

# Sports

See the Sports Section at nghanews.com

## Panthers open second half with 28-unanswered; trounce Andrews 42-14

Banks County and Union meet for the 39th time Friday when the Leopards visit Blairsville

By Todd Forrest  
North Georgia News  
sports@nganews.com

The Panthers pulled away from Andrews, NC after overcoming a sluggish first half with 28-unanswered points to remain undefeated with a 42-14 victory.

Union County is 3-0 for the fourth straight season and the fifth time in six years as the schedule takes it up a notch with Banks County on Friday and region play opening with No. 1 Greater Atlanta Christian next week.

In the early going vs Andrews, the Panthers could have been accused of overlooking the Wildcats as they found themselves trailing for the first time all season. Andrews captured the quick lead when senior quarterback Cole Wright threw his first interception of 2017 and it was returned to the Union 21-yard line.

"They (Andrews) just made a really good defensive play," Union County Head Coach Brian Allison said. "On the first play they came out in a defense that we hadn't seen from them. Cole (Wright) made the right read but the outside linebacker was up on the line, then dropped back and Cole hit him right in the hands with it."

The Wildcats overcame a false start penalty and converted a pair of fourth downs before finding the end zone with a quarterback sneak on 4th-and-1 at the two. The keeper capped off an 8-play, 21-yard drive that chewed nearly four-and-a-half minutes off the clock.

The Panthers took over on the 20 and junior running back Chad Buzzard picked up a huge chunk on first down with a 26-yard carry. A Wright keeper was good for nine then Buzzard moved the chains with a short gain. A quick screen to junior wide out Kanon Hemphill went for 22 but a first down incomple- tion and a second down sack dropped Union into a 3rd-and-16 from inside the 30.

On third-and-long, nobody was open and Wright was forced to check-down to Hemphill for eight - bringing up a 4th-and-8 from the 20.

Instead of attempting a 37-yard field goal, the Panthers went for six and Wright rolled out to buy some time and sophomore receiver Kyle Morlock came open in the back of the end zone and Wright fired a strike back across his body for the score.

With 4:34 to play in the first quarter, Andrews took over from the 20 and began churning its way upfield behind a physical offensive line and a power rushing attack. Without injured 280-pound, three-year starter Matthew Beise on the defensive line, the Wildcats tested the Panthers' front-seven by pounding the fullback up-the-middle. After converting a 3rd-and-5 and a 3rd-and-2, Union eventually forced a stop and brought up a punting situation on the first play of the second quarter.

"I don't believe we came out with the focus we needed to come out with and I don't think I had us ready to play the game," Allison said. "It definitely hurt us not having Beise and they (Andrews) were pounding it in there on us. The other guys did a nice job filling in but Beise's size is just something you can't replace."

Starting from inside their own 10, the offense quickly found some breathing room with a 24-



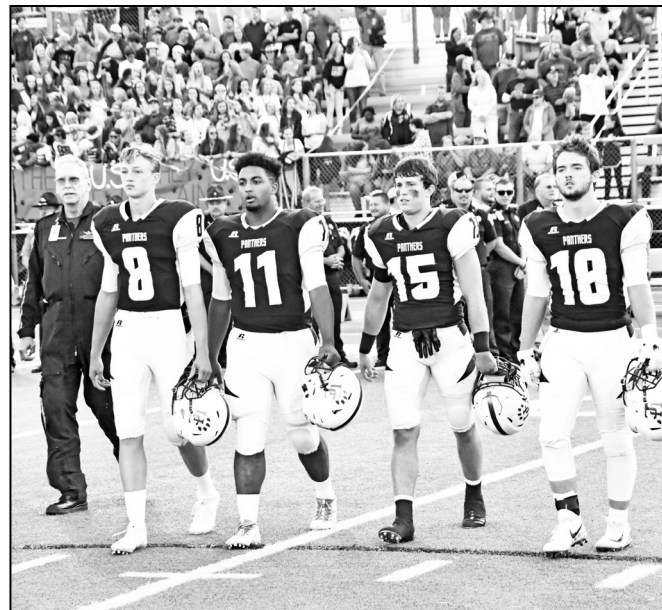
The Panthers take the field prior to their 42-14 victory over Andrews, NC on Friday. Photo/Todd Forrest



