

Sports

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Volleyball: Panthers honor seniors, visit Redan Tuesday

Union handles Rabun on Senior Night, wins one at region tourney

By Todd Forrest
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Union County (16-18) defeated Rabun County in straight sets during its Monday, Oct. 7 Senior Night match ahead of the Region 7-AA tournament, where the Panthers beat North Murray but suffered narrow losses to Coahulla Creek and Sonoraville.

Union will open the Class AA State Tournament on Tuesday, Oct. 15 on the road at Stone Mountain's Redan High School.

Panthers 3, Rabun County 0 (25-15, 25-15, 25-14) - Union County took care of business on Senior Night, easily handling Rabun County to close out the regular season.

During the first set, the Panthers raced out to advantages of 4-0 and 15-2 before Rabun climbed within 17-11. With Rabun threatening to make it a game, senior Mallory Rouse and junior Mady Adams sparked Union County to four of the next five points and a 21-12 lead.

After cruising to another 25-15 win in set two, Union County fell into a 3-0 hole in the third but turned it on to outscore Rabun 25-11 the rest of the way.

Seniors Lily Brookshire and Katelyn Brown led the way with 7 kills; Rouse had six, sophomore Sofia Foster had 4 kills; senior Charlei Robinson added three. Juniors Reese Jones and Adams had one each.

Brown had 7 aces, Brookshire had five, Rouse had four and Jones had two. Sophomore Payton Murphy and freshman Samantha Combs added one ace apiece.

Adams had 3 blocks; Foster and freshman Livia Hanev had one block. Brown



UChS volleyball seniors (L-R): Katelyn Brown, Charlei Robinson, Mallory Rouse and Lily Brookshire. Photo/Todd Forrest

had four; Foster finished with 2 kills. Brown had 2 aces and Brookshire added one.

Foster recorded a block and Brown had 15 digs. Brookshire ended up with 11 digs, Robinson had 10; Jones finished with 8 and Murphy had seven.

Panthers 1, Coahulla Creek 2 - (25-23, 25-15, 15-7) Union County took set one of the Region 7-AA tournament opener vs. No. 2 seed Coahulla Creek on Tuesday, Oct. 8 before dropping the final two sets to fall into the loser's bracket.

Brookshire notched a team-high 7 kills; Robinson had six; Brown and Rouse

had four; Foster finished with 2 kills. Brown had 2 aces and Brookshire added one.

Foster recorded a block and Brown had 15 digs. Brookshire ended up with 11 digs, Robinson had 10; Jones finished with 8 and Murphy had seven.

Jones led Union County with 13 assists and Brown had seven.

Panthers 2, North Murray 0 - (25-14, 25-11) Union continued region tournament play at Sonoraville on Thursday, Oct. 10, easily taking care of North Murray in the opening match.

The Panthers stormed ahead 4-1 and 6-2 in the opener before the Mountaineers inched within two at 6-4. It was all Union the rest of the way, opening up margins of 10-4, 14-5 and 17-7.

North Murray closed within 18-13 until Brown's kill halted the run. Later, Brown delivered again for a 22-13 edge and Brookshire's ace made it 23-13.

The Mountaineers held a brief 2-1 edge early in set two but Brown and sophomore Emmy Kight moved Union back in front. Consecutive aces from Robinson and another kill by Brown built a 6-2 lead.

Two kills and a block from Foster helped extend the gap to 12-5 and a Robinson kill built a double-digit lead at 18-8.

Kight, Brown and Rouse had Union County in control at 23-8 before North Murray rattled off three straight. But with her team up 24-11, Brookshire finished the match and sent Union to the next round to face Sonoraville.

Brookshire and Brown had 6 kills apiece; Foster, Robinson and Rouse all recorded four. Kight finished with 2 kills.

Robinson had 3 aces, Brown had two, and Rouse and Combs added one. Foster's 2 blocks led the Panthers.

Brookshire had 7 digs, Brown finished with 5 and Robinson added four.

Jones had 12 assists and Brown chipped in 10.

Panthers 1, Sonoraville 2 (25-21, 19-25, 15-17) Union took the opening set but couldn't protect an 11-6 cushion during the third set in a loss at Sonoraville.

Union County never trailed in the first set, holding early leads of 4-0 and 13-8. Sonoraville tied things up at 14-14, 15-15 and 16-16 but Foster, Robinson and Brown accounted for the next four Panthers points and a 20-16 edge.

