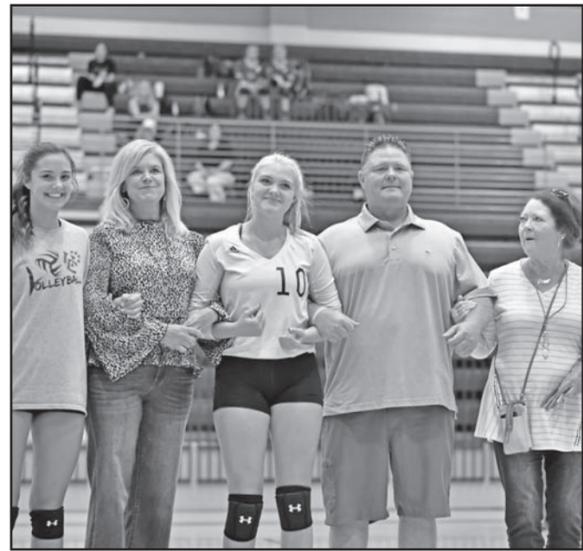
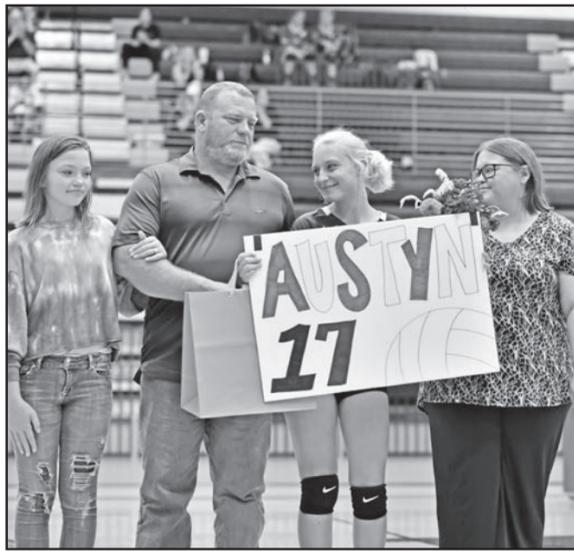


# Volleyball: Union makes quick work of Banks, Elbert on Senior Night



Union County Volleyball seniors (L-R): Katie Baumeister, Austyn Davis and Haley Noe. The Class of 2021 were freshmen when the volleyball program was formed in 2017. In year one, Union County didn't win a single set. In year two they advanced to their first State Tournament. Last year, they reached the Elite 8 following a runner-up finish in Area. Photos/Todd Forrest



**By Todd Forrest  
Sports Editor  
sports@nganews.com**

Area play got underway last Thursday with a pair of one-sided victories over Elbert County and Banks County on Senior Night.

Hosting the area tri-match, Union County opened with Elbert County, dismantling the first-year program in set one, 25-8.

Set two was a bit more competitive, but the Panthers were never threatened in a 25-15 victory.

"We were excited to see Elbert since they are a beginning program," said Union County head coach Anna Chapman, who missed last week's action due to illness, giving way to assistant coach Seth Merritt. "This happens to make for a tough match even when you don't expect it. Elbert tested us and caught us with a slower pace of game. We

had to return to the basics and remember to be ready all the time. The ball can come over after the first ball and it's important that we stay on our toes. The girls pulled out a great win in the end."

Juniors Riley Allison and Morgan Fussell, along with sophomore Saylor Noe recorded three kills apiece.

Sophomore Sofia Swartz added two kills in the win.

Molly Kay West recorded a match-high eight aces. Haley Noe had four aces and Allison added three.

Saylor Noe, Emma Whicker and Fussell each chipped in one ace.

Swartz and Allison had one block.

In the nightcap vs. Banks County, Union outscored the Leopards 12-1 in set one to turn a 4-4 tie into a 16-5 rout. The Panthers would cruise to a 25-13 victory.

The second set saw Union break things open following a 3-3 start, eventually opening up an 18-7 advantage. Once again, the Panthers coasted to a 25-13 victory.

"This is the second time against Banks and we were ready for another round of solid play but were confident in our skills," Chapman said. "The girls showed amazing court coverage, court awareness, and incredible stats for the night. We are proud to be 2-0 for (Area) play right now."

