

Greater Atlanta Christian, injury bug team up to spoil UCHS Homecoming

By Todd Forrest
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Top-ranked Greater Atlanta Christian handed Union County its first regular season home loss in three years with a dominating 47-7 victory over the previously unbeaten Panthers.

However, a home winning streak was the least of head coach Brian Allison's concerns as Union also lost its Region 7-AAA Offensive Player of the Year, quarterback Cole Wright to a foot injury in the first quarter. And before it was all said-and-done, the defensive side of the ball took a hit when the team's top-two tacklers, senior RJ Banton and junior Jackson Colwell joined Wright, senior receiver Logan Dyer and sophomore wide out Cayden Rich on the sideline with apparent injuries.

As of Monday morning, Coach Allison was optimistic that none of the injuries would be season ending.

The X-rays on Wright's foot came back negative on Saturday but his status was unknown until he visited the doctor Monday.

According to Allison, Banton and Dyer suffered sprained ankles and are questionable for this week's game. Colwell injured his shoulder and is also questionable. Meanwhile, Rich appears to be okay for Friday night.

Nothing went as planned for the Panthers on Friday night. Not even the scheduled start time of 7:30 was safe. A stray thunderstorm moved over Blairsville shortly after 7:15 p.m., forcing a 1-hour and 15-minute lightning delay. When the game finally kicked off at 8:45 p.m., the first quarter wasn't even halfway



Coach Allison with some encouraging words for his Panthers squad following their homecoming loss to No. 1 GAC last week. Photo/Todd Forrest

complete when a sudden blackout plunged the entire stadium into darkness at the 6:49 mark of the first quarter.

Lighting was finally restored after roughly 20 minutes but it still couldn't brighten the Panthers' prospects.

On the first play of the game, Wright was picked off by University of North Carolina commit Trey Morrison, setting up a 22-yard touchdown run from Clemson commit Kyler McMichael, two plays later.

"They just made some really good plays," Allison said. "Sometimes all you can do is tip your cap."

After a Union County three-and-out gave the ball back to the Spartans following a Banton punt, GAC used a 13-play,

61-yard drive – that was interrupted by a lighting malfunction – to take a 14-0 advantage with 5:18 left in the first.

The Panther defense forced the Spartans into three third down, and one fourth down, situation, but were unable to come up with a stop.

To make matters worse, GAC caught Union off-guard with an onside kick – for the second straight year – to regain possession at the Panther 45-yard line. A 44-yard pass and a 1-yard run opened up a 21-0 lead with more than three minutes remaining in the opening quarter.

An 8-yard keeper from Wright gave Union a much-needed first down but on the very next play, Wright and running back Chad Buzzard couldn't

complete the exchange and the Spartans recovered the fumble at the 26.

Three plays and an extra-point later, GAC led the shell-shocked Panthers, 28-0.

On the ensuing drive, a substitution infraction on the Spartans awarded Union a first down, then an offsides penalty turned 2nd-and-9 into 2nd-and-4. That's when the Panthers were forced to burn a timeout, and when the offense returned to the field, Pierson Allison, not Wright was behind center.

With the starting QB on the trainer's table, Allison led Union's first-and-only scoring drive of the night.

A short loss dropped the Panthers into 3rd-and-5 but Allison found senior Austin Pattee

for a 10-yard hookup. As the second quarter got underway, Allison scrambled for eight, then handed to Buzzard for five more.

Consecutive third down completions to Rich moved the chains, and on first-and-goal from the 10, Allison rolled left and hit a diving Kyle Morlock in the endzone for six. The Brian Smith point-after made it a 28-7 game with 8:55 left in the half.

Any momentum the Panthers gained was quickly erased with a 62-yard McMichael touchdown run.

A three-and-out by the Union offense brought Banton onto the field for another punting situation, but this time, a roughing the kicker penalty gave the Panthers new life, but the hit

put Banton on crutches for the remainder of the game.

Union benefited from a pass interference that gave them another first down but the drive eventually stalled when GAC stuffed the Panthers on fourth-and-short.

