

Lady Panthers look to get back on track as they host 2nd place Wilkes for Senior Night

By Todd Forrest
North Georgia News
sports@nganews.com

The Lady Panthers (16-6, 6-2) traveled to Social Circle for an 8-AA doubleheader on Sept. 8th, and after 9 errors in two games, came out on the wrong end of a sweep, dropping Union from first to third place in region play.

The first meeting was all Union, holding a 5-1 advantage with two innings to play, until the Lady Redskins took advantage of two errors, while using a pair of bunt singles to cut the Lady Panthers' lead to 5-3.

In the bottom of the seventh, Social Circle continued to roll as Union continued to fold.

With nobody out, the Lady Redskins loaded the bases after Union gift-wrapped all three base runners.

A two-run single tied the game, then an errant throw home allowed the winning run to score.

With a chance to take out their frustrations on the home team in the second contest, the Lady Panthers suffered their first shutout of the season and were mercy-ruled after four innings by a score of 12-0. The 12-run loss marked the first time since 2005, and the first time under Head Coach Jessica Stewart that Union has been mercy-ruled in region play — a streak that spanned 135 games.

The Lady Panthers were able to put Social Circle in the rear view and finish 2-2 against much larger schools, despite committing 16 total errors at the Cherokee County Invitational Tournament in Woodstock, beginning on Sept. 11.

In the first contest, the Lady Panthers fell 6-1 to Max-Preps' 12th ranked team in the nation, the Cherokee Lady Warriors from Canton. Cherokee currently sports a 17-2 overall record with an 8-0 mark in Region 5-AAAAA.

Union recorded its lone run in the second inning but Cherokee scored all six of its runs in the fourth.

The Lady Panthers followed the loss with back-to-back wins over teams that also hail from Region 5-AAAAA. The first win was a 3-0 shutout of Pope (11-1 overall) and then an 8-4 victory over Milton (1-5 in region play). In the final game on Saturday afternoon,



Sophomore Jillian Lawn went deep at Social Circle and has been one of the Lady Panthers' hottest bats of later. Photos/Todd Forrest

Union fell 4-0 to Gilmer, who they defeated earlier in the season.

"I was concerned that the loss at Social Circle would carry over but I think the girls regrouped," Coach Stewart said. "I thought we did fairly well at Woodstock considering we were playing some big schools. I would've liked to went 4-0 but the 2-2 split wasn't a disappointment.

"We played Cherokee who is AAAAAA and ranked and lost 6-1, and also lost to AAAA Gilmer. We beat Pope and Milton who were both good teams.

The Lady Panthers had last week off to make corrections before hosting Washington Wilkes on Tuesday. The Lady Tigers are currently 7-1 in 8-AA and tied with Social Circle for first place. Union needs a sweep to finish in second place in region-play, while a split — or worse — would result in a third place finish and road trips in the Region Semi Finals and the Championship Game, should they advance past the semis.

"I like for the girls to get to see live pitching at least a couple times a week so the week off may effect us some but I hope that we got some of our defensive kinks out in practice last week," Coach Stewart said. "I would love to go into the Region Tournament as the No. 2 seed and get a chance to play in the Region Championship again this year.

Lady Panthers 5 Social Circle 6

Social Circle - Despite outitting the Lady Redskins 9-to-6, Union was unable to hold on to a 5-1 lead, surrendering 5 runs in the final two innings that resulted in a 6-5 walk-off win for Social Circle, who entered the doubleheader in third place in 8-AA.

The Lady Panthers allowed two bunt singles and an error to load the bases in the bottom of the sixth. A ground out to shortstop Kendra Tanner brought in one run but Laken Chambers mowed down the ensuing on three straight pitches for the second out. Un-



Freshman Aladriel Arnold continues to be a tough out while providing solid defense in left field. Photo/Todd Forrest

fortunately, another Union error allowed the Lady Redskins to tack on another run and trim the deficit to 5-3.

The bottom of the seventh opened in similar fashion as two fielding errors, followed by a mental blunder, loaded the bases once again. A single to center brought home the tying run and an overthrow of the catcher on the relay scored the game-winner.

Social Circle drew first blood in the bottom of the first with a leadoff single, two stolen bases, and an RBI ground out made it a 1-0 game.

Union tied the game in the second when sophomore Jillian Lawn blasted the first pitch of the inning from sophomore lefty Kayla Spinks, over the left field fence for a solo homer.

