

Sports

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No. 1 Panthers fall to East Jackson, bounce back at FCS

East Jackson and Fellowship Christian sink Lady Panthers' playoff hopes

By Todd Forrest
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The No. 1 ranked Panthers (8-2-1) suffered a 3-2 Senior Night loss to East Jackson in the de facto region championship game on Tuesday, March 19, before rebounding Friday night with a 3-0 shutout win at Fellowship Christian School.

The win at Fellowship secured the No. 2 seed and a home playoff game for Union County ahead of next month's Class AA State Tournament. East Jackson takes the top spot in 8-AA; Providence Christian finishes third. Fellowship Christian and Athens Academy will battle on Tuesday, March 26 for the fourth and final playoff spot.

The first round gets underway Apr. 19 where the Panthers will host either Elite Scholars Academy, Redan or Towers. A second-round berth will likely result in a trip to Class AA's new-No. 1, Model.

Meanwhile, the Lady Panthers' postseason hopes were dashed in a 5-1 loss to East Jackson on March 19. Later, the Union girls (2-9) were dealt a 10-0 loss at No. 2 Fellowship Christian.

Panthers 2, East Jackson 3 - Union County dug itself a 3-0 hole that it couldn't escape despite a spirited second-half comeback.

The Eagles scored in the 17th and 37th to take a 2-0 lead into the intermission. East Jackson added another in the 53rd to build a 3-goal edge.

Senior Evan Bohms put Union on the board from 23 yards in the 55th, and then Zuriel Mancillas found Antonio Solorio for an acrobatic header goal in the 58th.



The Class of '24 soccer players celebrated Senior Night on Tuesday, March 19. Bottom (L-R): Eli Decker, Nick Depalma, Wes Seiler, Joel Mendoza, Zack Depalma. Top (L-R): Seth Rutan, Benton Gregory, Ethan McBride, Evan Bohms, Kooper Ashcraft, Zuriel Mancillas. Photo/Todd Forrest



The Lady Panthers' Class of 24 was recognized on Senior Night last Tuesday, March 19. L-R: Maggie Delatte, Alanna Franklin, Marina Stepps and Zoe Crawford. Lara Turner is not pictured. Photo/Todd Forrest

Moments later, Mancillas' equalizer attempt sailed high when his 37-yard free kick cleared the crossbar. The Panthers' final scoring opportunity

failed to come to fruition in the 68th when Solorio was knocked to the turf from behind, inside the penalty area, resulting in a no-call.

Union County also failed to convert a corner kick in the 74th.

However, senior keeper Ethan McBride kept the Pan-



Senior midfielder Zuriel Mancillas had three assists in Union County's two games last week. Photo/Todd Forrest

thers within a goal via a sliding kick save in the 75th. Later, he denied an East Jackson penalty kick in the 80th.

Panthers 3, Fellowship Christian School 0 - Union County put away the Paladins behind three first-half goals from Solorio (2) and Benton Gregory.

Union opened the scoring in the 4th minute via Solorio, courtesy of Mancillas.

Solorio made it 2-0 in the 25th via another Mancillas helper. Benton Gregory added a third goal in the 30th from Solorio.

Lady Panthers 1, East Jackson 5 - Trailing 2-0 in the 26th, senior Zoe Crawford

found the net for the fifth time in two games, cutting the margin in half.

The Lady Panthers couldn't convert scoring opportunities in the 39th and 40th, and East Jackson pulled away with three second-half goals.

Ariel McCarter finished with an assist.

Lady Panthers 0, Fellowship Christian 10 - Union County was no match for the defending State champion in a 10-0 loss in Roswell.

Up next: Both Union County teams have concluded region play and will visit Dawson County on March 26. The girls kickoff at 5:30 p.m. with the guys to follow.

Baseball: Panthers drop two on the road; weekend games rained out

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Union County baseball suffered road losses last week at Providence Christian and Hayesville, North Carolina before rain washed out Friday's home doubleheader with Providence.

No makeup date has been set for Providence.

