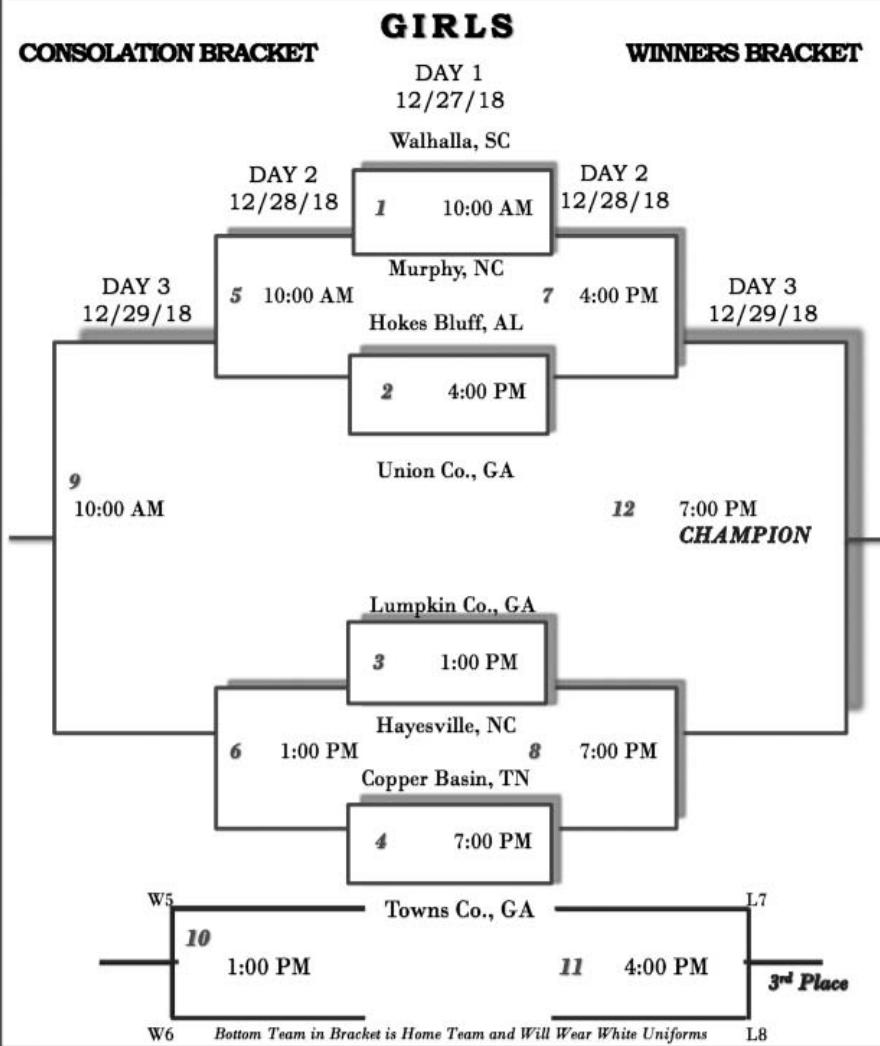


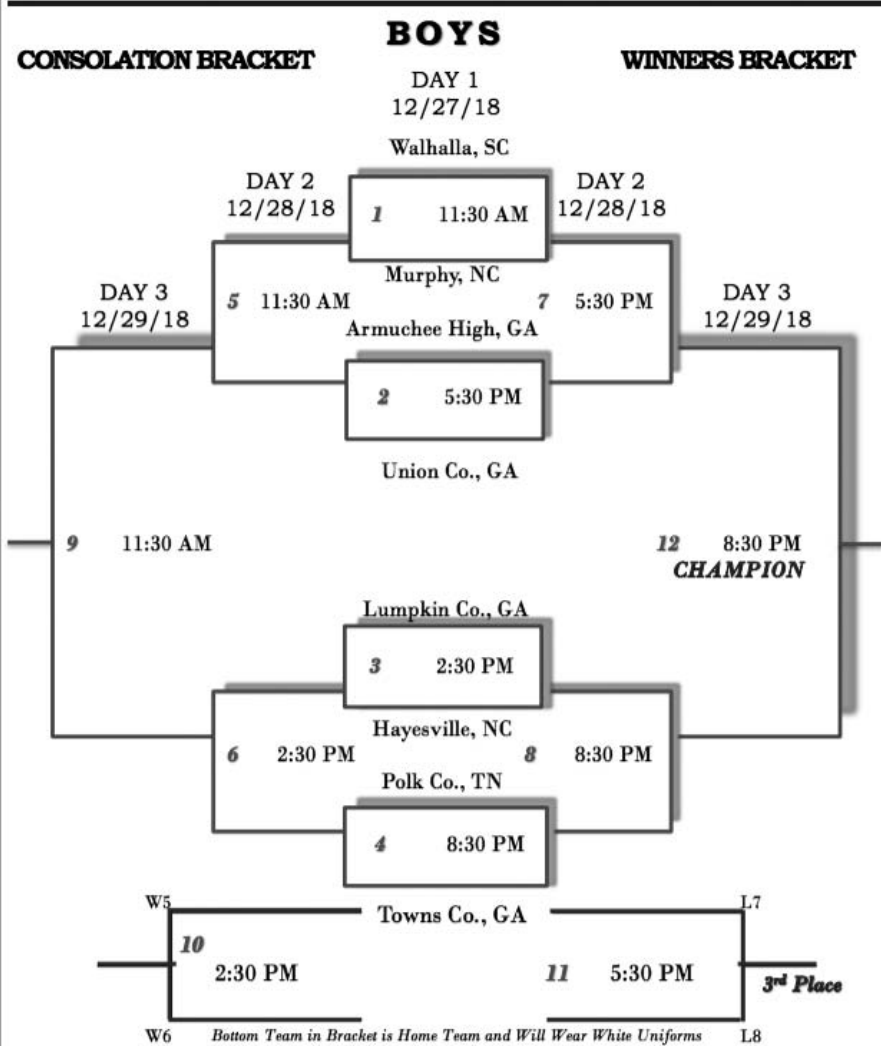
2018 25th Annual CHRISTMAS TOURNAMENT OF THE STATES

