

Sports

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Henry tops 1,000 points, No. 9 Union thumps Towns

Panthers host Fannin on Tuesday in final tune-up before region play

By Todd Forrest
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Senior Houston Henry surpassed 1,000 career points, and No. 9 Union County (2-1) received a much-needed boost from the return of Kaden Combs and Maddox Young during a 75-47 win over Towns County.

"We started Maddox and his energy showed immediately," Union County head coach Corey Garrett said. "It was obvious on the defensive end. What he brings to the team is very evident."

"And Combs finished with a double-double. When you combine them with Houston and Hayden [Hughes] and the chemistry they have, all being seniors, they just gel."

The Panthers host Fannin County on Tuesday night, seeking their sixth straight win over the Rebels before taking 10 days off ahead of the Region 7-AA opener vs. Sonoraville.

Panthers 75, Towns County 47 - Young scored a career-high 19 points along with 6 rebounds, 5 steals and 2 assists on 9 of 16 from the floor.

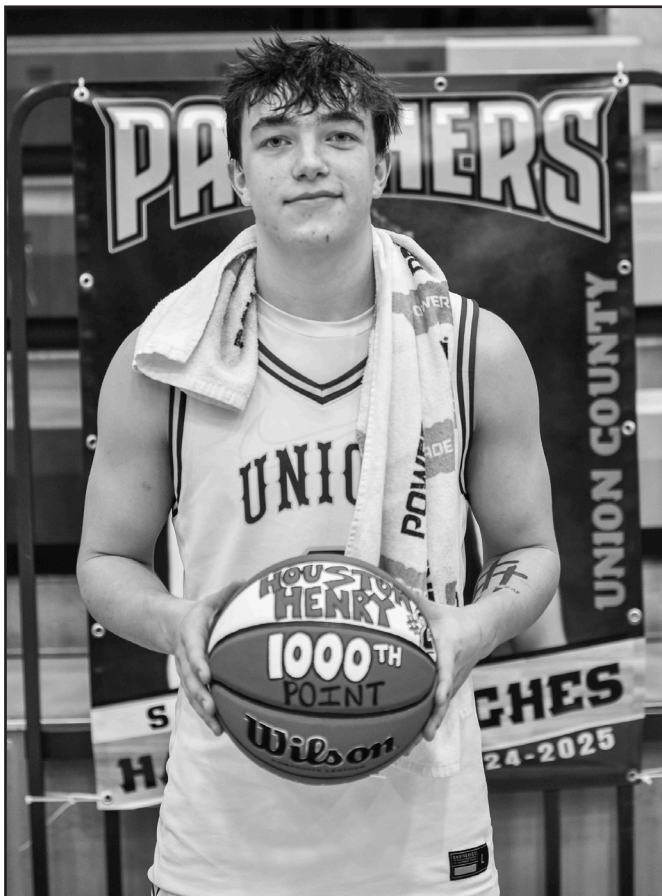
Henry finished with 18 points, 8 assists, 5 rebounds and 5 steals.

In all, five Panthers scored in double figures, with Combs, Hayden Hughes and Holden Payne chipping in 10 each. Vince Marevka added 8 points in the win.

Coming off a narrow win at Towns on Nov. 14, where Union fell behind 24-10 early, the Panthers never trailed in the rematch.

"Getting the football guys back was huge and the energy they bring was the difference from the first game," Garrett said.

As for Hughes, he enters Tuesday's Fannin County con-



Houston Henry reached the 1,000-point mark for his career with 18 in the win over Towns County. Photo/Todd Forrest

test needing two 3-point baskets to break the UCHS record of 186 treys set by Michael Ross between 2004-2008.

In a reversal of the last meeting with Towns County, the Panthers jumped all over the Indians early, racing out to a 13-2 lead that eventually grew to 27-10 after a quarter.

Union's early outburst came via a balanced scoring attack led by Henry and Young's 7 first-quarter points. Combs had 6 points, Hughes had five and Marevka scored 2 points over the opening 8 minutes.

Consecutive 3s by Towns had the Indians within 15-9, but a 10-0 run courtesy of 5 points apiece from Henry and Hughes

broke things open at 25-9.

A 3 by Hughes, followed by a Combs putback, had Union out front 32-12 early in the second period before Towns answered with a 6-0 spurt, which was stopped by Marevka's layup at the 2:41 mark.

Towns wouldn't score again in the half as Henry hit 1 of 2 at the line, and Payne closed out the first half with a steal-and-score to award the Panthers a 37-18 lead at the break.

