

UCMS Panthers take league champions to the limit

By Todd Forrest
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If you left at halftime of last Thursday's middle school football game, you would think that the Panthers had it in the bag.

However, that wasn't the case as Rabun County showed why they are the defending league champs and responded from a 19-6 halftime deficit.

The Wildcats scored 22 unanswered points in the second to inch past Union County 36-31.

After dominating the entire first half, the Panthers suffered a setback when a few key players began cramping up - including starting quarterback and defensive back Bo Lynch.

The Panther defense picked off four Rabun passes in the half, with two by Zach Stone and two by Lynch, who returned both for touchdowns, and also scored on a nine-yard run late in the second quarter.

"We had some guys start cramping up in the second half," said Coach Jones. "Our quarterback was out for most of the third quarter and half the fourth."

Union's backup quarterback was able to fill in nicely and keep Union County in the game, even when it appeared that Rabun had seized momentum. "The backup quarterback, Cole Wright came in did a good



Bo (Lynch) knows touchdowns



Nick Rodriguez drags defenders



UCMS' Purple Swarm brings down a Wildcat ball carrier in last week's game. UCMS Photos by Todd Forrest.

job," Coach Jones said. "We did fine and I felt like we played pretty hard the whole time despite being tired and hot out there on that turf. We just made a couple mistakes in the second half that cost us."

Wright led the team to

two touchdowns, including one that he took in himself and another 80-yard touchdown scamper from Nick Rodriguez.

Coach Jones still sees some adjustments to be made after giving up 30 points in the second half. Some can be fixed,

while others can be chalked up to bad luck.

"Defensively we struggled in the second half," Coach Jones said. "They got us on a couple of big plays. They hit us on a deep pass when our safety tripped and fell and they scored on it."

The Panthers still had a shot to win the game with 90 seconds left on the clock but with no time outs the task was to daunting for them to overcome.

"We had to burn all of our timeouts there at the end," Jones said. "They had the ball inside the thirty. They were trying to score and we got them in a third and long and fourth and long and held. But we had to burn our time outs so we didn't have any time outs to work with in the final 1:30. We had to really try to hurry up and score but just couldn't make anything happen right there at the end."

At the end of the day, Coach Jones was proud of his team and feels that there is a good shot that his Panthers will get another crack at Rabun County in the playoffs.

"Overall I feel good about it," Coach Jones said. "We did some good things and found some things that we're going to work on. Hopefully we'll get another shot at them. I feel like we're probably the two best teams in the league so we should see them again. I think we're better than them. We made some mistakes that we couldn't overcome"

UCHS Football Schedule

Aug 31 @ Towns County
Sept 7 vs Fannin County (Recognizing the 1957 Panthers)
Sept 14 vs Andrews, NC (Recognizing Middle School Team)
Sept 21 - Bye Week
Sept 28 vs Washington Wilkes (Recognizing Rec Dept Teams)
Oct 5 @ Oglethorpe County
Oct 12 vs Riverside Military Academy (Homecoming)
Oct 19 @ Greene County
Oct 26 @ Rabun County
Nov 2 vs Social Circle (Senior Night)
Nov 9 @ Jefferson

UCHS upcoming Softball games

Aug. 28 vs Jefferson
Aug. 30 @ Greene County
Sept. 4 vs Dawson County
Sept. 6 vs Rabun County
Sept. 7-8 Veterans Tournament
Sept. 10 @ Dawson County

Wrestling Open-Mat

The Union County Panther wrestling coaches invite all students from ages 5-18 to join us for Panther Open Mat day.

Open Mat will take place every Tuesday and Thursday from 3:30-5:30 in the Elementary School gym (The Pit).

Wrestlers will participate in proper techniques for stretching and conditioning, team building activities, learning individual wrestling skills and the UC Panther wrestling system.

The primary focus of Panther Open Mat is for young people to be physically active and have fun in a positive environment.

Wrestlers need to wear t-shirts and gym shorts with no zippers or buttons. Wrestling shoes are not required.

For more information contact: Coach Bob Williams at bwilliams@ucschools.org or Coach Michael Smith-Foot at msmithfoot@ucschools.org

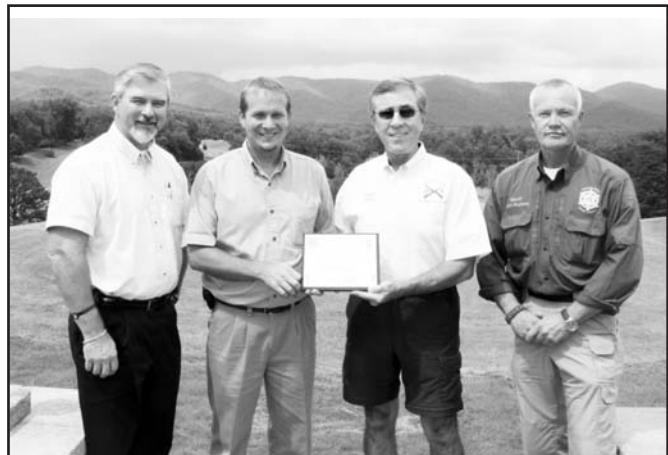
UCMS Football Schedule

Aug. 30 vs White County
Sept. 6 @ West Hall
Sept. 13 @ Towns County
Sept. 20 vs Copper Basin
Sept. 27 @ Lumpkin County

UCMS Softball schedule

Aug. 28 @ Lumpkin County
Sept. 4 Lumpkin County
Sept. 6 @ Rabun County
Sept. 11 @ White County
Sept. 17 Towns County
Sept. 24-27 Tournament @ Meeks Park

Clay Shoot Benefit



Sonny Mahan, Matthew Akins, Gene Margelli, and Union County Sheriff Scott Stephens.

