

# Lady Panthers ride three-game win streak into the holidays

**By Todd Forrest Sports Editor** sports@nganews.com

The Union County Lady Panthers (9-5) enter the Christmas break on a three-game winning streak after handing North Hall (6-5) its third consecutive loss -- a 60-58 nail-biter on Tuesday, Dec. 21 in Blairsville.

Senior Ava Hunter scored 15 of her game-high 24 points in the second half as Union County led most of the contest and held off the Trojans down the stretch, never owning more than a 3-point lead over the final 5:24.

Despite trailing much of the third period, the Lady Panthers opened up a 56-52 advantage when Hunter knocked down a pull-up jumper at the 7-minute mark of the fourth. North Hall answered with a 3 inside of 5:30 to move within a point, but both squads went ice cold over the next two-and-a-half minutes until sophomore Sofia McNabb hit a floater in the paint with 2:56 remaining

A Trojans' basket kept the visitors within a point at the 2-minute mark but both offenses came up empty until Union regained possession with under a minute left, nursing a 58-57 lead. A costly mistake sent Hunter to the foul line when North Hall, who had only one team foul in over seven minutes, was forced to commit four consecutive fouls to move Union into the bonus. Repeatedly stopping the clock following four consecutive Lady Panthers' inbounds passes, the Trojans lost track of the foul Union already in the 1-and-1 bonus.

The senior hit both of her free throws to grant the Lady Panthers a 60-57 advantage with 37 seconds remaining. North Hall missed on the other end, but freshman Ariel McCarter couldn't connect on the frontend of a Union 1-and-1 with 17 seconds on the clock.

On its very next trip, North Hall threw the ball out of bounds, then fouled Hunter on the ensuing inbounds play, sending her to the line for two shots with 7 seconds left. The Hill added 5 points -- all coming normally-reliable Hunter (who in the first quarter -- to round out the third handed the Trojans their entered the game as a 70% FT



Sophomore Lara Turner (24) stuffs a North Hall shot attempt during the second quarter of Union County's 60-58 win. Photo/Todd Forrest

shooter) missed both tries, but Union secured the offensive board in the paint where the Trojans immediately forced a jump ball to seize possession with 4.7 seconds remaining.

Following a timeout, North Hall advanced the ball into the frontcourt and raced to the 3-point arc, misfiring on a trey at the buzzer from the right-wing as the Lady Panthers heated up, hitting five treys celebrated the apparent victory. Not so fast.

A Union County foul count and grabbed Hunter with on the Trojans' last-ditch shot attempt sent North Hall to the charity stripe for three attempts with 3-tenths of a second put back on the clock.

> shot but missed the second, all but securing the Lady Panthers' victory. Hunter pulled down pace, connecting from downthe forced-miss on the third try as the buzzer sounded on the season's first half.

> points. McNabb and senior Rebekah Chambers scored 8 points each. Sophomore Lara Turner ing Union into the break with a had 6 points, and junior Corinne the Union County offense

During the Lady Panthers' Nov. 30 loss in Clermont, North Hall shot the lights out, hitting 15 of 33 from 3-point territory in a 78-49 runaway. Last week in Blairsville, however, the Trojans needed more than 10 minutes to find their range from downtown as Union built a 23-15 secondquarter advantage.

But North Hall quickly over the final 5:26 of the half, including three straight during a 9-1 run that erased the Lady Panthers' eight-point advantage.

Tied at 24-24, Hunter scored consecutive baskets before the Trojans responded with a triple for a 28-27 score at the The shooter sank the first 1:50 mark of the second. Mc-Carter answered with a trey of her own, but North Hall kept town with 87 seconds before the intermission

Chambers hit two from McCarter finished with 9 the line near the one-minute mark and North Hall scored inside with 18 seconds left, send-33-32 lead.

