five times.

In the fifth Kelsey Nix ville three times while Darlington split (W 6-4, L 6-2). The Lady Panthers will be

looking to advance past the first round for the first time since 2010. In last year's first round, Union no-hit Lovett in a 9-0 game one

men in round one but were swept. In 2011, the Lady Panthers were upset by North Murray at home despite taking game one.

to the second round for the first

## XC: Union men show improvement at Unicoi; Garrison misses out with injury

By Todd Forrest North Georgia News sports@nganews.com

Helen - The Union County Cross Country teams were part of a loaded field at White County's Mountain Invitational held at Unicoi State Park.

The Panthers placed 21st out of 30 teams, most of which were Class AAA or higher.

Freshman Lance Underwood led Union with a 76th place finish at 18:05. Jacob Kelley was 108th at 18:41, Jakob Brown was 122nd at 18:58, Timothy Murphy placed 125th at 19:04, Adam Bachman was 150th at 19:07, Gehrig Patterson was 152nd at 19:42, and Cristian Garcia placed 166th at 20:18.

As for the Lady Panthers, they are without two-time defending State Champion Emma Garrison who is battling shin splints, but she's expected to return before the Region 8-AA meet, later this month.

At Unicoi, the Lady Panthers placed 22nd with Stephanie Busse

Meanwhile, the Wildcat

"Our offensive line has

The Panthers will go into

defense limited the Union rushing

attack to just 24 yards. However,

Rogers caught 6 passes for 126

gotten a lot better from last year,"

Mancuso said. "We've just got to

trust our receivers, our line, and

the Rabun County matchup fresh

off a pair of road trips to Ogletho-

rpe County and Greene County.
"That's something that

needs to be said about these kids,

is how they responded after 2 hours

and 45 minutes to Oglethorpe and

3 hours to Greene County in back-

to-back weeks and won both of

them," Coach Allison said. "But I

know that when we return home for

been a year to remember. Sev-

en wins is the most by a Union

County team since 2001, they have

clinched their first back-to-back

State playoff trips in team history.

and will finish with three-straight

winning seasons, something that

hasn't happened since the mid

ing to settle for just making the

playoffs. That was the goal last

year and this group of young men

is determined to take another step

season but we're still looking for

10-0," Barnett said. "We've just got

to keep practicing as hard as we've

arrive early as the stadium will fill

However, this team is refus-

Possibly a few steps for-

This has been an awesome

Kickoff is Friday at 7:30 but

1980's.

forward in 2014.

been practicing.

For the seniors, 2014 has

Rabun County it'll be a battle."

yards and 2 scores.

our defense."

Showdown... continued from 14A



Lance Underwood

coming in 100th at 24:03.

Anna Danek was 106th at 24:12, Marissa Spaulding was 122nd at 24:56, Cora Bauman came in 131st with a time of 25:43, Raphaela Aleman was 138th clocking in at 26:09, 153rd belonged to Kaitlyn Gallagher at 27:15, and Adele Bauman was 157th at 27:49.

Union's JV men came in at 4:30 p.m.

game as the 11 Alive Game of

the Week. To vote go to http://

usatodayhss.com/2014/poll-vote-

for-the-team11-game-of-the-week-

The UC defense will face its toughest test of the season on Friday.

Pink out scheduled for Friday night

and honor those who have battled cancer. October is traditionally

a time set aside for breast cancer awareness. The cheerleaders

would also like to recognize those who have gone up against all

the various forms of cancer that are out there. This week's game

against the Rabun County Wildcats will also prove to be a battle.

Let's show our Panther support of Breast Cancer awareness by

wearing Pink to the game on October 17th at 7:30. There will be

a small booth if you would like to donate to the American Cancer

Society in Panther Alley. Coosa Creek will also have Panther pink

The 5th Quarter "After the Game Celebration" will be

held on Friday night, October 17th, immediately after the foot-

ball game, at the shopping center across from Circle K, one mile

south on Gainesville Hwy. All students are invited to attend. The

event will feature free food and a live band, "Drivenbyfaith."

items available for sale at the Panther Spirit Store!

"after the game celebration"

A safe place for kids

You can also vote for this | Sponsored by Fellowship of the Hills Church. N(Oct15,Z8)CA

The UCHS football cheerleaders would like to remember

It's that time of year again - Pink Out Time!!