On July 27th, a Benefit Sporting Clay Shoot was held at Noontootla Creek Farms in Cherry Log, for the purpose of raising funds in support of the Union County 4-H Shotgun Team and Georgia Sheriff's Youth Homes.

The event was organized by Gene Margelli, a volunteer coach with the Union County 4-H shooting team and the Union County Sheriff's Office.

The partnership formed between the 4-H club and Sheriff's Office for the fundraiser has proven to be beneficial for both organizations, Margelli says.

"We each recruited 12-14 squads to participate in the event, sold raffle tickets and worked together combining our resources and expertise to produce a successful event."

Union County has participated in the 4-H shooting program for 13 years. The shotgun team has 36 members from 7th - 12th grade with boys and girls participating.

Union County has been the host of the State District Shoot for the past three years. In 1960, the first Georgia Sheriff's Youth Home was established out of a concern for the growing number of abandoned, neglected and abused children. Today there are five youth homes located

throughout the State of Georgia providing thousands of disadvantaged youth the opportunity to live normal, positive lives in full time facilities. These homes are funded based on donations only. Sheriffs from around

the state conduct fund raisers to help build and operate the camps. Union County Sheriff Scott Stephens is an avid supporter of the youth homes and has held numerous fund raisers to help with the program.

Both organizations appreciate Greg Owenby for hosting the event at Noontootla Creek Farms. In addition, Sheriff Stephens and Gene Margelli would like to thank and acknowledge the following wonderful sponsors:

Blue Ridge Mountain EMC, Advanced Disposal, Blue Ridge Pawn Shop, Marine Corps League, Circle K, Alexander's Store, Harmon Inc., Edward Jones Investments, Nelson Tractor, Eagletel Communications, Canteen Commissary, Mountain Education Center, Arrow Exterminating, Gimer County Sheriff, Arrowood Electric, Rick's Rental and Sheriff Scott Stephens.

The event was a great success, raising money for two organizations working diligently to positively impact on young people's lives.

UCMS Lady Panthers tee-off on rival Towns County

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The Union County Middle School Lady Panthers improved to 3-0 after a thumping of rival Towns County, 14-2 in four innings.

Union led 2-0 after the second inning, then expanded the lead to 5-0 after three before exploding in the fourth for nine runs.

Towns added two in the bottom half of the fourth but it wasn't enough as the game was shortened due to the mercy rule.

"Everybody hit the ball, and our pitcher did a great job," Coach David Tucker said. "We're getting more confident about ourselves. They all can play, it's just believing in yourself and what we're doing. It was only 5-0 then we scored nine runs only going one base at a time, and it happened so quick that it was unbelievable."

This week the Lady Panthers travel to Lumpkin County



Lady Panther Middle School in action at Towns County last week.

before returning home to face Lumpkin again on Sept. 4th.

Coach Tucker had been ecstatic about the improvement that he's noticed in his ball club over the past few weeks. And has long as his club brings its A-game, then Panther fans should have nothing to worry about this season.

"We are doing very well right now", Coach Tucker said. "The coach at Lumpkin does a good job and last year they were our main competition and I don't know know much about them."

"I don't worry about the other team, I only worry about ourselves. We'll just keep practicing and we'll be alright. We'll be ready to play since it's on the road and we know that you've got to be a little bit sharper on the road. They've all been doing great in practice. All we need to do is keep a good attitude, keep practicing, and keep playing and everything will work out. There is a few things we could do better but we'll be alright," he said.

Youth football gets underway in Union County last weekend

Union County youth football kicked off last weekend in Blarsville, Jefferson, and Dawsonville.

The Panther squads finished with mixed results as the 7&U squad defeated

Lumpkin County, the 8&U Panthers also took down Lumpkin County, the 10&U Panthers held on to beat Rabun County.

The 9&U Panthers fell to Dawson County in Daw-

sonville and the 11&U Panthers fell victim to Jefferson on the Dragons' home field.

Next week, Union County will host four games beginning at 9 a.m. with White County and Rabun

County travelling to Blarsville's Mike Colwell Memorial Stadium.

The 10&U Panthers will travel to Cleveland to take on White County at 10:30 a.m.



Rec Basketball Registration

Basketball Registration

Ages 5-8

Fee: \$40

Register the whole month of September

Basketball Registration

Ages 9-14

Fee: \$40

Register the whole month of October

Check out the website

www.unioncountyrecreation.com

(706)439-6074