

Sports

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Georgia's best no match for 12U Lady Panthers

By Todd Forrest
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Cleveland - The Union County's 12U girls' basketball team's firepower was on full display over the weekend, winning a second 12U state title in six years with four blowout victories at White County.

Offensively, the Lady Panthers were one of only two teams to top 50 points in three different games. And when it came time to turn it up on the other end of the floor, a smothering full-court pressure defense added to their opponent's frustration. In a 52-5 win over Manchester, Union County didn't allow a point over the final three-plus quarters of play.

Led by head coach Meg Henry and assistant Megan Brown, the Lady Panthers squad includes Kamryn Brown, Mya Jordan, Elle Munn, Scout Henry, Lyla Price, Hailey Marshall, Miya Totherow, Kinsley Kendrick, Lennon Ellis and Bristol Davis.

Lady Panthers 58, White County 36 - Totherow led all scorers with 25 points, and Union County put the host team away with an 18-0 run to begin the second half.

The Lady Panthers jumped out to early leads of 9-2 and 11-4, but White County kept it close at 14-10 after one period. Still on top 20-16 in the second, Union County opened up some breathing room at 30-16 courtesy of a 10-0 run. One Totherow free throw accounted for all of Union's offense over the final 2 minutes as the Warriors remained within striking distance at 31-20 entering the break.



Miya Totherow (22) uses the finger roll vs. Fitzgerald. Photo/Todd Forrest

Totherow scored 15 of her game-high 25 during the first two quarters; Davis added six, and Brown and Marshall had four apiece at halftime.

Marshall and Totherow poured in 8 points each in the third as Union broke things open at 49-20 before holding a 51-26 edge heading to the fourth.

Marshall finished with 12 points, Davis had eight, Brown scored seven and Henry added 6 points. Totherow and Brown connected on one 3-point field goal.

Lady Panthers 48, Fitzgerald 32 - In its closest

contest of the tourney, Union County held a 26-18 halftime advantage before pulling away at 41-24 after three.

The Lady Panthers extended its margin to 46-26 near the 5:30 mark of the third before putting it in cruise control during their semifinal victory over the Purple Hurricanes.

Union jumped out to an 8-0 lead and held an 8-4 edge after one. Henry and Totherow hit from downtown in the second, then Totherow added another trey in the third, and Davis hit from deep in the fourth as the Lady Panthers seized control after the break.



Scout Henry (11) takes the ball away from a Gilmer player during Friday's pool play. Photo/Todd Forrest

Totherow finished with a game-high 14 points; Davis scored 9 points and Ellis had eight. Brown added 6 points and Marshall chipped in a free throw.

Lady Panthers 52, Manchester 5 - Union made quick work of Manchester in the opening round of Saturday's tournament play, holding the Blue Devils scoreless over the final three quarters.

Manchester connected on a trey and two free throws in the first quarter but surrendered 26 points to the Lady Panthers over the first 8 minutes. Union County stretched its lead to

38-5 at the break and led 46-5 after three.

Totherow poured in a game-high 15 points -- seven coming at the charity stripe. Henry scored 9 points, Brown had eight and Marshall chipped in six.

Kendrick and Munn had 4 points apiece; Davis, Ellis and Jordan scored two each.

Lady Panthers 62, Gilmer 23 - Union County overcame a slow start in Friday's pool play competition before turning it on in the second frame.

Clinging to an 8-7 advantage late in the first, the Lady

Panthers used a 27-8 outburst to mount a 35-15 lead at the intermission behind Brown's 12 first-half points. Union extended its margin to 53-21 as Totherow delivered 10 in the third to finish with a game-high 14 points.

Brown ended the night with a dozen, Davis scored 10 and Henry had nine. Kendrick and Marshall added 6 points apiece. Ellis and Jordan had two; Munn hit one free throw.

The 12U basketball team would like to thank the Union County Recreation Department, the community, their friends and family for their support.



Kamryn Brown drives the baseline vs. Gilmer. Photo/Todd Forrest



Lennon Ellis battles to extend a possession vs. White. Photo/Todd Forrest



Bristol Davis at the foul line vs. White County. Photo/Todd Forrest



Hailey Marshall (13) and teammates fight for a board. Photo/Todd Forrest



Kinsley Kendrick for 3 vs. Fitzgerald. Photo/Todd Forrest



Elle Munn attempts a free throw vs. Gilmer. Photo/Todd Forrest

Soccer: Fourth-ranked Panthers rally past Athens Academy

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Athens - The No. 4 Panthers (6-1, 1-0) collected a vital Region 8-AA victory at Athens Academy on Thursday, March 2, erasing a 1-0 halftime deficit behind a pair of late goals.

Juniors Benton Gregory and Zuriel Mancillas provided the offense in Union County's sixth-consecutive win following its season-opening loss at Class AAA's fourth-ranked Coahulla Creek.