The Phoenix climbed within two at 20-18, but Jones and Robinson extended the margin back to four. Foster's block granted Union a 23-20 lead and a Sonoraville service error made it 24-21.

Union erased an early 6-2 deficit in set two, storming ahead 8-7 courtesy of Foster's block and Brown's ace.

Jones and Brookshire grew the Panthers' lead to 15-12 but Sonoraville rattled off six straight and never trailed

again.

Union County led most of the third set, owning margins of 3-0, 9-4 and 11-6.

Sonoraville scored the next six for a 12-11 edge, but a service error and a Brookshire kill provided the visitors a 13-12 lead. Tied at 13 moments later, Brookshire spotted Union a 14-13 advantage, and then, Rouse's kill broke a 14-14 tie, before Sonoraville rattled off three straight to advance to the region semis.

Brookshire and Brown led Union with 7 kills each; Robinson had six; Jones and Rouse added three apiece; Foster had 2 kills.

Brookshire and Brown had 2 aces; Jones had Robinson finished with one.

Foster had 3 blocks; Brown and Robinson both turned away one shot.

Brown and Robinson recorded 10 digs; Brookshire had nine. Jones finished with 12 assists; Brown had 10 assists.

Up next: Union County travels to Redan on Tuesday, Oct. 15 in the opening round of the Class AA Public State Tournament.

Despite finishing as the No. 2 seed in Region 6 and earning an automatic home playoff game, Redan came in five spots (25th) behind Union County in the Class AA post-season power rankings.

The Raiders own a 9-9 record on the year and have won nine of 12 since starting 0-6. However, eight of Redan's nine wins have come against teams with losing records. For the year, those eight squads have a combined record of 21-89.

Redan's lone notable win came over an 18-2 Miller Grove squad, who returned the favor by knocking off the Raiders 2-0 in the region championship, giving them two wins in three meetings vs. Redan.

The Raiders are led by 5-foot-5 senior Eden McCarthy (41 kills, 25 aces and 4 blocks).

Others to watch are 5-7 junior Jordan Gray (35 kills, 21 aces, 13 assists, 4 blocks); 5-3 junior Kemani Thomas (87 assists, 26 kills, 10 aces); 5-7 senior Jordan Howze (21 kills, 6 aces).



Senior Mallory Rouse serves during Union County's region tournament match at Sonoraville last week. Photo/Todd Forrest



Charlei Robinson during Union County's Senior Night victory over Rabun County. Photo/Todd Forrest

Softball: Union County enters postseason off 12-4 win over Ringgold

Lady Panthers open Class AA State Tournament Wednesday at Shaw

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The Lady Panthers (12-17) are advancing to their seventh straight State tournament after wrapping up the regular season with a 12-4 win over Ringgold on Oct. 9.

Earlier in the week, Union County dropped a 5-1 contest to Coahulla Creek.

Union County opens the Class AA public school State Tournament on Wednesday, Oct. 16 at Columbus' Shaw High School.

Lady Panthers 12, Ringgold 4 - Trailing 4-0 in the third, Union County scored 10 in the third and 2 in the fifth to defeat the Tigers in five innings.

The Lady Panthers needed just 7 hits (one extra-base hit) to amass 12 runs, capitalizing on three Ringgold errors and swiping four bags.

Junior Delaney Moses led the charge with 3 RBIs, two runs and two steals during a 1-for-2 day. Senior Sloane Dyer went 2 for 3 with 2 runs, 2 RBIs and a stolen base. Sophomore Izzy Anthros finished 2 for 3 with a run and an RBI.

Freshman Addison Whitener picked up the win in the pitcher's circle, throwing 3 2/3 innings of 1-hit softball in relief of fellow freshman Lexi Davenport, who allowed 2 earned runs on 3 hits over 1 1/3 innings.

Ringgold led off the game with a solo homer, then added three more in the second inning via a single, consecutive doubles and a Union error.

After Whitener worked a scoreless third, the Lady Panthers broke out with 10 runs in the bottom half, beginning with Reese Kelley's single and a Mikala Souther hit-by-pitch.

With two aboard, Moses



Senior Jordane Mullanack homered in a 5-1 loss at Coahulla Creek. She ends the regular season with at least a share of the team lead in six offensive categories. Photo/Todd Forrest

reached on an error that scored Kelley. Anthros loaded the bases with a single, and an error off the bat of Whitener brought in a Union run.

