

Sports

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Coach Allison: Spring game provides answers; solidifies areas of concern

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Coach Brian Allison addresses the team following Friday's spring scrimmage game at Chestatee High School. Photo/Todd Forrest

MURRAYVILLE - Union County put an exclamation point on spring practice with 66 points during Friday's scrimmage at Chestatee.

No official score was kept but the unofficial tally had the Panthers hanging nine touchdowns, nine extra points, and one field goal on the War Eagles. Meanwhile, the Union County defense limited Chestatee to a pair of first-half touchdowns before pitching a shutout over the final 32-plus minutes.

Rising-junior quarterback Pierson Allison connected on 13-of-15 passes for 243 yards and two touchdowns. His two misfires came on balls that were caught but the receiver was unable to complete the catch inbounds.

"(Allison) was 13-for-15, even though it was a lot of fumble and dunking, but I thought his composure in the pocket was really good," head coach Brian Allison said. "We're still working on getting his release a little quicker but I thought he managed the game really well."

Wideouts Sawyer Drake, Kyle Hemphill, and Kyle Morlock combined for 252 yards and a pair of scores on 13 catches. Hemphill also completed 6-of-11 passes for 70 yards and a score.

"I thought Kanon (Hemphill) came in and did a really good job (at quarterback)," Coach Allison said. "He doesn't get the amount of reps in practice that Pierson does but he proved he's very capable of running the offense."

The Panther rushing attack churned out 216 yards on 36 carries (6 YPC) with rising-sophomore Payton Ivester and rising-senior Chad Buzzard leading the way.

Ivester went for 66 yards on 12 second half carries while Buzzard turned in a 61-yard performance on a dozen at-

tempts - all coming in the first half. Sloan Sutton's 7.9 yards-per-carry was tops on the team as the rising-junior tallied 55 yards on seven rushes.

The ground game also got a little help from its QBs, as Allison and Hemphill combined for 7 YPC (35 yards on 5 carries).

Defensively, the Panthers forced three first-half turnovers with Hemphill pouncing on a War Eagle fumble just two plays into the game. The take-away led to a 30-yard scoring strike when Allison went deep down the sideline to Morlock for a 6-0 advantage.

Morlock would end up catching five passes for a game-high 94 yards and a score.

Rising-senior Brian Smith connected on the point-after to make it 7-0 just 78 seconds into the contest.

Chestatee answered with a 63-yard quarterback keeper by rising-sophomore Christian Charles but the Panthers

quickly regained control with back-to-back scoring drives to open up a 21-7 advantage (unofficially, of course).

Buzzard punched it in from two-yards out after Drake turned a short completion in a big-gain and was pushed out inside the five.

Following a three-and-out courtesy of the Union County defense, Allison and Hemphill hooked up for a 56-yard gain that set-up another Buzzard score, this time from five yards out.

Hemphill finished with three catches for 71 yards and a score; Drake added five grabs for 87 yards.

The next defensive series was highlighted by a Hunter Kelley sack then a Jackson Colwell interception. The Colwell pick led to a 15-play, 80-yard scoring drive, capped off by a 10-yard touchdown scramble by Allison.

The War Eagles responded with their second and final

TD of the evening despite a Kyle Williams sack that forced the backup QB into action for the remainder of the series.

The second-string signal-caller converted a 4th-and-16 with a 20-yard completion inside the 10. From there, Chestatee used three handoffs of 6, 2, and 1 yard to find pay dirt.

"We made some mistakes (defensively) that need to be fixed, but against that particular team, I thought we played pretty well," Coach Allison said. "We missed about three tackles on the long quarterback run early in the game. Then as the game went on, I thought we got better with our tackling."

"Secondary-wise, I think we made a lot of progress, but most importantly, we saw what some people can do and what some people can't do on the defensive side of the ball. So (the scrimmage) really solidified a lot of things for me."

On the ensuing possession, Allison connected with

Drake and Morlock then Buzzard used his legs for gains of 10 and 12 yards. With a 1st-and-goal from the five, Allison hit Hemphill over the middle for Union's fifth TD of the game.

On Chestatee's next play from scrimmage, rising-senior safety Chayton Schafer scooped up a fumble and raced 25 yards the other way for six points.

The Panthers final score of the half came on a 22-yard field goal from Smith after Hemphill replaced Allison and led the offense on a 13-play, 75-yard drive that spanned the final 4:59 of the second quarter.

During the drive, Union County went 4-for-4 on third down conversions with Hemphill finding Drake for 12 on 3rd-and-6, and later, Schafer for four on 3rd-and-1.

Sutton also moved the chains with a 10-yard carry on 3rd-and-4 and a 7-yard pickup on 3rd-and-2.

Both offenses turned it over on downs to open the

third but the Panthers tacked on another score when Hemphill and rising-sophomore Josh Orr connected on a 28-yard touchdown pass.

Early in the fourth, rising-freshman Jonah Daniel turned the corner and dove for the pylon to polish off a 20-yard touchdown run in style. Daniel wasn't finished, however. With 6:01 to play, he scored from in-close on a 2-yard carry for Union County's ninth and final TD of the game.

No official stats were kept for the freshmen during the fourth quarter, but unofficially, Daniel turned in a 44-yard, two-score performance on five carries in his "unofficial" high school debut.