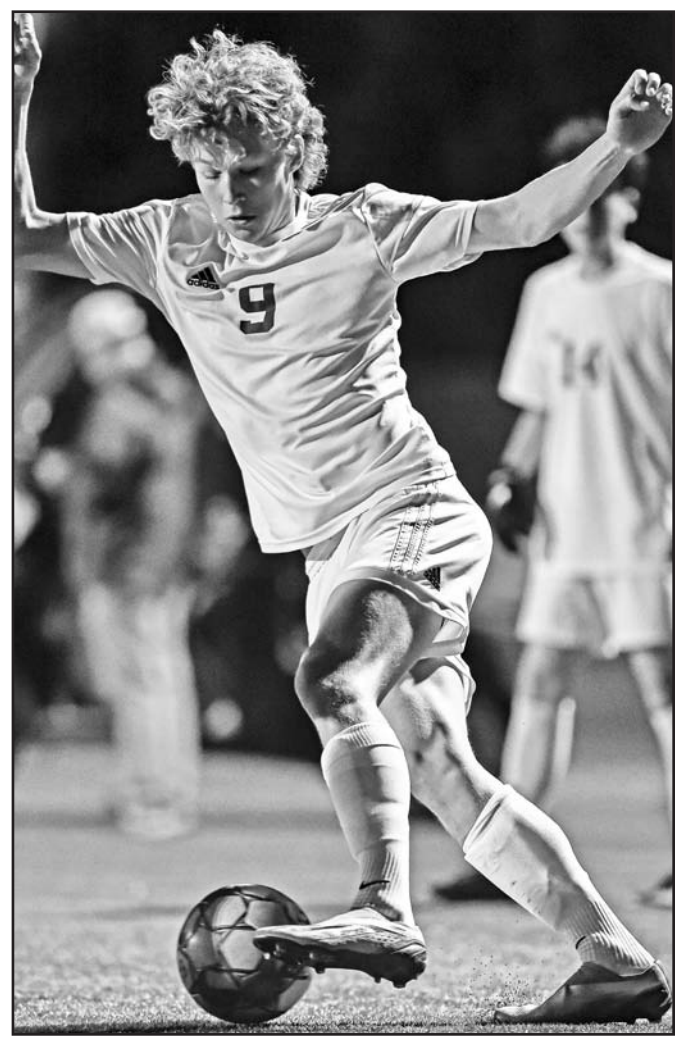
After Gregory's equalizer in the 47th minute, Mancillas blasted a shot off the keeper's fingertips during the 74th minute to send the Panthers home with a 2-1 victory.

Union's go-ahead goal was credited to Gregory on the stat sheet after Mancillas' score went unnoticed by the referee, despite Mancillas' shot clearly breaking the plane. With play still live, the Spartans' keeper batted the shot back into the field of play where Gregory erased any doubt by putting it into the back of the net.

Mancillas and fellow junior Evan Bohms had one assist each for Union County. The Lady Panthers



The Lady Panthers are looking to halt a three-game winless streak on Tuesday vs. Gilmer. Photo/Todd Forrest (2-4-1) suffered a 10-0 loss at No. 6 Athens Academy while losing junior three-year starter Ariel McCarter to injury. She is expected to miss at least two more weeks. Union County hosts Gilmer on Tuesday before heading back on the road to face Providence Christian in another region matchup. The Providence men (6-3) enter the week ranked No. 2 in Class AA; the Providence girls (4-4)



Benton Gregory is enjoying a breakout junior season. Photo/Todd Forrest

are currently eighth in AA. The Gilmer men own a 3-2 record; the Lady Bobcats are 3-1.

Both girls' matches this week kick off at 5 p.m. with the guys to follow.

Track: Union County opens 2023 with solid showing at Rabun County

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Tiger - Union County collected 11 gold medals at its season-opening track-and-field meet at Rabun County on Wednesday, March 1.

Freshman Lola Hunter and senior Sam Page recorded a pair of first-place finishes, with Hunter winning the 800 and 1600-meter events. Page came out on top in the 110M (18.14 seconds) and 300M hurdles (44.04), defeating his teammate Cooper Kluth by more than two seconds in the 300M event. He defeated Rabun's Leo Marin by the same distance in the 110M race.

As for Hunter, her 800M time of 2:36.90 edged Rabun's Mollie Mazarky by two seconds. In the 1600M, her 5:56.86 was 14 seconds better than Rabun's Molly Jo Wright.

Both Union teams won two of its three relay events - the boys taking the 4x100 (46.99) and 4x200 (1:44.28) and the girls winning the 4x200 (2:01.31) and 4x400 (4:40.57) races.

The boys 4x100 team features Jensen Goble, Tyler Grasty, Ethan McBride and Taylor Whitehead. The 4x200 team consists of Cade Dockrey, Daniel McPhee, Braden Plott and Jacob Turner.



Nicolai Gromowa placed first in the high jump at 5-feet, 6 inches. Photo/submitted

The girls 4x200 team members are Ellie Adams, Katie Byers, Sara Patterson and Giovanna Salazar. The 4x400 team features Adams, Hunter, Noel Hyatt and Hannah Kazmierzak.

