

Rabun County pulls away 56-28; Panthers to host Bremen on Friday

Head Coach Brian Allison: We need everyone's support on Friday night

By Todd Forrest
Sports Editor
sports@nganews.com

TIGER - Union County (9-1, 6-1) will host Bremen in Friday's opening round of the Class AA State Tournament following a 56-28 loss at 3rd ranked Rabun County (9-1, 7-0).

The loss was Union's first of the season, ending an 11-game winning streak that spanned almost 13 months.

Tied at 14-14 late in the second quarter, Rabun County rattled off 35 unanswered points to open up a 49-14 advantage until Sawyer Drake's second touchdown catch of the night, late in the third quarter, ended the Wildcat onslaught.

But the damage was already done at that point.

Rabun County added another score for good measure in the fourth and Jonah Daniel tacked on a 3-yard run in the final minutes for a 56-28 final.

"I thought our kids gave everything they had," Union County Head Coach Brian Allison said. "We just, unfortunately, made too many mistakes. There was a stretch there from the last 4 minutes of the second quarter through the first 6 or 8 minutes of the third quarter that cost us the ball game."

The first 20 minutes were a different story, however.

The Wildcats' opening drive stalled when junior safety John Mancuso jarred a 4th-and-6 pass attempt loose at their own 32, bringing Pierson Allison and the explosive Panther offense onto the field.

Any doubts regarding Union County's big-play ability against a quality defense were quickly put to bed when the junior quarterback led a two-play, 68-yard scoring drive capped off by a 49-yard catch-and-run on a quick slant to Drake. Instead of playing the receiver, the Rabun cornerback jumped the route, but Allison delivered the ball quickly and accurately, allowing Drake to trace untouched into the end zone with 9:48 on the clock.

On the ensuing drive, it was the Panthers' turn to gamble in the secondary and it paid off for the visiting underdogs.

On 3rd-and-6 from the Union County 28, the Wildcat receiver ran a short, 6-yard hitch to the first down marker but senior Alec Scott read the eyes of freshman quarterback Gunnar Stockton and broke on the ball before it was released, cutting in front of the receiver for the interception.

Stockton was able to make



L-R: Senior cornerback Alec Scott (7) returns a first quarter interception that almost gave Union a 14-0 lead; junior receiver Sawyer Drake fights for extra yardage following a third down catch. Drake finished with two touchdowns receptions and a career-high 140 receiving yards. Photos/Todd Forrest



up for the mistake by getting back on defense and making the tackle inside the 5-yard line. More importantly, he drew a (questionable at best) holding call that moved the ball back to the 33-yard line.

A short run and two incompletions later, senior Brian Smith was called upon for a 49-yard field goal where Union County was flagged for a false start -- forcing head coach Brian Allison onto the field for his second consultation in five plays with the officials.

Pushed back to 54 yards into a rainy crosswind, Smith's kick missed wide and 2 yards short.

Starting at the 20, Rabun County overcame three penalties -- including a block-in-the-back that brought back a touchdown pass -- while converting a pair of third downs to tie the game at 7-7 with an 11-play scoring drive that ended with a 6-yard touchdown pass.

On the ensuing Panther series, Union County was on the move until an interception in the end zone halted the drive at the 32, one play removed from Pierson Allison converting a 3rd-and-5 with his legs.

The defense answered the turnover by forcing a Wildcat punt but the kick was downed at the Union County 1-yard line. A Chad Buzzard 5-yard run on 2nd-and-10 moved the offense out to the six but an incompletion forced a punt from the shadow of the goalpost.

A short kick and a nice return allowed Rabun to begin its drive at the Panthers' 2-yard line where the Wildcats needed just

one play to take their first lead of the night at 14-7 with 7:00 before halftime.

"I liked our energy on defense in the first half," Coach Allison said. "Unfortunately, that (punt) was downed on the 1-yard line. It hit inside the 10 and Kanon (Hemphill) did what he was supposed to do but we just wound up giving Rabun a short field after our punt."

Union set up shop at the 20 and immediately went on the move. A 10-yard hookup with Kyle Morlock and a 21-yard, third down throw to Sawyer Drake moved the Panthers into Rabun County territory.

Following 5-yard run by Buzzard, a 6-yard scramble by Pierson Allison drew a late hit on the Wildcats, advancing Union to the 16. A first down end-around by Chayton Schafer went for maybe two yards before a throw-away on second down forced the Panthers into 3rd-and-8 from the 14.

Drawing single coverage on the outside, Morlock came open on an out route in the front corner of the end zone and Allison delivered a timely throw for the score.

All tied-up with 3:54 before the break and Union set to receive the second half kickoff, a stop by the defense would provide the Panthers with two scoring opportunities. But starting from the 33, the Wildcats needed only 84 seconds to retake the lead at 21-14 on a 37-yard scoring strike.

Regaining possession at the 2:30 mark, Union County still had a shot to get on the board before halftime but a three-and-out was the result. And to add

insult to injury, Union County was flagged for intentional grounding on 3rd-and-7 at the 23, pushing the ball back to the 18, where a 13-yard punt handed Rabun the ball at the 31.

