

Sports

See the Sports Section at nganews.com

Panthers finish as runner-up at Reinhart 7-on-7 tourney

North Hall places first, needs six OTs to take down Union Co.

By Todd Forrest
Sports Editor
sports@nganews.com

The Panthers came within a whisker of taking home first place at last Thursday's Reinhart University 7-on-7 tournament, held on a hot and humid afternoon in Waleska.

Union County finished 2-1 in pool play, earning the No. 2 seed and a first-round bye during the championship tournament. However, they ultimately lost the title game to North Hall after an intense battle that required six overtimes to settle.

"I think we had a pretty good showing," said Union County first-year head coach Rob Stowe. "(7-on-7) is not real football, don't get me wrong, but I like the fact that we stood toe-to-toe with North Hall and didn't back down, even when they tried to push us around a little bit."

In the championship matchup against North Hall's first team (the Trojans fielded two squads at the event), both defenses held strong, preventing any scores on the first two possessions for each squad, resulting in a 4-4 tie.

After North Hall finally broke through with a touchdown, Union found themselves facing a 10-4 deficit. However, the Panthers responded when Kamden Kendrick connected with Chetley Cox for a touchdown with just over five minutes left in the game.

But two plays later, North Hall regained the lead with a score, making it 16-10. Nevertheless, Union drove deep into North Hall's territory and, on the final play of regulation, Kendrick hit Mikey Davis in the endzone, tying the score at 16-16. Unfortunately, the Panthers' extra-point attempt failed, sending the game into overtime.

During the extra session, each offense took turns from the 5-yard line with both squads failing to complete a pass during their first three attempts.

In the fourth overtime, North Hall completed a pass to a receiver streaking across the back of the endzone, but the receiver failed to get a foot inbounds after coming down with the leaping grab. Union's attempt resulted in an interception, but moments later, linebacker Micah Wallace swatted away a North Hall



Rising junior receiver Chetley Cox comes down with a tough over-the-shoulder grab before racing to the endzone during Union County's win over North Hall No. 2. Photo/Todd Forrest

throw in the fifth OT.

However, following a Panthers' incompletion in the sixth overtime, North Hall finally found paydirt, ending the contest and taking home first place.

"We're still installing a new offense and have only gotten in about 50% of our playbook," Stowe said. "We are hampered a little bit at the moment with Cade Dockrey's hand injury. Right now, Kamden Kendrick is getting every snap at quarterback, which is really helping him and his growth process."

Union earned a spot in the finals by defeating the third-seeded Georgia Knights Christian Community College, a prep school based out of Stockbridge.

The Panthers picked up a 24-8 victory after a touchdown pass from Kendrick to Dom Tarbert and a Bentley Rich point-after spotted Union a 9-3 lead.

Another interception kept the Knights in the game at 11-6, but the defense forced consecutive three-and-outs, bookending a Union three-and-out, for a 15-8 advantage.

Kendrick blew things open on the ensuing Panthers'

possession, finding Cox on a 40-yard touchdown pass. Wallace put an exclamation point on Union's victory, picking off a pass in the final seconds.

The Panthers opened pool play with a 17-9 win over Johns Creek, beginning with a Davis touchdown grab and a Haze Burnett PAT. Johns Creek answered with nine consecutive points but Union went back on top when Kendrick hit Burnett (PAT failed) and the defense came up with a critical late stop.

"Defensively, I think we grew a lot on Thursday," Stowe said. "Again, it 7-on-7, so we know it's a pass every down so you don't have to worry about the element of the run, but it was still good for our guys to defend multiple formations, motions and different concepts. But I was really pleased with the defense. I think we came away from the tournament feeling like defense could be a strength this year."

Union narrowly defeated North Hall's second team by a score of 16-14, successfully denying a late 2-point conversion attempt after the Trojans

closed the gap within two.

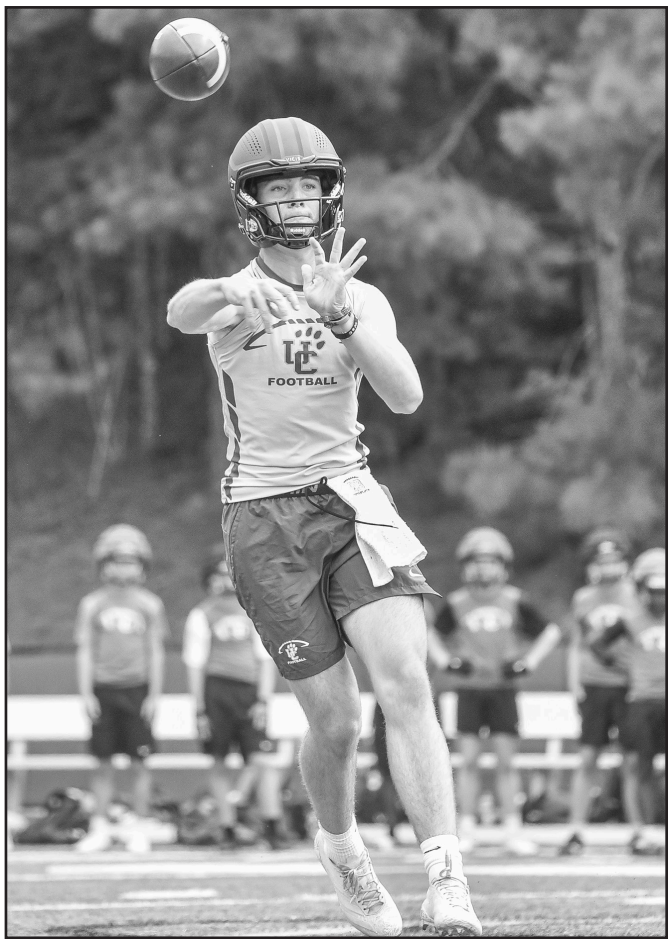
The game was tied at 2-2 early on when Cox came down with a jump ball and went untouched into the endzone, giving the Panthers their first lead at 9-2. North Hall then responded with a touchdown, but their unsuccessful PAT attempt left the score at 9-8.