The Panthers' success on the ground can be chalked up to the big guys in the trenches. Coach Allison had plenty of praise for his line-play on both sides of the ball.

"I feel like the offensive line has six, maybe seven people that can play those five spots," he said. "On the defensive side we made some mistakes that can be corrected but I felt our line dominated both sides of the ball."

Union County football will begin its summer workouts on May 31, then they'll attend a three-day quarterback/receiver camp at Furman from beginning June 10.

On June 15 the Panthers will take part in a 7-on-7 tournament at Habersham Central.

On June 21, Union County will host an FCA-sponsored 7-on-7 tournament prior to the Georgia High School Association's annual "dead period," which falls between June 27 and July 8.

Conditioning for the upcoming season begins July 25, followed by the first padded practice on Aug. 1.

On Aug. 10, Union County will host Habersham Central in a scrimmage contest (time TBA), two weeks before the season opens on Aug. 24 with East Hall at home.



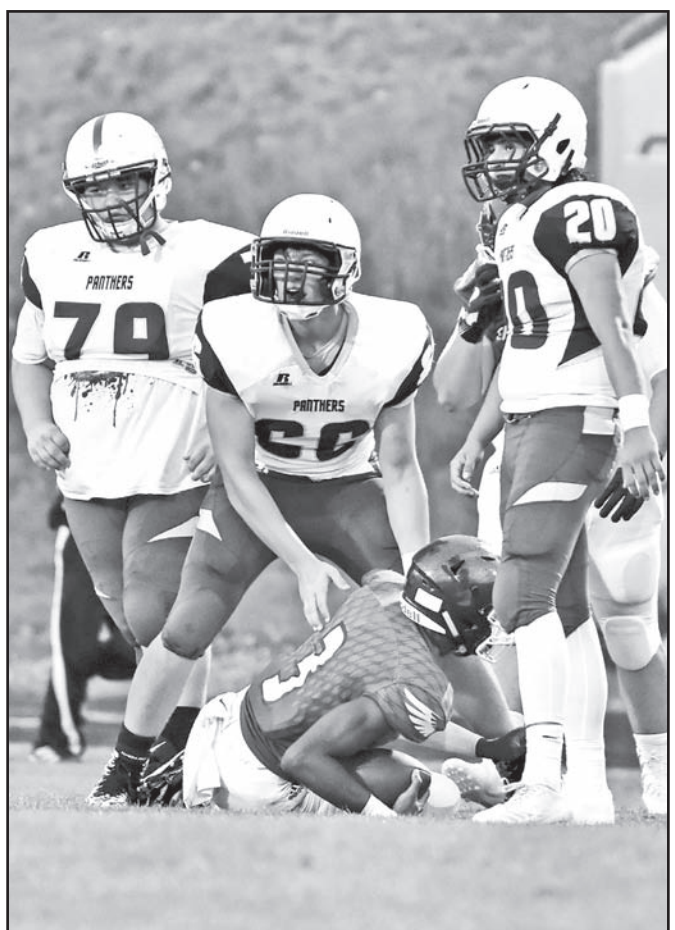
Kyle Morlock hauls in a TD reception from Pierson Allison in the first quarter at Chestatee. Photo/Todd Forrest



Union County's Hunter Kelley (30) spent a lot of time in the War Eagle backfield during Friday's spring game. Photo/Todd Forrest



Chad Buzzard finds a crease and blasts his way into the endzone for one of his two rushing touchdowns on Friday. Photo/Todd Forrest



Nowhere to run: The Union County defense swarms Chestatee quarterback Christian Charles. Photo/Todd Forrest

Football and Cheerleading Registration

Football and Cheerleading Registration opens at the Union County Recreation Department May 7, 2018 - June 29, 2018. Ages 7-11 as of April 30th. You may register at the Union County Recreation office located at 310 Wellborn Street or online at unioncountyga.gov. Please call 706-439-6074 with any questions.

Meeks Park Pool and Splash Pad

Open Saturday, May 26, 2018
Open daily from noon-6 p.m.
\$5 per person, 5 and under are FREE

Season passes will be available for purchase at the Union County Recreation Department beginning 5/14/18. Passes will also be available to purchase at the pool.

Pool parties will be booked at the Union County Recreation Department only beginning Tuesday, May 29, 2018. Parties may be booked 6/1-8/5 from 6 p.m. - 8 p.m. No parties on Mondays or Wednesdays. Please call 706-436-6074 for more information.

2ND ANNUAL ALLEGHENY MASONIC LODGE GOLF CLASSIC

June 23rd
Butternut Creek Golf Course
Blairsville, GA

\$75 Per Player includes: Cart, Green Fees, Lunch and Hole in One Contest Mulligans \$5 Limit 2
Registration starts at Noon
Lunch will be at 1 PM
Shotgun Start 2 PM

Women are invited to play!

More Prizes:	Hole in One Prizes:
Closest to Pin	#12 \$25,000
Closest to Line	#4 Set of Callaway Irons
Top Two Teams	#8 55" Sharp Led TV
Prize for High Score	#17 Set of Callaway Irons
50/50 Tickets	

\$25,000 for Hole in One on Hole #12 Par 3

More information or reservations please call: Dick Fleming - 770-833-7690 or Bud Akins - 706-781-7903