A North Hall 3 to begin first lead since 12-9, but Cham-



Ava Hunter takes on four Trojans in the paint during the second half. The Union County senior scored 15 of her game-high 24 after halftime despite being the focal point of North Hall's defense. Photo/Todd Forrest

bers tied it back up with a drive to the hoop 16 seconds later.

Still tied at 37-37, a North Hall trey followed by two free throws handed the visitors their largest lead at 42-37 with 4:53 left in the period. The Lady Panthers countered with a 5-0 spurt, sparked by a Hunter jumper. Approaching the midway point of the third, Turner knotted the score, sinking a corner trey for a 42-42 tie.

Three free throws in four attempts by the Trojans put Union in a 45-42 deficit until McCarter scored on a coast-tocoast layup. Still behind 47-44 at the 3-minute mark, the Lady Panthers regained the lead for good, 48-47 on two Hunter free throws and a Chambers' deuce.

Both Hunter and McNabb split a pair at the line to open a 50-47 advantage that became 54-51 at quarter's end, courtesy of 4 points from Hunter over the final 43 seconds.



Senior Rebekah Chambers pulls down a first-half rebound in Union's Dec. 21 victory over North Hall. Photo/Todd Forrest

## **Region Alignments: Elbert and Rabun to Class A; Riverside goes indie**

**By Todd Forrest Sports Editor** sports@nganews.com

Significant changes are in store for Union County and Region 8-AA following the release of the Georgia High School Association's (GHSA) updated region alignments earlier this month.

The most notable of 8-AA's alterations are the departures of Rabun County and Elbert County, both of which have dropped to Class A. Meanwhile, **Riverside Military Academy** (RMA) will depart the GHSA for the Georgia Independent Athletics Association (GIAA), joining nearby Lakeview Academy on its way out the door.

With the GHSA's reshuffling of the deck, Union County and Banks County remain the only 8-AA holdovers when the changes take effect in August.

Joining Union and Banks are a slew of new faces, plus a couple old foes that Panthers and Leopards haven't faced in region competition since their 8-A days of the 1990s. First, Athens Academy and Providence Christian rejoin Union and Banks after spending much of the 90s

together in Region 8-A, albeit in opposite sub-regions.

As for Providence, the Gwinnett County private school made a brief move to Region 8-AA between 2002-2006 but eventually returned to Class A.

Another familiar opponent is East Jackson, who spent its first four years in 8-AA before jumping to Class AAA after the 2011-2012 school year.

Rounding out the six-team league is Roswell's Fellowship Christian, who comes to 8-AA by way of Region 6-A Private.

Elsewhere in north Georgia, Fannin County will hang tight in Region 7-AA and Towns County stays put in Class A, which will now be split into a Division 1 (D1 - larger enrollments) and Division 2 (D2 - smaller enrollments).

Towns will join Division 2 where they will still face Greene County, Lincoln County and Washington-Wilkes in Region 8. The region also includes Aquinas, Lake Oconee Academy, and Warren County. Other nonfootball schools in the region are Georgia Fugees Academy, GSIC and Taliaferro County.

Originally, Towns was placed in Region 7-A (D2)



alongside Woody Gap. However, TCHS Athletic Director Jim Melton filed an appeal to exit a private-school heavy Region 7 that includes Bowdon, Christian Heritage, Mt. Zion (Carrollton), Pinecrest, Woody Gap and nine non-football private schools.

As for Rabun County and Elbert County, they are now members of Region 8-A (D1) where they will compete against the likes of Athens Christian, Barrow (non-football), Commerce and Tallulah Falls (nonfootball).

While Rabun and Elbert have been an annoyance to Union County (especially in football and girls basketball) at the region level, the Panthers will no longer see State playoff tormenters Pace

Academy and Lovett, who both made the jump to Class AAAA. Meanwhile, longtime-softball powerhouse Heard County is on its way to Class A.

