

Basketball: Summer camps a learning experience for players and coaches

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Union County basketball wrapped its summer camp season late last month and the North Georgia News caught up with both head coaches to check on the progress of UCHS hoops.

Up first is the Lady Panthers' second year head coach Corey Garrett.

NGN: What were some of your priorities or goals for the summer camps and were you able to accomplish them?

CG: We had quite a big turnover from last year. We lost a couple of girls that we thought were coming back. We were expecting seven returning players on varsity but only ended up with four.

So our focus going into the summer was to find some young girls who could fill the roles of the girls that left.

We struggled early on (in the summer). At the first camp we went 2-5. We had some good games, we only lost to North Hall by one and were very competitive against Dawson County.

Up next we went to (the University of North Georgia camp) and that's where the tide kind of turned. We gained a lot of chemistry. Some of the young girls, you could really see, were starting to fit in and learn what their roles were.

At UNG we went 6-1 with a tie against Hart County. The only game we lost was to Grayson, who I'm pretty sure is (Class) AAAAAA.

We came back home and played four more games



(Left) Coach Corey Garrett instructs one of his players. (Right) Valuable experience was gained by the younger Panthers at camp. Photo/Todd Forrest

and went 4-0. I think it was against Gilmer, where you could really see a turnaround and we showed what we're capable of.

So I think we found some of those younger girls who can step up but we still don't have a whole lot of numbers. Even with the younger girls who stepped up, we only go about seven-deep. We're still looking for that eighth, ninth, and tenth girl but I think we came along way from the beginning of the summer.

NGN: With all the young players, were you able to install anything new offensively or defensively, or were you simply looking for who can play and who can't?

CG: No, there was nothing new, but during individual workouts in the spring,

I was able to spend a lot of time bringing some of the younger girls up to speed.

That was a huge help because by the time we started in the summer, everything was pretty much rolling. They hadn't played any 5-on-5 but as far as the offense went, they pretty much knew what was going on.

NGN: With camps over, what's next? Do you have any workouts or anything scheduled before practice begins in the fall?

CG: All of our (summer) games are over. We'll lose a couple of girls to softball and volleyball. When we return from the July 4th dead week, the girls who aren't playing softball or volleyball, which is about six girls, will be in the weight room three days a week. We'll also shoot



a little bit and do some skill work, stuff like that. It'll be very low key. We're just trying to keep them moving.

We'll be off in August, then after August we'll ramp up our individual workouts.

NGN: You hosted two pretty big camps over the summer that seemed to run smoothly. Are these camps something we can expect to continue in the future?

CG: Both camps went really smooth and we hope to bring it back. A lot of the coaches said they enjoyed it and it's a little cheaper than some of the college camps with less travel. I think they were very successful and we hope to continue it.

(Head boys coach Casey Jones)

NGN: What was your main focus coming into these

camps?

CJ: Summer is always a good time to take a look at any new guys that are coming out or to see if any younger guys might be able to help out on varsity.

We also use the camps to install some new things offensively or defensively. This summer we played more man-to-man (defense). Usually we play with the 1-3-1 (zone) but we played more man since we don't use it a ton during the season.

NGN: As for any new guys or younger guys, what did you learn about them and did you gain any confidence in some of the lesser-experienced players?

CJ: Some of the younger guys that we're hoping can help us out proved that they are capable of doing that.

We had 10 freshmen this year after only having four last year. It's really nice to see that many freshmen come out and I really liked what I saw from them. They have a bunch of nice pieces that all fit together pretty well.

NGN: How did the guys adjust to playing more man-to-man (defense)?

CJ: I thought they did well with it. The more games we played, the better we got at it. We're more comfortable in the 1-3-1 and anytime I give them the option, they're going to play 1-3-1. We did get better at man. Being in the help position, or "the gap" as we call it, was our focus this summer. Protecting the paint and the rim and making people shoot contested 3-pointers is our man-to-man defensive philosophy.

NGN: Anymore workouts going on this summer? What will you do between now and the fall?

CJ: The football players are strictly football now but we'll try to do some fundamental work in July.

If not July, we'll have some workouts when school starts.

NGN: Anything you want to add about the camps?

CJ: I'm just really proud of the guys and their effort. (One day) we played three games with only six players and (another day) we played four games with seven kids. That's tough. Especially when you get to that third or fourth game. They're a good group of guys, they played hard, I'm proud of their effort and look forward to the upcoming season.