After forcing a three-and-out, the Union County defense was immediately sent back onto the field after the second Panther fumble of the half gave GAC the ball at their own 35. The Spartans immediately went for the jugular and connected on a 35-yard scoring strike.

With a first half average starting field position at the Union County 40-yard line, the Spartans took a 41-7 lead into the break.

Late in the third quarter, GAC was called for a personal foul, targeting penalty that, for some reason, didn't award the Panthers a first down. Faced with 3rd-and-2 after the penalty, Union was stopped on two straight plays and the Spartans took over at their own 35. From there, GAC began the only scoring drive of the second half – an 8-play, 65-yard drive – culminating with a 5-yard run on the first play of the fourth quarter.

Next week Union will visit East Hall, who feature one of the top scoring offenses in the state. Led by returning senior quarterback Austin Parker and senior WR Sedrion Morse, who was one of the best kept secrets in North Georgia entering 2017, but make no mistake, teams are starting to realize that Morse could be the best pass catcher north of Gwinnett County.

For the complete Allison interview and East Hall preview, visit www.ngnsports.wordpress.com throughout the week or follow on Twitter at: @hotrod-todd25.

Offense

Passing	Comp/Att	Yds	TD	Int	Long	2PT
#17 P. Allison	14/20	112	1	-	14	-
#8 C. Wright	0/3	-	-	1	-	-
Rushing	Att	Yds	TD	Long	Fum	2PT
#24 C. Buzzard	20	27	-	12	1	-
#8 C. Wright	4	15	-	7	1	-
#17 P. Allison	2	13	-	8	-	-
#15 C. Dockrey	3	5	-	3	-	-
Rest of team	1	-14	-	-	-	-
Receiving	Rec	Yds	TD	Long	Fum	2PT
#20 C. Rich	5	29	-	9	-	-
#4 K. Hemphill	3	24	-	12	-	-
#84 K. Morlock	2	20	1	10	-	-
#2 C. Schafer	2	14	-	9	-	-
#21 S. Drake	1	14	-	14	-	-
#22 A. Pattee	1	11	-	11	-	-

Union Co. Youth Football report

By Blake Lynch
North Georgia News

Elijay - The 8U Panthers took on the Pickens County Dragons at Gilmer and it was all Panthers.

In the first quarter No. 2 Brandon Lynch scored on a 20-yard touchdown and converted the extra point.

Later No. 00 Lassiter Windsor ran in a huge touchdown, then No. 28 Bentley Rich scored the point after.

Lynch did it again with

another touchdown and Kamdon Kindrick converted the point after. Windsor would add another touchdown for a 38-0 Union win.

The Offense Player of the Game was Windsor with two touchdowns and a PAT. Defensive player of the Game honors belonged to No. 34 Isaiah Stepp.

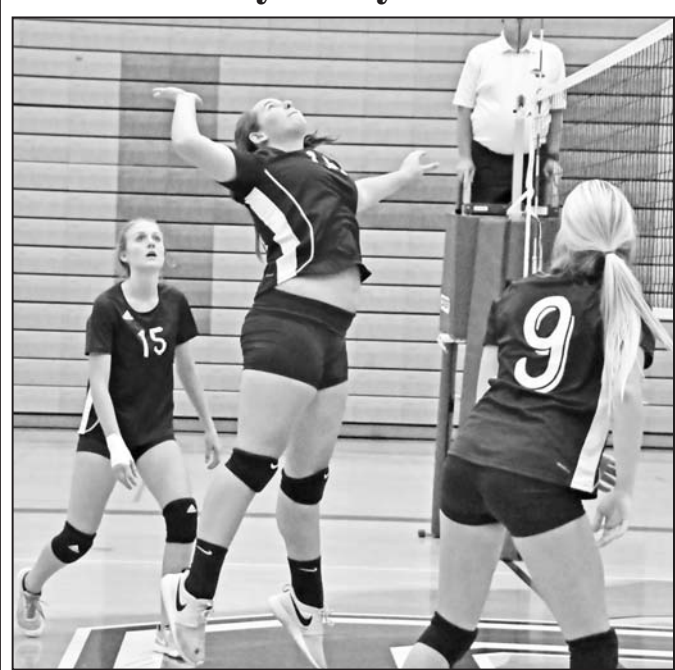
The 10U Panthers took on the Gilmer Bobcats at Fannin and the Panthers dominated 19-12.