Adams also took home gold in the 400M race (1:06.37), and Mattie Brookshire (26 feet, 9 inches) won the shot put by nearly two feet over Rabun's

Caroline Bahin.

Nicolai Gromowa's 5-6 in the high jump was good enough for first over teammates Jonah Kluth and McBride. Plott came in first in the long jump at 18-9, defeating Stephens County's Jonah Swinton (18-3) and Jeremiah Scott (17-9). UCHS teammates Dockrey (17-3) and Gromowa (16-9) placed fourth and fifth, respectively.

Other Union County girls' top-five finishers included Adams (third in 800M); Abby Barrett (fifth in triple jump); Byers (second in high jump, fourth in 100M hurdles); Avery Hussion (fifth in long jump); Hyatt (third in 400M and high jump); Kazmierzak (fifth in high jump); Linley Jones (second in 300M hurdles and long jump, third in triple



Eli Underwood in the discus throw. Photo/submitted

jump, fifth in 100M hurdles); Ava Loyd (fifth in 100M); Patterson (fourth in high jump, fifth in 300M hurdles); Katie Payne (third in 300M hurdles); Natalie Payne (fourth in 1600M; fifth in 800M); Salazar (fourth in long jump); Lydia Wagner (fifth in 1600M).

Boys top-fives included Thomas Gary (fifth in 800M); Grasty (second in triple jump,

fourth in 100M); Cooper Kluth (third in triple jump); Jonah Kluth (fifth in 200M); Lane Lance (second in discus); Zander Rotko (second in 400M, third in 200M); Turner (fourth in 300M hurdles); Whitehead (second in 200M); Eli Underwood (third in discus, fourth in shot put).

Union County travels to Fannin County on Tuesday.

Baseball: Union County blanked by Dawson, Lumpkin; hosts Gilmer on Friday

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The Panthers dropped a pair of five-inning contests last week, falling 10-0 at Lumpkin County, then suffering a 13-0 home loss to Dawson County before rain washed out Friday's home rivalry showdown with Fannin County.

Panthers 0, Dawson County 13 - Four fielding errors and a combined 0-for-11 day from the 1-5 spots in the lineup doomed Union County in its Wednesday, March 1 loss to Dawson. Freshman Gunnar Akins tossed four innings in the start, striking out five, issuing two walks and hitting two Tigers.

In all, Dawson County touched Akins for eight hits and nine earned runs during the southpaw's 79-pitch outing.

Sophomore Kaden Combs surrendered two hits and two unearned runs during his 26-pitch fifth frame. All four Union County hits came from the 6-9 hitters, highlighted by Combs' fourth-inning double. Lane Haney followed with a base hit to left, but the Panthers left runners stranded at the corners.

Jordan Gilliam led off the fifth with a single to center before Dawson County retired the next three Panthers.

Moses Stephens opened the third by lining a base hit into left field, and Maddox Patton reached via a one-out error and then stole second, putting Union County in business. However, the next two Panthers went down swinging and Dawson took an 8-0 advantage into the fourth.

Akins retired the first two Tigers he faced but back-to-back two-out hits spotted Dawson a 1-0 lead after an inning. Akins worked a 1-2-3 second, and Eli Sosens-



Freshman Gunnar Akins deals during the second inning of last week's game vs. Dawson County. Photo/Todd Forrest

ky walked and swiped second in Union's half of the frame. Once again, consecutive strikeouts left a Panther in scoring position, allowing Dawson to break things open via a seven-run third.

Akins fanned the leadoff man in the third, but things quickly went south following two doubles, two walks and a pair of hit batters.

Holton Fleming added a stolen base for Union County.

Panthers 0, Lumpkin County 10 - The Indians got five in the first and three in the fourth during a mercy-rule-shortened win over Union County on Tuesday, Feb. 28.

Senior Will Duncan accounted for Union's only hit,

while Hunter Fleming, Eli Gwynn and Sosensky each walked. Hunter Fleming stole a base.

Gwynn started on the hill and allowed eight hits and eight earned over three frames. Hunter Fleming gave up one earned run and two hits in one inning.

Union County travels to Gilmer on Tuesday at 5:30 p.m. The Panthers will host Gilmer on Friday at 5:30 p.m.

Union County opens Region 8-AA action next week against Fellowship Christian. The Panthers travel to Fellowship on Tuesday, March 14 before hosting the Paladins in a Friday, March 17 double-header.



Sophomore Kaden Combs doubles during the fourth inning vs. Dawson County. Photo/Todd Forrest

12U Boys second at District tourney



12U Boys Head Coach Shorty Hughes; assistants Ricky Tanner and Tim Murphy. Players: Logan Adams, Sawyer Gaylord, Mason Hopple, Jaylen Howard, Kason Hughes, William Hughes, Jared Jones, Dalton Murphy, Isaiah Stepp and Dawson Tanner.