Later in the game, Union faced a crucial fourth down that could have resulted in a 2-point stop and the lead for North Hall. However, senior Tyler Parker hauled in a pivotal touchdown catch from Kendrick, extending Union's lead to 16-8.

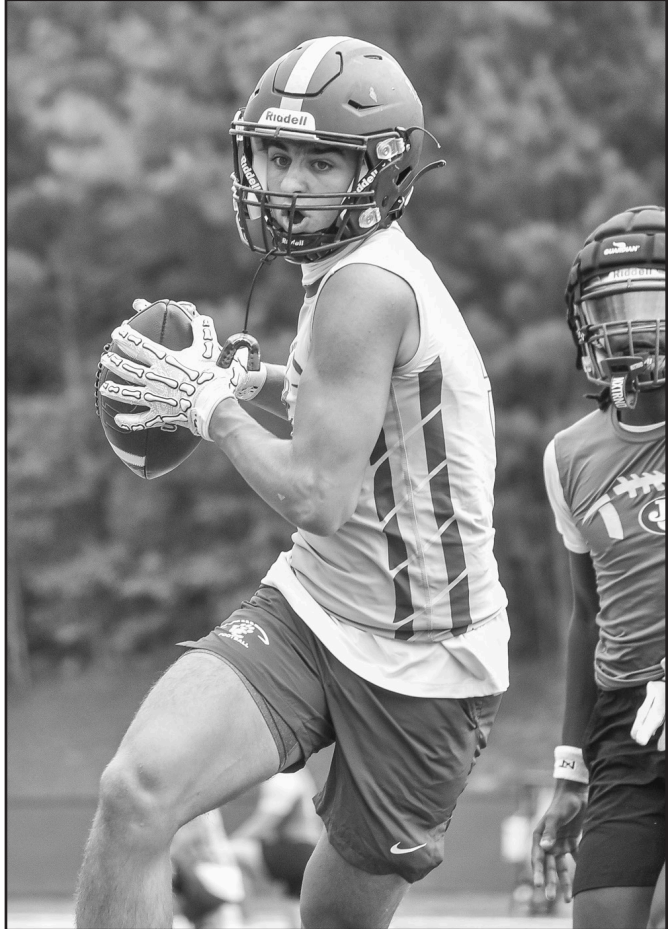
In the final pool play matchup, Union County faced North Hall's first team with the No. 1 seed on the line. The Trojans secured a 19-8 victory, aided by a late touchdown pass after Union trailed 12-9.

Both teams struggled offensively, with a pair of interceptions awarding North Hall an early 6-2 lead. The Trojans' first touchdown drive was bolstered by a questionable pass interference call,

See Reinhart 7-on-7, Page 9A



Rising sophomore QB Kamden Kendrick during Union County's 7-on-7 win over Johns Creek at Reinhart University. Photo/Todd Forrest



Rising sophomore receiver Mikey Davis secures Union County's first touchdown of the day at Reinhart. Photo/Todd Forrest



Nobody is catching rising senior WR Tyler Parker after seeing nothing but open field in front of him vs. North Hall No. 1. Photo/Todd Forrest



Head coach Rob Stowe (L) and offensive coordinator Jay Stowe (R) last week at Reinhart University. Photo/Todd Forrest

UC VOLLEYBALL YOUTH

VOLLEYBALL

CAMP

2025

IMPROVE YOUR SKILLS AND HAVE FUN!!

JULY 14-16TH 9-11:30AM

WHAT TO EXPECT

- Age appropriate instruction
- Skill development
- Team building exercises
- Friendly Matches
- Private Coaching Session
- Fun!!

AGE GROUP

2ND-8TH

GRADE

Registration Fee

\$75 INCLUDES

A SHIRT

QR CODE

CAMP LOCATION

Union County Elementary NEW gym

REGISTRATION

ucpanthervolleyball@gmail.com

Reinhart 7-on-7... continued from Page 8A

which led to a touchdown just two plays later, putting Union in a 12-2 deficit.

