

# JV and Middle School Panthers win on the road

By Todd Forrest  
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The Union County Middle School won for the second straight week and the JV squad picked up a win in the season opener.

The Middle School pulled away from West Hall 34-24 during the second half before the Spartans added two touchdowns during mop-up duty.

The JV Panthers also were on the road, where they throttled Fannin County 47-6.

The Middle School Panthers jumped out to an early 14-0 lead before West Hall put six on the board. Union had a shot to put another six points up before the half, but its two receivers bumped into each other on a deep route that would have easily been taken to the house for a score.

"I felt like we missed a great scoring opportunity right before the half," Coach Casey Jones said.

Following a Spartan three-and-out to open the second half, Union added another score early in the third to make it a 20-6 game.

West Hall answered with

a touchdown to get within eight points at 20-12 but Union scored 14 unanswered points to take a 34-12 lead during the fourth quarter.

"West Hall had a real athletic running back," Coach Jones said. "Every time he touched the ball it made it a little bit nervous."

Quarterback Bo Lynch had three scores for the Panthers and threw for another touchdown.

Nick Rodriguez scored once, as did Cole Wright.

"I was real proud of our guys when they scored their second touchdown because the momentum had shifted, even though we were still leading," Coach Jones said.

"We came out and marched right down the field and scored, then held them to a three-and-out then marched down the field and scored again," he said.

Next week Union County travels to Towns County where an unbeaten Indian squad awaits the Panthers. Coach Jones is hoping for another great week of practice, leading up to Thursday's league game.

"We're steadily improving," Coach Jones said. "Practice was much better last week and we just continue to get

better and that's what our main goal is."

The JV Panthers got off to a slow start only leading 8-0 after one before exploding for 41 unanswered points.

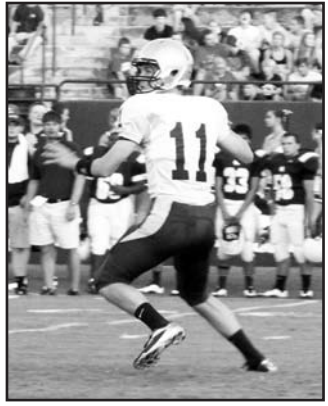
The Panthers extended the lead to 28-0 at the half and 40-0 after three quarters.

Sophomore quarterback Ralston Drake ran for two scores and threw for another.

Nick Whittle and Lance Rich each finished with a rushing touchdown, Dalton Moose returned a kickoff for a score, and Chase Stencil scored on a pick-six.

Nic Sparks and Rich each converted two-point conversions.

Joseph Mancuso, who splits time at quarterback with



Ralston Drake

Drake, went a perfect 3-for-3 with 40 yards through the air.

"We split our quarterback play," Coach Cullen Robertson said. "Drake plays the first half and Mancuso plays the second."

Despite holding an insurmountable lead, Union's defense never let it's foot off the gas and continued to make plays well into the fourth quarter.

"Our defense made a goal line stand late in the game when we could have just let them score," Coach Robertson said. "I'm glad we never let up in the second half. We kept our foot on their throats the entire game."

The JV team will play its home opener on Thursday against Rabun County.

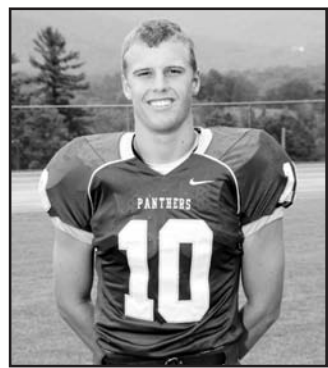


Bo Lynch

## Week One: Players of the week



Josh Kim



T Bentley

Coach Allison has selected the Players of the Week for Week One at Towns County. Josh Kim, whose 47-yr TD reception gave Union an early lead. He also had four tackles and one tackle for a loss.

Quarterback T Bentley rushed for 111 yards and threw for 134 yards and a score.

Kicker Eric Hougrand hit a career long 44-yr field goal and two of his three kickoffs went for touchbacks.

Congratulations to these three seniors.