The Lady Panthers put up four more in the third when Lydia Arrowood and Braden Poteete opened the inning with bunt singles. Tanner reached on an error that scored Arrowood and Chambers scored Poteete and Tanner with an opposite field single. Lawn, who drove in Union's first run of the game, would drive in the final run with a sacrifice fly that scored courtesy runner Ellie Garrison.

Chambers got out of trouble in the fourth without any damage following a hit-by-pitch and a double to open the inning.

The Lady Panthers missed an opportunity to put the game away when they couldn't manufacture a run despite an Aladriel Arnold double and Courtney Moose single to put two in scoring position with nobody out.

Chambers struck out five while giving up two earned runs in 6-plus innings of work in the loss.

Lady Panthers 0 Social Circle 12

Social Circle - Union allowed nine hits and five errors during a 12-0 blowout loss at Social Circle.

The home team got a run in each of the first two innings, two runs in the third and eight in the fourth. Meanwhile, the Lady Panthers could only muster one hit off the bat of Arnold.

Lawn reached on a free pass for Union's only other base runner of the contest. Chambers allowed 9 runs but only one was earned. She also gave up 7 hits, a walk, while fanning three. The other three runs belonged to Lawn, who entered with two outs in the fourth.

Lady Panthers 1 Cherokee 6

Woodstock - Against the high powered Lady Warriors, Arrowood finished with a 2-for-3 day, while Lawn

walked and scored Union's only run.

Chambers and Arnold also recorded base hits to round out all of the Lady Panthers' offense.

Chambers went the distance from the circle allowing only one earned run and five hits with three strikeouts.

Lady Panthers 3 Pope 0

Woodstock - Union got a run in the first, one in the fifth, and one in the sixth as they shutout Pope from Class AAAAA.

Chambers tossed a complete game three-hitter without giving up a walk.

Nix and Garrett each had two hits in the game with an RBI going to Nix, Lawn drove in a run with a double.

Sutton singled and Poteete scored a run.

Lady Panthers 8 Milton 4

Woodstock - Garrett, and Kendra Tanner were a wrecking crew.

Garrett was 2-for-4 with 3 RBIs and a double while Kendra Tanner finished 2-for-3 with a run, a double, 2 RBIs, and a pair of walks.

Nix put up some not-so-shabby numbers as well, going 3-for-5 with a run, a double, and an RBI.

Arnold had a 2-for-4 game with an RBI, Lawn was 2-for-4 with a run, Arrowood also finished 2-for-4 with a run.

Junior Channa Carroll went 1-for-2 with 2 runs and an RBI. Poteete and Chambers both singled and Sutton scored a run.

Chambers and Lawn each pitched and only one of their 8 runs were earned. Lawn struck out four in 5.2 innings and Chambers fanned three in 1.1 innings.

Lady Panthers 0 Gilmer County 4

Woodstock - Union could only muster four base hits with Nix, Lawn, Garrett, and Sutton getting one single a piece.

Chambers whiffed 9 in 7 innings without giving up an earned run. The junior right hander scattered six hits and issued one free pass.

NASCAR 2015

By Gerald Hodges/the Racing Reporter

Hamlin wins first Chase Race

JOLIET, Ill. — Denny Hamlin overcame a big hurdle to win Sunday's Sprint Cup race. Hamlin spun on lap 2 of the 267-lap race, after another car ahead of him had lost control. This caused him to go a lap down, but he fought his way back to the front.

He was fourth on the race's last restart with six laps remaining. He passed the leader Kurt Busch during lap 264, and held off Carl Edwards for his first win of the season, which automatically guarantees him a spot in the second round of the Chase.

"I was hoping everything would work out on that last restart, and it did," said Hamlin. "Coming back from a lap down is incredible. I knew if we could get back to the front we could win."

Carl Edwards led six laps, but ran out of laps before he could catch Hamlin.

"We're very satisfied with our team today," said Edwards. "We had a fast car, but the way things worked out there at the end, this was the best we could do."

Kurt Busch was leading the race when the last caution came out and finished third.

"Overall, we're happy with this team," said Busch. "The caution was the one thing we did not need. It messed us up."

Ryan Newman was fourth, followed by Matt Kenseth, Joey Logano, Kyle Larson, Brad Keselowski, Kyle Busch, and Aric Almirola.

There was a physical confrontation between Kevin Harvick and Jimmie Johnson immediately after the race. Johnson went over to Harvick's hauler in an attempt to clear the air, but Harvick came out and shoved him in the chest. It all stemmed from a bumping incident during a restart on lap 127. Johnson had tried to pass on the inside of Harvick, and scraped the left side of Harvick's No. 4 Chevrolet.