Fussell had five kills and Allison added three vs. Banks. Haley and Saylor Noe chipped in two apiece, Olivia Blocker had one.

West, Whicker and Haley Noe picked up three aces each. Saylor Noe added two. Haley Noe also recorded seven digs.

Union visits Commerce on Tuesday for a tri-match with Lake Oconee Academy at 5 p.m.



L-R: Baumeister, Noe and Davis pose for a group photo following the Senior Night festivities between Union County's Area wins over Elbert County and Banks County. Photo/Todd Forrest

## Softball... continued from 2C

a pair of base on balls to Potts and Sisum in the sixth. In the seventh, Queen's leadoff walk and a Banton sacrifice bunt put the winning run at second with one away, but a foul out and ground out sent the contest into extra frames.

Patton turned in a 3-for-5 performance, driving in two and scoring the game-winner. Potts finished 2-for-4 with an RBI, a steal and a walk. Sisum ended up 1-for-3 with two bases on balls, two Ks and a walk-off RBI single.

Davis and Collins both finished with a single and a run; Roxbury went 1-for-4; Karnes scored twice and Katie Byers scored once. Banton and Burnette each chipped in one RBI.

Queen struck out six, yielding six singles and two earned runs over eight innings. However, she walked four batters and hit two on 112 pitches while setting a season-high with 36 batters faced.

"Everybody contributed to either keep us in it, or win the ball game," Mitchell said. "There's nothing I love more than having multiple kids contribute to a big win."

**Lady Panthers 9, Fannin County 0** - On Tuesday, Sierra Burnette and Tori Tracy combined for a five-inning no-hitter as Union County mercifully ruled the rival Lady Rebels.

Leading 1-0 in the third, the Lady Panthers exploded for eight runs, highlighted by Sisum's second homer of the year. The inning got underway with a Roxbury walk and a Burnette single with one down. Davis scored Roxbury with a base hit; Jones scored the courtesy runner Karnes with a single and Collins walked to load the bases.

Patton singled to center,

scoring Davis, then an outfield error allowed three more runs to come around.

Sisum's homer made it an 8-0 game, and later, Roxbury singled and advanced to second on a wild pitch, setting the table for Banton to make it 9-0 on an RBI single.

Burnette got the nod and worked three perfect innings, striking out five. Tracy entered in the fourth and struck out three and walked one over two innings.

Sisum finished 1-for-3 with her second homer of the year; Patton was 1-for-1 with an RBI, a run and two walks. Roxbury scored twice during a 1-for-1, two-walk performance and Banton went 2-for-2 with a pair of ribbies. Burnette was 2-for-3; Davis and Jones each finished 1-for-2 and Collins scored a run while going 1-for-1.

Karnes went 1-for-1 and Katie Byers added a run.

**Up next:** Union County visits Elbert County on Tuesday and Rabun County on Thursday as they wrap up their first trip through Region 8-AA. Both games are scheduled to begin at 5:30 p.m.

"Elbert started out a little slow but they beat Rabun County 17-3," Mitchell said. "They have a new coach, who has done a great job, and they return most of their team from last year. But this week is really, really crucial to our positioning in the region."

Union will take on No. 1 Heard County and Class 7A's Cherokee this Saturday at Twin Creeks Softball Complex in Woodstock.

Game times are at 2 and 6 p.m.

## Football... continued from 2C

points off the board via a Hemplin blocked field goal.

The Panthers offense would suffer a three-and-out and Commerce put the game away with a nine-play, 65-yard drive that opened up a 32-14 lead with 11:01 remaining.

The game-sealing drive was capped off by a 13-yard scoring run, coming on the heels of two third-down conversions - a 9-yard run on third-and-7 and a 6-yard carry on third-and-6.

"Commerce is a top-10 team and we only gave up seven points in the second half," Allison said. "It's coming. Our goal is to get better each week and I feel like we're a better football team now than we were a week ago. If we can continue making these strides I feel like we'll be in good shape."

Union County was turned away on fourth-and-2 from the 28, but Commerce put the ball on the turf five plays later. With the game all but decided at this point, both squads began rotating in the reserves.

The Panthers got on the board first with a scoop-and-score by Elijah Helton. In Week 1, Helton, a.k.a. Mr. Right-Place-At-The-Right-Time forced a fumble that led to a Dalton Allen touchdown vs. Fannin County.

