

Sports

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Wrestling: Union County's state title bid ends in semis

By Todd Forrest
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Hazelhurst - Union County advanced to the Class AA State Duals semifinals at Jeff Davis High School over the weekend, defeating Berrien County and Landmark Christian before falling to Toombs County during the semis and Banks County in the consolation bracket.

Union County 43, Berrien County 25 (1st Rd) - Union scored first in the opening round win over Berrien, with Eli Flowers recording a 10-0 major decision at 113 lbs and Payton Legatt earning a 6-4 decision at 157 lbs.

At 190 lbs, David Heredia needed just 23 seconds to earn a win over Drake Jones. Meanwhile, Asa Smith-Foot notched a 63-second pinfall vs. Josh Kallam at 175 lbs.

Zander Rotko picked up a second-round pin over Aidyn Hurst at 150 lbs; Paxon Legatt (144 lbs) took only 87 seconds to pin Sam Jenkins; Anderson Clouse (138 lbs) pinned Christian Reliford in 96 seconds; Riley Mortenson pinned Cade Rice 49 seconds into the third after taking command with a 5-point second round.

During Payton Legatt's 157-lb bout, the Union County junior trailed 4-3 entering the third round until a 3-point nearfall swung the decision in his favor over Matthew Lopez.

In other action from the Panthers' opening round, Berrien's James Reliford pinned Landon Bell at 126 lbs; Brayton Folsom pinned Thomas Gary at 132; Jenaro Paredes notched an 18-5 major decision over Andrew Engle at 165 and Jack Shepard pinned Beau Webster at 285.

Junior Dusty Aaron



Senior David Heredia (top) finished 4-0 at the State Duals tournament at Jeff Davis. Photo/Todd Forrest

dropped a razor-thin 4-3 decision at 215 lbs when Berrien's Brady Warren scored a late 2-point reversal during round three, putting him over the top.

Union County 65, Landmark Christian 12 (Quarterfinals) - The Panthers won 12 of their 14 matches vs Landmark, with one of its two losses coming by forfeit.

Flowers (106) and Mortenson (120) won their bouts via forfeit, and Bell scored a third-round pinfall over Cooper Brown after securing a 9-0 advantage.

After his takedown during the first 10 seconds, Gary led wire-to-wire during a 12-5 decision over Jake Bridges at 132 lbs. Clouse's first-round takedown resulted in a pinfall victory vs. AJ Crowe at 138. Meanwhile, Kevin Kilpatrick scored a 45-second pinfall over

Logan Trask at 144 lbs.

In the 150-lb bout, Paxon Legatt built an 11-1 advantage before his third-round pin vs. Andrew Seppings. Rotko picked up an 11-2 major decision over Nathan Cruver at 157 lbs; Payton Legatt notched a 13-3 major decision vs. Brady Robinson at 165.

Smith-Foot recorded a second-round pin vs. Jacob Weissflog at 175 lbs; Heredia added a first-round pin over Christopher Brezina at 190; Webster pinned Fischer Thomas during the first round of his 285-lb bout.

At 215 lbs, Landmark's Micah Rogers pinned Aaron during the first round. The Panthers took a forfeit at 113 lbs.

Union County 33, Toombs County 45 (Semifinals) - Union County fell into an early 24-9 hole before

pinfalls by Smith-Foot (175) and Heredia (190) pulled the Panthers within 3 points.

After Gary suffered a pinfall loss at 132 lbs, Clouse put Union on the board with a 3-point decision at 138 lbs. Clouse held a narrow 2-1 edge in round three vs. Tyson Brantley before two takedowns awarded Clouse a 6-3 finish.

Kilpatrick took a pinfall defeat at 144 lbs, but fellow freshman Paxon Legatt secured a third-round pin at 150 lbs. Later, Rotko (157) and Titus Conley (165) were each pinned, dropping Union into the 24-9 deficit.

Smith-Foot and Heredia responded with convincing wins, with Smith-Foot mounting a 10-0 advantage at 175 lbs before his second-round pin. Heredia held a 6-1 margin when he scored a second-round



Senior Xander Rotko went 3-1 at State Duals. Photo/Todd Forrest

pinfall at 190. Aaron dropped a 9-2 decision at 215, and Jackson Arthur suffered a first-round pin at 285.

Flowers (106) and Mortenson (120) kept hope alive for Union with their pinfall wins, but a forfeit at 113 lbs awarded 6 points to Toombs County. Later, Bell (126) and Gary (132) were each pinned during the first round.