Union's old region, 7-AAA, will look a bit different with the additions of Pickens and Wesleyan, along with the departures of East Hall, North Hall and Cherokee Bluff to Class AAAA

Former Class A private school Hebron Christian Academy is jumping two classes to Region 8-AAA (Franklin, Hart, Stephens, Oconee, etc). Elsewhere, Jasper County (Monticello), Oglethorpe County and Social Circle have reunited in Region 5-A (D1). Meanwhile, Putnam County stays put in Re-

gion 4-AA.

### Who's who in the new-look **Region 8-AA**

Athens Academy: Vol*leyball* - State runner-up in Class A Private with a 42-3 record. Football - lost 56-7 to Eagles Landing in the second round of State. Boys Soccer - Area Champ and 10-3 record in 2021. Lost 5-1 to Atlanta International in Class A Private Final Four. Girls Soccer Area Champion and 11-2 record in 2021. Defeated Lovett 2-1 in the regular season. Lost 1-0 (OT) to Paideia in Class A Private Elite Eight. Baseball - finished 13-14 in the regular season and third in Region 8-A Private; swept by Hebron (3-0, 13-12) in the first round of State. Girls Cross Country - fifth at State; junior Sarah Harrison - 12th place at 21:03. Boys Cross Country - fourth at State; junior Jackson Scruggs - fourth at 16:55. Wrestling - sent three underclassmen to State.

East Jackson: Girls Basketball - currently ranked 7th in Class AAA with an 11-1 record. Softball - finished third in Region 8-AA, swept by LaFayette in the first round of State by a combined score of 13-3. Boys soccer - lost

10-0 to Coahulla Creek in the second round of Class AAA playoffs as No. 2 seed from Region 8-AAA. Girls Soccer - lost 10-0 to Westminster in the first round of Class AAA playoffs as a No. 4 seed. Girls Cross Country - 15th at State. Boys Cross Country - ninth at State; junior Isael Guerra-Baca -27th at 18:12. Wrestling - qualified five underclassmen for State; one top-four finisher.

**Fellowship Christian:** Football - reached the Class A Private Final Four and ended with a 12-2 record; lost 38-28 to Prince Avenue Christian. Volleyball - swept by Tallulah Falls in first round of Class A Private State Tournament. Boys Soccer lost 5-2 to Athens Academy in the second round of Class A Private playoffs as a No. 2 seed. Beat Darlington 3-2 in the first round. Boys Cross Country - 24th at State. Baseball - lost in State Final Four with a 25-8 record.

**Providence Christian:** Boys Basketball - currently ranked 9th in Class A Private at 7-5. Softball - qualified for State with a No. 23 ranking in Class A Private Power Ratings. Swept in the first round by No. 10 ELCA by a combined score of 28-0.

# Panthers' late surge falls short despite Austin Taylor's career-high

### **By Todd Forrest Sports Editor** sports@nganews.com

Union County (5-8) came up short of its third consecutive victory, struggling for the first three-plus quarters of a 58-50 home loss to North Hall (9-2) on Tuesday, Dec. 21.

Senior guard Austin Taylor led Union County with a career-high 14 points -- nine after halftime -- however it proved too little, too late as the Panthers' 21-7 run wasn't enough to overcome a 51-29 fourth-quarter deficit.

Freshman Jude Ellis finished with 10 points and matched a game-high with three steals, but shot just 4 of 13 from the floor and 1 of 5 from 3-point range. Senior Caleb John scored seven of his 9 points in the fourth while pulling down five boards and dishing out two assists.

Meanwhile, senior Lake Hughes was unable to get on track offensively after going to the bench with three fouls less than 70 ticks into the second frame. The Panthers' leading scorer (entered the contest at 14 points per game) finished with 5 points and matched Ellis' game-high three steals on 1-of-6 shooting from deep (2-for-9 overall).

Late in the third frame, North Hall all but put Union County away, using a 7-0 run that culminated in the game's first 20-point margin at 46-26 with 40 seconds left in the quarter.