17th with Aaron Stafford leading the team with a 51st place finish at 19:25. Cole Payne, Brooks Patterson, Daniel Kumler, Evan Browning, Jesus Polamo, and Jarrett Holbrook rounded out Union's

The Lady Panthers JV was 13th as Addie Murphy led the team with a 53rd place finish at 27:32. Brooke Hamby, Hannah Quigley, Grace Rivera, and Sage Royston rounded out the top-five.

The middle school girls finished sixth as Zoe Sanchez led the way in 20th at 13:51. Anzly Sherman, Grace Weldon, Lexie Ochoa, Sahory Salazar, Allison Vincent, and Madison Yost were

Union's top-seven. The middle school boys were 19th with Colby Ives leading the way in 49th at 12:48. Britt Waller, Will Harkins, Grayson Blocker, Milo Bauman, Malachi Patrick, and Connor Latka rounding out Union's top-seven.

The UCHS squads will race at Meeks Park on Thursday

As of this writing on Mon-

day afternoon, Rabun at Union was

in the lead with 45.4 percent of the

vote. Forsyth Central vs Sprayberry

was in second at 33.9 percent.

### NASCAR 2014

By Gerald Hodges/the Racing Reporter

#### Harvick gets third win of season

Kevin Harvick held off Jeff Gordon on a restart with two laps left in Saturday night's 334- lap Sprint Cup race for his third win of the season.

"It's great, and it came at just the right time," said Harvick. "We knew it was just a "Kenseth swung at my matter of time. The guys have been building better and better

"We've had a lot of control, but now we're moving tried to pick a fight". on. Our win tonight should let everyone know that."

Harvick started seventh and led six times for a racehigh 162 laps. With his win, he automatically advances to the Eliminator Round, which will be determined after next Sunday's race at Talladega. There, the Chase field will be cut from 12 drivers to eight. No matter where Harvick finishes at Talladega, his victory at Charlotte guarantees him a spot in the three-race Eliminator Round that will ultimately determine which four drivers vie for the championship in the season finale at Homestead.

Jeff Gordon led 61 laps and finished .571 of a second

"I wanted to win and I tried as hard as I could," said Gordon. "There at the end I wasn't able to stay with Kev-

Jamie McMurray, Joey Logano, Kyle Busch, Kyle Larson, Ryan Newman, Carl Edwards, Denny Hamlin and Kasey Kahne were the remainder of the top-10.

Dale Earnhardt Jr. had a gear-shifter break about midways of the race, and finished 20th, one-lap down. The team tried to make repairs during several pit stops.

"There was a vibration in the car that broke the shifter in half," he said. "After that the car was pretty hard to handle."

There was a lot of pushing and shoving in the garage after the race. Once the checkered flag flew, Hamlin and Keselowski got together on the track. Keselowski tried to turn Hamlin around but failed. Coming down pit road,

Keselowski got into the side of Kenseth and then hit the rear of Stewart's car. Stewart backed up and damaged Keselowski's

Once drivers were out of their cars Hamlin had to be prevented from going up to Keselowski. As Keselowski walked

off, Kenseth rushed up to him and more shoving began.

Eventually everyone was separated with the help of their

road while I was getting out of

my car. I already had my hel-

respective teams and officials. "He's a complete idiot," said Kenseth. "He bumped me on the track, and then just ploughed into me here on pit

met and HANS off when he hit me. Yes, I'm mad, I don't know what's wrong with the guy. NASCAR needs to do something.

Keselowski cooled off

during the final caution causing damage that ruined my race," said Keselowski.

He also said Hamlin things happen that we couldn't "stopped in front of me and

"I figured if we're going to play car wars under yellow and after the race, I'll join, too," Keselowski continued. "Those guys can dish it out, but they can't take it. I gave it back to them and now they want to fight.'

NASCAR will determine Tuesday whether to penalize anyone for their actions.

Chase leaders: 1. Logano-3088, 2. Kyle Busch-3082, 3. Harvick-3081, 4. Newman-3077, 5. Edwards-3076, 6. Gordon-3074, 7. Hamlin-3073, 8. Kahne-3057, 9. Kenseth-3056, 10. Keselowski-3038, 11. Johnson-3031, 12. Earnhardt-3031.