Instead of the Panthers adding back-to-back scores, it was Rabun who extended its lead to 28-14 following a 5-play, 31-yard drive -- its second straight scoring drive beginning deep in Union territory.

"Giving (Rabun) two short fields back-to-back really hurt us there," Coach Allison said. "They downed it at the one and later we were called for grounding and that backed us up and we gave them another short field."

"It was 7-7 and then we short-fielded them a couple of times. I thought we played decent but in the second half we got behind and got a little frustrated."

Rabun added another score early in the third when a fumble on the first play from scrimmage handed the ball back to the Cats on the 25. A 24-yard pass on first down moved the ball to the one, from there, they needed two plays -- despite a false start penalty at the one -- to blow things open at 35-14.

A three-and-out by the Panther offense, followed by a 25-yard punt, sent the defense back out to defend a short-field for the fourth straight possession.

An 8-play scoring drive that consisted of seven runs and one pass led to a 42-14 Rabun advantage.

The Union offense would go three-and-out once again and the Wildcats regained possession at their own 31.

Driving inside the Panther 25, Stockton would keep it himself for a 24-yard touchdown run and a 49-14 lead.

"The same thing happened to our offense (we got frustrated) in the second half," Coach Allison said. "The first turnover (of the game) was on the fade (route) in the end zone and the kid just made a nice play (on the interception). Then, on the fumble, we just needed to do a better job of taking care of the football."

Union County finally responded with a 45-yard pass to Drake, capping a 9-play, 80-yard scoring drive.

Drake would finish with a career-high 140 yards and two touchdowns on 6 catches.

Allison connected on 14-of-21 passes for 221 yards and 3 touchdowns. He also led the Panthers with 82 rushing yards.

Up next is Bremen, the No. 3 seed from Region 5-AA, who is coming off a 20-7 loss to the 5-AA Region Champion Heard County. One way or another Friday night, someone's season will end with a two-game skid following a very promising start. Coach Allison is confident that even if his team is unable to come away with the win, it won't be due to shell-shock from the Rabun game.

"Our guys are very resilient so I think they'll be able to regroup," Coach Allison said. "I know they're pretty disappointed, and they should be, but that's what happens when you lay it all out there. But now we have a chance to win a playoff game for the first time so hopefully we'll bounce back and be good to go on Friday."

Bremen is the only team to defeat Rabun County this season, 13-10 in the season opener played at Georgia Southern in Statesboro. But according to Coach Allison, that win over Rabun means very little and Friday's opponent shouldn't discourage anyone.

"It was game one back on Aug. 17 and Rabun has a freshman quarterback that is playing a lot better now," he said. "Rabun County is playing a whole lot better than they were on Aug. 17. I can't speak for Bremen, but Rabun is a much improved team right now."

"We need everyone's support Friday night for this playoff game. There's a lot of excitement in the air and we don't want to allow the loss to Rabun deflate that. We had a great crowd at Rabun to support our guys and I'm very pleased at the way everybody showed up."

Kickoff Friday is at 7:30 p.m.

Scoring Summary			
Quarter	Team	Player	Score
First Quarter	UCHS		0
	ROHS		7
Second Quarter	UCHS		7
	ROHS		14
Third Quarter	UCHS		14
	ROHS		28
Fourth Quarter	UCHS		35
	ROHS		56

Offense						
Player	Comp/Att	Yds	TD	Int	Long	Fum
Passing						
#17 P. Allison	14/21	221	3	1	50	
Rushing						
#17 P. Allison	13	82	-	20	1	
#34 J. Daniel	10	55	1	10	-	
#24 C. Buzzard	12	37	-	5	-	
#2 C. Schafer	1	2	-	2	-	
#21 S. Drake	1	-8	-	-	-	
Rest of team	1	1	-	1	-	
Receiving						
#21 S. Drake	6	140	2	50	-	
#84 K. Morlock	3	40	1	18	-	
#20 C. Rich	2	24	-	20	-	
#4 K. Hemphill	1	17	-	17	-	

Junior Varsity Football correction

In the 10-31-18 edition of the *North Georgia News*, the article regarding the Union County JV football team's undefeated season incorrectly listed a 38-29 win over White County as the first victory of the year. Actually, Union County defeated Dawson County 38-29 in the season opener. The White County game was postponed and never made up after the rescheduled contest was canceled by White County due to injuries.

TVA and Fish & Wildlife Service to continue Trout Stocking Program

The Tennessee Valley Authority and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have reached a multi-agency agreement to provide continued funding for three federal fish hatcheries that have stocked waters in Georgia and Tennessee with millions of trout.

announced the new agreement recently at a press conference beside the Clinch River below Norris Dam outside Knoxville, TN. The agreement provides partnership funding through fiscal year 2021.

The partnership, which began in 2013, includes the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

Last year, the partnership provided more than 1.1 million brook, brown, lake and rainbow trout to TVA waters. More than 256,000 anglers are estimated to fish for trout in Tennessee and Georgia waters each year, spending about \$73 for every \$1 invested in the hatchery program, and producing an economic impact of about \$45 million.