Ellis converted a 3-point play on the ensuing Panthers' possession, but the Trojans closed the period with a deuce and a 48-29 advantage. Facing a 51-29 deficit

nearly 90 seconds into the fourth, Union County appeared dead in the water, but to their credit, head coach Corey Garrett's squad continued battling until the final buzzer.

nior Lake Hughes picked off a pass on the perimeter and started 1:50 on the clock after the Pana Union break that ended with thers couldn't secure a Trojans' Henry sinking two free throws after drawing a foul on a layup



Senior Austin Taylor launches a trey from in front of the Union bench during the third quarter vs. North Hall. Photo/Todd Forrest miss, Henry drove the lane and coming 20 seconds later on the was met with a double-team, resulting in a kick-out to Taylor for three.

The Panthers cut the margin to 15 when John put back a Taylor miss, resulting in a 51-36 score with 4:47 to play. But North Hall immediately wiped out any momentum by racing down the floor for a layup and the foul.

Union County refused to go away as John canceled out the Trojans' and-one when he drew a foul on a double-clutch lavup. keeping Union within 15 on his free throw at the 4:29 mark.

North Hall capitalized on a mismatch in the post to build a 56-39 advantage but the Panthers continued to fight, beginning with a steal by John that popped into the hands of Henry, who quickly passed ahead to John for the layup with 3:40 left

Consecutive Trojan turnovers led to a 56-43 score when Ellis took advantage of a traveling violation by sinking a floater from 12 feet at the 2:30 mark.

North Hall kept Union at With 5:47 remaining, se- arm's length, popping a pull-up 15-footer from the elbow with miss

attempt. Following a North Hall with his only 3 of the night, period. Buckets from Henry,

**Morlock earns All-American recognition** 

following breakout sophomore campaign

wing from 25-feet. On the ensuing inbounds pass, Taylor made his presence felt on the defensive end, deflecting a cross-court pass, then chasing down the loose ball under the basket and laying it in for a 58-48 score with 1:22 remaining.

Despite having the clock on its side, North Hall fired off a quick trey on the offensive end, then missed a putback, allowing Union to regain possession on Daniel Snow's rebound with 1:08 to go as a bewildered Trojans' head coach Miles Kendall threw his hands into the air.

Kendall would breathe a sigh of relief moments later when Hughes' step-back trey from the corner was too strong, forcing the Panthers to start extending the game with under 40 seconds left.

Two Union County fouls later, North Hall missed the front-end of a 1-and-1, and Taylor's runner in the paint connected as the game clock approached 15 seconds. Up 58-50 and 9.5 seconds remaining, the Trojans muffed another 1-and-1 attempt while the Panthers' final 3-point try drifted wide as time expired.

The Trojans scored the game's first four points en route Hughes kept hope alive to a 20-6 advantage after one



Freshman Houston Henry uses a wrap-around pass to kick the ball out of the paint during the second half vs. North Hall. Photo/Todd Forrest

Hughes and senior Hayden Payne kept Union within 8-6 in the early going but North Hall closed the quarter with 12 unanswered.

Ellis connected on his only 3-point basket to halt the North Hall run at the 6:20 mark of the second but Union County struggled to find consistency on both ends of the floor.

Trailing 25-11 following a basket from junior Eli Underwood, Taylor rattled off five straight, driving inside for a deuce, then connecting from the corner to move the Panthers within single digits at 25-16 with 2:39 left in the half.

North Hall, who sank 4 of 6 from deep in the first half, connected from behind the arc 19 seconds later to extend the margin to a dozen. But Ellis needed only 12 seconds to reduce the deficit back to 10 before six-straight Trojan points built a 34-18 score

Senior Caleb John used a dribble-drive in the final seconds to keep Union within 14 at the break, but coming out of halftime, North Hall needed just

19 seconds to open up its largest lead of the night at 37-20. Snow scored down low on consecutive possessions, then Taylor kept the Panthers within 13 on a pull-up jumper from the baseline. With Union continuing to hang around, the Trojans used seven unanswered to mount a 46-26 advantage during the latter

stages of the third. 4 points, a team-high three assists, two steals and a gamehigh two blocked shots. Taylor, meanwhile, matched Henry's team-high with three dimes to go with three boards and one steal in 26 minutes off the bench.

four boards and blocked a shot.

