

# Sports

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## Records fall in Union's 53-21 victory over Monticello

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With former Panther great and current Richmond quarterback Joe Mancuso in attendance, senior Pierson Allison turned in a career-defining performance with school-record totals of 490 passing yards and 534 total yards - both marks previously held by Mancuso.

Furthermore, Allison's dazzling numbers spearheaded another record-shattering achievement by the Union County offense as a whopping 721 total yards were churned out by the Panthers on Friday night.

Allison would finish the evening with four passing touchdowns to go with his 490 yards; he also tacked on 44 rushing yards and a score, pacing Union County to a 53-21 victory over Monticello in the Region 8-AA opener.

"It felt great to break a record set by someone as great as Joe (Mancuso), but I also couldn't have done it without the offensive linemen and receivers making plays all night," Allison said of Friday night's performance. "The team record is a big deal; it shows just how good we can be on offense when we don't shoot ourselves in the foot.

"At Fannin we had a lot of penalties and they killed our drives. I think tonight we cleaned up our penalties - no holdings and no ineligible receivers downfield."

Joining Allison with multiple touchdowns was junior running back Jonah Daniel, who put up 163 yards and two scores on the ground, along with four catches, 78 yards and a receiving touchdown that kickstarted the offensive onslaught.

"I don't think we would have put up those type of numbers at Fannin but I think the penalties, at Fannin, really prohibited us from doing the things we needed to do," Union head coach Brian Allison said. "We made a conscientious effort during the week to make sure we were lined up right and that [linemen] weren't downfield. As a result, I think there was a real improvement over the week before, as far as penalties are concerned."

After Monticello's game-opening drive stalled at the Union County 39-yard line, the Panthers were forced to start in the shadow of their own end zone following a "coffin-corner" punt that bounced out-of-bounds inside the 3-yard line.

On 3rd-and-2 from the 11, Allison would keep it himself for 14 yards and a fresh set of downs. On the next play, Allison and Sawyer Drake hooked up for a 22-yard completion out near midfield.

Three plays later, Coach Allison was faced with his first major decision of the evening as the offense was looking at 4th-and-3 from the 49-yard line. With trips to his left, Pierson Allison rolled in that direction before stopping and tossing a throwback screen to a wide-open Daniel,



The Union County offensive line's pass protection and run blocking helped Pierson Allison (17) and the offense set three school records in last week's win over Monticello. Photo/Todd Forrest

who raced 49 yards down the visitors' sideline for the score.

Trailing 7-0, Monticello answered with a 61-yard carry on the ensuing possession.

"The kid made a great cut and they just got us on that run," Coach Allison said. "I can live with that one."

With 1st-and-goal from the seven, the Canes needed three plays to punch it in and tie the game with 5:17 left in the first quarter.

After swapping punts, Union County took over at its own 36, late in the first quarter. From there, a 4-yard keeper by Pierson Allison and a 15-yard reception by Drake moved the Panthers into Monticello territory. On first down from the 45, Allison and Drake connected once again, this time on a 45-yard post-route that saw Drake slip a shoestring tackle at the 10, keeping his balance long enough to stumble across the goal line for six.

The duo of Pierson Allison and Drake continued to wreak havoc on the Canes' defense when Drake took a 2nd-and-5 tunnel screen and broke loose into the open field for a 55-yard gain on Union's next series. From the 23-yard line, Allison rolled right and lobbed a perfectly-placed throw into the bread basket of Cayden Rich, who had a step on his defender in the end zone.

"Offensively, I think we played awesome," Coach Allison said. "Whenever [Monticello] would score we would come right back, drive it down the field and score. I think we only punted once all night."

Leading 21-7 just beyond the midway point of the second, the Panthers stretched its advantage to 28-7 when another Hurricanes' drive stalled in Union County territory, resulting in a punt into the end zone for a touchback.

Starting at the 20, the Panthers needed just four plays and an offside penalty to build a 21-point lead when Daniel ripped off a 70-yard touchdown run on 1st-and-10 with 5:06 to play in the second.

Monticello's last attempt

to get on the board before halftime was denied on 4th-and-11 from the Union 25 when junior linebacker Noah Underwood broke up a pass attempt to the running back.

The Panthers received the second half kickoff and marched 69 yards on seven plays for a 35-7 advantage. Daniel recorded the hat trick with his third score of the night, this one coming via a 30-yard rush on 2nd-and-short.

