

Union Cross Country battles injuries as Region 7-AAA runs at Unicoi State Park on Thursday

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Both Union County Cross Country squads are dealing with injuries to two of their top runners as the Region Championship races will be held on Thursday in Helen.

The ladies' No. 2 runner, junior Emmi Schakat is done for the season after suffering a stress fracture in her leg in September.

The guys' top runner, junior Lance Underwood is nursing a sore hamstring and has been sidelined for the better part of last week.

He hopes to return to running prior to Thursday's Region 7-AAA meet at Unicoi State Park but just how healthy he will be is still up in the air.

Union County's first year Head Coach Paige Dyer has praised her team's toughness and has learned that you can



Timothy Murphy never underestimate the heart of a champion as both squads will enter Thursday's meet as the two-time reigning 8-AA Region Champions.

"They are two very tough teams and they are extremely competitive," Coach Dyer said. "I think that the changing of regions has been difficult for them in some ways, but they are a very good team, a strong team, and I think they will do well, despite

having to move up into a very tough region.

"We may not win Region, and that will be different for some of the kids. The juniors have been region champs in middle school and both years of high school, so this year is going to be different, but I still believe they have what it takes to qualify for State.

"I've also been very impressed with a lot of our freshmen that have stepped up and taken spots that were left over from last year."

The girls will get underway at 2:15 p.m. on Thursday with the guys to follow.

Should either team finish in the top four or anyone qualify individually at Region, they will advance to the State Meet at Carrollton on Saturday Nov. 5.

The girls begin at 8 a.m. and the guys at 8:45 a.m.

The JV Region Meet will also be held on Thursday at the conclusion of both varsity races.

Rivalry... continued from 2B

The quarterbacks, on the other hand, will be the key to victory on both sidelines. Davis has thrown eight interceptions this season, so if Wright and the Union offense can take care of the football, and the Panthers defense can force a few turnovers and pressure Davis, one would have to like Union's chances.

Fannin's defense currently has four picks and six fumble recoveries while Union has picked five passes and recovered six fumbles on the year.

Neither team has been able to force a lot of turnovers but whichever defense wins the takeaway battle will likely determine the outcome since both offenses should be able to move the ball at will.

"As always, most games always end up being about turnovers and who can control the football," Allison said. "If they're able to drive the ball and score like they did last year, then we're going to have some issues. We're going to have to force some turnovers and just play good solid defense."

Injury report: According to Coach Allison, linebacker RJ Banton and safety / kick returner Zach Stone are listed as probable this week after sitting out the North Hall game.

Wide receiver Erik Strayer is listed as questionable this week, according to Coach Allison. Strayer missed most of the Dawson and all of the North Hall contests.

Finally, senior lineman Tyler McConnell (foot) is also questionable after suffering an injury late in the North Hall game, according to Coach Allison.

Game notes: Union is 25-23 all-time vs Fannin County and 12-11 all-time at Fannin County (includes East Fannin and West Fannin).

Since the merger of East Fannin and West Fannin into Fannin County High School during the late 1970's, Union has never defeated the Rebels three straight times.

The last time the Panthers traveled to Blue Ridge riding a two-game win streak over their western rivals was in 2013 - a

43-35 Fannin victory. The coach of Fannin in that game was Greg Chambers, who is currently in his third season as an assistant on Coach Allison's UCHS staff.

A win for Union will make this year's seniors the winningest class in program history with 31 total victories.

If the Panthers win-out, they will finish as the No. 3 seed in Region 7-AAA.

Last year's win in Blue Ridge ended a four-game skid in games at Fannin. However, since FCHS opened in the late 1970's, the Panthers have never won back-to-back games at Fannin County.

Although in seasons where Union finished with a winning record (six or more wins), the Panthers have fared much better vs the Rebels.

Overall Union is 9-2 vs Fannin during seasons where the Panthers finished with a winning record. Union has already clinched a winning record for 2016.

Since 1984, Union is 4-6 vs the Rebels during the month of October.