Another Ringgold error, this time, courtesy of Jordane Mullanack's grounder to short, made it a 4-3 game, and Dyer's two-run single to center put Union County on top 5-4.

Following two quick outs, Kelley returned to the plate and loaded the bags with a walk. Souther followed with an RBI walk and Moses' double cleared the bases. Anthros' second single of the inning scored Moses and spotted the Lady Panthers a 10-4 advantage.

Whitener followed with a shut-down 1-2-3 fourth, allow-

ing Union County to tack on two more and end the game an inning later via the mercy rule.

The Union fourth began with base hits by Mullanack and Dyer, then Jules Dyer brought home Mullanack with a grounder to short. The 10th run came courtesy of a wild pitch that scored Sloane Dyer.

Whitener's perfect fifth frame ended the game at 12-4.

At the dish, Whitener scored and drove in one during a 0-for-3 day. Jules Dyer went 0 for 3 with an RBI; Kelley scored twice and walked while going 1 for 2; Souther walked, scored twice and drove in another.

Lady Panthers 1, Coahulla Creek 5 - Mullanack

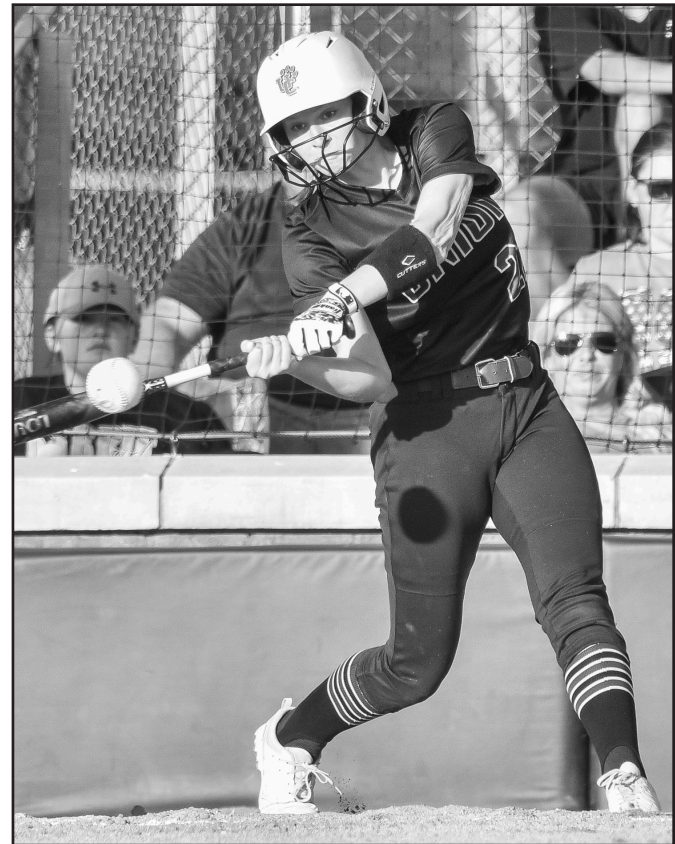
went 2 for 3 with a homer, accounting for half of her team's hits and its only run of the Tuesday, Oct. 8 loss at Coahulla Creek.

Coahulla Creek scored two in the second, one in the third and two in the fifth to build a 5-0 lead. Mullanack's big fly ended the shutout bid with two away in the seventh.

Kelley took the loss, surrendering 3 hits, 4 walks and 3 earned runs over 3 innings. Sophomore Ayla Jamison went 3 innings, giving up 2 hits and 2 earned runs.

Whitener finished 1 for 3 with a stolen base and Souther ended her day 1 for 2.

Union County stranded two runners in the second and



Senior shortstop Reese Kelley scored two runs in Union County's 12-4 win over Ringgold. Photo/Todd Forrest

Coahulla Creek took advantage of three walks in the bottom half to grab a 2-0 lead. A two-run, two-out single in the third bumped the Union deficit to 3-0, then a wild pitch and an error accounted for Coahulla's final two runs.

Season stats: Mullanack finishes the regular season with team-highs in batting average (.360), OPS (.910), SLG (.535), triples (2) and runs (19). Her two homers also tied for the team lead with Moses.