However, Kendrick responded quickly by connecting with Parker on the Panthers' next play, cutting the deficit to 12-9. Unfortunately, the Panthers couldn't make a crucial defensive stop, and North Hall added a late touchdown as time expired.

On Tuesday, June 24, Union County attended a padded camp at Habersham Central, getting off to a slow start in their practice sessions vs. Chestatee and North Hall. However, the Panthers finished strong with four touchdowns in 10 minutes vs. Habersham, while the defense allowed only one over the same span.

"We didn't get off the bus very well against Chestatee," Stowe said. "They run a unique offense that we didn't have time to prepare for, but the disappointing part was how North Hall pushed us around. But I fell like we finished well against Habersham Central, so we were able to leave feeling good about something."

This week marks the GHSA's mandatory dead week, but Union will resume off-

season workouts on Monday, July 7.

The Panthers will travel to Calhoun on July 15 to practice with Gordon Central and a few teams from Tennessee in an event similar to last week's padded camp at Habersham Central.

"It will be a bunch of teams that we know nothing about," Stowe said. "Which is good as we get closer to the season, because it allows you to fine tune what you're trying to do against teams you're not going to see during the season."

Conditioning gets underway on Monday, July 21. The team will be in full pads on July 28.

Union scrimmages at Chestatee on Aug. 8 and then opens the season with a bye week before hosting Gilmer on Aug. 22.

"We're making strides and we're learning from it all: The good, the bad and the ugly. The important thing is, our young men are starting to play the game with passion all the time - not just every once in a while. As we get closer to doing that, we're going to have more success down the road."



Rising sophomore linebacker Micah Wallace breaks up a pass attempt vs. North Hall. Photo/Todd Forrest



Rising junior running back Bentley Rich during Union County's semifinal win over the Georgia Knights Christian Community College. Photo/Todd Forrest



Rising sophomore receiver Haze Burnett makes a grab during Union County's win over Johns Creek last Thursday at Reinhart. Photo/Todd Forrest

UCHS Softball Schedule 2025		
August 1st	Burke VS Union	5:00
August 2nd	Rabun County VS Union	1:00
August 4th	Union @ Oconee County DH	4:00 and 6:00
August 5th	Union @ Gilmer JV 4:30 Varsity	6:00
August 7th	BASA VS Union	5:30
August 9th	Union @ Providence Christian Diamond Day Union vs Grayson 12:00 Union vs Providence Christian 2:00	
August 11th	Union @ Rabun JV 4:30 Varsity	6:00
August 14th	Union @ Rockmart	5:30
August 15th	Gilmer @ Union JV only	4:30
August 19th	North Murray VS Union	5:30
August 21st	Union @ LFO	5:30
August 23rd	Tallah Falls VS Union	11:00am Varsity
August 25th	Rabun VS Union JV	5:00
August 26th	Sonoraville VS Union	5:00 JV to Follow
August 28th	Union @ Ringgold	5:30
September 3rd	North Hall VS Union	5:30
September 4th	Murray VS Union	5:30
September 8th	Union @ North Cobb Christian JV 4pm Varsity 5:30	
September 9th	Coahulla Creek VS Union	5:30
September 11th	Rockmart VS Union	5:30
September 16th	Union @ North Murray	5:30
September 18th	LFO VS Union	5:30
September 23rd	Union @ Sonoraville	5:00 JV to follow
September 25th	Ringgold VS Union	5:30
September 30th	Union @ Murray	5:30
October 2nd	North Cobb Christian VS Union	5:30
October 6th	Gilmer VS Union	5:00
October 7th	Union @ Coahulla Creek	5:30

UCHS Cross Country Schedule 2025		
Aug 23	TCEC Jaguar Run	Murphy, NC
Aug 28	Home Meet	UCHS
Sept 4	North Hall Invitational	Hall County
Sept 12	North GA XC Invitational	UNG Course Gainesville GA
Sept 16	North Georgia HS XC Championship	Gilmer County
Sept 20	Wingfoot XC Classic	Cartersville, GA
Oct 2	Mountain Invitational	Unicoi State Park
Oct 10	Pickin n Grinnin	Pickens County
Nov 1	XC Sectionals	UCHS!!!
Nov 8	State @ Carrollton	12:30 - boys / 1:15 - girls

Union 2025 UNION FOOTBALL SCHEDULE	
VS. GILMER CO. AUGUST 22ND	VS. LFO LAKEVIEW-FORT-OGLETHORPE SEPTEMBER 26TH
@ FANNIN CO. AUGUST 29TH	VS. RINGGOLD OCTOBER 3RD
@ MURRAY CO. SEPTEMBER 5TH	VS. COALHULLA CREEK OCTOBER 17TH
VS. ROCKMART SEPTEMBER 12TH	@ SONORAVILLE OCTOBER 24TH
@ N. MURRAY CO. SEPTEMBER 19TH	@ NO. COBB CHRISTIAN OCTOBER 30TH