UCMS... continued from 2B



Colton Day with a touchdown reception for UCMS. Photo/submitted

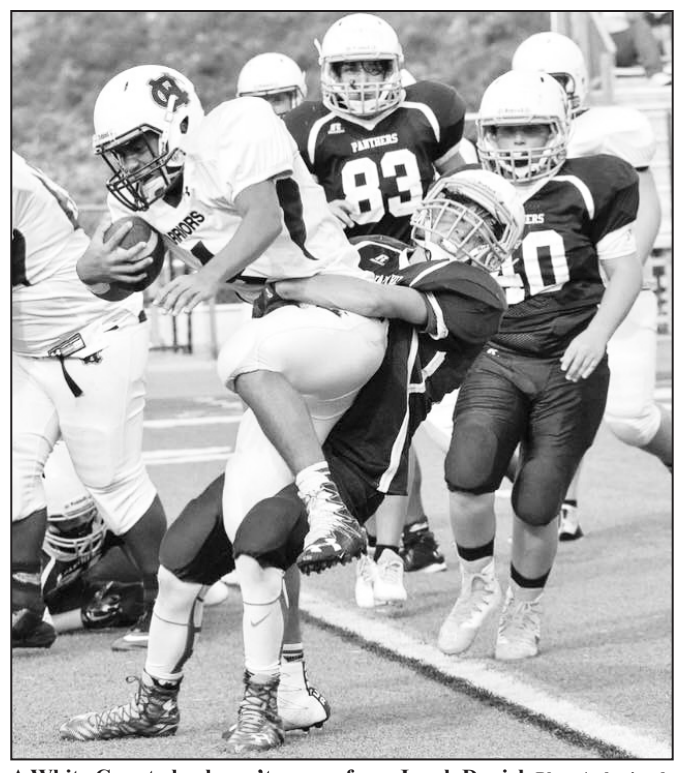
linebacker Noah Underwood. This opened the game up for us. We continued to shut them down on defense and score on a deep ball from Hemphill to Day. We finished the scoring with a long run from Daniel to seal the victory."

The season opened with a 35-20, scrimmage win over Banks County but the first official contest was a 22-7 loss to a very tough White County

squad.

The Panthers' early-season schedule didn't ease up as they faced Habersham County the following week. According to Byers, Habersham is perhaps the most athletically gifted team in the league, due to them combining three different schools into one team.

After trailing 20-6 at halftime, Union County's offense found it's rhythm during



A White County back can't escape from Jonah Daniel. Photo/submitted

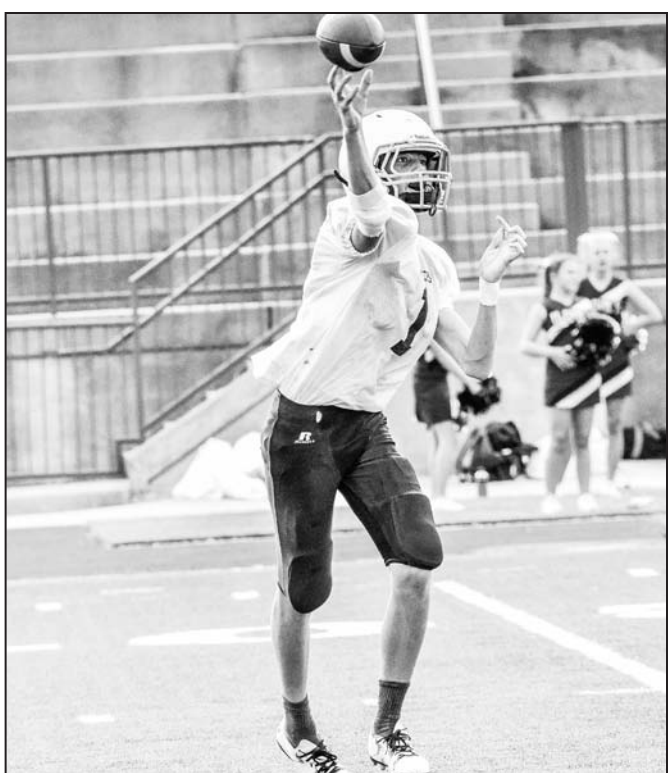
the second half, but it was too little, too late and they fell 34-20.