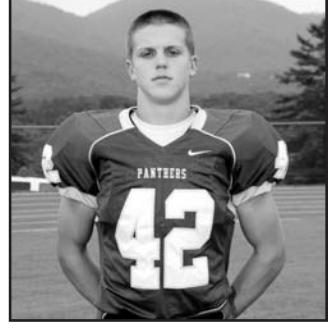


Eric Hougrand

## Week Two: Players of the week



CJ Byers



Jonah Whitmer

Coach Brian Allison's Player of the Week selections for Week Two are senior CJ Byers for offense and senior Jonah Whitmer on defense.

Byers play on the offensive line resulted in his Player of the Week selection. The lineman's blocking allowed

the Union offense to rush for 136 yards and throw for 227 yards.

Whitmer finished with the game with nine tackles and picked up a second half interception and caused a fumble.

Congratulations to CJ Byers and Jonah Whitmer.

# Cross Country runs the War Eagle Invitational

By Todd Forrest  
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Last week, Union County's Cross Country teams participated in the War Eagle Invitational, hosted by Chestatee High School in Hall County.

Nineteen teams took part with Union picking up three individual medals. Jeremy Webb finished second overall in the boys varsity race, Emma Garrison finished sixth overall in the girls varsity race, and Alyssa Arnold finished 3rd overall in the JV girls race.

The top five girls for Union County were: 1st overall Emma Garrison at 22:05, sixth overall Ansley Garrison at 24:00, 10th overall Rachel Vester at 24:43, 12th overall Kenna Bauman at 24:59, and



Jeremy Webb

15th overall Rachel Todd at 25:09.

The top five boys for Union County were: second overall Jeremy Webb at 18:18, eighth overall Cristian Garcia at 20:06, 12th overall Aaron Stafford at 20:48, 14th overall Will Stone 21:03, and 15th overall Jacob Kelley at 21:13.

The next meet will be on Sept. 11th at West Hall.



Emma Garrison



Cristian Garcia



Coach Jackie Hughes



Ansley Garrison

# Mountain Gymnastics Center ready for 2013

The Mountain Gymnastics Center has begun preparation for the 2012-13 season.

2012 saw the MGC bring home multiple state championships during the spring and with the Summer Olympics just ending, Coach Shelley Thomas is excited about this season, which officially begins in November.

"A lot of it stems from the Olympics," Thomas said. "They've all got Olympic fever so they are ready to get back to work. We're trying to get ready for the competition season."

The squad expects to have a mock meet in Blairsville

before the first official meet of the year takes place in Dahlonega during the first weekend in October.

MGC teams participate in the AAU and USA competitive programs levels 2-7.

Shelley Thomas has owned and operated Mountain Gymnastics Center since its birth, 26 years ago.

The MGC is still taking class registration and have started a boys class on Monday from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. 12 boys are currently enrolled along with male coaches

For more details contact MGC at (706)745-3325.



The 2012-13 MGC Competition Team. Photo/Todd Forrest

## Football...continued from pg 10A

half due to dehydration, so the coaching staff shut him down for the evening.

Defensively for the Panthers, Whitmer racked up nine tackles, picked off a pass, and forced a fumble. Burnette would also chip in with seven stops.

Craig Jones had five tackles, including a sack, to go along with three quarterback hurries, a forced fumble and a forced interception. Luther Jones had seven tackles, two for a loss, and two quarterback hurries.

"Defensively we played really well," Coach Allison said. "Winning the turnover battle made a big difference from last week. That is always critical. It was a good win for us. Now we get to play An-

draws, go into our open week, regroup a little bit and get ready for region play. We need to run the football a little bit better but overall I was pleased with our efforts."

The Panthers now own back-to-back wins over the Rebels for the first time since 2000 and 2001.

Following a 2-0 start, Union turns it attention to Andrews, NC and the sound of the Panthers' first 3-0 start since 2008 has a very nice ring to the Panthers' linebacker/running back Chase Barnett.

"We're happy about our position," Barnett said. "We are planning on going 3-0 after Andrews. We just have to work hard and have a good week of practice."



Senior Craig Jones applies the pressure to Fannin QB Trevor Stone as the Rebel throws an interception. Photo/Todd Forrest

## Softball...continued from pg 10A

ning and five in the fourth.