Just past the midway point of the opening frame at Commerce, Conner Cook slipped into the backfield and jarred the football loose from the Tigers quarterback. Elijah Helton was the benefactor this time as he scooped up the pigskin and raced 45 yards in the other direction.

"We've worked on some turnover circuits, especially in fall practice," Allison said. "Both times the ball happened to bounce right into our hands, but they came as a result of our defense forcing the fumble and not an

unforced error."

Commerce needed just three plays to pull within a point at 7-6 when a third-and-5 toss sweep turned into a 70-yard scoring run.

"That's been the story in both games this year: We play good then give up a big play," Allison said. "But our guys played their hearts out and I thought we did a good job taking care of our responsibilities on defense, but whenever we would blow an assignment we gave up a big play."

The ensuing Union drive would stall following a 17-yard tunnel screen to McCombs. Starting from their own 19, the Tigers tore off runs of 15, 28 and 20 to move inside the Panthers' red zone. On the first play of the second quarter, Commerce punched it in from a yard out for a 12-7 advantage.

A sack derailed Union's following drive despite runs by Helcher of 18 and 10 yards. A punt gave the ball back to the Tigers at their own 16, and after converting a fourth-and-1 from the 25, Commerce began churning out large chunks of yardage on the ground. Gains of 10, 15, 17, 12 and 10 helped set up a 5-yard scoring run.

The Tigers missed their third straight extra point to take an 18-7 lead at the 6:03 mark of the half.

Helcher finished with a career-high 207 yards, one touchdown and two picks on 21 for 36 passing. Playing without the services of senior running back Jonah Daniel (broken ankle) for at least six weeks, both Helcher and Walker finished in negative yardage on the ground.

McCombs hauled in a career-best seven grabs for 71 yards. Hemphill caught three passes for 31 yards; Chitwood

caught five balls for 36 yards; Underwood had four receptions for 32 yards; Walker added 22 yards and a score on two catches; Allen caught one pass for 6 yards.

**Up next:** Union County will host Senior Night vs. the Chestatee War Eagles, who are under the direction of UCHS alum Shaun Conley. Chestatee enters the game at 0-1 following a blow-out loss to Cherokee Bluff.

Senior quarterback Christian Charles leads the War Eagles following a 2019 campaign that saw the 6-1, 185-pound QB throw for 2,000-plus yards and rush for 921.

The *Rivals.com* 3-star Athlete has current Power 5 offers from Duke, Georgia Tech, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Vanderbilt, Virginia Tech, Washington State, along with a plethora of Group of 5 and FCS offers.

"He's a Power 5 quarterback and a great player so we're going to have to do a better job

preventing big plays and keeping him contained," Allison said.

Union is looking to avoid its first 0-3 start under Allison and the program's first since 1995 - the year before Allison's arrival.

Friday marks the first official gridiron meeting between the Panthers and Chestatee.

### Schedule Update

Union County will host Rabun Gap in place of the canceled Riverside Military Academy contest on Nov. 6.

## UCHS Cross Country Update

The Union County men placed fourth and the ladies were sixth at North Hall last week.

Luke Gambrell and Hana Gregory both reached the medal stand. Complete standings and times will be featured in next week's newspaper.

## Local Racing Report: Tri-County

**By Blake Lynch  
Racing Reporter  
North Georgia News**

Tri-County Racetrack hosted a race this past Monday night for Labor Day with a full racing program plus Super Late Models. Here are the top five from each class.

**Pony** - Coming in first was No.00 Adam Brooks. Coming in second was No.6 Koulten Herbert. Finishing in third was No.01 Zack Sander. Coming in fourth was No.32 Franklin Burk Sr. Finishing in fifth was No.9 Jamie Pritchett.

**Street Stock** - Coming in first was No.12 Roger Beaver. Coming in second was No.14 Charles Devine Jr. Finishing in third was No.95 Alex Vance. Coming in fourth was No.21 Troy Turner. Finishing in fifth was No.32 Logan Exum.

**FWD** - Coming in first was No.3 Josh Deese. Finishing in second was No.19r Sean Rice. Coming in third was No.32 Justin Queen. Finishing in fourth was No.74 Dakoata Worley. Finishing in fifth was No.10 Blake Lynch.