Coming off a shootout at Habersham County, the Panthers hosted Fannin County in a defensive struggle. The Rebels were able to secure the win thanks to a pair of big plays that went for scores. Meanwhile, the offense could only find the endzone once in a 16-7 loss.

UCMS would respond

with a thrilling 28-20 victory over Lumpkin County for their first win of 2016. Unfortunately, the Panthers were unable to win back-to-back games as they dropped a home contest to Pickens County, by a score of 27-13. The Panthers posted six points on their opening drive but the Dragons would outscore Union County 27-7 for the remainder of the contest.

"It is hard to say who's



Quarterback Kaston Hemphill fires downfield. Photo/submitted

been a stand-out player this year, we have a great group of young men who have worked really hard since the beginning of summer," Byers said. "I could list several of them that have made big plays and big contributions to the team on game day and daily practice. I am very proud of my team for who they are, what they stand for, and how far they have

come."

The Union County Middle School football team was coached by Byers, Caleb Paul - receivers and secondary, Michael Smith-Foot - offensive and defensive line, Thomas Gouchnour - quarterbacks and outside linebackers, and Bob Overstreet - Head of Football Operations.

NASCAR 2016

By Gerald Hodges/the Racing Reporter

Logano Wins; Chase Field Reduced

Talladega, AL -- Joey Logano survived a green-white-checked restart to win at Talladega and clinch a spot in the next-to-last round of this year's Chase For The Sprint Cup Championship.

The win was especially satisfying for the Penske Racing driver because he had to overcome a pit road penalty that cost him a lap after he left his pits with a jack stuck under his car. He made a full lap around the 2.66-mile track, with the jack stuck to his car, and then had to wait for his team to remove it, after returning to his pits.

"We were lucky to get this one," said Logano. "It's never a layup here. We had several things happen that we weren't prepared for. The car was really overheating a couple times. I wasn't sure about the engine, and then we had that deal in the pits. But we've come to far to give up, and I think that's the mindset of all the team."

Brian Scott's runner-up finish was the highest of his career. "Man, this was just great," he said. "This was a great race for us. The only problems we had were trash and some paper on the grill. Being able to stay out of trouble and avoid the wrecks is like a win."

The remaining top-10 finishers: 3. Denny Hamlin, 4. Kurt Busch, 5. Ricky Stenhouse, 6. Kyle Larson, 7. Kevin Harvick, 8. Aric Almirola, 9. Austin Dillon, 10. A.J. Allmendinger

The four drivers that were eliminated from this year's Chase were Martin Truex Jr., Brad Keselowski, Austin Dillon, and Chase Elliott.

Martin Truex Jr. lost an engine in his No. 78 during lap 150 and was unable to finish.

"It is what it is and it's racing. It's part of it and we'll move on," Truex said. "We're going to go try to win the last five races or whatever is left and have a good end to our season."

Brad Keselowski had led 90 laps in the race before his car started smoking on Lap 144.

"It looks like we lost an engine," he said. "I'm pretty confident I lost a rod or something in the lower end. That's just the way it goes."

him in the field.

The field of eight drivers will remain as they are for the next three races at Martinsville, Texas, and Phoenix. After the Phoenix race, the field will be reduced to four. Whichever driver finishes the highest, or wins at Homestead will be the 2016 Sprint Cup champion.

Top-8 Chase drivers: 1. Johnson-3100, 2. Kurt Busch-3099, 3. Logano-3089, 4. Kenseth-3088, 5. Kyle Busch-3084, 6. Harvick-3082, 7. Edwards-3082, 8. Hamlin-3078. Note: Denny Hamlin and Austin Dillon both had 3078 points, but Hamlin had a higher average finish during the last four races, which broke the tie.

ENFINGER GETS FIRST TRUCK VICTORY

Grant Enfinger of Fairhope, AL took the checkered flag in Saturday's Talladega Truck Series race. It was the first career win for the former ARCA Re/Max Series champion, who led five times for 45 laps of the 94-lap race.

Spencer Gallagher was second, followed by Timothy Peters, Rico Abreu, Ben Kennedy, Christopher Bell, Johnny Sauter, Ryan Truex, Matt Tifft, and William Byron.