Union County 39, Banks County 42 (consols) - The Panthers came up short during an 8-AA Area Championship rematch on Saturday afternoon.

Flowers notched a second-round pin over Xander Ledford at 106 lbs, and Bell scored a 6-2 decision at 126.

Paxon Legatt picked up a first-round pin at 150 lbs; Rotko added a second-round pin at 157 lbs; Smith-Foot (175) won via a

first-round pinfall and Heredia recorded a second-round pinfall victory at 190.

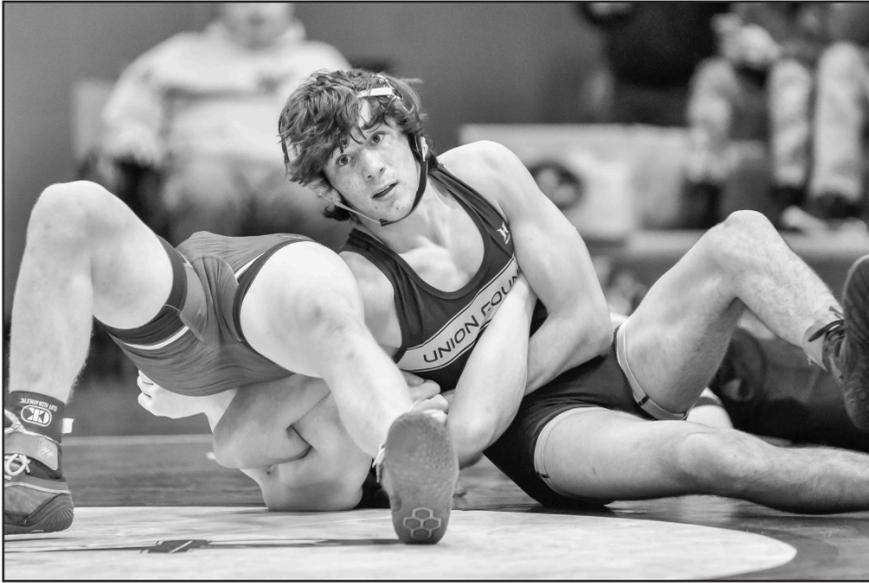
Both squads swapped forfeits with Union giving up 6 points at 113 lbs and Banks surrendering six at 138.

In the 120-lb bout, Mortenson lost via a third-round pin. Gary suffered a first-round pin at 132 lbs, and Kilpatrick took a pinfall loss in the third round at 144.

During Kilpatrick's match, the Union freshman nearly erased a 6-2 deficit, including within a point at 7-6 when a late reversal by Banks' Elijah Mullins resulted in a pin with 10 seconds remaining.

The Traditional (individual) Area tournament is Feb. 3 at Fannin County High School.

The Sectionals are Feb. 10 and the State Championship will be Feb. 15-17.



Freshman Paxon Legatt went undefeated over the weekend at Jeff Davis. Photo/Todd Forrest



Union County's Riley Mortenson during a 120-lb match. Photo/Todd Forrest



Freshman Kevin Kilpatrick (rear) during a recent bout. Photo/Todd Forrest



Senior Anderson Clouse (top) during a recent match. Photo/Todd Forrest

Basketball resumes Tuesday following weather cancelations

Union County travels to Banks and Athens Academy, at home Saturday

By Todd Forrest
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Winter weather forced Union County basketball to reschedule three games this month, but with warmer temperatures expected this week, the Panthers and Lady Panthers will return to the hardwood with three games in five days.

Union County will face a pair of ranked teams when they visit Banks County on Tuesday, Jan. 23. Both Union squads hit the road again on Friday, Jan. 26 at Athens Academy.

The Panthers and Lady Panthers will host their first home contest in two weeks when Fellowship Christian makes the trip to Blairsville on Saturday, Jan. 27.

Meanwhile, last Friday's trip to Providence has been rescheduled for Saturday, Feb. 3.

This Tuesday's road game at Homer could determine the top-seed and host site in next month's Region 8-AA tourney.

The 10th-ranked Leopards remain undefeated in 8-AA while No. 9 Union County sits second as the region's only one-loss team.

With two losses, Athens Academy is right behind Union County, adding extra significance to Friday's road trip.

As for the Lady Panthers, both Union and No. 5 Banks County are unbeaten in region play, setting up a first-place showdown in Homer on Tuesday.

At the moment, Union and Banks have pulled away from the rest of 8-AA and are on the verge of locking down the top-two seeds.