Since 2013, TVA has been funding trout production by the Service at three national fish hatcheries: Dale Hollow and Erwin in Tennessee, and Chattahoochee Forest in Georgia. The trout are then provided to the following tailwaters: Apalachia (Hiwassee River), Blue Ridge, Boone, Cherokee, Fort Patrick Henry, Normandy, Norris, South Holston, Tims Ford and Wilbur. Trout-stocked reservoirs in the plan include Fort Patrick Henry, South Holston, Parksville, Watauga and Wilbur reservoirs.

"In Georgia, we are proud of the trout fishery and recognize that it provides not only exceptional outdoor recreation opportunities, but that it also is an important economic driver in many of our mountain communities," said Rusty Garrison, director of Georgia Wildlife Resources Division. "This continuing partnership will help us maintain high quality trout fishing on waters such as the Toccoa River below Blue Ridge Lake."

TITLE 1

FALL SHOWCASE

November 13th
1st Grade

November 14th
Kindergarten & 2nd Grade

This Event will take place 30 minutes prior to your child's Thanksgiving lunch. Teachers will be sending home specific times.

Attention Union County Elementary School Families and Community Members

The students at Union County Elementary would appreciate your participation as an audience to hear their personal writings.

Date: Tuesday, November 27
Location: Union County Elementary School Cafeteria
Time: 5:30 - 6:30 p.m.

We look forward to seeing you there!

BLAIRSVILLE PTO

GEORGIA GAME DAY EVENT

Where: Union County Elementary School
When: November 10th
TIME: 5 PM - 8 PM

Fundraising Activities Include:
food vendors, Georgia tattoos, cake walk, hair painting, golf cart rides, corn hole, yo-yo balloons, facepainting, popcorn, and games
UCPS, UCES, and UCMS - Day with Coach
UCPS and UCES - King/Queen of the car rider line

* SPORTS THEME BASKETS AVAILABLE FOR A SILENT AUCTION.

The game is free of charge, so grab your chairs and blankets and join us for a fun-filled afternoon!

VS

Local Racing Report: Tri-County

By Blake Lynch
Staff Writer
North Georgia News

Tri-County hosted a two-day event with tuff trucks, demo derby and racing. Here are the top five from each racing class, Tuff Truck and Demo Derby Champs.

Day 1 (Nov. 2): **Young Guns** - In first was No. K0 Caylan Kettle. In second was 32jr Franklin Burk Jr. Coming in third was No. 22 Ricky Queen. Coming in fourth was No. 01 Matt Murphy.

Street Stock - Coming in first place was No. 05 Michael Harper. Finishing in second place was No. J69 Jim Weller. Coming in third was No. 7D Dylan Truhan. Finishing in fourth place was No. 5 Carson Shields. Coming in fifth was No. 01 Jacob Lynch.

Beginner 602 - Coming in first place was No. 1 Cody Sogars. Coming in second place was No. 25 Jacob Hamby. Coming in third was No-J32 Shannon Jones. Coming in fourth place was No. 49 Seth Speed. Coming in fifth No. 18 Lucas Beaver.

Limited - Coming in first place was No. c11 Michael Courtney. Coming in second place was No. 12w Daniel Wilson. Coming in third was No. 7 Jason Deal. Coming in fourth place was No. 1 David Conley. Coming in fifth was No. 16w Wesley English.

Tuff Trucks - In round one Jeffery and Jeremy Wood had the best time through the course with a time of 42.67. In round two, Wally Chapman won with a time of 40.05.

Day 2 (Nov. 3): **UCRA** - Coming in first place was No. 17 Chip Brindel. Coming in second place was No. 15h Ethan Hunter. Coming in third was No. 7 Jason Deal. Coming fourth place was No. c11 Michael Courtney. Coming in fifth was No. J39 Jimmy Elliott.

Watermelon Race: The driver has to drive around the track with the melon on top of the car. The driver that makes it around the track without dropping the melon wins. Michael Harper was Friday night's winner.

FWD - Coming in first place was No. k3 James Klauklee. Coming in second place was No. 9r Sam Rice. Finishing in third was No. J3 Josh Deese. Finishing in fourth place was No. Q2 Jim Exum. Coming in fifth was No. 74 DJ Worley.

Pony - Coming in first place was No. 15 Ryan Crawford. Coming in second place was No. 43 Tain Ross. Finishing in third was No. 11 Ricky Dyer.

Hobby 602 - Coming in first place was No. 34 Greg Sudderth. Coming in second place was No. 50 Charles Devine Jr. Coming in third was No. 48 Lynn Burchfield. Coming in fourth place was No. 1 Cody Segars. Coming in fifth was No. 56j Jason Berrong.

Tuff Trucks - Kevin Cox won the second night. Watermelon race-Jason Coates won the second night.

Tri-County and Ray Cook would like to thank all the race fans and drivers that came out each race. See ya in March 2019.