Hughes' tip-in off a Payne miss nudged Union's margin to 21 early in the third, but after Towns answered with five straight points, Payne hit from the corner to push the lead back to 19.



Maddox Young scored a career-high 19 points in his first start since returning from the gridiron. Photo/Todd Forrest

Payne's up-and-under kept the cushion at 48-28, and then Young and Henry went to work late in the quarter, extending the lead to 54-30.

The Indians continued hanging around into the fourth when Tucker Engert's 3 narrowed the gap to 56-37, prompting a Union timeout.

Marevka scored out of the stoppage, and Young came up with a loose ball that resulted in a fast break layup and a 60-37 lead at the 6:45 mark.

Following a Towns County trey, Henry topped 1,000 points when he dribbled into the lane and hit an off-balance one-handed floater.

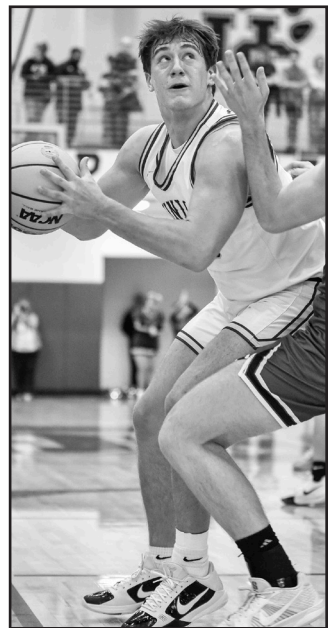
"We want to congratulate

Houston on his accomplishment," Garrett said. "We're going to try and do something for him Tuesday night. The microphone broke and we couldn't make an announcement when it happened."

After's Henry's deuce, Towns pushed the action the other way, but Hughes deflected the ball away from Engert, and it was scooped up by Henry, who threaded the needle with a bounce pass ahead to Young for 2 points.

Three more baskets from Young and a Combs layup extended Union's lead to 72-40 at the 3-minute mark.

Combs ended with a 10-point, 11-rebound double-



Kaden Combs

double; Hughes had 5 boards and 3 steals; Payne had 2 steals and 2 rebounds; Marevka finished the night with 8 rebounds.

Ethan Hogsdad had 2 assists. Hayden Price had 3 rebounds and a steal.

"I felt that everyone that went in the game gave us nothing but positives," Garrett said. "It was definitely a team effort -- an overall team win. That was a big deal for me."

Union County finished 5 of 12 (42%) at the charity stripe and shot just 6 of 32 (19%) from 3-point range. The Indians didn't fare much better behind the arc, going 5 for 25 (20%).

Up next: Union County hosts Fannin County on Tuesday, Nov. 26. The girls game gets underway at 7 p.m.

"I don't think Fannin has played a game yet," Garrett said. "I haven't seen anything about any games or even a scrimmage. I don't know much about them. They have a new coach and they have some size, but they're missing one of their guards to football."

Undefeated Lady Panthers dismantle Towns, rise to 8th in Class AA

By Todd Forrest
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Union County improved to 3-0 for the first time in five years with an easy 76-34 victory over Towns County in its 2024-25 home opener on Friday, Nov. 22. The win comes ahead of Tuesday night's showdown vs. No. 2 Fannin County -- a team that's won seven of the last nine meetings vs. the Lady Panthers.

At 3-0, Union County has cracked the Class AA top-10 for the first time this season, setting up a heavyweight clash with the Lady Rebels.

Lady Panthers 76, Towns County 34 - Sophomore guard Regan Trlica scored 21 of her game-high 25 points in the second half and senior backcourt mate Ariel McCarter had 15 of her 19 points before halftime as Union County cruised to its 10th straight win over the Lady Indians.

"The girls came out strong and are confident in what we're doing and they believe in it," Union County head coach Thomas Nelson said. "These girls have had five coaches in seven years and they're finally starting to get comfortable in what we're doing."

Up 34-17 at the break, the Lady Panthers landed a knock-out blow via a 22-12 third period where Trlica, who spent much of the first half in foul trouble, scored 11 points and put the visitors away.

Trlica opened the third with consecutive pull-up jump-



Regan Trlica scored a career-high 25 vs. Towns. Photo/Todd Forrest

ers, and then her steal led to a Hope Taylor bucket inside and a 40-17 score.

Trlica added two free throws and a trey, but Towns cut the deficit back to 20 at 47-27 near the 2:20 mark.