The Panthers will host Athens Academy on Tuesday and Murphy, NC on Wednesday. Union visits Athens Academy for a Friday doubleheader.

Panthers 0, Providence 10 (5 inn.) - The Storm ended Union's Tuesday, March 19 trip to Lilburn early via three runs in the fourth and three more in the fifth.

Providence got to Panthers' starter Eli Gwynn for 7 runs (6 earned) in 3 2/3 innings while limiting Union to one single apiece from Travis Tracy and Lane Haney.

Three doubles and a single spotted Providence a 3-0 lead after one. Two hits, two errors and a hit batter in the third allowed the Storm to expand their lead to 4-0.

Providence took a perfect game into the fourth when Tracy's two-out single awarded Union its first base runner.

A two-out, two-run single in the fourth pulled the plug on Gwynn, bringing freshman Junior Davis to the mound.

Two walks and a hit batter sparked Providence's three-run fifth that ended the contest at 10-0.

Panthers 8, Hayesville



Senior Will Doyle drove in two runs in Wednesday's 9-8 loss at Hayesville, NC. Photo/Todd Forrest

9 - Union's comeback bid fell short in the Tarheel State on Wednesday, March 20.

Trailing 9-4 in the seventh, the Panthers scored four in the frame until a third-out on the basepaths brought things to a close.

Davis started the seventh with a base hit, and Maddox Patton tripled him home.

RBI singles from Gwynn and Tracy made it 9-7 and Gunnar Akins' run-scoring groundout had Union within a run.

Bo Brown's single kept the Panthers in business until Hayesville appealed Union's use of an illegal courtesy runner for the catcher, resulting in the third out.

Hayesville jumped out to



Sophomore outfielder Maddox Patton went 3 for 4 with a triple and 2 RBIs during Wednesday's loss at Hayesville, NC. Photo/Todd Forrest

a 3-1 lead after one but Union briefly grabbed a 4-3 edge in the third. The Jackets answered with four in the bottom half and another in the fourth and sixth to mount a 9-4 advantage.

Colten Gibson got the start for Union and surrendered 5 runs (3 earned) and 5 hits over 2+ innings. Freshman Chetley Cox replaced Gibson in the third

and went 2 innings, allowing 2 hits and 3 runs (2 earned).

Kaden Combs took over in the fifth and allowed just one hit in two scoreless innings.

Patton finished 3 for 4 with 2 RBIs and a pair of runs; Akins and Brown each went 2 for 3 with an RBI; senior Will Doyle knocked in 2 runs during a 1-for-3 day; Davis went 1 for

2 with a run.

Tracy added a pinch-hit single; Connor Swanson scored a run; Haney drew a walk.

Up next: Tuesday's first-pitch vs. Athens Academy is scheduled for 5:30 p.m. The Wednesday meeting with Murphy is at 4 p.m. Friday's doubleheader in the Classic City begins at 5 p.m.

Track: Hunter leads the way with two gold medals at Rabun

Union County travels to Alpharetta for 15-team meet on March 28

By Todd Forrest
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Tiger - Union County picked up 11 gold medals at Rabun County's Bo James Invitational on Saturday morning.

Sophomore Lola Hunter collected two first-place finishes in the 1600M and 3200M races, finishing the 1600 in 5 minutes, 33.64 seconds, and clocking in at 12:28.09 in the 3200.

Ava Lloyd came in first in the 200M race with a time of 26.93; Ellie Adams was first in the 800M at 2:38.67. The girls' 4x400 relay team logged the fastest time at 4:30.67 and the 4x800 came in first place with a time of 11:03.58.

On the boys' side, JT Neal crossed the line first in the 100M race at 11.12. Taylor Whitehead placed first in the 200M at 51.87. Benton Gregory took home gold in the 800M at 2:08.25; Tyler Grasty placed first in the triple jump with a distance of 40 feet, 8 inches.

Union County's silver medalists included Lloyd in the 100M (13.14); Natalie Payne in the 3200M (14:35.26), the girls' 4x200 relay team (1:55.17), Noel Hyatt in the high jump (4-0); Nomi Nelson in the triple jump (30-3).

