

Sports

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Lady Panthers perfect at UNG, visit Towns on Wednesday

By Todd Forrest
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Dahlonega - The Lady Panthers won all six games at the two-day University of North Georgia camp on June 19-20, defeating Pinecrest Academy, Oglethorpe County and Fannin County on Friday, followed by wins over North Forsyth, Madison County and Shiloh on Saturday.

"It was good to see the girls out there getting up to game speed and gaining some experience," Union County head coach Thomas Nelson said. "We won all of our games, but the main point of camp is to let everyone play and see what they can do in pressure situations."

"The camp also showed a lot of our weaknesses and where we're not as strong as we need to be. Their confidence is getting better, but we're still not where we need to be."

During the win over Oglethorpe, a 23-3 region champ from Class A D1, Union County pulled away 32-23 in a low-scoring contest. The Lady Panthers held a 14-8 edge at the break before Oglethorpe moved within a point at 20-19, prompting Union to close on a 12-4 run.

Later, the Lady Panthers fell behind 11-2 to Fannin County (Class AA Sweet 16) but raced back to grab a 20-19 lead ahead of a 24-24 halftime score. The second half was all Union County, building a 40-31 advantage en route to a 58-47 win.

"Aubrie Akins and



Head coach Thomas Nelson and the Lady Panthers during halftime of their win over Oglethorpe County on Friday at UNG. Photo/Todd Forrest

Regan Trlica had some big plays in that [Fannin] game," Nelson said. "Aubrie plays well inside, and Regan is adjusting and getting familiar with her teammates. We knew last year when [Regan] got here she was going to be a good player. Right now, she's still getting comfortable with [her teammates]. But the more she becomes familiar with girls like Ariel [McCarter], KB [Katelyn Brown] and [Hope] Taylor, the better we're going to be."

"We were in a situation in that Fannin game where they threw a [fullcourt] press on us and we fell behind early

because we didn't know how to react. But it got better and we handled it, it just took them a little while."

Union tipped the opening-day action with an easy win over Pinecrest Academy.

"We actually didn't even keep score that game," Nelson said. "We didn't pressure them [on defense] and kept things really vanilla. They are a young team and we wanted to keep the score as close as possible."

On day two, Union County defeated North Forsyth by 8 points despite trailing for much of the game. North Forsyth is coming off a 31-1

season that ended with its only loss in the Class 6A State title game.

"North Forsyth is a really, really good team," Nelson said. "They are a very disciplined team and a solid shooting team. They created problems for us right away, but our girls were able to fight back and get the win. But both teams were playing everybody and wasn't very concerned with winning or losing."

The Lady Panthers knocked off Class 4A Madison County for the second time this summer, winning by 15 points following a 10-point win earlier

this month at the Emmanuel camp.

"We won by 15 this time, but [Madison] was better the second time," Nelson said. "They ended up beating some good teams at North Georgia and you can see them getting better. Their coach just got there in May, so it's only a matter of time before they are really good."

In Saturday's final game, Union County defeated Class 6A Shiloh by 30+ points.

"They were one of the most athletic teams you'll ever see," Nelson said. "They had a little point guard that could do

anything she wanted to. She was hitting shots from almost halfcourt. She was lighting it up. She kept them in the game in the first half, but then we were able to do some things to limit her in the second half and we won by almost 35. But once we were able to slow her down, [Shiloh] kind of gave up toward the end."

The Lady Panthers were at full strength for the first game vs. Pinecrest but played the rest of the weekend without rising-senior Sloane Dyer, who Coach Nelson complimented for her dedication while balancing her commitments to basketball and softball.

"I am over the moon with Sloane when it comes to making it work between two sports," he said. "She has come to every event we have offered while getting ready for her senior softball season."

The girls conclude summer camps with three games at Towns County beginning at 8 a.m. on Wednesday.

"These camps showed us our mistakes and where our weaknesses are," he said. "We have a lot of time to work on those things between now and the season. We're going into a new region that's very physical and stuff that was called a foul in our old region, probably won't be called over there. But if these kids are willing to put in the work, we have a chance to be a really solid basketball team when the season starts."

In closing, Nelson thanked the Tip-Off Club and their sponsors for their support during the summer basketball camps.



Rising sophomore Regan Trlica vs. Fannin County. Photo/Todd Forrest



Rising senior Katelyn Brown vs. Oglethorpe County. Photo/Todd Forrest



Rising senior Hope Taylor battles Fannin in the paint. Photo/Todd Forrest



Rising senior Aubrie Akins vs. Fannin County. Photo/Todd Forrest



The Union County Lady Panthers hosted its annual girls youth basketball camp from June 17-19 at the UCHS gym. The camp featured UCHS coaches and players and hosted youngsters entering grades 2-8. The three-day camp featured games, drills, guest speakers and plenty of fun for both the players and coaches. More on page 9A. Photo/Todd Forrest

Mixed results for Panthers at UNG, LakePoint

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It was an up-and-down week for Union County basketball at the University of North Georgia and LakePoint Sports basketball camps while a handful of key players dealt with injuries and football practice throughout the week. The Panthers opened the

week at UNG by defeating a Class 7A playoff team in North Gwinnett. However, the Panthers suffered a narrow loss to South Gwinnett and were blown out by Riverwood -- the Class 6A State Champion.

The second day of camp featured a 2-point loss in a back-and-forth battle with Gilmer, followed by a 10-point loss to Lambert, that saw Union County jump out to a

20-8 lead in the early going.

No other results were available from the UNG camp. Over the weekend, the Panthers traveled to Emerson's LakePoint Sports complex to participate in the GACA camp. The Panthers' lone win at the event came over Lithonia, while suffering losses to East Hall and Seckinger on Friday.

In the 1-point loss to Seckinger, rising senior point guard Houston Henry led the way with 22 points. Rising senior Hayden Hughes added 16 points on five 3-pointers. The event concluded Sunday with Union County falling to Greater Atlanta Christian, despite going up double digits in the first half. The Panthers will finish up the summer by hosting their annual youth camp on July 25-27.



Head coach Corey Garrett looks on as Houston Henry dishes out an assist to Lambert at UNG on Wednesday. Photo/Todd Forrest



Ethan Hogsd lines up a 3-pointer vs. Gilmer. Photo/Todd Forrest



Hayden Hughes shoots in the paint vs. Gilmer. Photo/Todd Forrest

Photos: Lady Panthers youth basketball camp



Union County Lady Panthers youth basketball camp photos by Todd Forrest

Hole-in-One

Butternut Creek Golf Course would like to congratulate Dave Jones from Blue Ridge and Melbourne FL on his hole in one at the 127-yard par 3 fourth hole at on Tuesday June 18th.

Mountain High Hikers Schedule

Mountain High Hikers offers three hikes in the local area each week: Tuesdays - a long hike from 8-14 miles and a shorter hike of 5-8 miles. Thursday we lead a leisure hike usually around 5 miles. We also maintain over 100 miles of trails in North Georgia and Western NC area and run trail maintenance hikes on Thursdays each week.

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