That's as close as the Indians would get as Trlica fed Adams down low for 2 points and senior Katelyn Brown added a 3-point play off a putback. After a Towns miss, Brown sparked a Union fast break, finding Trlica for a layup and a 54-29

advantage.

In the fourth, senior Sloane Dyer knocked down a pair of 3s, and Trlica added 10 points to put the finishing touches on the blowout.

Dyer started the fourth by answering a Towns County deuce with a corner-3, and seconds later, McCarter converted a turnover into a quick layup.

The wheels continued coming off for the Lady Indians when Brown's steal resulted in an 18-footer by McCarter. Trlica



Katelyn Brown and the Lady Panther seniors are looking for just their second win vs. Fannin County on Tuesday. Photo/Todd Forrest

hit twice from 17 feet off consecutive inbounds play to bump the margin to 64-31 before Dyer sent the UCHS student section into a frenzy with her transition 3.

Three more jumpers by Trlica and one from sophomore McKenna Hood grew the lead to 76-31 and put the finishing touches on the Lady Panthers' 22-2 run.

Trlica finished with a career-high 25 points, 6 rebounds, 5 assists and 3 steals. McCarter

had 19 points, a team-high 5 steals, 4 boards and 3 assists.

Taylor had 6 points and 13 rebounds - seven coming on the offensive glass. Brown finished with 6 points, 9 boards, a team-high 6 assists and 4 steals. Dyer ended her night with 6 points, 3 rebounds, 3 assists and 3 steals.

As has been the case all year, Union County was on a mission in the early going, opening with a 9-0 run courtesy of 7 points from McCarter and a

Taylor bucket to start the game.

McCarter finished with 10 points in the opening frame, and the Lady Panthers held a 17-8 lead.

Senior Aubrie Akins scored twice in the paint, McCarter scored the next 5 points, and Brown added a putback to begin Union's 19-9 second period with an 11-0 run and a 28-8 score.

An Ava Thompson 3 at the 3:46 mark finally halted the Lady Panthers' run.

Thompson led Towns County with 11 points; Scotlyn Fain had 7 points; Kaleigh Beaver added six.

Akins finished with 6 points and 4 rebounds for the Lady Panthers. Adams had 6 points and a steal. Hood ended her night with 2 points and a rebound. Sophomore Ragan McCarter had 5 rebounds, 3 assists and 3 steals. Freshman Samantha Combs had an assist; freshman Livia Haney added a rebound.

"Everyone from the first unit to the third unit is doing their job and it has shown when we've got into some foul trouble," Nelson said.

Up next: No. 8 Union County hosts No. 2 Fannin County on Tuesday, Nov. 26 at 7 p.m.

"We understand what's at stake," Nelson said. "We had a shot to beat [Fannin] last year and lost in overtime. Our girls were pretty tore up about it, but that's what happens when you let your guard down, just for a moment, against a good team."

Union 6th grade leaves no doubt in Super Bowl win

Dillinger scores five touchdowns as Union avenges only loss of 2024

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After winning just one game in 2021 as 3rd graders, Union County's 3-year plan to win a Super Bowl came to fruition in Saturday night's 38-0 blowout of Chestatee.

The 3-year plan started with increasing their win total in 4th grade: Check.

Making the playoffs in 5th grade: Check.

Winning a Super Bowl in 6th grade: You know the drill.

However, the only thing standing between Union and checking that final box was Chestatee - a squad that had made five-straight Super Bowl appearances and won the last three.

But at the end of the day, Chestatee's dynasty couldn't overcome Union's destiny.

And even when you're a team of destiny, it always helps having a flawless defensive gameplan. And Parker Dillinger.

After two early turnovers spotted Chestatee excellent field position, the Union defense denied the War Eagles on a pair of fourth down attempts, and Dillinger took it from there.

Dillinger scored on a 62-yard run, spotting Union an 8-0 first-quarter lead.

In the second, Dillinger took a swing pass from Coltyn Sandler and raced 54 yards down the home sideline for a 16-0 lead.

Union made it 24-0 early in the third when Dillinger found some room around the right side and outran a defender to the pylon on a 20-yard carry.

With Chestatee's hopes hanging by a thread, Dillinger's 75-yard interception return cut the cord, blowing things open at 32-0 with 2:28 left in the third period.

Dillinger put the finishing touches on his evening in the fourth by picking off another pass and going 45 yards untouched into the endzone.

