

Softball: Union drops two of three at Region, going on the road at State

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Union County's late-season slide continued at last week's Region 8-AA Tournament as the Lady Panthers dropped two of three to finish as the region's No. 3 seed in the upcoming Class AA State Tournament.

Dating back to last month, Union has lost four of six overall, with three defeats coming to opponents with a combined 32-38 record.

Although, the top-seeded Lady Panthers got off to a solid start, taking a 5-1 victory over Rabun County in the first round on Tuesday, Oct. 6.

In the second round, Union was unable to score its third win of 2020 over Banks County, who overpowered the host team 8-2. On Wednesday, Oct. 7, the Lady Panthers took on Elbert County with the victor earning a rematch vs. the Leopards. And once again, the third time wasn't the charm for Union County, as Elbert handed the Lady Panthers their first region-tournament shutout loss since 2015.

Scoreless entering the sixth inning, an Elbert single was magnified by an error and a wild pitch, placing a runner at third with one down. The Blue Devils capitalized with a sacrifice fly for a 1-0 advantage, followed by a single and a stolen base, allowing Elbert to make it 2-0 with another base hit.

The heart of the Union County lineup went hitless in the bottom of the sixth and freshman pitcher Sierra Burnette, who replaced starter Trinity Queen during the previous inning, retired Elbert 1-2-3 in the seventh to keep the Lady Panthers within striking distance.

Two quick outs spelled trouble for Union County in the bottom of the seventh but pinch-hitter Jaycee Seabolt kept hope alive with a base hit to left field. Ansley Collins walked to put the tying run aboard, but that was all Union could muster as a ground out ended the game.

Following 12-plus innings the day before, Queen started and tossed 5 1/3 shutout innings before running into trouble in the sixth. The senior



Junior Ansley Collins was Union County's toughest out of last week's Region 8-AA Tournament. Photo/Todd Forrest

struck out five and didn't surrender a walk or a hit-by-pitch. Prior to the aforementioned sixth inning, Queen allowed just two singles over the first five innings before giving up two during her final inning.

At the plate, Collins accounted for two of Union County's five hits, going 2-for-2 with a walk and a stolen base. Senior Hannah Patton singled in the first inning during a 1-for-3 day. Queen singled in the second, while also finishing 1-for-3 at the dish. Seabolt ended her day 1-for-1 with a seventh-inning single.

Junior Aubrie Banton went 0-for-1 with a sacrifice bunt and a walk.

Following Patton's base hit, Union County left a runner at second with one out in the first. Queen led off the second with a base hit and Banton moved her to second, but consecutive pop-outs kept Union off the board.

Collins opened the third with a single and Banton drew a two-out walk in the fourth. Collins singled and stole second with one down in the fifth, but the Lady Panthers continued to struggle with runners aboard, finishing 0-for-11 with two strikeouts and a walk with runners on base.

Meanwhile, Elbert could not take advantage of leadoff errors in the second and fifth innings or a leadoff single in the fourth with Union County doubling off two different runners at first on a pair of line-drive outs.

In the win over Rabun, Union struck first with two in the third before the Wildcats responded with one in the fourth. The Lady Panthers began pulling away with two more in the fifth inning and another in the sixth.

With two down in the third, consecutive singles by sophomore Chloe Potts and Patton, followed by an error off the bat of junior Lexi Sisum, spotted Union County a 2-0 advantage.

However, the game's pivotal moment came in the top of the fourth when Rabun loaded the bases with nobody out and only came away with one run.

Queen hit the first two batters and walked the third, opening the frame by missing the strike zone on 10 of her first 13 offerings. She finally settled down, getting a strikeout before an RBI single made it 2-1. With the bags still packed, Queen induced a force at the plate and a grounder to second to preserve a one-run advantage.