First-year head coach Thomas Nelson and his Lady Panthers can take over sole possession of first place in Region 8-AA with a win on Tuesday. Photo/Todd Forrest

2024 Baseball Schedule				
DATE	OPPONENT	LOCATION	TEAM	TIME
2/13	Northwest Whitfield	Northwest Whitfield	Varsity	5:30 PM
2/20	Gilmer	Gilmer HS	JV	5:30
2/21	Rabun Gap	UCHS	Varsity	5:30 PM
2/22	Murphy (Double Header)	UCHS	Varsity	4:00/6:00 PM
2/26	Andrews	UCHS	Varsity	4:00 PM
2/27	Towns	UCHS	Varsity	5:30 PM
3/1	Towns	Towns HS	Varsity	5:30 PM
3/4	Towns	TCHS	JV	4:00
3/4	Hayesville	UCHS	Varsity	5:30 PM
3/5	Gilmer	UCCHS	Varsity	5:30 PM
3/6	Hayesville	HHS	Varsity	5:30
3/7	Fannin	UCHS	JV	4:00
3/8	Gilmer	Gilmer HS	Varsity	5:30 PM
3/11	Gilmer	UCHS	JV	5:30
3/12	Fellowship Christian (Region)	UCHS	Varsity	5:30 PM
3/13	Towns	UCHS	JV	5:30
3/16	Fellowship Christian(Region)	FCHS	Varsity	12:00
3/16	Fellowship Christian(Region)	FCHS	Varsity	2:30
3/19	Providence(Region)	Providence HS	Varsity	6:00 PM
3/21	Gilmer	Gilmer HS	JV	5:30
3/22	Providence(Region)	UCHS	Varsity	5:00 PM
3/22	Providence(Region)	UCHS	Varsity	7:00 PM
3/26	Athens Academy(Region)	UCHS	Varsity	5:30 PM
3/29	Athens Academy(Region)	Athens Acad.	Varsity	5:00 PM
3/29	Athens Academy(Region)	Athens Acad.	Varsity	7:00 PM
4/9	East Jackson(Region)	EJHS	Varsity	5:55 PM
4/10	Fannin	FHS	JV	5:30
4/12	East Jackson(Region)	UCHS	Varsity	5:00 PM
4/12	East Jackson(Region)	UCHS	Varsity	7:00 PM
4/16	Banks(Region)	Banks	Varsity	5:30 PM
4/19	Banks(Region)	UCHS	Varsity	5:00 PM
4/19	Banks(Region)	UCHS	Varsity	7:00 PM

Union Co. swimmers wrap up regular season with third-place finish at Tallulah

UCHS SWIM TEAM TOP 25 RESULTS

Light in the Mountains Invitational Jan 20 | Tallulah Falls School

<p>200 MEDLEY RELAY BOYS A: 3RD- ANDREW NUSHTAYEV, COLE ORLANDO, WYATT CHANDLER, NICHOLAS NUSHTAYEV GIRLS A: 4TH- LILLY COLLINS, LILY HELTON, REESE JONES, SOPHIA LICAVOLI GIRLS B: 6TH- SAMANTHA ODOM, DELILAH HERNANDEZ, ISABEL HOOVER, ZOIE PARMELY</p>	<p>100 FREESTYLE 1ST: NICHOLAS NUSHTAYEV 4TH: ANDREW NUSHTAYEV 8TH: COLE ORLANDO 14TH: COOPER ALLEN 5TH: REESE JONES 15TH: ZOIE PARMELY 21ST: SAMANTHA ODOM</p>
<p>200 FREESTYLE 1ST: LILY HELTON</p>	<p>500 FREESTYLE 2ND: WYATT CHANDLER</p>
<p>200 IM 5TH: SOPHIA LICAVOLI</p>	<p>200 FREESTYLE RELAY BOYS A: 3RD- ANDREW NUSHTAYEV, WYATT CHANDLER, COLE ORLANDO, NICHOLAS NUSHTAYEV GIRLS A: 4TH- DELILAH HERNANDEZ, SAMANTHA ODOM, ZOIE PARMELY, SOPHIA LICAVOLI</p>
<p>50 FREESTYLE 2ND: NICHOLAS NUSHTAYEV 5TH: ANDREW NUSHTAYEV 8TH: COLE ORLANDO 14TH: WYATT CHANDLER 19TH: COOPER ALLEN 8TH: LILY HELTON 10TH: REESE JONES 12TH: ISABEL HOOVER 17TH: LILLY COLLINS 19TH: ZOIE PARMELY 23RD: DELILAH HERNANDEZ 25TH: SAMANTHA ODOM</p>	<p>100 BACKSTROKE 6TH: LILLY COLLINS 9TH: SOPHIA LICAVOLI</p>
<p>OVERALL BOYS: 3RD GIRLS: 3RD COMBINED: 3RD</p>	<p>100 BREASTSTROKE 3RD: ISABEL HOOVER 7TH: DELILAH HERNANDEZ</p>
	<p>400 FREESTYLE RELAY GIRLS A: 2ND- LILY HELTON, LILLY COLLINS, ISABEL HOOVER, REESE JONES</p>