Despite losing starting offensive tackle Wright Hogsey for the season to an ACL injury, the Union County O-line paved the way for Friday's record-breaking performance.

"Our offensive line played great," Pierson Allison said after the game. "Monticello has a very good defensive line but our line played probably its best game of the season tonight."

His head coach agreed. "Nathan Brooks has filled in nicely (for Hogsey)," Coach Allison said. "We did some things better this week, and overall, I feel like the O-line is getting better each and every week."

The Hurricanes answered with a 56-yard completion followed by a 3-yard scoring run, two plays later. Leading 35-14, Union County immediately drove inside the 10 thanks to a 20-yard catch-and-run by Daniel. On 1st-and-goal from the five, short runs by Pierson Allison and Daniel, followed by an incompletion brought on Mason McCombs to connect on a 21-yard field goal.

On the first play of the ensuing series, Monticello took a shot downfield and connected on a 65-yard touchdown pass to pull within 38-21 at the 3:05 mark of the third.

"Giving up those deep passes were a result of selling out to stop the run," Coach Allison said. "The only one I had a problem with was the second half touchdown pass. We were loading up in the box to stop the run game and I truly felt that we did a good job against the pass until that long touchdown."

That's as close as the visi-

tors would get as Union County closed the contest with 15-unanswered, beginning with a 22-yard scamper by Pierson Allison on 2nd-and-4.

"The play was designed to go to the left side but I cut it back to the right because I couldn't find any room, but it just felt good to get the score," Pierson Allison said of his touchdown run that saw him cover 50-plus yards to gain 22.

When asked where that 22-yard score runs among his most memorable runs, he placed it very close to the top.

"I'd probably put that one second behind my run at Monticello last year," he said.

What is it about Monticello that brings out his inner-Lamar Jackson?

"I don't know," he said with a laugh. "I think they just happened to be the team we were playing at the time."

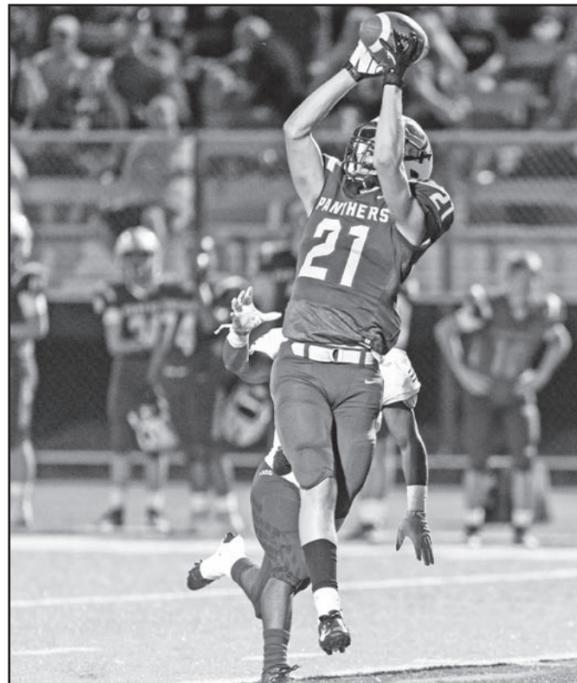
The Canes fell asleep on the extra point, allowing Rich to slip unnoticed into the end zone for a 2-point conversion pass from Pierson Allison - extending the margin to 46-21.

Late in the third, another Monticello punt would pin Union inside the 3-yard line, but the Panthers needed just four plays to go 97-yards and put the game away at 53-21.

Starting at the three, an 18-yard completion to Morlock opened up some breathing room as the third quarter came to a close. The fourth began with a 12-yard run by Daniel, followed by a deep ball down the sideline to Morlock for 69 yards and the score.

Later, Monticello was faced with a fourth down at the Union County 30 when Zion Ross picked off a pass inside the 5-yard line, allowing the Panthers to run out the clock and secure the 32-point win.

Drake finished the game with seven grabs for 155 yards and a score; Morlock had six catches for 138 and a score. Rich hauled in five catches for 58 yards and a touchdown. Ross added



Sawyer Drake snags a touchdown pass from Allison. Photo/Todd Forrest

three grabs for 49 yards.

**Up next** - On deck is a visit to Putnam County, who is coming off a 55-8 loss at Rabun County. The War Eagles are currently 1-3 on the year with a 43-35 win over Greene County. Their other losses were 40-14 at North Oconee and 55-21 at Temple.