Ten laps later, Harvick's left rear tire blew out, forcing him into the outside wall, and damaging his car. He had to pit for repairs and lost 56 laps.

"I had gotten a good restart and he (Johnson) just slammed into me like I wasn't even there," said Harvick.

Johnson finished 11th, while Harvick was 42nd.

Jeff Gordon led twice for 41 laps, but got bottled up on the last restart and wound up 14th.

Busch-2049, 5. Kurt Busch-2048, 6. Logano-2048, 7. Johnson-2045, 8. Newman-2040, 9. Keselowski-2039, 10. Earnhardt-2038, 11. Truex-2035, 12. Gordon-2031, 13. McMurray-2028, 14. Menard-2027, 15. Bowyer-2025, 16. Harvick-2009.

"ROWDY" KYLE TAKES XFINITY RACE

Kyle Busch won his 74th Xfinity Series race Saturday as he held off a hard charging Matt Kenseth at Chicagoland Speedway.

Busch led 102 laps of the 200-lap race, but near the end, it appeared Kenseth might be able to overtake him. Two laps from the finish lap traffic interfered with Kenseth's driving line and he had to settle for second.

"Those last few laps were pretty cool," said Busch, who started on the pole. "We weren't all that much faster at the beginning, but we kept getting better and better after each pit stop."

"But I got nervous there at the end. Matt (Kenseth) was coming on pretty strong."

Both Busch and Kenseth finished the race in first and second, the same position they started from.

"Kyle had the fastest car," said Kenseth. "I tried hard, but some lap cars got between us and I lost my momentum."

Remaining top-10 finishers: 3. Darrell Wallace Jr., 4. Paul Menard, 5. Ty Dillon, 6. Daniel Suarez, 7. Chris Buescher, 8. Elliott Sadler, 9. Regan Smith, 10. Brendan Gaughan.

Top-10 leaders after 26 of 33: 1. C. Buescher-945, 2. T. Dillon-920, 3. Elliott-917, 4. Smith-894, 5. Sadler-839, 6. Wallace Jr.-838, 7. Suarez-830, 8. Scott-825, 9. Gaughan-798, 10. Reed-716.

JOHN HUNTER NEMECHEK GETS TRUCK WIN

Joe Nemecek's son, John Hunter Nemecek won his first career NASCAR race as he powered to victory in Friday night's rain-postponed Truck Series race at Chicagoland on Saturday.

Nemecek took the lead from Kyle Larson on lap 148 of the 150-lap race, after Larson ran out of fuel, and held off Tyler Reddick, the second-place finisher.

Timothy Peters was third, then it was David Suarez, Johnny Sauter, Eric Jones, Kyle Larson, Spencer Gallagher, Matt Tifft, and John Wes Townley rounding out



Denny Hamlin wins First Chase Race furnished by NASCAR

the top-10 drivers.

Top-10 leaders after 16 of 23 races: 1. Jones-628, 2. Reddick-618, 3. Crafton-617, 4. Sauter-576, 5. Hemric-519, 6. Hayley-517, 7. Peters-512, 8. Townley-500, 9. Gallagher-488, 10. Kennedy-483.

HOW THE CHASE WILL WORK

The 2015 Chase to determine the Sprint Cup champion will consist of four parts.

The first three races are called the Challenger round. The 16 eligible drivers will compete in races at Chicago, New Hampshire and Dover for 12 spots available in the next round. A win at any of the three races advances the winning driver into the next round.

The rest of the field of 12 will be determined by order of total points scored after the three races. Each advancing driver will be reset to 3,000 points, no bonus points for wins.

Round number two will be known as the Contender. The 12 drivers who advance from the Challenger round will compete at Charlotte, Kansas and Talladega for eight spots available in the next round, with the same rules for advancing as in the Challenger round. Each advancing driver will be reset to 4,000 points, no bonus points for wins.

The next three races will be the Eliminator round. Eight drivers advance to races at Martinsville, Texas and Phoenix and compete for four spots in the final round. The same rules will be used for advancing as in previous rounds. Points for the four drivers going for the championship are reset to 5,000, no bonus points for wins.

The final Championship round will be decided by the driver with the best finish among the top four at Homestead, the last race of the season.