DEC 27-28-29, 2018



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Panthers... continued from 2B

35 points, but it wasn't enough as Union outscored Towns 21-11 in the second quarter to take control after the Indians seized momentum to close the first.

The Panthers jumped out to a 7-2 lead but were unable to find an answer for Travis, who led the Indians on an 18-6 run for a 20-13 advantage after one.

Travis would score 14 of his team-high 19 in the first half before getting into foul trouble.

With 6:32 before half-time, Towns would open up its largest lead of the night at 24-15 before Union County responded with 10-unanswered to knot things up at 24-24 with 4:44 left in the second period.

A pair of Indian buckets sandwiched around a Panther free throw allowed Towns County to go back up by three, before two free throws from Allison cut the margin to a point at 28-27.

A 1-for-2 trip to the line by Travis at the 2:53 mark made it 29-27 in favor of Towns but an Allison 3-point play gave the Panthers their first lead since the opening four minutes.

The Indians bounced back with a steal-and-score but Allison struck again -- this time a pull-up jumper with 1:10 on the clock. After Towns missed a pair of free throws, Allison drove inside for two more, giving the Panthers a 34-31 halftime lead.

Drake opened the third with an and-one that gave Union its largest advantage of the night at 37-31 just eight seconds into the second half.

With 5:37 to play in the third, Towns County would pull within a basket at 39-37 before the Panthers tore off an 11-0 run to open up a 13-point lead with under two minutes left in the period. Trailing 50-37, the Indians momentarily slowed the bleeding with a Aidan Berrong free throw at the 1:39 mark, followed by two more from

the stripe by Moss when Towns was fouled on a put back off the missed foul shot. This time they hit them both and Towns was within 10.

Once again, Drake would answer by scoring on a base line drive and following a Collin Crowder deuce, Union County stretched the margin back to a dozen at quarter's end.

Allison and Berrong swapped 3-point shots to open the fourth but the Indians could never get within single digits the rest of the way. Leading 59-48, Drake took advantage of the foul trouble plaguing the Indians and continued to attack the rim as consecutive baskets from the junior stretched the lead back to 15.

Towns County made one last push to get within 11 at 63-52 at the 2:55 mark but the Panthers sank four straight free throws to keep the Indians at bay down the stretch.

Travis turned in a 19-point performance to lead the Indians while Moss chipped in 16. Berrong added six, Crowder had five, Brett Denton scored four and Trent Bradshaw finished with two.

For the Panthers, Waller had six while Rich and Brey scored four apiece. Nelson finished with three and Day scored two.

Panthers 37, Social Circle 49 -- On Tuesday night, the Panthers jumped on top of Social Circle 11-2 before sputtering out in a 49-37 defeat.

"That's a game I would like to forget," Jones said. "But that was our fourth game in five days and we were coming off a hard fought win at Towns County the night before. I hate to make excuses but we were just dead."

"We were missing two-footers, throwing the ball away, turning it over, it was just one of those nights but I contribute most of it to us being gassed."

Allison led the way with 16 while Waller and Drake

added 8 points apiece.

Social Circle was able to weather the early storm and find its way into the lead at the break, 21-18. Waller led the Panthers with 6 points in the first half.

At the 5:22 mark of the second quarter, the Redskins would connect from 3-point territory -- their final field goal of the night from outside the paint.

The Redskins were able to stretch its lead to double figures with under two minutes to play in the third and held a 35-25 advantage entering the final frame.

Looking ahead - Union County opens the 25th Annual Battle of the States Christmas Tournament on Thursday, Dec. 27 with Armuchee (Rome).