Cole Dockrey (15) and Del Ruff (62) celebrate a TD. Photo/Todd Forrest



Senior QB Cole Wright fires a pass on the run. Photo/Todd Forrest



The Union Co. captains escorted by first responders. Photo/Todd Forrest

yard give to senior running back Cole Dockrey. Three plays later, Buzzard kept the drive alive with a 10-yard pickup on third-and-short. Sophomore Sawyer Drake hauled in a 6-yard completion on first down then Dockrey gave Union another fresh set of downs with a 5-yard rush. Wright and senior Logan Dyer hooked up for a 32-yard passing play - setting up 1st-and-goal at the five. Two handoffs to Dockrey would put the Panthers on top for good at 14-7.

Both offenses would swap punts for the remainder of the half and Union went to the locker room clinging to a one-touch-down advantage.

"In the first half it looked like we were moving in quicksand," Allison said. "We didn't have a great week of practice and that's what happens."

Early in the second quarter, the lights behind the home bleachers lost power on the field-house end of the stadium, creating a "black hole" on that corner of the field. While Coach Allison claims that it had no impact on the passing game or the play-calling. The Panthers fell victim to a couple of dropped passes on that end of the field.

"We could see pretty good on the field but it might have been responsible for one (dropped pass)," Allison said. "But the lighting on the field didn't seem to be too bad."

Light was restored early in the second half while Coach Allison and the coaching staff seemed to flip a switch themselves during the break.

"In the locker room (at halftime), we weren't too happy with how we had played," Dockrey said. "Our coaches made the adjustments and in the second half we did much better against the run."

Two first downs by Andrews to open the third had the Panthers defense back peddling until a third down sack by ju-

nior Coleson Daniel forced a punt. Starting from their own 19, Wright took off for a gain of nine then he found senior Austin Pattee for 11 more yards. A holding penalty on Union brought up a 1st-and-18 but consecutive offsides flags on the Wildcats negated the 10-yard holding call. A Buzzard run brought up 2nd-and-4 then sophomore Cayden Rich pulled in a 13-yard grab for a first down at the 43. On the ensuing play, Wright broke loose for a 43-yard scoring run to open up a 21-7 lead with 5:29 left in the third.

The Panthers defense responded with its first three-and-out of the game and gave the ball back to the offense at the 43 after the punt.

The first play was a handoff to Dockrey and the senior running back found a crease and that was all he needed to take it to the house from 43 yards out. Junior Brian Smith's fourth extra point of the game opened up a 28-7 advantage at the 3:51 mark of the third.

With momentum clearly on the home sidelines, the defense forced a punt with another three-and-out. From its own 21, Union opened the series with an 8-yard keeper by Wright followed by a 71-yard scoring strike to Drake, who came open over the middle near midfield, then outran the Andrews secondary the rest of the way, blowing things wide open at 35-7.

The third consecutive three-and-out gave the ball back to the Panthers at the Wildcats 47 with 11:08 left. An 9-yard scramble from Wright was followed by

consecutive runs by Dockrey to pick up 3 and 13 yards. Two incomple- tions appeared to stall the drive at the 21 but Wright used his legs to extend the play and find paydirt on 3rd-and-10. After rolling right, he ran out of real estate near the home sideline. Forced to reverse his field, Wright turned the corner on the far sideline and weaved his way through traffic before overpowering a Wildcats defensive back at the goal line for the final Panther touchdown.

The 21-yard scamper opened up a 42-7 lead with 9:59 to play.

Andrews drove 80-yards on 16 plays to trim the final score to 42-14 with a 9-yard touchdown pass in the final minutes.

"It was good for us to face some adversity and have to play all four quarters," Allison said after the game.

Wright finished with 188 yards and 2 scores through the air while totaling 125 yards and 2 scores on the ground.

Dockrey also went over 100 yards on nine carries while scoring twice and making six tackles on the other side of the ball. Drake finished with 2 grabs for 77 yards and one touch-down.

Defensively, Jackson Colwell and RJ Banton tallied double-digit tackles with 14 and 12, respectively. Brian Nelson had nine tackles with 2 sacks and

the 39th time overall.

The Leopards enter with a 1-2 record with losses to two undefeated teams: Jackson County, 21-17 and Commerce 42-13.

Banks is led by senior running back Clayton Dykehouse who rushed for over 1,100 yards last season with 208 coming against the Panthers.

