

# Volleyball: Union races past No. 10 Lake Oconee, blanks Commerce 2-0

By Todd Forrest  
Sports Editor  
sports@nganews.com

**Commerce** - Union County recorded a pair of victories at Commerce last Tuesday, Sept. 15, including a 2-1 win over No. 10 Lake Oconee Academy, to remain unbeaten in Area play.

The Panthers will play host to Chestatee and Elbert County in a Tuesday night tri-match before hitting the road Thursday to take on No. 9 Oglethorpe County.

During last week's victories at Commerce, the shorthanded Panthers battled back to take the second and third sets after dropping the opener 25-17 to Lake Oconee Academy.

Against the host team, Union County dominated the first set 25-9 before closing out the Tigers 25-18 in the second.

"We pulled up JV outside hitter, Sophia McNabb to set for both of these matches," Union County coach Anna Chapman said. "The team only had two practices to adjust to



Union was without the services of junior setter Emma Whicker at Commerce. Whicker leads the team with 88 assists. Photo/Todd Forrest

having a substitute setter. We spent time focusing on sets, hitting at a different levels and working through the rotations.

"Commerce is a young program and they have a lot of heart. They really came out and challenged us in a few rallies, but it was a great opener for the evening. We were able

to practice those rotations that were still very new to us this week.

"We struggled with communication in the second set and it showed in the amount of errors that we had. We had a lot to overcome and I'm glad we came out with a W."

Later, Union remained flat in the opening set vs Lake



Molly Kay West recorded four aces in Union County's 2-1 victory over No. 10 Lake Oconee Academy. Photo/Todd Forrest

Oconee, but turned things around just in time with a one-sided 25-14 victory in set two and a narrow 15-13 win in the clincher.

"We knew Lake Oconee Academy was going to be a tough match," Chapman said. "They are putting out strong wins in our region and this is a match we needed to win.

The team chat in the locker room before the match focused heavily on teamwork. We are at a point in the season where tensions can be high, but these athletes have to remember who has their back on the court.

"The match against LOA will go down as one of the most exciting of the sea-

son. The change of pace in the first set caught us off guard, it was much quicker and more competitive than the previous match against Commerce. We were caught in a few tough situations, but the team came out ready to give it 100% in the second set.

"We had less errors, stronger serves, targeted hits, and intense energy. The third and tiebreaker set had us all on the edge of our seats. It was so close at the end and the team did exactly what they set out to do."

**Stats vs Commerce:** Morgan Fussell - 5 kills, 6 aces; McNabb - 7 aces, 12 assists; Sofia Swartz - 3 kills; Saylor Noe - 3 aces.

**Stats vs LOA:** McNabb - 19 assists; Fussell - 7 kills; Haley Noe - 5 kills; Swartz - 4 kills; Riley Allison - 3 kills; Molly Kay West - 4 aces; Saylor Noe - 3 aces.

**Up next:** Union takes the court at 5 and 7 p.m. during Tuesday's home tri-match.

At Oglethorpe County, Union County's tri-match with the Patriots and Washington-Wilkes begins at 5 p.m.

# Cross Country: Gambrell seventh, Hana Gregory ninth at North Hall

By Todd Forrest  
Sports Editor  
sports@nganews.com

**Clermont** - Union County Cross Country participated in its first road meet of the year, turning in a pair of top-six finishes at North Hall.

Paced by Luke Gambrell's seventh place finish at 17 minutes, 21 seconds, the Panther men came in fourth - 38 points back of third-place North Hall.

The Union County ladies finished sixth - two points behind fourth-place Dawson County and one back of fifth-place Jackson County.

Hana Gregory led the way for Union, crossing the finish line at 22:57, good enough for a ninth-place individual finish.

Rounding out the girls' top-five was Campbell Chambers in 21st at 24:52. Rachel Reid placed 34th, clocking in at 26:23. Allie Brey was 37th with a time of 26:37.

Katelynn Rash came in 39th at 26:40 and Natalie Payne was 48th with a time of 28:41. In 54th was Abigail Pruitt at 31:56.

In the guys' race, Hunter Hartzog turned in a 16th-place performance at 18:24. Hunter Payne was 21st, clocking in at 19:13. Zander Rotko placed 38th with a time of 20:27.

In 52nd place was Daniel Griggs at 21:32. Two spots back was Zach Jackson in 54th, crossing the line at 21:48. Brady Hus-



Union County Cross Country in action earlier in the season. At North Hall, the Union men placed three runners -- the ladies put two more -- in the top-21. Photos/Todd Forrest

sion took home 66th with a time of 73rd at 22:45.

Chestatee finished in first place in the team standings with a dominating 30-point performance.

Second-place Dawson County was unable to keep pace at 66 points. At 90 points was North Hall in third; Union was fourth with 128.

With 130, fifth-place Lumpkin County was right

behind the Panthers. Sixth-place Towns County had 175 and Flowery Branch finished with 198.

On the girls' side, North Hall was even more impressive than the Dawson men, finishing



with 25 points. White County posted a solid number with 42 points, but it wasn't enough to hang with the Trojans.

Lumpkin County picked up the bronze with 91 points; Dawson County was fourth at 123, Jackson County had 124 and Union County finished with 125.

Towns County was seventh with 166 points.