The Lady Panthers were led by the bats of Adams, Allie Stroman, and Courtney Busbee.

Adams knocked in three runs on two singles, Stroman drove in two with another two-hit game, and Courtney Busbee finished 3-for-3 with a double, triple, and two RBIs.

Cook started the game for Union and they found themselves in a familiar situation as the previous game - trailing 5-1. Byers would enter the game during the third inning and pick up the win thanks to the awakening of Union's bats.

Down four runs, Union opened the third inning with three consecutive singles. Adams reached on an error and Seeba on a fielder's choice before Stroman's single tied the game at five.

During the bottom of the fourth Rich and Hughes singled and Courtney Busbee brought them both home on a double

to center.

Byers, Adams, Seeba, and Stroman followed that up with a single each and when the dust cleared, Union had taken victory by a 10-5 score.

Cook allowed five hits and four earned runs for the Lady Panthers and Byers closed the game, allowing two hits and striking out two.

Karley Nix scored three times for Union and Brown finished with a run and a hit.

**Lady Panthers 4  
Prince Avenue 3**

Union's final win of the season came thanks to a Hannah Hughes solo homer in the top of the sixth.

With the game tied at 2-2, Hughes sent a shot over the left field fence to give Union the lead.

Brown would follow Hughes with a single to center and would add an insurance

run, following a Byers double.

Earlier, Brown would single home Crystal Busbee to give Union the early 1-0 advantage.

Two Union errors allowed Prince to tie things up in the bottom half of the fourth.

In the fifth, Adams would single and score on a passed ball to give Union the 2-1 lead.

Prince responded with another run in their half of the fifth to tie things up before Hughes and Byers' hits put Union ahead for good.

Crystal Busbee tossed six innings, striking out two and allowing two hits.

This week, Union traveled to Dawson on Monday before returning home to host Social Circle on Tuesday.

Tuesday night's game should decide the top seed in the Region 8-AA Tournament.

A win by Union and they are guaranteed the top-spot and will host the tournament.

A loss and Union finishes second but still gets a

first round bye in the region tournament.

On Thursday, the Lady Panthers travel to Jefferson to take on the Lady Dragons.

Union County will then take a week off before taking part in the Brookwood Tournament at the end of the regular season. The postseason begins Sept. 25th with the opening of the Region 8-AA Tournament.



Senior shortstop Shawna Brown. Photo/Todd Forrest

## Rec Basketball Registration

**Basketball Registration**

Ages 5-8

Fee: \$40

Register the whole month of Sept.

**Basketball Registration**

Ages 9-14

Fee: \$40

Register the whole month of Oct.

Check out the website

[www.unioncountyrecreation.com](http://www.unioncountyrecreation.com)

(706)439-6074

## GHSA "Pink Week"

Union County School's Mike Colwell Memorial Stadium is usually bathed in purple when the Panthers take to the gridiron.

But pink will be the color Friday night, Sept 14, 2012. That's because the Union County High School cheerleaders' community service project is a "Pink Out" for breast cancer during the match up between Union County and Andrews.

The cheerleaders will be using PINK Pom Poms and wearing PINK Hair Ribbons.. Donations will be taken in "Panther Ally" from 6:00 -7:00 where the Panther Mascot will be available for photographs.

All donations will benefit the American Cancer Society. Although it may be difficult to give up your Panther Purple, please join the cheerleaders in their support of the fight against breast cancer. Pink and Purple look great together!

On Tuesday the Union

County Lady Panthers will be hosting a "Pink Out" game with Social Circle.

The game will also double as Senior Night for the Lady Panthers as we honor our 2012-13 seniors. Hannah Hughes, Amber Seeba, Shawna Brown, Bailey Byers, and Carly Adams.

The softball game begins at 5:30 and pink hair extensions and other items will be sold, along with raffle tickets for a gift basket with all proceeds benefiting the Susan G. Komen Foundation.

The Foundation is the global leader of the breast cancer movement, having invested more than \$1.9 billion since inception in 1982. As the world's largest grassroots network of breast cancer survivors and activists, they are working with the G.H.S.A. to save lives, empower people, ensure quality care for all and energize science to find the cures.