The six remaining Chase drivers with four races remaining: 1. Byron, 2. Bell, 3. Peters, 4. Kennedy, 5. Sauter, 6. Crafton.

NASCAR AND WALMART RIDE TOGETHER

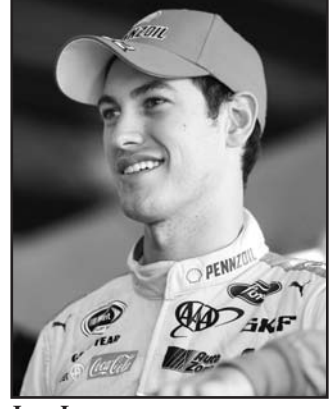
NASCAR and Walmart seem to be driving the same type vehicle. Both organizations go to great lengths to show the sunny side of their business, while suppressing information that might offer a conflicting view.

Just last week I saw a big Walmart ad on television. They were touting the fact that they were spending hundreds of millions of dollars creating new jobs for Americans. It looked and sounded great.

But knowing how frugal the giant retailer is, I wondered by what means they would cut costs in order to derive the extra cash. And besides, the ad cost them a lot of dollars to make, and millions more to air many times on prime-time TV.

I found out this past Thursday how the money would be generated to create those new jobs.

While hurrying to leave for Talladega, my wife informed me that her schedule was pretty tight, and she didn't have time to



Joey Logano

go by the grocery store for some coffee and a couple other things we needed.

She couldn't guarantee there would be coffee in the house when I returned.

No problem. I remembered seeing an ad in Sunday's newspaper for our favorite brand of coffee from one of Walmart's competitor's for \$5.99 per bag. I would be able to zip up to our nearby Walmart, pick up the coffee and other items, and head out for the track. No sweat.

Got in Walmart, found all the items, put them in the buggy and headed for the check-out. Walmart has a policy that if there are over three customers in a check out line, they will open another register. But I guess that didn't apply last Thursday morning. I suddenly remembered that this was Walmart, and I had to play by their rules. My wait time wouldn't be over 15 minutes, and I knew I could make it up once I hit the highway. A little girl that looked to be about 16-years-old checked me out. When she got to the bag of coffee, that was priced at \$7.97, I explained to her about the competitor's lower advertised price.

"We no longer price match," was her reply.

I was shocked. Walmart used to have a policy of matching all competitors prices. Apparently they had changed their policy and rules without telling anyone. Maybe they didn't want us to know.

On the way out of the store, I suddenly realized how Walmart was going to generate all those millions it needed to help us poor Americans.

NASCAR is basically the same way. I have never had any problems with the organization, but I know a few journalists that are no longer issued race creden-

tials, based on some negative writings.

Descriptions of the actual Sprint Cup races put out by NASCAR's public relations department always give the image of an exciting race. While the last ten laps might be exciting, the other 490 laps are as boring as an order of stale McDonald's french fries.

The truth is everything is not as it appears in NASCAR racing. The organization will announce a new title sponsor for the Cup Series within a few weeks. The new company won't be paying nearly as much as Sprint did, hence there will be less money for everyone involved.

The field of cars used to consist of 43, now it's down to 40.

Several major sponsors, including Kellogg's, are leaving NASCAR after this season.

Every 2016 Sprint Cup race with the exception of one has had a decrease in television viewers. Overall television viewership is down 14 per cent from 2015, and another 17 per cent from 2014.

Teams are struggling, especially single-car operations. Tommy Baldwin, a former racer, who has run a low-budget, one-car team for many years, is being forced to sell out, because he can't pay the bills.

Getting back to Walmart, I politely told the young cashier that I had decided not to buy the coffee.

My daddy had a saying, "No matter how you try to skin a cat, he's not going to like it."

There are times I know how that cat felt.

I sure hope I can find a grocery store open on the way home from the track.

Weekend Racing: The Sprint Cup and Truck teams are at the .522-mile Martinsville track.

Sat., Oct. 29, Truck Series race 20 of 23; Starting time: 1:30 p.m. ET; TV: Foxsports1.

Sun., Oct. 30, Sprint Cup race 33 of 36; Starting time: 1 p.m. ET; TV: NBCSN.