## Box Score: Union County 13, Elbert County 4

Lineup	AB	R	H	RBI	BB	SO
Chloe Potts	3	1	0	0	0	0
Tori Tracy	1	0	1	1	0	0
Hannah Patton	4	0	2	0	0	0
Jewell Massey	0	3	0	0	0	0
Georgia Patton	1	0	0	0	0	0
Lexi Sisum	4	2	2	5	0	1
Emma Roxbury	4	2	3	1	0	0
Trinity Queen	4	1	2	2	0	0
Aubrie Banton	4	0	1	1	0	1
Emily Byers	3	0	0	0	0	1
Jaycee Seabolt	1	1	1	1	0	0
Caley Davis	4	1	2	1	0	0
Ansley Collins	3	1	1	0	0	0
Kaelyn Jones	1	0	0	0	0	0
Caroline Karnes	0	1	0	0	0	0
Rebekah Chambers	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Totals</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>

  

Pitching	IP	#P	S%	H	R	ER	SO	BB	HR
Trinity Queen	6.0	82	.695	6	4	2	5	2	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>6.0</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>.695</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>

## Football... continued from 2B



The Union County High School student section are vocal supporters of Panthers football on Friday nights. Photo/Todd Forrest

He added 16 yards on the ground.

Chitwood caught four passes for 49 yards, Hemphill had two grabs for 45 yards, Dalton Allen, McCombs, Underwood and Walker caught one pass apiece. Cayleb Rogers carried three times for 16 yards; freshman quarterback Caiden Tanner rushed once for 10 yards.

**Up next:** Union welcomes Pickens County to Mike Colwell Memorial Stadium for Homecoming on Oct. 2.

## COVID-19 Update

Concerns over COVID-19 have forced Union County High School to cancel its first sporting event of the 2020-21 school year.

Union County previously planned on visiting George Walton Academy this Friday, Sept. 25; however, Coach Allison informed the *North Georgia News* following Friday night's win over Chestatee that, as a precaution, his team would not make the 3-hour bus ride to Monroe.

"We had a player begin experiencing COVID-like symptoms last week and to play it safe, we don't want our guys stuck together on a bus

for nearly three hours," Allison said.

Another Union County player missed last week's game after coming into contact with the sick player. While the second player has yet to experience any health issues, he was held out Friday due to previously spending time with the symptomatic player.

Coach Allison confirmed that no UCHS football player has tested positive for the novel coronavirus and the decision is a precaution to avoid additional cancellations later in the season.

"I also didn't believe it was a good idea for our guys to travel to a more heavily-populated area," he said. "With back-to-back home games on Oct. 2 and Oct. 9, this gives our guys 4-5 weeks without any travel outside of Union County. Our players' health and safety is our top priority, and as I said, we hope this prevents any future problems."

A makeup game against a local opponent is in the works for the regular season's final week. When finalized, Union's 10th game will be made public via social media as early as this week, Allison said.

## Local Racing Report: Tri-County

By Blake Lynch  
Racing Reporter  
North Georgia News

**Brasstown, NC** - Tri-County Racetrack moved their Topless Outlaw Series to Saturday Sept. 19, along with a full, action-packed racing program.

Here are the top finishers in each class.

**Pony** - Coming in first No. 11 Ricky Dyer. Coming in second No. 104 Ricky Queen.

**Street Stock** - Taking the checkered flag was No. 42 Johnny G. Coming second No. 95 Alex Vance. Taking home third No. 21 Troy Turner. Coming in fourth was No. 12 Roger Beaver. Finishing fifth No. 01 Jacob Lynch.

**Modified Street** - Coming in first was No. 81 John Howard. Coming in second was No. 38 Jamie Oliver. Coming in third was No. 24 Seth Wimpey. Placing fourth was No. 27 Mike Davidson. Finishing in fifth was No. 37 Michael Barnett.

**Beginner 602** - Coming in first place was No. 03 Dante Curtis. In second was No. 22 Tucker Anderson. Coming in third was No. 5 Justin Payne. Placing fourth was No. 44 Jay Lynch. Coming in fifth was No. 17 Justin Rogers.

**FWD** - Finishing first was No. 74 DJ Worley. Coming in second was No. 21 Trenton Moss. Finishing in third was No. j3 Josh Deese. Coming in fourth was No. 15 James Kluck. Finishing in fifth was No. 401 Brent Lynch.

**Crate** - Taking the checkered flag was No. 88 Ricky Smith. Placing second was No. 9 Brian Kinnersley. Finishing third was No. 1 Junior Whitener. Coming in fourth was No. 11c Preston Crisp. Rounding out the top five was No. 52 Troy Eads.

**Topless Outlaws** - Coming in first was No. D6 Ronnie Johnson. Second went to No. 12 Daniel Wilson. Third was No. 4 Danny Ledford. Coming in fourth was No. D5 Drew Collins. Finishing fifth was No. 79 Chad Wallace.

## Learn to play Pickleball

Learn to play Pickleball: Beginner's Lessons every Tuesday, 6 PM (weather permitting). No charge and all equipment provided. Courts are located behind the Health Department. For more information contact: blairsvillepickleball@gmail.com.

## VFW and American Legion Fundraiser Golf Tournament

The VFW and American Legion in Hiwassee is having our 7th Annual Golf Tournament on Thursday, October 8 at 10 a.m. at Chatuge Shores Golf Course. Join fellow Veterans and supporters for a day of FUN and Golf. Cost is \$55 per person. Winning team will receive \$200 in cash! Contact Mel Halfon at 404-295-6462 for more information.

# BASKETBALL

## Union County Recreation Department Basketball Registration is open!

Ages 5-12

Age you are September 1st is the age group you play in.

Registration fee is \$50.00 and open to both boys and girls.

Registration can be completed online at [unioncountyga.gov](http://unioncountyga.gov) or at the Recreation Office.

Registration will end September 25, 2020.

If you need any additional information, please call 706-439-6074.