"They are big up-front on the offensive line, they're athletic and they are a receiver that reminds me of the one from Monticello," Coach Allison said when asked what concerned him about Putnam.

"They have a good running back, but he's a little bit different than Monticello's back, but he's still a very good player. Defensively, they use a lot of man coverage and don't sit back in a zone, so that will present a little bit of a challenge."

Last year, Putnam County allowed 42 second-half points in a 55-0 loss at Union County. This week, you can be certain that Coach Allison is going to drill home the fact that his team only led 13-0 (two field goals and a TD) at halftime in last year's meeting at Mike Colwell Memorial Stadium.

"It was only 13-0 at the half and this time we have to travel down there, so there is a different set of circumstances and

a different type of adversity that we're going to have to deal with this year," Coach Allison said when asked what he would use as motivation during the week.

While Union did pull away in last season's meeting, the stats show a contest that should have been much closer. The War Eagles ran 71 offensive plays to Union's 60. They were 7-for-19 on third down while Union was 4-for-10. Additionally, Putnam didn't turn the ball over and was only penalized once (to Union County's seven penalties).

The difference was four unsuccessful fourth-down attempts that allowed Union County to add four touchdowns (three by Daniel) in the fourth quarter.

It also helped that the Panthers limited them to just 218 total yards.

Defensively, linebacker Sloan Sutton had himself a game, recording 11 tackles and three sacks in last year's meeting. Overall, the Panthers defense would finish with nine tackles for a loss and seven sacks.

Kickoff is scheduled for 7:30 p.m. Friday at Putnam County in Eatonton. The football stadium is located at the middle school. **Address: 140 Sparta Hwy.** (across the street from Putnam General Hospital).

### Offense

Passing	Comp/Att	Yds	TD	Int	Long	2PT
#17 P. Allison	26/32	490	4	-	69	-
Rushing	Att	Yds	TD	Long	Fum	2PT
#24 J. Daniel	11	163	2	70	-	-
#17 P. Allison	4	44	1	22	-	-
#6 S. Sutton	6	23	-	7	-	-
#25 C. Rogers	2	1	-	1	1	-
Rest of team	3	-	-	-	-	1
Receiving	Rec	Yds	TD	Long	Fum	2PT
#21 S. Drake	7	155	1	55	-	-
#15 K. Morlock	6	138	1	69	-	-
#24 J. Daniel	4	78	1	49	-	-
#11 C. Rich	5	58	1	23	-	-
#7 Z. Ross	3	49	-	33	-	-
#5 M. McCombs	1	12	-	12	-	-

### Defense

	Tk	Asst	Seck	TFL	Sfty	Int
#52 C. Lester	7	4	-	-	-	-
#9 J. Mancuso	5	3	1	-	-	-
#16 N. Underwood	4	7	-	-	-	-
#7 Z. Ross	3	1	-	-	-	1
#43 J. Orr	3	-	-	1	-	-
#6 S. Sutton	2	6	-	-	-	-
#74 N. Ledford	2	2	-	-	-	-
#3 K. Hemphill	2	3	-	1	-	-
#17 P. Allison	1	-	-	-	-	-
#56 J. Engle	1	2	-	-	-	-
#26 J. Littles	1	1	-	-	-	-
#78 J. Rockenbaugh	-	1	-	-	-	-

### Game Capsule: at Putnam County

**Nickname:** War Eagles

**Location:** Eatonton

**Head Coach:** Shaun Pope - 2nd season

**2018 record:** 3-7

**Current record:** 1-3, 0-1

**All-time record vs Putnam:** 1-2

**All-time road record vs PC:** 0-1

**Coach Allison record vs PC:** 1-0

**Allison record vs PC coach:** 1-0

**Last meeting:** 2018 (W 55-0)

**Last loss:** 2007 (43-41)

Team Totals	UC	Mon
Total Plays	60	56
Total Yards	721	418
Passing Yards	490	201
Rushing Yards	231	217
First Downs	25	14
Third Down Efficiency	6-9 (67%)	2-10 (20%)
Fourth Down Efficiency	1-1 (100%)	0-2 (0%)
Turnovers	1	1
Fumbles Lost	1	-
Interceptions Thrown	-	1
Penalties	4	5
Yards	15	38