Boys' silvers were: Whitehead in the 200M (22.22); Gregory in the 1600M (4:51.21); the 4x100 relay team (43.88); the 4x200 relay (1:33.19); the 4x400 relay (3:40.07); the 4x800 relay (9:36.91).

Third-place finishes went to Hannah Kazmierzak in the 400M (1:05.13); Sara Patterson in the 300 hurdles (54.62); Giovanna Salazar in the long jump (14-6); Jacob Turner in the 300 hurdles (45.01); Braden Plott in the long jump (19-11).

Fourth-place finishers were Hyatt (400M); Lydia



Sophomore Lola Hunter placed first in the 1600M and 3200M events at Rabun County over the weekend. Photo/Todd Forrest



Sophomore Ava Lloyd's time of 26.93 at Rabun was good enough for first place in the 200M. Photo/Todd Forrest

Wagner (3200M); Leslie Rash (discus); Neal (200M); Daniel McPhee (triple jump). In fifth place was Kazmierzak (800M); Payne (1600M); Logan Duckworth (800M); Nolan Thompson (110 hurdles and 300 hurdles); the boys' 4x800 relay team; Eli Sosensky (high jump).

Union County competed against Banks County, Commerce, Heard County, Rabun and Robbinsville, North Carolina.

Union County travels to Alpharetta High School on Thursday, March 28 at 4 p.m. to face Atlanta Classical Academy, Cedar Grove, Cherokee, East Forsyth, Fellowship Christian, Fulton Science Academy, Greenforest Christian, Habersham Central, Heritage, McNair, Northview, South Forsyth, Stone Mountain and Alpharetta.



Union County junior Braden Plott finished third in the long jump at Rabun County on Saturday. Photo/Todd Forrest

Golf: Both Union County teams undefeated through three matches



Sophomore Sofia Charboneau's 59 led the way in Union County's win at Pickens' Bent Tree Golf Course on Wednesday, March 20. Kendyl McBride shot a 60 and Mikala Souther had a 62. Photo/Todd Forrest



Will Henson was Union County's low medalist with a 41 at Bent Tree Golf Course in Jasper. Henson was followed by a pair of 43s from Hayden Price and Huston West. Turner West shot a 50. Union County was back in action Monday, March 25 at Blairsville's Old Union Golf Course vs. Murphy, NC and Lumpkin County. Photo/Todd Forrest

Boating Safety Classes by the Coast Guard Auxiliary



Warm weather is here and more boaters are out on the water. The Coast Guard Auxiliary will be teaching the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (GA DNR) Boating safety course at the Hiawassee 911 training room in Hiawassee.

Coast Guard Auxiliarists from our local Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla are volunteering their time to serve as instructors for the Georgia DNR classes.

Is boating education required in Georgia?

Answer: As of July 1, 2014, all persons born on or after January 1, 1998 that operate any motorized vessel on the waters of the state must have completed a boat education course approved by the department prior to such operation.

A person is exempt if he or she is: a person licensed by the U.S. Coast Guard as a master of a vessel; a person operating on a private lake or pond; a non-resident who has in his or her possession proof that he or she has completed a NASBLA approved boater education course or equivalency examination from another state.

These Georgia Boating Safety classes will meet this mandatory education requirement. To register for these classes, visit the Georgia DNR website: <https://gadrnle.org/boating-education>

Here are the five (5) DNR Boating Safety classes that are being offered in our area over the next few months: All class sizes are limited to 15.

March 23 - Towns County Civic Center. 67 Lakeview Circle, Unit C. Hiawassee, GA 30546. Set up and late registration 8 - 8:30. Class begins at 8:30. Class ends at 4:30 with a 45 minute lunch break.

April 20 - Union County Civic Center. 165 Wellborn Street. Blairsville, GA 30512. Set up and late registration 8 - 8:30. Class begins at 8:30. Class ends at 3:30 with a 45 minute lunch break.

May 18 - Towns County Civic Center. 67 Lakeview Circle, Unit C. Hiawassee, GA 30546. Set up and late registration 8 - 8:30. Class begins at 8:30. Class ends at 4:30 with a 45 minute lunch break.

