

# XC: Underwood inks scholarship with Georgia College

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Over the last four years, Lance Underwood has raced his way into the record books at Union County High School, but now his legs will carry him to Milledgeville where he begins his next chapter as a Georgia College Bobcat.

“My decision came down Georgia College or (University of Georgia) and Georgia College gave me the opportunity to run (cross country) so that was the kicker and it swayed my decision. I met the coach and visited the campus and loved everything about it.”

“The coach let me meet some of the runners and it was just like a big family atmosphere so that’s what kind of drew me in. It was a lot like my high school team, a small and close-knit group.”

Underwood made an impact right away at UCHS, placing second in Region 8-AA as a freshman with a time of 17:16 - two seconds back of the region champ.

However, his second place finish was good enough to lead the Panthers to a team Region Championship.

At State, Underwood



Union County senior Lance Underwood alongside his parents and sister at last week’s signing ceremony at UCHS. Photo/Shawn Jarrard

was the second fastest freshman in Class AA, placing 20th overall with a time of 18:29.

In 2015, Underwood returned to the Region 8-AA meet and blistered the field by more than 40 seconds over the next closest competitor.

Union County also captured the boys team title, along with the girls individual and team titles for a clean sweep.

“I’m just super competitive and don’t want to lose,” Underwood said when asked what drives him to be a successful runner. “I figure if I’m going to do it, I might as well give my full effort.”

A week later, Underwood battled the rain and mud for a seventh place finish at the State Championships in Carrollton.

Union County moved up to Class AAA prior to the 2016 season, joining state powers North Hall and Dawson County, along with private school Greater Atlanta Christian.

At the Region Meet, hosted by Unicoi State Park, Underwood turned in an impressive time of 16:57 - good enough for fifth.

In his first appearance at

the Class AAA State Championships, Underwood posted a similar result to his first state race in AA - a 21st place finish to lead the Panthers to an 11th in the team standings.

This past October, Underwood took home second in Region 7-AAA with a school record time of 16:06 at Unicoi.

In the final race of his

career, Underwood clocked in at 16:52 to place among the top five in Class AAA. The fifth place performance helped the Panthers record a top 10, coming in eighth place.

“He’s always been a phenomenal runner but he’s an even more phenomenal person,” said Union County Cross Country Coach Paige Dyer, who coached Underwood in middle school and two years of high school. “He’s just a good guy, a solid leader, a person of integrity, and I think he’s going to be a huge asset to Georgia College. I’m very excited that he’s going to be able to continue running because he excels at it.”

Underwood plans on studying chemistry then possibly transferring to UGA later on for an engineering degree.

“I just want to thank my family and my coaches,” Underwood said in closing. “Coach (Jackie) Hughes and Coach (Paige) Dyer played a big part, so did Coach (Beau) Kelley and Coach (Caleb) Paul. I also want to thank my soccer coaches for letting me run track during soccer season. (track) was a big reason that I got recruited.”

Sean Jarrard contributed to this article.

## Juniors rule: Olympics crown stays put



The Class of 2019 are the UCHS Olympics Champions for the second straight year after locking up the much sought after trophy as sophomores during last year’s games. The Olympics is a class competition that spans the entire school year judging students on academics, behavior, school spirit, athletics, and more. Photo/Todd Forrest

## Additional UCHS recent college signing photos



GOLF: Grace Wischmeyer - Maryville. Photo/Todd Forrest



GOLF: Megan Rowe - Columbus State. Photo/Todd Forrest



BAND: Anthony Grader - Kentucky. Photo/Todd Forrest



CROSS COUNTRY: Lance Underwood - Georgia College. Photo/Shawn Jarrard

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AGE GROUPS  
BOYS: '07, '08, '09, '10  
GIRLS: '07, '08, '09, '10

MAY 31- JUNE 1 @ 6PM-7:30PM YHC

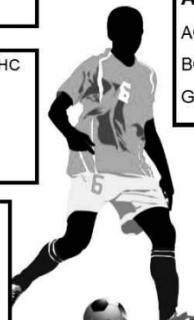
**BOYS SELECT - 13U**

AGE GROUPS  
BOYS: '06, '07

JUNE 4-5 @ 6PM-7:30PM ELAN

**GIRLS SELECT - 13U**

AGE GROUPS  
GIRLS: '06, '07



JUNE 7-8 @ 6PM-7:30PM YHC

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AGE GROUPS  
BOYS: '03, '04  
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