Photo Gallery: Union County Football hosts FCA 7-on-7 camp

Photos by Todd Forrest



Rising-junior DB Alec Scott tips a pass to himself for an interception.



Hwy. 515 FCA hosted a morning devotional for all six teams.



Rising-senior running back Chad Buzzard has reservations for six.



Rising-junior quarterback Pierson Allison scans the field.



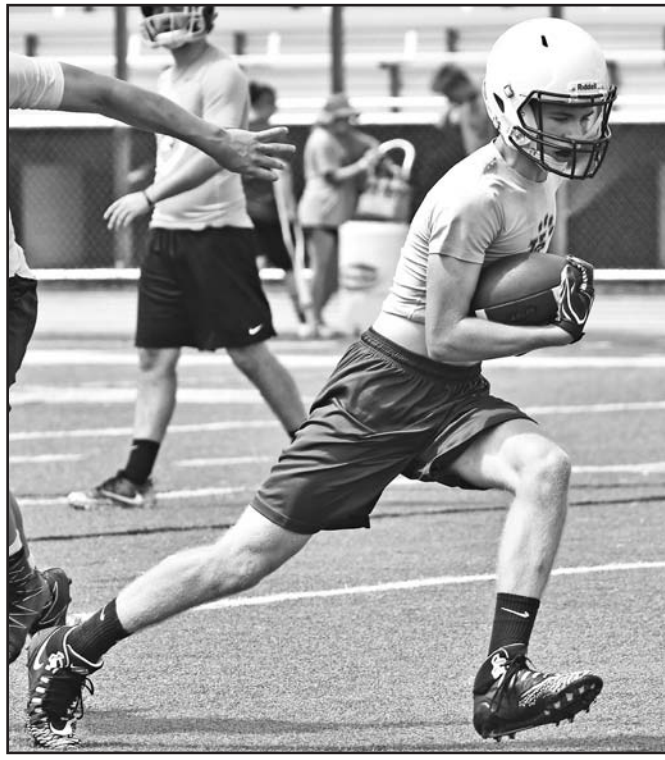
Rising-junior WR Sawyer Drake hauls in deep ball down the sideline.



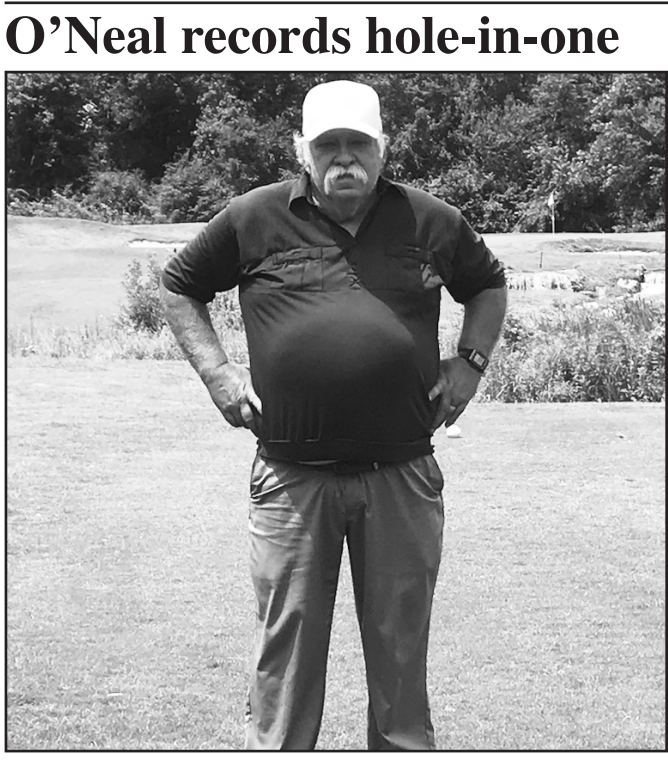
Rising-senior Chayton Schafer beats two Chestatee DBs for the score.



Rising-junior WR Kyle Morlock with a TD grab vs White County.



Noah Underwood with the TD as Union takes care of Murphy, NC.



O'Neal records hole-in-one

John O'Neal picked up an ace at Old Union Golf Course on May 2nd.