June 15 - Union County Civic Center. 165 Wellborn Street. Blairsville, GA 30512. Set up and late registration 8 - 8:30. Class begins at 8:30. Class ends at 3:30 with a 45 minute lunch break.

July 27 - Towns County Senior Center. 954 N Main Street. Hiawassee, GA 30546. Set up and late registration 8 - 8:30. Class begins at 8:30. Class ends at 4:30 with a 45 minute lunch break. NT(Mar27_A2)JH

The Old Union Women's Golf Association 2024 Season

Attention area lady golfers! The Old Union Women's Golf Association will kick off their 2024 season on May 6. This special day will include Mimosas and light breakfast items. Further plans for opening day will be forthcoming. Anyone interested in joining this great group of ladies is asked to contact Karen Mussoline at 352-638-3649 or Cynthia Panter at 706-633-7587.

Cost: Membership fee is still only \$35 which includes the Hole-In-One Fund and the Sunshine Fund. Golf on Mondays for O UWGA members will be \$25. Participation in the weekly games plus chip-ins and birdies, continues to be \$4.

Tournaments: There will be four tournaments during the season: Eclectic (2-week), Flag Day, Member/Member (2-week), League Championship (2-week). The tournament open to the public will be the Sadie Hawkins Tournament. Emails with further details will be sent out at a later date.

Beat The Pro: Coach Matt and Old Union Golf Course will continue to participate in the Beat The Pro once a month. All players whose NET score beats Coach Matt's score will receive a sleeve of golf balls from the pro shop.

Closest To The Pin: Old Union Golf Course will continue to offer a free round of golf or a \$25.00 gift card for closest to the pin each week.

One option for play this year that will begin May 1 is to play a Par 3 round. If a

player previously played only 9 holes, this would be a great option for that player.

Those playing a Par 3 round will be in the regular pairings and may be in the weekly game. Those players will simply be placed in a "Par 3" flight with others playing that type of round. This will allow those players who prefer a slightly shorter round to interact with all of O UWGA members. All golfers will finish at the same time which will make attending the "after golf" luncheons easier for all the ladies. Each week, there will be a Par 3 sign up option on the website which will differentiate the flights.

Girls' Golf Trip: This year the annual golf trip will either be Maggie Valley or Gatlinburg depending on the number of participants. A blast email outlining the trip will be sent to all members in plenty of time to make plans.

Weekly Lunches and Newspaper Articles: Cynthia Moorehead has agreed to continue to arrange our lunches after golf, and she will continue to write her weekly informative articles to the newspaper.

Lessons: Jane Childers will continue to chair and coordinate golf lessons. O UWGA is very excited to announce that Mary Rehling Holmes returns to Old Union Golf Course in 2024 to offer private golf lessons on Wednesdays, starting in April through October. Each lesson is 45 minutes and costs \$35. If you are interested in a les-

son or need more information, email jane.childers77@gmail.com or text at 706-633-7868.

Mary Holmes played golf at Tuscaloosa High School and then on the University of Alabama team from 1975-1979. She coached the women's golf team at LSU from 1979-1982. Mary started her private teaching in 1979 and has also participated in many golf camps. She served as a Regional Consultant for the National Golf Foundation. Mary is an excellent teacher and makes golf fun - even practice! Lessons may also be arranged with Matt Cook through the Old Union Pro Shop at 706-745-4653.

Thursday Non-Play Days: Something new! Numerous members have inquired about having a second standing tee time at Old Union each week. Cameron has offered the league tee times on Thursday starting at 9 AM. The cost for golf will be \$30. Members will have to sign-up on the website, and the league will do the pairings and cart signs. At this time there will be no game or money collected... just a fun day on the course!

End of Year Banquet: Our end of the year banquet is scheduled for October 10, 2024, and details will be forthcoming toward the end of the season.

Ladies golfers with all levels of skill are invited to join this fun-loving golf league for interaction and camaraderie on and off the course. NT(Mar27_Z19)CA