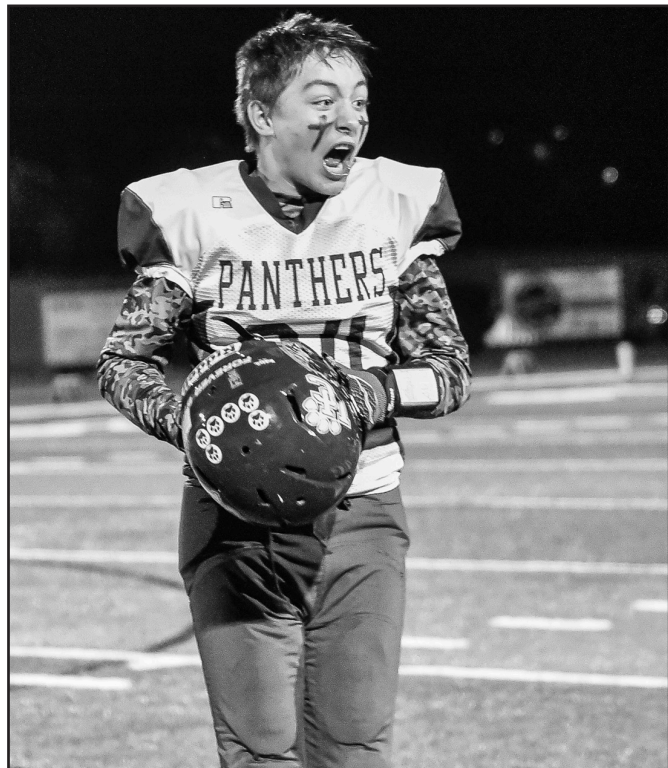
The Union County 6th



Parker Dillinger picks off a Chestatee pass and goes the other way for his fifth TD and second pick-6 of the night. Photo/Todd Forrest



Coltyn Sandler (45) and Sawyer Fox (42) realize their Super Bowl dreams will soon become reality after Fox's PAT put Union in front 32-0. Photo/Todd Forrest



Bennett Brown celebrates Union's Super Bowl win. Photo/Todd Forrest
grade team, who finishes 9-1, consists of Canaan Allen, Aaron Atkins, Houston Baker, Beau Bridges, Bennett Brown, Parker Dillinger, Sawyer Fox,



Houston Baker (10) and the defense flexed its muscle, limiting Chestatee to 29 total yards. Photo/Todd Forrest
kas, Mason Parent, Alexander Resendiz, Hunter Richards, Coltyn Sandler, Luke Spiva, Owen Swanson, Landon Taylor, Jordan Zetina and Manager Kendall Cary.
The 6th grade team is coached by Jared Sandler - head coach, Monroe Mayfield, Derick Dillinger, Bill Foos, Jon Spiva, Derrick Baker, Matt Parent, Daniel Munn, Derek Richards, Noah Grey - videographer and Josh Murauskas - analytics.

Legatt wins 150th match; Panthers dominate at home, 2nd at Ringgold

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Union County senior and defending Class AA State Champion Payton Legatt won the 150th match of his career during his first-place 165-lb performance at Saturday's Ringgold Invitational.

Union County placed second overall with 133.5 points, coming in behind Lovett (141.5).

Joining Legatt atop the podium were his brother, sophomore Paxon Legatt (157) and senior Asa Smith-Foot (190). Kristyn Kraft placed first in girls competition.

Tournament runner-ups were sophomore Eli Flowers (120), Jada Taylor and Charlei Robinson.

Jackson Arthur (285) took home a bronze medal and Kevin Kilpatrick (175) came in fourth.

Payton Legatt scored a pinfall victory over Lafayette's Jesse Bradford in the quarterfinals. He earned an 11-1 technical fall in the semis vs. Coahulla Creek's Shawn Bailey, followed by 7-4 sudden victory vs. Ringgold's Jaxon Delgado in the finals.

Paxon Legatt picked up a 16-1 technical fall in the quarters vs. Darlington's Tripp Dunn. He pinned Dalton's Ezra Wingfield in the semis and edged Ringgold's Tristan Busch by a 3-1 decision.

As for Smith-Foot, he received a bye into the semifinals, where he pinned Coahulla Creek's Jaxon Millsaps. He finished out the day by pinning Gordon Lee's Mason Dougherty in the finals.

