

Sports

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MGC's Erin Raper claims Southeast Regional USA Gold Balance Beam Championship

By Todd Forrest
North Georgia News
sports@nghanews.com

Pigeon Forge, Tenn - Earlier this summer, six girls from Blairsville's Mountain Gymnastics Center qualified for the Southeast Regional Championships where 14-year old Erin Raper headlined the MGC's performances by claiming the USA Xcel Gold Southeast Regional Championship on the Beam with a high score of 9.475.

Raper, a resident of Murphy, NC, also recorded a second place score (9.35) on the vault, finished tied for fourth on the Floor with a 9.475, and posted a 9.05 on the Bars. She just missed taking home top honors with a 37.35 All-Around score that was still good enough for second place.

MGC's other competitors



Southeast Regional Champion Erin Raper of MGC.

were led by Jordan Swanson's fifth place All-Around finish of 36.48, thanks to three top 10 performances.

Swanson was tied for

fifth on the Beam with a 9.25, tied for ninth on the Floor with a 9.375, while finishing tied for 10th on the Vault with an 8.75.

Other than Raper, the only other MGC athlete to record a top three was Evelyn McBride's third place showing (9.35) on the Beam. McBride was also 10th on the Bars at 9.13 for an All-Around score of 36.03.

Sofia Swartz came in fifth on the Bars with a 9.45 and seventh on the Beam with a 9.25 while posting a 35.68 All-Around score.

Caymin Thompson dialed up a top 10 performance with a 9.20 on the Beam - good enough for a tie for eighth place and a 36.05 All-Around score.

Mia McCombs' 35.73 All-Around score was anchored by a 13th place score of 8.93 on the Vault.

Each of these six girls qualified for the Southeast Regionals by scoring a 35 All-Around at the State Championships.

MGC Open House this Saturday

As fall classes approach, Mountain Gymnastics Center will be holding an Open House this Saturday morning from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the MGC gym on Airport Industrial Drive.

MGC will also be accepting registrations for the upcoming fall classes.

For more details you can visit the MGC website at www.mtngym.com or on Facebook under 'Mountain Gymnastics Center.'



You may contact MGC by email at mtngym@windstream.net.

UCHS Softball Alumni game

The Union County High School Softball team will host an alumni game this Saturday, July 30th at the UCHS Softball Complex.

Beginning at 10 a.m., any UCHS softball alumni may register at the field. The alumni and current team will get their pictures taken for the newspaper and keepsakes at 10:30 a.m.

The first pitch will be thrown out at 11am. The alumni will play against the current team in a friendly, but competitive game at the UCHS Softball Complex.

Admission to the game is free and the game is open to the public. Following the

game, the UCHS softball team will host a tailgate party.

Alumni will pay \$30 to receive a t-shirt, team picture, and BBQ/Hamburger plate. Other food items will be for sale at the concession stand. There will be enough food for all alumni, parents, family, and friends.

The game will be an eight inning affair with four innings of fast-pitch and four innings of slow pitch.

Keeping our alumni involved in our program is a priority. See you July 30!

For more details you may contact Coach Jessica Stewart at jstewart@uchs-schools.org

Jones Camp draws 75 athletes; raises \$800



The first annual Brannon Jones Memorial Football Camp received tremendous community support while attracting close to 80 young athletes.

By Todd Forrest
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sports@nghanews.com

Following an early afternoon downpour, the skies cleared for nearly 75 youth football players at last Saturday's Brannon Jones Memorial Football Camp.

The camp was led by 2014 Union County High School graduate Luther Jones, son of the late Brannon Jones. Luther Jones was joined by 14 of his Kennesaw State teammates, as well as local coaches and former Union County players to conduct the camp.

"We had between 70-75 kids and being (the camp's) first year, I felt really good about it,"

Luther Jones said. "Hopefully we'll build from here, get bigger, and keep on trucking."

According to Luther Jones, when the rains hit, the younger kids were sent inside and the middle and high school players were kept on the field to perform drills. And what he saw from the Union County kids left him extremely impressed.

"They really got after it and showed a lot of intensity," Luther Jones said. "I love to see that from guys that are going to be playing for (Union County) this year. I graduated a few years ago so I don't know many of the guys anymore, but from what I saw yesterday, they are hard workers."

There was no registration fees for the camp, however

almost \$800 in donations were accepted with the proceeds going to EDS (Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome) research.

On the heels of a successful football camp, Luther Jones announced that he and his family will be handing out a pair of scholarships in memory of Brannon Jones.

"We don't know how we're going to break them down yet but we'll be awarding two scholarships at (Union County) high school," Luther Jones added.

When asked what it was like to witness such a strong turnout, along with the overflowing support from the community for a football camp honoring his late father, Luther Jones' gratitude was over-

whelming.

"All of this meant a whole lot to me and my family," he said. "There was just an awesome outpouring of support from the community. I couldn't have done this without the sponsors, the Jones family, my mom Leslie, my brother Dustin, the McBride family, and all the Kennesaw people that helped me."

He went on to thank Bob Head for his donation and Impact Design for making the camp shirts and bags.

Another 'thank you' went to Union County Head Coach Brian Allison for allowing them to use the facilities, along with assistant coach Gabe Miller and Michael Ross for their help conducting the camp.



Luther Jones (far right) teaches youngsters at the camp in memory of his late father, mentor, and best friend Brannon Jones. Photo/Todd Forrest



Campers of all ages took part in Jones' camp. Photo/Todd Forrest

North Georgia RAPIDS Swim Team making waves at Championship Meet

The RAPIDS competed at the North Georgia Swim League Championship Meet on July 8th and 9th, 2016 at the Habersham Aquatic Center.