Sloane Dyer's 21 RBIs and 7 stolen bases lead the team. Anthros' .409 OBP and 11 walks are tops on the Lady Panthers. Whitener has a team-best 8 doubles.

In the circle, Anthros

worked 102 1/3 innings, posting a 7-10 record, 142 Ks and a 3.69 ERA.

Up next: Union County travels to Shaw High School to begin the Class AA State Tournament.

Shaw finished as the No. 2 seed from Region 1 with a 15-11 overall record and an 11-3 mark in region play.

Shaw is led by junior Katlyn Moss (.483 BA, 11 doubles), junior Kaiden McBurnett (.419 BA, 5 triples) and sophomore Michayla Bledsoe (.408 BA, 3 HRs).

Moss owns an 11-3 record in the circle with a 5.79 ERA.

Shaw features six players with at least 12 stolen bases.

Mountain Masters Jr Golf hosts Banquet

The Union County Recreation Department partnered with Megan Rowe, Aulli and Tim Fisk, Mike Mashburn and many other volunteers to put on the first ever joint golf program with the private sector.

Commissioner Paris, an avid golfer and sports fan, was super excited to add golf to the many programs the recreation department offers to kids and adults. Thank you, Young Harris Men's Golf team, for helping at our first practice session.

Thank you to Cameron Forrest and Caleb Kelley and the volunteers from Old Union Golf Course. A big shout out to Matt Cook, Golf Pro from Mountain Harbour, and Chatuge Shores Golf Pro Bill Rinaldo and staff for all their help.

It was great to have Coach Phil Meadows back to help with the golf program. Most of all, thank you to the kids for participating and the parents who helped at the events to make this all possible. This is by far one of the best sports to play with family and friends for life.

The Mountain Masters Jr Golf League began their season on Sept. 5 and ran for six weeks on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Twenty-eight kids, from Union County and surrounding counties and homeschoolers, ranging from grades 3-12 participated. The Union County Recreation Department and Butternut Creek Golf Course partnered with golf courses in the tri-county area, Old Union, Chatuge Shores and Mountain Harbour.

We are looking to grow even bigger next year with possible new golf courses and new events.



Union County commissioner Lamar Paris and Megan Rowe.



The Mountain Masters Jr Golf league hosted its banquet at the Union County Community Center last Thursday, Oct. 11.

River City Bank proudly supports Mountain Area Christian Academy Athletics

River City Bank is pleased to announce our support for the Mountain Area Christian Academy (MACA) athletic program. As a steadfast advocate for community engagement and youth programs, River City Bank is committed to empowering young athletes, who are an important part of our community's growth and development.

MACA athletics strives to provide students an opportunity to practice teamwork, strategy, leadership, perseverance, self-control, and humility through competition. For MACA, athletic programs are a way to prepare students with skills and characteristics which will serve them throughout life.

"We are honored to extend our support to MACA Athletics. It is important that we, as a community partner, contribute to their growth and success," said Scott Nanney, Market President in Blairsville.

MACA Athletics is a member of the Georgia Chris-



Scott Nanney, River City Bank President, pictured with MACA athletes. Go Lions!

tian Athletic Association (GCAA) as a Class A school in region one. They offer volleyball, basketball, cheerleading, soccer, and cross-country track. Visit www.macalions.org/athletics for more information.

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ancial solutions for personal and business clients including deposits, loans, treasury management, and brokerage services. We are headquartered at 228 North Second Avenue SW, Rome, GA. For more information, visit www.rivercity.bank. Member FDIC. Equal Housing Lender. (N0ct16.213)CA

UCRD Football: 6th grade undefeated; 2nd and 4th grade in hunt for playoff spot



Parker Dillinger (21) scored three touchdowns -- two rush, one kick return -- during the 6th grade's 32-0 win over East Hall on Saturday. All UCRD teams are back at home this weekend vs. Gilmer. Photo/Todd Forrest



Union County's 4th grade team is 3-2 on the year and sitting in third place in the Mountain Athletic Conference ahead of Saturday's showdown with 4th-place Gilmer. Photo/Todd Forrest



Jakin Wright (12) and Union County's 2nd grade team sit at 3-2 on the year and holds the fourth and final playoff spot in the league entering this Saturday's meeting with 1-3 Gilmer. The Panthers 3rd grade team is 1-4 this fall; the 1st and 5th graders are 0-5. Photo/Shaye Cobb