Racing Trivia Question: Where is Chase Elliott's hometown?

Last Week's Question. Which Cup team will Clint Bowyer drive for in 2017? Answer: He will replace Tony Stewart at Stewart/Haas Racing.

You may contact the Racing Reporter by e-mail at: hodges@race500.com. NT(Oct26,Z16)CA

Sweet 16... continued from 2B

Bullock struck out the side to take the game into the ninth inning.

With momentum on their side after coming back from the brink of death in the previous inning, the Lady Jackets exploded for four runs in the inning.

The inning actually began with promise for Union as Lawn got the force at third on a bunt attempt. But four straight singles would follow and SE Bulloch held a 4-2 lead before Union recorded the second out.

The Lady Panthers' sixth fielding error of the game allowed to more runs to score before Lawn picked up a K for the final out.

Trailing 6-2 with one out in the bottom of the ninth, Arrowood singled to score Poteete from second.

Chambers drew a walk to put two aboard and bring the tying run to the plate but Union was all out of comebacks and the Lady Jackets held on to a 6-3 victory.

Lawn worked nine innings as she pitched in a state playoff game for the fourth time in her career.

She scattered 12 hits and surrendered 3 earned runs, walked three, and fanned six.

At the plate, Lawn did everything she could to help her own cause as the junior went 2-for-5 with a pair of RBIs.

Tanner also finished 2-for-5, Arrowood was 1-of-

5 with two runs and an RBI, while Chambers chipped in a 2-for-3 day with a walk.

Wischmeyer finished 2-for-4, Poteete and Sutton also walked for Union County.

The three seniors, Arrowood, Chambers, and Tanner complete their high school careers as one of the most successful senior classes in program history.

This year's seniors will graduate with 10 State Tournament wins, which is the second most behind the Class of 2010-11 and 2011-12, who each won 14 games at State during their careers.

Tanner leaves with the all-time triples record and the individual season triples record.

Chambers takes the career RBIs record and the individual season RBI record with her.

She is also second in nearly every Union County pitching category for her career, trailing only Angie Hughes.

Another milestone this season was Coach Stewart's 250th career victory - all coming at UCHS.

As for the rest of Region 7-AAA, No. 1 seed East Hall was swept by Region 2-AAA's No. 2 team Cook County by scores of 5-2 and 13-5.

North Hall was also swept as they fell victim to the Region 1-AAA Champion Worth County, by scores of 6-2 and 10-2.

Bowling scores

Monday Night Men: Branden Hartness 228, Stanley Tyler 204, Jim Kidder 201, Mel White 236, Richard Tanner 205, John Delphino 212, Doug Tanner 211, 212, Tim McVey 205, Ken Thigpen 226, Bob Bischoff 212, Greg Wittenberg 214, Taz Matetzsch 289, Jeremiah Platt 224, 225, Joe Teague 204, 200, Derrick Rice 215.

Young at Heart Seniors: Bart Rodgers 242, Ken Thigpen 213, Bob Landis 218, 230, Dewey Allen 233, John Delphino 212, 215, Bryan Cuthbert 203, 215, Mel White 202, 220, Barry Rice 213, 204, Bruce Burnett 222, Bob Bischoff 209, Ron Wingate 201.

Thursday Night Fun

Mixed: Tee Turner 212, Stacey King 200, Branden Hartness 247, 204, Ray Everett 202, 237, 210, Series 649, Herb Popkey 223, Dewey Allen 210, 245, Tony Lynch 217, 225, Stanley Tyler 201, 201, Chuck Reeves 213, Phillip Brix 203, Curtis Corn 211, 201, Bonnell Thomas 224, 207, Jimmy Southern 202, Brett Hogsd 203, 225, Shay Roberts 254, 202.

Young at Heart Seniors: Sabrina Willis 125, 123, Lizzy Taz-zia 93, Ben Love 68, Cooper Allen 61, Michael Lierd 119, Michaela Caldwell 107, Nick Love 120, Lily Love 79, Ivy Robbins 124, Christian Theriot 137, Noah Freven 73, Kiley Hartness 99, Jaeden Love 111, Michael Fox 195. NO(Oct26,Z16)CA