**Super Late Models** - Coming in first was No.8 David Payne. Coming in second was No.x15 Shawn Chastain.

Finishing in third was No.17 Kurt English. Coming home in fourth place was No.1c Kenny Collins. Coming in fifth was 171 Kyle Courtney.

**Crate/Limited** - Coming in first place was No.4 Danny Ledford. Coming in second was No.4h Levi Hicks. Coming in third was No.7 Jason Deal. Finishing in fourth was No.30 Devin Deilbeck. Finishing in fifth was No.371 Drew Benfield.

**Beginner 602** - Coming in first was No.22 Tucker Anderson. Finishing in second was No.21 Jay Merk. Finishing in third was No.03 Dante Curtis. Coming in fourth was No.25 Matt Lockaby. Coming in fifth was No.55 Brad Sosebee.

Tri-County's next racing program will be Friday, Sept. 18 at 5pm.

## Learn to play Pickleball

Learn to play Pickleball: Beginner's Lessons every Tuesday, 6 PM (weather permitting). No charge and all equipment provided. Courts are located behind the Health Department. For more information contact: blairsvillepickleball@gmail.com.



FOLDS of HONOR

## The Old Union Women's Golf League supports "Folds Of Honor"

The Old Union Women's Golf League became aware of the "Folds Of Honor" organization the night before play day. During the morning announcements, the Mission Statement was read to the ladies. The ladies then voted to donate the entire weekly entry fee to this worthy organization. Additionally, many of the ladies contributed above and beyond their entry fee. One member was so impressed with the organization that she contributed another \$100.

Plans are already in the works for a "Folds of Honor" Tournament next year. It will be open to the public and sponsored by the women's league to raise funds and to help spread the word of this exceptional organization. "Folds of Honor" takes care of the families of the men and women who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our nation. For more information, please visit their website: <https://www.foldsofhonor.org>. The "Folds of Honor" mission statement reads, "To honor the sacrifice of our fallen and disabled servicemen and women by providing educational scholarships to the

spouses and children they leave behind in the pursuit to protect our American freedoms."

Even-Steven was the game of the week on Labor Day, September 7th, for the Old Union Women's Golf League. The net scores from all even holes were the only scores that counted. Several ladies were victorious: Flight A winner was Martha Zimmer with a net 37. Flight B winner was Nancy Hamilton with a net 39. Flight C winner was 'Happy' Cappie Harper with a net 31. Flight D winner was Donna Stone with a net 33.

Viola Copenhaver and Cappie Harper, each, enjoyed a birdie on hole number 15 and 4, respectively. Alison Tayler, Nancy Outlaw, Cappie Harper and Diane Walker each had a birdie. Great playing, ladies!

The Old Union Women's League Club Championship is on tap in the next few weeks. Round one of the two day tournament will be September 21, and round two will be September 28. The make up day for those unable to attend the two tournament days has been scheduled for September 16.

Mary Holmes continues to offer Golf Clinics at Old Union Golf Course. The cost is \$20 plus range ball. Max number in a group is six, and the clinics are an hour long. Mary will have two classes... the first one at 8 AM and a second clinic at 9 AM. You must sign up on the website to participate in the clinic. Mary Holmes was the ladies' golf coach at LSU, and we are delighted with her offer to lead the Golf Clinics. Sign up soon as the classes will fill up quickly!

The Old Union Women's

Golf Association is now offering a new 9 Hokers League which will also be played on Mondays. This league is perfect for those players who are new to the game, who may have time constraints or those players who want to play only 9 holes. Come join the best league in the North Georgia Mountains! If you are interested and would like to come as a guest, or for more information, visit our website at [www.OU-WGA.com](http://www.OU-WGA.com) or call/text Karen at 352- 638-3649 or Cynthia at 706- 633-7587.



## Union County Recreation Department Basketball Registration is open!

Ages 5-12  
Age you are September 1st is the age group you play in.  
Registration fee is \$50.00 and open to both boys and girls.  
Registration can be completed online at [unioncountyga.gov](http://unioncountyga.gov) or at the Recreation Office.  
Registration will end September 25, 2020.  
If you need any additional information, please call 706-439-6074.