The Armuchee Indians are on break until the BOTS and currently sit at 4-6 overall and 2-4 away from home.

They currently own two wins over Pepperell (1-6) and one victory each over Dade County (0-10) and Gordon Central (1-12).

There are no common opponents between Union and Armuchee but Gordon Central has already lost twice to Gilmer by margins of 18 and 22 points.

Armuchee defeated Gordon Central by a narrow 57-53 score.

Meanwhile, Gilmer is currently 10-3 overall with a 42-40 win over Fannin County, a pair of double-digit wins over Pickens, a 22-point victory over BOTS participant Lumpkin County and a 19-point win over Hiwassee Dam, NC.

"Hopefully we'll be able to go over to the Battle of the States and play well," Jones said. "Anytime you can play good teams it will only make you better."

Union County opens the BOTS at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 27.

Union County Swimming results: Dec. 8th

MURPHY, NC - Union County High School attended a swim meet on Saturday, Dec. 8 at Hiawassee Valley Wellness Center in Murphy, NC. The following are the top 10 times.

200 Yard Medley Relay
1st Place HS: Michael Leird, Hunter White, Alden Wilkes, Preston Perren

50 Yard Freestyle
2nd Place HS Alden Wilkes
4th Place HS Hunter White
5th Place HS Michael Leird
9th Place HS Preston Perren
3rd Place HS Kaiya Wilkes
6th Place HS Rachel Reid
10th Place HS Olivia Blocker

100 Yard Butterfly
1st Place HS Alden Wilkes

100 Yard Freestyle
6th Place HS Alec Youngblood
3rd Place HS Kaiya Wilkes

200 Yard Freestyle Relay
2nd Place HS: Hunter White, Alec Youngblood, Michael Leird, Alden Wilkes

100 Yard Backstroke
2nd Place HS Michael Leird
4th Place HS Preston Perren
4th Place HS Olivia Blocker
5th Place HS Hana Gregory

100 Yard Breaststroke
1st Place HS Hunter White
2nd Place HS Rachel Reid



The Union County Swim Team

Lady Panthers... continued from 2B

McCarter with 6 points and 7 boards; Adeline Dockrey had 3 points and 4 assists, Kyla Locklear scored 2 points, grabbed 4 rebounds and blocked a shot and Riley Allison added a free throw and 2 rebounds.

The Lady Panthers shot a season-high 50-percent from the floor on 27-of-54. They also connected on a season-best 53-percent from long distance on 10-for-19 -- a season-high for made threes.

"We played well, spread the ball around and shot well," Garrett said.

At the charity stripe Union hit 10-of-18 for 56-percent, they also outrebounded the visitors 39-26.

Lady Panthers 32, Murphy, NC 52 -- The Lady Bulldogs pulled away in the second half thanks to a hot-shooting third quarter that saw Murphy sink 5-of-5 tries from behind the arc.

"(Murphy has) a lot of good guards and we have a lot of good post players," Garrett said after the game. "They have speed and we have size but their speed got us out of sorts a little bit tonight. Then they started going off from three and it was just on from there."

Trailing 6-5 after one and 19-14 at the half, Union County was unable to keep pace with the Lady Bulldogs, who outscored them 20-12 in the third to open up a 39-26 lead.

Despite the best efforts of Brooke Dockrey -- who scored nine of her team's 18 second-half points -- Murphy proved too much and never allowed Union County to get closer than 14 points.

"We missed a bunch of lay ups and didn't execute, but give (Murphy) credit, they had

a good game plan for us," Garrett said. "It's just a bad match-up for us. But if we could have forced them to play our style, it would've been a bad match-up for them. Unfortunately, we played right into their hands."

Dockrey finished with a team-high 12 points while Hunter finished with nine -- all coming in the first half. McCarter and Hill scored 5 points apiece; Allison added a free throw.

Looking ahead - Union County draws Hokes Bluff, AL in the opening round then will see the winner/loser of Walhalla, SC and Murphy, NC on day two.

Hokes Bluff has reached the BOTS finals three straight years, winning it all in 2015

and 2016. Last year's title game was a loss to Murphy -- setting up a potential rematch of last year's final in the second round.

Hokes Bluff is currently 6-7 overall while Walhalla is 3-4 with a 75-24 loss to Rabun County on their resume.

"(Hokes Bluff) is going to be a very good team, they're a tough draw and we're in a tough bracket," Garrett said. "If we survive the Hokes Bluff game we'll likely get Murphy in game two. We just have to keep working and keep getting better each day."

Union and Hokes Bluff will tip-off at 4 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 27.



Pierson Allison soars to the hoop in the come-from-behind victory over Murphy, NC last week. Union County could potentially meet Murphy again on day two of the Battle of the States. Photo/Todd Forrest



Brooke Dockrey is fouled on a dribble-drive vs Murphy. Photo/Todd Forrest