Overall Event Placement:

- Girls:**
8 & Under: Lily Helton - 2nd Place Overall
18 & Under: Kaiya Wilkes - 9th Place Overall
- Boys:**
8 & Under: Andrew Nushtayev - 3rd Place Overall
10 & Under: Nicholas Nushtayev - 7th Place Overall
10 & Under: Wyatt Nichols - 16th Place Overall
12 & Under: Hunter White - 3rd Place Overall
14 & Under: Brian Williams - 10th Place Overall
14 & Under: Luke Gambrell - 11th Place Overall
14 & Under: Steven Williams - 15th Place Overall

Combined Team Scores Resulted in 8th Place Finish Overall (out of 15)

Top Individual Event Placements:

- Girls:**
50-Yard Freestyle:
8 & Under: Lily Helton / 2nd Place Finish (out of 31)
12 & Under: Danielle Grader / 21st Place Finish (out of 56)
18 & Under: Kaiya Wilkes / 5th Place Finish (out of 35)
18 & Under: Leannah Gambrell / 20th Place Finish (out of 35)
100-Yard Freestyle:
12 & Under: Danielle Grader / 17th Place Finish (out of 33)
12 & Under: Courtney Foster / 22nd Place Finish (out of 33)
18 & Under: Kaiya Wilkes / 6th Place Finish (out of 13)
25-Yard Breaststroke:
8 & Under: Lily Helton / 2nd Place Finish (out of 24)
50-Yard Breaststroke:
18 & Under: Leannah Gambrell / 9th Place Finish (out of 17)
50-Yard Backstroke:
12 & Under: Danielle Grader / 19th Place Finish (out of 51)
12 & Under: Courtney Foster / 20th Place Finish (out of 51)
18 & Under: Kaiya Wilkes / 7th Place Finish (out of 27)
25-Yard Butterfly:
8 & Under: Lily Helton / 2nd Place Finish (out of 47)
50-Yard Butterfly:
12 & Under: Courtney Foster / 21 Place Finish (out of 46)
18 & Under: Leannah Gambrell / 17th Place Finish (out of 25)
100-Yard IM:
8 & Under: Lily Helton / 1st Place Finish (out of 12)
12 & Under: Courtney Foster / 17th Place Finish (out of 24)
18 & Under: Kaiya Wilkes / 8th Place Finish (out of 16)
18 & Under: Leannah Gambrell / 13th Place Finish (out of 16)
- Boys:**
25-Yard Freestyle:
8 & Under: Andrew Nushtayev / 2nd Place Finish (out of 38)
10 & Under: Nicholas Nushtayev / 4th Place Finish (out of 48)
50-Yard Freestyle:
8 & Under: Andrew Nushtayev / 1st Place Finish (out of 33)



- 10 & Under: Nicholas Nushtayev / 7th Place Finish (out of 39)
10 & Under: Wyatt Nichols / 10 Place Finish (out of 39)
12 & Under: Lucas Whitaker / 18th Place Finish (out of 40)
14 & Under: Luke Gambrell / 9th Place Finish (out of 32)
14 & Under: Alden Wilkes / 22nd Place Finish (out of 32)
100-Yard Freestyle:
12 & Under: Hunter White / 2nd Place Finish (out of 22)
12 & Under: Lucas Whitaker / 14th Place Finish (out of 22)
14 & Under: Brian Williams / 8th Place Finish (out of 25)
14 & Under: Luke Gambrell / 10th Place Finish (out of 25)
14 & Under: Steven Williams / 13th Place Finish (out of 25)
14 & Under: Alden Wilkes / 20th Place Finish (out of 25)
25-Yard Breaststroke:
8 & Under: Andrew Nushtayev / 2nd Place Finish (out of 14)
10 & Under: Nicholas Nushtayev / 7th Place Finish (out of 26)
10 & Under: Wyatt Nichols / 10th Place Finish (out of 26)
50-Yard Breaststroke:
12 & Under: Hunter White / 4th Place Finish (out of 32)
14 & Under: Luke Gambrell / 5th Place Finish (out of 22)
14 & Under: Brian Williams / 6th Place Finish (out of 22)
14 & Under: Alden Wilkes / 17th Place Finish (out of 22)
25-Yard Backstroke:
8 & Under: Andrew Nushtayev / 2nd Place Finish (out of 41)
10 & Under: Nicholas Nushtayev / 3rd Place Finish (out of 47)
50-Yard Backstroke:
12 & Under: Lucas Whitaker / 14th Place Finish (out of 40)



- 14 & Under: Steven Williams / 8th Place Finish (out of 25)
25-Yard Butterfly:
10 & Under: Wyatt Nichols / 9th Place Finish (out of 30)
50-Yard Butterfly:
12 & Under: Hunter White / 2nd Place Finish (out of 27)
14 & Under: Brian Williams / 6th Place Finish (out of 25)
14 & Under: Steven Williams / 8th Place Finish (out of 25)
100-Yard IM:
10 & Under: Wyatt Nichols / 8th Place Finish (out of 17)
12 & Under: Hunter White / 3rd Place Finish (out of 20)
12 & Under: Lucas Whitaker / 18th Place Finish (out of 20)
14 & Under: Brian Williams / 6th Place Finish (out of 15)
14 & Under: Luke Gambrell / 7th Place Finish (out of 15)
14 & Under: Steven Williams / 11th Place Finish (out of 15)
14 & Under: Alden Wilkes / 14th Place Finish (out of 15)
- Relays:**
Girls:
200-Yard Medley Relay: 18 & Under / 9th Place Finish
200-Yard Freestyle Relay: 18 & Under / 6th Place Finish
- Boys:**
200-yard Medley Relay: 14 & Under / 2nd Place Finish
200-Yard Freestyle Relay: 12 & Under / 4th Place Finish
200-yard Freestyle Relay: 14 & Under / 2 Place Finish