Union improves to 4-0 this season. Offensive POG was Maddox Young. Defensive POG was Caden Combs



Union County youth football in action. Photo/Blake Lynch

Union County volleyball at Gilmer



Union County's varsity and JV volleyball team's were in action at Gilmer last Thursday. The varsity dropped two straight but the JV won the first set before the Lady Bobcats came back and took the next two. UCHS is improving each time the take the floor and are light years ahead of where they were at a month ago. The next home match is Oct. 2 but they're at Lumpkin and White Counties this week. Photo/Todd Forrest

Family Hiking Day Saturday, September 30th



and is involved in several hiking clubs in the Southeast, two of them as both maintenance director and constructions director and two as president.

The Appalachian Trail Conservancy, the Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce, along with the Mountain High Hikers, Georgia Appalachian Trail Club, and the Benton MacKaye Trail Association invite families of all ages and hiking abilities to experience the adventure of being active on a hiking trail!

Even if you're unable to join an official Family Hiking Day event, participants who walk on the A.T. with their family on September 30 and October 1 are invited to share their Family Hiking Day experiences for a chance to win one of five Osprey backpacks. Photos and videos uploaded to Facebook, Twitter or Instagram with the hashtag #AT-FamilyHike will be automatically entered into the contest. Entries can also be emailed to soro@appalachiantrails.org. Winners will be announced



Johnny and Stella Collins on October 1.

For more information on planning a family hike throughout the year and suggestions of family-friendly day hikes on the A.T., visit appalachiantrail.org/FamilyHike. For more information about the Blairsville Family Hiking Day, please call 706-745-5789. NT(Sep27,22)CA

Union County High School Homecoming 2017-18



The Union County High School 2017-18 Homecoming Court. Photo/Todd Forrest



Left: Second Runner Up Baylee Young. Right: First Runner Up Claudia Ledezma. Photos/Todd Forrest

Warriors Veteran Outreach Golf Tournament



Warriors Veteran Outreach Golf Tournament was held on September 8th at the Old Union Golf Course. America's Home Place of Blairsville is proud to provide The Warriors Veteran Outreach a \$500 donation to help our Veterans. Thank you for your service! NT(Sep27,22)CA

Allegheny Masonic Lodge to host charitable golf tournament

Allegheny Masonic Lodge #114 will be hosting a charitable golf tournament October 7, 2017 at Butternut Creek Golf Course in Blairsville. It will be a four man scramble (best ball). Many prizes will be handed out including a set of Mizuno irons and Yeti soft cooler and thermos just to name a couple, and "\$25,000 Hole in One Prize".

We are looking for hole sponsors and players. Hole sponsors are \$50/black and white 18"x24" tee box sign or \$75/full

color 18"x24" tee box sign with your business information. Teams are \$300 or \$75/player.

Proceeds go towards our charity account which helps support the Masonic Children's Home of Georgia, local high school scholarships, Union County 4-H, The Boy Scouts of America; just to name a few.

If you're a golfer or a business or both, call Ivy Smith at 478-731-6050 or Dick Fleming at 770-833-7690 to sign up or sponsor a hole.

Benton McKaye Trail Group Hike

Friday, September 29, BMTA Group Hike: Flat Creek Loop. Lunch in Blue Ridge. 5.6 miles, moderate. Pre-register with hike leaders Tom and Jane Keene at tkbmta@gmail.com.

For more information on the Benton MacKaye Trail, see www.bmta.org or Facebook. Hikers must pre-register to find out location and time of hike. NT(Sep27,29)CA