Union answered by load-



Freshman Sierra Burnette provided Union with valuable innings at Region but neither pitcher received much run support. Photo/Todd Forrest

ing the bases with one down in the bottom half of the inning but were unable to push across a run. They would finally breakthrough in the fifth with a base hit by Patton and an Emma Roxbury RBI single. Later in the inning, Queen reached on a fielder's choice, Banton singled to left and Burnette made it 4-1 with a run-scoring single.

Union's final run came in the sixth when Potts walked and Patton brought her around with a one-out double.

Patton finished 3-for-4 with an RBI, Potts scored twice during a 1-for-3 day and Roxbury went 1-for-4 with an RBI.

Queen, Banton and Burnette each finished 1-for-3 with Burnette chipping in an RBI.

Katie Byers scored twice and Caroline Karnes added

one run.

Queen fanned eight over 7 innings, allowing just two hits and a walk while hitting three batters and giving up one earned run.

In the second game on Tuesday night, Banks County jumped on the Lady Panthers with four runs in the second and never looked back en route to an 8-2 victory. Union got one in the fourth, but the Leopards put it away with four more in the sixth.

Queen went 5 1/3 for Union County, allowing just two earned runs while getting victimized by six fielding errors.

Following a 1-2-3 first, the Union right-hander ran into trouble in the second after a leadoff walk quickly turned into a 2-0 deficit on a two-run

homer. Later in the inning, a single, an error and a double allowed Banks to stretch its margin to 4-0.

The Lady Panthers finally manufactured a run in the fourth when Patton reached on an infield single. The courtesy runner Byers advanced to third on a pair of wild pitches, allowing Roxbury to bring her in with an RBI groundout.

Neither team was able to take advantage of scoring opportunities in the fifth as Banks loaded the bases with two down and Union opened with consecutive walks before three-straight Ks ended the threat.

The Lady Panthers began to unravel in the sixth as four errors resulted in an 8-1 deficit. Burnette also replaced Queen during the frame, recording consecutive outs after a two-run error.

Another groundout led to Union's second and final run during the sixth.

Roxbury finished 0-for-3 with a pair of RBI groundouts. Sisum went 2-for-3 and Patton was 1-for-3. Byers scored both Union County runs.

Queen walked four and allowed 6 hits and 2 earned runs over 5 1/3 innings. Burnette didn't yield a hit in 1 2/3 innings of work.

Up next: The Lady Panthers won't know their playoff opponent until after Monday's deadline, but from the looks of it, they will have their hands full, traveling to either second-ranked Heard County or third-ranked Bremen for round one.

Should the Lady Panthers survive the opening round, they would likely visit Dade County, Pepperell (Rome) or No. 8 Chattooga (Summerville) in the Sweet 16.

Toby Collins wins First Place at Paradise Drag Strip



Blairsville resident Toby Collins won First Place in Footbrake at Paradise in Calhoun, GA. He went 8 rounds to claim the victory. Toby drives a 1976 Plymouth Arrow which runs a small block Mopar. The car ran Low 6 all day with a maximum speed of 111 mph. in an 8th mile. He has been racing for over thirty years. N10ct14Z14CA

Second Annual "Hole in Fun" Golf Tournament

On Friday October 2nd, Benchmark Physical Therapy and High Mountain Healthcare hosted the 2nd Annual Hole in Fun Scramble to benefit Union County Family Connection (UCFC).

A beautiful day on the golf course, and the donations of sponsors and players, will allow staff to continue meeting the needs of local children. UCFC is part of a larger state wide network (Georgia Family Connection Partnership) that is the only statewide network in the country dedicated to the health and well-being of families and communities. GFPC empowers communities in 159 counties to craft local solutions based on local decisions.

In Union County, Family Connection is fortunate to be housed in the school system, where we can work closely with students and families. We have been in existence since 1998 and have developed relationships with numerous agencies and organizations in order to research the needs of children and families in our community, and to work together to address those needs. Our mission is: Every child in Union County will grow up to become a successful, productive and contributing adult.

