

Wrestling: Union sending three to State Championships in Macon

By Todd Forrest
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BREMEN - Christian Martinez, Sean Phillips and Issac Tritt survived the State Sectional round to advance to this weekend's State Championships in Macon.

Union County would have sent a fourth member but senior Logan Tritt suffered a knee injury during a consolation match at Sectionals.

"This is not how he, or I, wanted his senior year to finish," Union County Wrestling Coach Justin Byers said.

In some good news for the Panthers, freshman Sean Phillips qualified for Macon with a fourth place finish, becoming the first freshman in program history to reach the final weekend of the season.

Phillips defeated Josey's Shykeem Carpenter in the opening round before falling to McNair's Kyron Fisher.

Phillips would reel off three straight in the consolation brackets, beginning with a win over Westside-Augusta's Eric Gibson. In the next match, he pinned Callaway's Curmondre Bray before pinning Monticello's Tristen Light.

In the third place bout he earned a rematch with Fisher but was unable to defeat the Area 4 champion.

Martinez scored a 57-



The Union County wrestling team following its appearance at the Area Tournament earlier this month. After sending four wrestlers to sectionals, three Panthers remain as the season comes to a head in Macon this weekend at the Class AA State Championships. Photo/Todd Forrest

second pinfall in his opening round match vs Temple's Hunter Bennett before suffering a pinfall at the hands of Gabriel Santos-Cunningham in round two.

He bounced back to defeat Social Circle's Zeb Hutchinson but lost to Anthony

Elliott of Callaway. In the fifth place match, Martinez pinned Oglethorpe's Edward Bridges in 33 seconds.

Last but not least, Issac Tritt came in third after knocking off Oglethorpe's Zeke Hull by a 14-12 decision in the final match.

His tournament began with a 46-second pinfall of Diego Santiago of Harlem. After falling to the eventual champion Koby Cook (Bremen) in round two, Issac Tritt rebounded with pinfall victories over Screven County's Cody Thompson and Social

Circle's Hunter Muse to earn a spot in the third place bout.

Logan Tritt pinned McNair's Shannon Duckworth in the opener but fell to Harlem's Sean Houston in round two.

During his consolation match with Bacon County's Trent Edmondson, he suffered

a heartbreaking injury that prematurely ended his season.

The State Tournament is scheduled to get underway on Feb. 13 at the Macon Centreplex, however no brackets were available at press time.

Lady Panthers eliminated by Monticello in opening round of region tourney

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TIGER - The 5th seeded Union County Lady Panthers saw the 2018-19 season come to a close last Tuesday with a 61-58 loss to 4-seed Monticello in the first round of the Region 8-AA Tournament at Rabun County High School.

After scoring on five of its first six possessions, Union County (14-12) cooled off and would trail by as many as nine points before a 10-2 run pulled them within a point at the break.

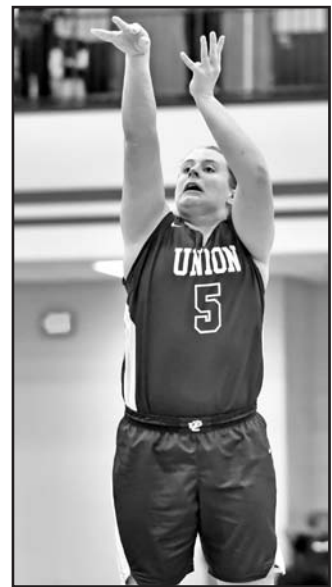
Junior Kait McCarter scored 14 of her team-high 20 points in the second half, including a trey to give Union its final lead of the night at 37-35, early in the third.

Monticello would regain the lead and take a six-point advantage into the fourth before McCarter pulled her team back within a deuce with consecutive baskets to start the fourth.

The Lady Panthers would never pull ahead as the Lady Hurricanes kept Union at bay with eight second-chance points in the final frame.

The Lady Panthers would commit 18 turnovers while Monticello turned it over only eight times. The Lady Canes would also win the offensive rebounding battle 19-18 marking the ninth time in Union's 11 losses that they were out rebounded on the offensive glass.