Weekend Racing: The Trucks and Sprint Cup teams are at the 1.058-mile New Hampshire Speedway. The Xfinity teams are at the 1.5-mile Kentucky Speedway.

ET; TV: Foxsports1.
Sat., Sept. 26; Xfinity Series race 27 of 33; Starting time: 8 pm ET; TV: NBCS.

Sun., Sept. 27; Sprint Cup race 28 of 36; Starting time: 2 pm ET; TV: NBCS.

Racing Trivia Question:

What year did Kurt Busch win his only Sprint Cup championship?

Last Week's Question: Who won the inaugural race at Chicagoland Speedway in 2006?

Answer: It was Kevin Harvick.

You may contact the Racing Reporter by e-mail at: hodges@race500.com. NT(Sep23,C1)ac

VFW Golf Tournament

The Veterans of Foreign Wars is having a golf tournament on Thursday, October 8th at 8:30 a.m. Join fellow veterans and supporters for a day of fun and golf at Chatuge Shores Golf Club. Cost is \$55 and includes prizes, breakfast and lunch. Call 404-295-6462 for more info. NT(Sep23,Z16)CA

Tri County British Car Club meeting

The Tri County British Car Club, will be holding its next luncheon meeting on Sunday, September 27th. Location is Brother's Willow Ranch Restaurant, in Young Harris, at 12:45 PM. If you are interested in classic British cars, you can contact them by email at tricountybritishcarclub@yahoo.com. Edward Wesson

McCay Lodge Bass Tournament

The McCay Lodge Bass Tournament will be held on Saturday, September 26th at Lake Chatuge, Ledford Chapel Ramp, beginning at 7 a.m. until 4 p.m. 100% guaranteed based on 40 boat field. Entry fee is \$80 per boat.

First Place - \$1,000; Second Place - \$700; Third Place - \$500; Fourth Place - \$300; and Fifth Place - \$100. Big Fish - \$200 donated by Blue Ridge Insurance and Smallest Fish - Victory Custom Road donated by David Helton. This is a fund raising project for the Masonic lodges and McCay Lodge. NT(Sep9,Z13)CA

Cross Country races back-to-back days at West Hall, Murphy

By Todd Forrest
North Georgia News
sports@nganews.com

Last Tuesday, Union County Cross Country challenged the best of the best at West Hall and the guys placed 10th out of 19 schools and the ladies took eighth out of 13 teams.

Emmi Schakat led the girls squad with a 12th place finish in just over 21 1/2 minutes. Emma Garrison took 15th with a time of 21:45. Sage Royston took 26th at 22:23, in 37th was Stephanie Busse, clocking in at 22:59. Destiny Orellana-Irvin placed 72nd with a time of 25:32 to round out the top five. Cora Bauman came in 78th and Erika Clouse was 82nd.

For the guys, Lance Underwood took 14th with a time of 17:26, meanwhile Colby Ives was 42nd at 18:21. Just nine seconds back of Ives was Timothy Murphy in 54th, 18 seconds back of Murphy was Jacob Kelley and Jakob Brown who placed 69th and 70th.

Gehrig Patterson came in 74th for Union and Adam

Bachman was 80th.

At Murphy, NC on Wednesday, the guys took first overall, 32 points ahead of second place Rosman, NC with Underwood placing second with a time of 17:38. Cristian Garcia's time of 18:42 was good enough for ninth, one second back was Ives in 10th place, and 15 seconds behind him was Brown in 16th place.

Kelley was 18th at 19:07, Patterson 19th at 19:10, and Murphy placed 21st - one tick behind Murphy.

The ladies took third place, 25 points back of first place Robbinsville, NC and 23 behind second place Swain County, NC.

Schakat paced the girls with a fourth place finish in 21:20, Garrison was 10th at 21:51, Royston-14th at 22:08, Busse - 16th at 22:44, Orellana-Irvin - 37th at 25:08.

Kaitlyn Gallagher was 43rd at 25:47 and Bauman - 50th at 26:34.

This Wednesday, Union County returns to North Carolina for a meet in Hayesville at 4:30 p.m.

Union County Recreation Department Presents

Disc Golf Lessons

Saturday, September 26th 10AM
\$15 Fee
Includes 1 Hour of Instruction, 1 Disc, 1 Mini Marker

Lessons will be taught at the Meek's Park Disc Golf Course
(Access from North Georgia Technical College)

Call Ashleigh Stephens at
706-439-6092 or 706-897-0466
for Information or to Sign Up

Payment may be made via cash or check to "Union County Recreation Department"