

Sports

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‘Work works’ at second Brannon Jones Memorial Football Camp

By Todd Forrest
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“Work works” is the new slogan of 78 future gridiron stars that were in attendance at last weekend’s Brannon Jones Memorial Football Camp.

Following a one-year hiatus, the camp was back in business on Saturday. The camp originated in 2016 as the brainchild of Union County graduate Luther Jones to honor his late father Brannon, who passed away in 2014.

After hosting the inaugural camp in 2016, the NCAA stepped in last summer and put things on hold.

Now a graduate of Kennesaw State and a coach at UCHS, Luther Jones is no longer under the jurisdiction of the NCAA and can host his camp free of outside interference.

“We’re blessed that we’re able to do this and get (the camp) started again,” Luther Jones said. “Now we hope to build from here and keep it going.”

“We have 78 kids today and it’s been great. It’s hot but we’re glad the rain held off. We got some great guys out here helping me and we’re getting some good work in.”

Kennesaw, Tusculum, and Shorter were among the five colleges represented by student-athletes who volunteered to spend the day with lo-



Luther Jones (far left) alongside campers and coaches following the 2018 Brannon Jones Memorial Football Camp at Union County High School. Photo/Todd Forrest

cal kids. With the camp named after his father, Luther Jones hopes those in attendance will take away life skills that will make them better young men both on and off the field. Matt Queen of Hwy. 515 Fellowship of Christian Athletes was also on hand to address the campers at the end of the day.

“One of my all-time favorite Bible verses is from Proverbs, and it says, ‘iron sharpens iron just like one man sharpens another,’” Queen

told campers as they gathered around him on the field. “So who are you making sharper? And who are you allowing to sharpen you? Who off the field is making you better? I want to challenge each of you to find someone to make you better on the field and off the field.”

On the football side, the spotlight was on “work works” and teaching proper work ethic. Later, the campers were divided up to take part in position drills.

“Our focus this year is “work works” so we’re trying to teach these kids how to work,” Luther Jones said. “Once they know how to work, then you can teach fundamentals. But our main focus is teaching kids how to work and to learn the grind of being a student-athlete at a high level.

“We mainly want to get these kids out here working, to love them, and teach them that there is more to this life

than football. Football is just a stepping stone for life.”

Finally, Luther Jones wanted to send out a special thank you to everyone that had a hand in making this camp possible. Now his goal is to continue to grow and build on the camp’s recent success.

“I want to thank all of the guys that came out from different colleges, my mom, my brother, my family, and my girlfriend,” he said. “I have to thank Michael Ross,

Paul McBride and all the guys that always had my back and helped me through everything. It means a lot.”

Regardless of whether the camp continues for two years or 20 years, one thing is certain: Brannon Jones is one proud father. He is looking down on Luther, smiling from ear-to-ear, glowing with pride, and bragging to the angels about the man his son has become.

Softball: Summer ball enters final week; season opens Aug. 6 at Habersham

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Union County softball will visit Jackson County and Franklin County this week, bringing its unofficial “pre-season” to a close.

On Tuesday, the Lady Panthers travel to Jackson County High School in Jefferson to face Jackson County at 5 p.m. and White County at 6:30.

Summer league wraps up Thursday in Carnesville when Union County takes on Franklin County and Madison County at 4 and 5:30 p.m.

According to first-year head coach Stephen Mitchell, the Lady Panthers will officially begin practice on Aug. 1, before opening with a doubleheader at Class AAAAA’s Habersham Central on Aug. 6.

Union County also released its 2018 schedule last week as the Lady Panthers return to Region 8-AA following a two-year stint in Class AAA.

Union County made the jump to Region 8-AA from 8-A prior to the 2000-01 school year. Union and Rabun were the only two schools that stayed put until the Panthers departed for AAA in 2016.

The Lady Panthers are currently scheduled to meet their longtime region foe Rabun



Catcher Mary Wischmeyer doubles vs Lumpkin. Photo/Todd Forrest

County in September.

Speaking of old rivals, Towns County returns to the schedule with dates set for Aug. 15 in Hiwassee and Aug. 20 at home.

Other non-region opponents include Pickens, Dawson County, Lumpkin County, and East Hall. The Lady Panthers

will also participate in a pair of tournaments during September - the first at Madison County on the 14th and 15th; the second in Dalton on the 21st and 22nd.

The postseason gets underway Sept. 24 with a Region 8-AA playoff series. The Region 8-AA Tournament will open on Oct. 1.

2018 Union County Softball Schedule



Date	Time	Opponent	Location	Notes
8/6	4:00	Habersham	Habersham	Varsity DH
8/7	5:55	Pickens	Home	JV Before (4:00)
8/9	5:55	Pickens	Away	JV Before (4:00)
8/13	5:55	Dawson	Home	JV Before (4:30)
8/15	4:30	Towns	Away	
8/16	5:55	Lumpkin	Away	JV Before (4:00)
8/20	4:30	Towns	Home	
8/23	5:00	Monticello*	Away	
8/25	11:00	East Hall	Away	
8/28	5:55	Elbert*	Home	JV Before (4:00)
8/30	5:00	Putnam	Away	
9/4	5:55	Dawson	Away	JV Before (4:00)
9/5	5:55	Lumpkin	Home	JV Before (4:00)
9/6	5:55	Social Circle*	Home	
9/11	5:55	Banks*	Away	JV Before (4:00)
9/13	5:55	Oglethorpe*	Home	
9/14	TBA	TBA	Madison	Madison Tournament
9/15	TBA	TBA	Madison	Madison Tournament
9/18		Rabun	Rabun	
9/21	TBA	TBA	Dalton	Ft Oglethorpe Tournament
9/22	TBA	TBA	Dalton	Ft Oglethorpe Tournament

9/24-9/28 Region Playoff Series TBA

10/1-10/6 Region Tournament TBA



Coach Mitchell offers some words of wisdom to one of Union County’s youngsters. Photo/Todd Forrest



The Lady Panthers infield gathers in the circle with pitcher Megan Bright. Photo/Todd Forrest