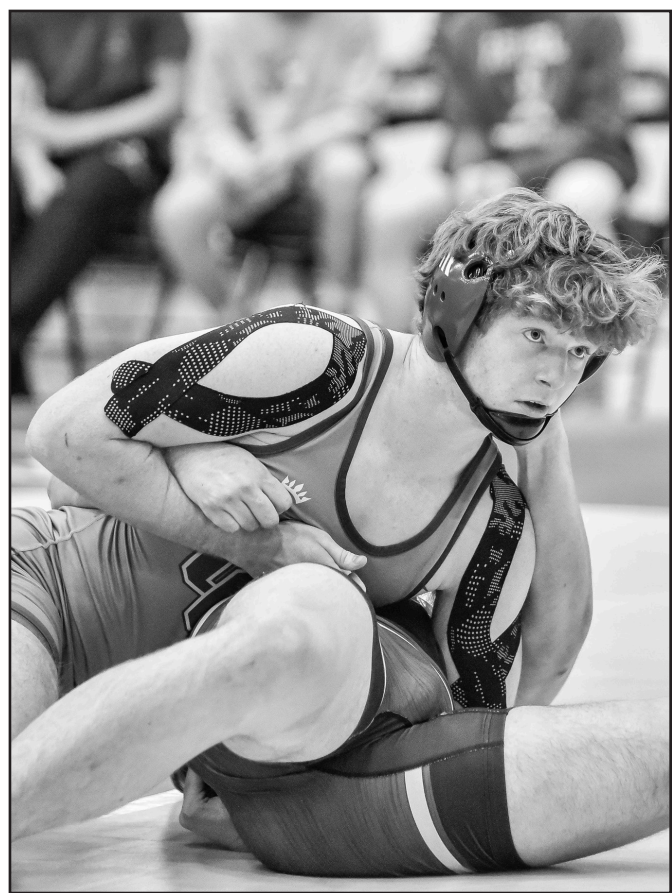
Flowers pinned Trion's Alberto Perez in the quarters, followed by a 21-4 technical fall over North Murray's Elijah Harden. However, Lovett's Xavier Mance picked up a 6-1 decision over Flowers in the finals.

Arthur lost in the quarters but battled through the consols to defeat Lafayette's Jack Harris for third. Kilpatrick lost in the semis and in the third-place match to finish 2-2 on the day.

On Thursday, Nov. 21, Union County hosted Fannin County and White County, recording a 65-18 win over the Warriors and a 66-12 win over Fannin County. The Panthers suffered only three losses on Thursday, two coming via forfeit, in the two matches across all weight divisions.



Senior Payton Legatt, alongside his family, celebrates his 150th career victory following his first-place performance in Ringgold over the weekend. Photo/UCHS Wrestling



Senior Asa Smith-Foot during his victory over Fannin County in last Thursday's home matches. Photo/Todd Forrest



Union County heavyweight Jackson Arthur during Union County's home win over White County. Arthur went on to place third at Ringgold on Saturday. Photo/Todd Forrest

Swimmers collect 27 top-10s at River Ridge

UCHS Swim Team Top 10 Finishes

RRHS Tri-Meet | November 22, 2024

<p>200 Medley Relay 4th: Boys B Team- Ian Lander, Wyatt Chandler, John Tippens, & Grayson Shadden 6th: Girls A Team- Lilly Collins, Lily Helton, Sophia Licavoli, & Isabel Hoover</p>	<p>100 Fly 3rd: Nicholas Nushtayev 4th: Wyatt Chandler 6th: John Tippens 8th: Isabel Hoover</p>
<p>200 Free 1st: Andrew Nushtayev</p>	<p>200 Free Relay 2nd: Boys A Team- Cole Orlando, John Tippens, Andrew Nushtayev, & Nicholas Nushtayev 4th: Boys B Team- Wyatt Chandler, Andrew Farmer, Arthur Bowman, & Ian Lander</p>
<p>200 IM 4th: Ian Lander</p>	<p>100 Back 3rd: Lily Helton 4th: Andrew Farmer 6th: Arthur Bowman 9th: Samantha Odom</p>
<p>100 Free 4th: Ian Lander 6th: Grayson Shadden 7th: Lily Helton</p>	<p>100 Breast 1st: Nicholas Nushtayev 4th: Cole Orlando 7th: John Tippens 8th: Wyatt Chandler 8th: Sophia Licavoli 9th: Delilah Hernandez</p>
<p>50 Free 1st: Nicholas Nushtayev 4th: Cole Orlando 6th: Isabel Hoover</p>	<p>400 Free Relay 6th: Girls A Team- Isabel Hoover, Lilly Collins, Sophia Licavoli, & Lily Helton</p>