The UCHS swim team competed in their last regular meet of the season on Saturday, Jan. 20 at Tallulah Falls. The team finished third overall combined with some incredible individual finishes, including Lily Helton taking first in the 200 freestyle and Nicholas Nushtayev first in the 100 freestyle. Congratulations on a great season Panther swimmers. The UCHS Swim Team is coached by Kelly Helton and assistant Megan Foster. The team includes Cooper Allen, Wyatt Chandler, Lilly Collins, Lily Helton, Delilah Hernandez, Isabel Hoover, Reese Jones, Sophia Licavoli, Andrew Nushtayev, Nicholas Nushtayev, Samantha Odom, Cole Orlando and Zoie Parmely.

2024 Soccer Schedule

DATE	OPPONENT	LOCATION	TEAM	TIME
February 5, 2024	Coahulla Creek	Home	MaxPreps Link	5:00G/ 7:00B
February 9, 2024	Lumpkin County - Indians	Home		5:30 / 7:30 PM
February 13, 2024	Pickens County - Dragons	Away		5:30 / 7:30 PM
February 16, 2024	Gilmer County - Bobcats	Away		5:30 / 7:30 PM
February 19, 2024	Chestatee	Away		5:30 / 7:30 PM
February 21, 2024	Fannin - Rebels	Home		5:30 / 7:30 PM
February 29, 2024	Athens Academy - Spartans	Home		5:30/7:30 PM
March 8, 2024	Providence Christian - Storm	Home		5:30/7:30
March 11, 2024	Pickens - Dragons	Home	Boys Only	5:30 PM
March 12, 2024	Rabun - Wildcats	Home		5:30/7:30 PM
March 15, 2024	Banks County - Leopards (R) 969 Historic Homer Hwy, Homer, GA 30547	Away		5:30/7:30 PM
March 19, 2024	East Jackson - Eagles (R)	Home		5:30/7:30 PM
March 22, 2024	Fellowship Christian - Paladins (R) 10965 Woodstock Rd, Roswell, GA 3007	Away		5:30/7:30
March 26, 2024	Dawson - Tigers	Away		5:30/7:30 PM
April 9, 2024	White - Warriors	Away		5:30/7:30

Mountain Gymnastics Center's 2023-24 season gets underway in Woodstock

Woodstock - Blairsville's Mountain Gymnastics Center (MGC) participated in meets in November and December -- beginning with the Turkey Tumble in Woodstock on Nov. 15.

Shaylyne Davis placed first all-around for Level 5 in Woodstock with a score of 35.7, finishing first in two events, the bars and beam, with respective scores of 9.15 and 8.6. She also placed third in the vault (8.9) and floor (9.05).

Addison Harkins finished first in the beam event with an 8.65 and second on bars with an 8.9 to finish fourth all-around with a 35.325.

Addyson Lee logged top-five finishes on beam (fourth), bars and floor.

In Diamond level competition, Emma Schuette finished third all-around at 36.025 behind a second-place performance (8.9) on bars.

In USA Gold competition, Kylee Coggins finished fifth on bars and beam.

In December, MGC competed at the Winter Warm-Up meet in Dahlonega. Results will be available in a future edition of the North Georgia News.

Mountain GYMNASTICS CENTER

(706) 745-3325

Union County Recreation Department

Baseball, Softball, and T-ball Registration

For Ages 5-14
The age you are September 1, 2024 is the age group you play in.

Age Group	Regular Reg. Ends	Late Reg. Ends	Fee:
9/10 yr olds	February 2nd	February 9th	\$80
11/12 yr olds	February 2nd	February 9th	\$80
13/14 yr olds	February 2nd	February 9th	\$80
5/6 yr olds	March 1st	March 8th	\$65
7/8 yr olds	March 1st	March 8th	\$65

Registration is open to both boys and girls. Late registration is an additional \$20. 9/10- and 11/12-year-olds will have evaluations 3/2, weather permitting. Registration can be completed online at unioncountyga.gov, or in person at the Union County Recreation Department located at 519 Industrial Blvd. If you need any additional information, please call 706-439-6074.