This season, Dykehouse is on pace to surpass his season totals from 2016. He currently is averaging 6 yards per carry, up from 5 YPC last season. He's more than doubled his receiving yards per game from 22 YPG in 2016 to 48 YPG this year.

For more on Banks County, visit the NGN Sports Blog later in the week at: www.ngnsports.wordpress.com.

For notifications on new blog posts, follow Todd Forrest on Twitter at: @hotrodtodd25.

Kickoff Friday is scheduled for 7:30 p.m. at Mike Colwell Memorial Stadium.

### Scoring Summary

Quarter	Team	Player	Yards	Uchs	Ahs
First Quarter	AHS	TD 3 Yd Run (Kick)		0	7
	UCHS	TD Kyle Morlock 20 Yd Pass From Cole Wright (Brian Smith Kick)		7	7
Second Quarter	UCHS	TD Cole Dockrey 1 Yd Run (Brian Smith Kick)		14	7
	Third Quarter	UCHS	TD Cole Wright 43 Yd Run (Brian Smith Kick)		21
UCHS		TD Cole Dockrey 43 Yd Run (Kick)		28	7
UCHS	TD Sawyer Drake 71 Yd Pass From Cole Wright (Brian Smith Kick)		35	7	
Fourth Quarter	UCHS	TD Cole Wright 24 Yd Run (Kick)		42	7
	AHS	TD 9 Yd Pass (Kick)		42	14

### Offense

Player	Comp/Att	Yds	TD	Int	Long	2PT
#8 C. Wright	9/16	188	2	1	71	-
Rest of team	0/1	-	-	-	-	-
Player	Att	Yds	TD	Long	Fum	2PT
#8 C. Wright	7	125	2	43	-	-
#15 C. Dockrey	9	100	2	43	-	-
#24 C. Buzzard	6	45	-	23	-	-
Rest of team	1	-6	-	-	-	-
Player	Rec	Yds	TD	Long	Fum	2PT
#21 S. Drake	2	77	1	71	-	-
#18 L. Dyer	1	32	-	32	-	-
#4 K. Hemphill	2	31	-	24	-	-
#84 K. Morlock	1	20	1	20	-	-
#20 C. Rich	1	13	-	13	-	-
#22 A. Pattee	1	11	-	11	-	-
Rest of team	1	4	-	4	-	-

## FIGHT NIGHT

at the REC

### Main Event

**VS**

Thomas Seabolt vs Craig Jones

**Saturday, September 16, 2017**  
310 Wellborn St. • Blairsville, GA

Doors Open at 6:00pm • Fight Starts at 7:00pm  
Admission \$15 Per Person  
Proceeds Benefit "Shop With A Cop"

Chase Barnett, Daniel Hayes, Tyler Jones, James Young, Lance Hill

SPONSORED BY:

Jacky Jones Automotive Group PRE-OWNED CARS

Rick's Kids

Shannon's Kids

MONTESSORI Blairsville / Hayesville

Nelson Tractor Company

### Basketball Registration at the Union County Recreation Department

Begins August 21st

Age Group  
5/6 yrs old  
7/8 yrs old  
9/10 yrs old  
11/12 yrs old

Registration Ends  
September 29th  
September 29th  
October 27th  
October 27th

\*\*Registration fee is \$50.00 and open to both boys and girls. \*\*  
Registration can be completed online at unioncounty.gov.com or at the Recreation Office located at 310 Wellborn Street. If you need any additional information, please call 706-439-6074.

### Union County Recreation Art-Tastic Program 2017 Youth Art-Tastic Holiday Camp

Ages: 4-7

Does your young child enjoy painting and designing art? This program is designed for children, ages 4-7 to explore their artistic side. Children will meet for camp 4 days in October, 4 days in November, and 4 days in December for this special Art-Tastic Holiday Camp! Participants will participate in arts and crafts designed for each holiday in the designated month. We will meet in the recreation room at the Recreation Office. All sessions will be led by the Program and Start Smart Director.

\*\*Session Registration begins on September 5, 2017 and ends October 5, 2017 at the Recreation Office (310 Wellborn St.). Cost is only \$35 for 12 art and craft sessions!

Registration must be done in person due to cap on participants per session! (You did not have to attend previous sessions.) If you have any questions, please call Jennifer at (706) 439-6074.