If you would like to make a donation or would like

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2020 Hole In Fun Scramble

Proceeds benefitting:

UNION COUNTY
family connection



Tournament Hosts:

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more information about Union County Family Connection, please contact us at 706-835-4351.

Our heartfelt apprecia-

tion goes out to each player, sponsor, volunteer, and restaurateur who participated. Thank you for making this event such a success! N10ct14Z6CA



Steve Rouse



Tim Hanley, Todd Littler, Charles Rich, Jim Ropper



Will Henson, Cayce Price, Hayden Price, & Jason Henson



Steve Rouse and Hanah Curtis

The Old Union Women's Golf Association season ends



The Old Union Women's Golf Association members

The Old Union Women's Golf Association has closed out its lively and dynamic season with a perfect-to-the-T banquet on Oct 2 at Meeks Park. James Gary Davenport, owner of Old Union Golf Course and Cameron Forrest, Director of Golf at Old Union, were honored guests. The season was punctured with many games and many accomplishments which was the recipe for fun times.

A snapshot of the 2020 season includes:

1). A season long Two-Person Team Match Play with the winners, Karen Mussoline and Cynthia Flanders Flight A and Alison Taylor and Martha Quijano's Flight B, taking the top honors and winning \$144 each. These gracious ladies donated their winnings back to the Pavilion fund to be used for the construction of a pavilion at Old Union in the future. The fund for the pavilion has reached close to \$1500.

2). USA vs Europe team tournament. The USA team won the tournament and each player on the winning team took home a bottle of wine or "birdie juice." The winners were also given a sleeve of golf balls donated by Cameron Forrest, Director of Golf, at Old Union Golf Course. Lunch was provided by Jinna Wheeler, with all the ladies bringing a side dish/beverages.

Recently, the Old Union league collected monies for Folds of Honor. The generous ladies of Old Union league donated \$500 with Jinna Wheel-

er and Jane Childers giving exceptional donations for this worthy cause! The contribution to Folds of Honor will be made in the name of two fellow golfers in the league... Geni Preece and Gwen Gibson who both served our nation proudly. Thank you, ladies, for your service to our country.

Also, new was the Flag Day tournament and "Who Wants To Be A Millionaire". Our guest player, Bryan Nelson, Director of Membership and Handicapping from the Georgia State Golf Association, spent the day with us. He generously donated documents explaining the new handicap system and answered many of our questions. He stated he will be back to Old Union and play "Beat The Pro" with us. Cameron arranged for Chick-fil-A to donate a lunch for the 30+ ladies who attended! It was a fantastic day at Old Union.

During the closing banquet on October 2, which was catered by Damn Good BBQ with sides brought in by members, were given awards and prizes were given out.

The multiple raffle prizes were donated by the members and are too numerous to mention; however, the big winners were: Karen Mussoline who donated a Cutter golf bag and won it. Martha Zimmer was the winner of a one year basic membership at Old Union donated by Mr. Davenport, owner of Old Union Golf Course.

Lastly, Cappie Harper attended more Play-Days than any other member and was awarded \$100 which was donated by Jinna Wheeler.

Round two of the first club championship was postponed until October 9 due to aeration of the greens. The winner will take home \$100, and will have their name mentioned in the Georgia State Golf Association Magazine.

In addition, the winner will enjoy her very own reserved parking space with her name on the sign. Also, the low net winners in four flights will each receive \$50. In addition, awards, in each flight, will be given to the member who gets closest to the pin and who has the longest drive and who has the least amount of putts.

The ladies' league will be starting their 2021 season this coming May, with pre-season play days starting in April. If you are interested and would like to come as a guest, or for more information, visit our website at www.OUWGA.com or call/text Karen at 352- 638-3649 or Cynthia at 706- 633-7587. N10ct14Z11CA

Learn to play Pickleball

Learn to play Pickleball: Beginner's Lessons every Saturday, 10 AM (weather permitting). No charge and all equipment provided. Courts are located behind the Health Department. For more information contact: blairvillepickleball@gmail.com. N10ct17Z2CA