After next week's Talladega race, only the topeight drivers will continue on. Kenseth, Keselowski, Johnson, and Earnhardt are on the

#### **KESELOWSKI TOPS BUSCH AT CHARLOTTE**

Brad Keselowski took the lead from Ryan Blaney on lap 187 of Friday's 200-lap Nationwide race and held off Kyle Busch for his fourth series win of the season.

Busch finished second, followed by Matt Kenseth, Ryan Blaney, Kyle Larson, Chris Buescher, Trevor Bayne, Chase Elliott, Elliott Sadler, and Chase Elliott. Top-10 leaders after

30 of 33: 1. Elliott-1106, 2. Smith-1064, 3. Scott-1045, 4. Sadler-1043, 5. T. Dillon-1042, 6. Bayne-1008, 7. C. Buescher-912, 8. Gaughan-875, 9. Reed-820, 10. J. Buescher-792 **HORNISH TO** 

#### **RPM IN 2015**

Sam Hornish will take over the driving duties of the No. 9 Richard Petty Motorsports Ford in the Sprint Cup Series next season. Hornish joins

from Joe Gibbs Racing where he competed part-time in the Nationwide Series this season scoring one win and four topfive finishes in eight starts. He spent three full sea-

sons in the Sprint Cup Series as well as two seasons in the Nationwide Series for Penske Racing where he finished sec-

ond in points in 2013. This is a great opportunity to join Richard Petty Motorsports and the No. 9 Ford



Kevin Harvick winner of Char-

Richard Petty, Andrew Murstein and Doug Bergeron have built this organization into a championship-contending team with world-class sponsors and partners. Many people

have noticed the progress being made here and I'm ready to build off this momentum. "My goal is to put the team in victory lane in 2015

and be a competitor in the Chase. The No. 9 team will continue to be led by crew chief Drew Blickensderfer who has

three Sprint Cup Series wins to his credit. "Sam is a really good fit for RPM and will be a great ad-

dition to the team," said Petty. "He's a family man who fits well with our core values and he will be a great ambassador for our partners. Sam's also proven that he can win races and compete for a championship. He came into the Cup Series with a steep learning curve from open wheel racing, but has shown in the Nationwide Series that he is a winner."

Hornish will replace current driver Marcos Ambrose who will return to his native Australia at the end of this sea-

Weekend Racing: The Cup and Truck teams are at the 2.66-mile Talladega Superspeedway. The Nationwide Series does not race again until Nov. 1.

Sat., Oct. 18; Truck Series race 18 of 22; Starting time: 3 pm ET; TV: Fox.

Sun., Oct. 19; Sprint Cup Series race 32 of 36; Starting time: 1 pm ET; TV: ESPN.

Racing Trivia Ques-

tion: What older site was Talladega Superspeedway built

Last Week's Question: When did NASCAR hold its first race at Charlotte Motor Speedway? The first race was the 1960 World 600, won by Joe Lee Johnson. Note: The 1949 NASCAR season opened on June 19 at the old threefourths mile Charlotte Speedway with Jim Roper being de-

You may contact the Racing Reporter at: www.hodges@

race500.com. NT(Oct15,C1)ac

clared the winner.

team," said Hornish. "Owners

North Murray beat Adairs-

Busbee was 1-for-2 with 2 RBIs

an RBI double, Karley Nix was 1-for-1 with 2 runs, Chambers

and Arrowood each went 1-for-Freshman Braden Poteete,

Seabolt, and Crystal Busbee each

of scoreless ball. She also passed

April Harper for second place on

the school's all-time win list with

34. Angie Hughes is first with

Busbee finished 3-for-5 with a

double and a run, Kelsey Nix went 1-for-2 with a 2-run homer in the fifth inning, Garrett was 2-for-4

with 2 RBIs. Arrowood had two

hits and an RBI while Courtney

Busbee, Tanner, and King each

recorded a hit and Seabolt scored

will come to Blairsville for the first

round of State. A doubleheader will be played at 4:30 and 6:30

p.m. with game three if needed on

Darlington have no common

opponents but Union defeated

North Murray 13-0, who shares

Thursday at 3:30 p.m.

On Wednesday, Darlington

The Lady Panthers and

Tanner was 2-for-3 with

Chambers allowed 1 hit and no walks during 5 innings

At Social Circle Crystal

and 2 runs.

win but dropped the next two. In 2012, Union hosted Bre-

Two wins over Darlington and Union's seniors will advance

lotte Cup race. Furnished by NA-