"We scored a lot of points but committed some big-time turnovers," Union coach Corey Garrett said. "In the fourth quarter it seemed like every one of our turnovers led to a layup and all of their offensive rebounds or putbacks resulted in and-ones."



Union County's All-Region 8-AA selections in action vs Monticello during last week's region playoffs. (L-R): First Team All-Region 8-AA: freshman Ava Hunter. Region 8-AA Honorable Mention: junior Brooke Dockrey, junior Andelin Hill and junior Kait McCarter. Photos/Todd Forrest

Controlling the offensive boards proved vital to the Lady Panthers' success this season. Union County sported an 11-2 record when winning or breaking even on the offensive glass. They were 3-9 when coming up short in the offensive rebounding column.

"With our size, we should never lose the rebounding battle," Garrett said. "We're not going to press and force a lot of turnovers so we have to try and make up for it with offensive rebounding."

Lady Panthers 58, Monticello 61 - Union County got 20 points from McCarter and 17 from freshman Ava Hunter but it wasn't enough as the Lady Canes punched their ticket to state by holding off the Lady Panthers down the stretch in the opening round of the Class AA Region Tournament.

"What it all came down to was, we didn't make enough big-time plays and they did,"

Garrett said. After trailing for most of the evening, Union County entered the fourth down 45-39 until back-to-back scores by McCarter pulled her team within two, 90 seconds in.

Monticello responded with consecutive baskets of its own but Hunter knocked down a pair from the line, then followed that up with a bucket just inside of the 4:30 mark to trim the margin back to two.

McCarter responded to a Lady Canes' 3-point play with a deuce on the other end to pull Union within three as the clock ticked under three minutes.

With 2:17 left, McCarter scored on a putback that pulled the Lady Panthers within a point at 52-51 but Monticello immediately answered by going coast-to-coast for a layup. The Lady Canes were on the verge of locking up the W after an offensive board resulted

in a basket and a 56-51 advantage with 91 seconds remaining.

Following a Lady Panther miss that should have sealed their fate, Brooke Dockrey kept hope alive with a steal-and-score plus a foul on the layup. The and-one made it a 56-54 game with 45 seconds to play.

Monticello hit 1-of-2 at the line but grabbed the offensive board on the miss, sending them back to the line, where they split another pair, for a 58-54 score.

McCarter was fouled with 20 seconds left, hitting 1-for-2, but the Lady Canes also sank 1-of-2 to keep the margin at four with 17 seconds remaining.

With senior Adeline Dockrey on the bench with five fouls, freshman Ansley Carter banked in a trey from the top-of-the-key to make it a one-point game with 6 seconds left. Union quickly fouled but the Lady Canes hit both free throws with 1.3 seconds remaining

and the Lady Panthers' ensuing half-court buzzer-beater missed everything.

McCarter would pull down 15 rebounds along with 3 blocks and 2 steals to go with a team-high 20 points. Meanwhile, Hunter scored 11 of her 17 points in the first half before dealing with double and triple teams down the stretch. The freshman post would finish with 8 boards and 3 blocks.

Junior Andelin Hill shot 3-of-8 from downtown for 9 points. She also recorded a team-high 4 blocked shots.

Adeline Dockrey knocked down a pair of triples for 6 points. The senior would haul in 4 boards, dish out 4 assists and record one steal in her final game.

Brooke Dockrey's 8 dimes were a team-high while also pulling down 6 rebounds with a steal, a block and 3 points. Collins also chipped in 3 points with

a late trey.

Union County shot 39-percent from the floor (20-for-51) and 33-percent from downtown (7-for-21). The Lady Panthers were near-perfect at the line, hitting 11-of-13 (85-percent) -- including a stretch of nine-straight at one point.

On the other end, the Lady Canes overcame a hot start from Union County by drilling its first two tries from 3-point land, then closing the first period on a 12-2 run.

Trailing 18-12 after one, Hill nailed a corner-three and Hunter scored inside to pull within a point but Monticello fired back with a 10-2 run to open up its largest lead of the game at 28-19.

Adeline Dockrey connected on her second trey of the day to ignite a 10-0 Lady Panther run that saw Hill drill a three of her own before Hunter hit 2-of-2 at the line and McCarter gave Union the lead with a putback in the final seconds.

Following McCarter's go-ahead basket, Monticello went the length of the floor to beat the buzzer with a runner in the paint -- putting the Lady Canes back on top and ending their four-minute, 24-second scoring drought at exactly the right moment.

After Monticello scored to open the third, Hill sank her third trey to even the score at 32-32, then McCarter put Union County in front with a putback. Later in the period, a McCarter trey put Union back on top at 37-35 with 4:20 left in the frame. Once again, the Lady Canes opened up a little breathing room with another 10-2 run to close the quarter with a 45-39 advantage.

(A season recap interview with Coach Garrett will be available in next week's North Georgia News.)

Soccer: Union opens 2019 with splits vs Lumpkin and North Murray

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Union County's 2019 campaign got underway last week with a pair of home contests vs Lumpkin County and North Murray.

On Wednesday, the Panthers jumped out to a 3-0 half-time lead before fending off a furious Lumpkin rally in a 3-2 victory.

The Lady Panthers, however, fell behind 2-0 at the break but were unable to mount a second half comeback in a 4-0 loss to the Lady Indians.

They would, however, get back on track Friday when they dismantled North Murray 6-0, while the guys suffered their first loss by a score of 3-1.

During the Panthers' 3-2 victory over Lumpkin County, Kobi Robbins scored two first half goals -- one a penalty kick -- and Malachi Patrick added another.

Assists belonged to Brian Smith and Kyler Robbins.

As for the Panthers' 6-0 win over North Murray, Union County exploded for five first half goals as they cruised to the easy victory.

Five different players scored with senior Madison Yost the only Lady Panther with two goals.

Maddie Sutton got Union on the board in the 10th minute



Kobi Robbins scored two first half goals during Union's 3-2 win over Lumpkin County. Photo/Todd Forrest

via an Ellie Garrison corner kick.

Yost scored an unassisted goal two minutes later and Mattison Ruff converted a PK in the 19th minute.

Yost struck again in the 27th minute off a feed from Sophia Romano. Anzly Sherman made it 4-0 with an unassisted goal in the 28th minute.

The final goal of the evening came in the 74th minute when Garrison found Desaray

Patterson for a score.

"We focused more on passing and possession in the second half," Lady Panther coach Tim Harty said. "The score could have been as bad as we wanted it to be."

"Ellie Garrison played outstanding with multiple assists. Her defensive play and free kicks were amazing. Our defense in general played well and our goalie Sadie Underwood got pretty cold standing

back there."

Later in the guys contest, Matthew Patrick assisted Kobi Robbins in the 67th minute for Union's only goal of the match.

Saturday's matches with Darlington were rescheduled due to a flu outbreak at the Rome private school. The next match will be Tuesday at 5 p.m. when Union County hosts Fannin County in the only high school games of the week.



Anzly Sherman advances the ball vs Lumpkin. Photo/Todd Forrest

Congrats to UCHS Fishing team

We would like to congratulate our Union County High School Fishing Teams for their success for the first part of the school year.

So far, UCHS has had two teams qualify to fish for the Georgia BASS Nation State Championship on Clark Hill Lake in June.

Those two teams are Jeremy Stover and Copper Colwell and Colby Elliott and Coby Thompson. UCHS also had two teams qualify to fish the FLW High School Series for a National Title in June as well.

Those two teams are Will Harkins and Logan Anderson, they qualified placing third

on Lake Wheeler, and Coby Thompson and Colby Elliott, they placed second on Lake Okeechobee.

On Jan. 19, UCHS had three teams fish on Lake Eufaula they were Michael Raper and Jordan Rogers, Will Harkins and Logan Anderson, and Coby Thompson and Colby Elliott all the teams

The next tournament will be held at Lake Seminole on Feb. 16.

Anyone interested in becoming a sponsor or a boat captain please contact Matt Thompson at 941-932-0601 or Phillip Abernathy at 706-994-7147.