6 points and a game-high four assists while hitting 1 of 2 from 3-point land. Game Notes: Taylor's previous career-high came during the 2020-21 season when he

scored 12 in the Region 8-AA tournament vs. Rabun County. He also recorded a career-high three assists in that contest - a feat he has matched twice this season, including the recent North Hall loss.

Payne added 2 points and three

shot the Panthers 43% (24 for 56) to 38% (21 for 55) from the field and 36% (5 for 14) to

19% (4 for 21) from 3-point

range. Union County won the

turnover battle 18-14, in spite of

the Trojans' relentless full-court

pressure defense, but North Hall

owned the boards (55-35) and

stripe with Union sinking 57%

(4 of 7) and North Hall making

er, senior Robert Terry (14 ppg)

finished with game-highs of 16 points and 13 rebounds. Sopho-

more Andrew Bales added 12

points on 2-of-4 shooting from

deep. Senior Elijah Gaddy had

7 points and five boards; sopho-

more Luke Sanders chipped in

Neither squad was particularly effective at the charity

The Trojans' leading scor-

points in the paint (36-26).

50% (5 of 10).

Overall, North Hall out-

rebounds

Landon Kight update: If all goes according to plan, Henry's night ended with Union County's injured allregion senior has missed his final contest and will be back on the court when the Panthers resume their 2021-22 campaign in January. As of Wednesday, Dec. 15, Kight was looking at a oneweek (approximate) timetable for return after suffering a hand injury during a late-November

**SCAR 2021** By Gerald Hodges/the Racing Reporter

Ty Dillon will drive the No. 42 Chevrolet for Petty GMS Racing in the 2022 NASCAR Cup season. It's a new team, new car, and new teammate, Erik Jones. After four seasons driving in the Cup Series for Germain Racing, Dillon entered 2021 sitting on the sidelines after the organization closed its doors. He ended up putting together a 16-race schedule

of Cup, Xfinity and Truck races. Dillon, 29, said the time away provided an opportunity to reevaluate his motivation for racing and in turn renewed his passion to compete.

"I grew up in this sport and for a long time I always knew what I was going to do the next year until this year I had nothing, and on my own, I had to kind of

figure it out," he said. "I would









Show chipped in 4 points and three rebounds. Underwood scored 2 points, pulled down practice.

Union County football standout and Class of 2020 grad Kyle Morlock picked up an AFCA Division II All-America nod earlier this month. In 10 outings this fall, the Shorter tight end hauled in 21 catches for 362 yards and five touchdowns, however, his seven-catch, 104-yard, two-touchdown performance vs. Erskine College on Nov. 6 solidified his spot among the nation's top pass catchers. Standing 6-foot-6 and weighing 240 pounds, Morlock opened the 2021 season with a 45-yard touchdown grab vs. Brevard. Morlock is the son of Steve and Suellen Morlock and lettered in football and basketball at UCHS. Photos courtesy of Shorter Athletics

### Union County Swim team results: Dec. 11

As we approach the Union County High School 'half-way' point, we sadly attended the final meet for the incredible Middle School season.

There are several highlights from this season thus far of note.

Team Captain Hunter White has qualified for State in the 50 Freestyle, the 100 Freestyle and the 100 Breaststroke. By qualifying for the State competition at Georgia Tech in February, White has become one (of a very few) high school students that has been to state all four years. If this year is any indication, he will not be the only UCHS swimmer to accomplish this achievement, as Andrew Nushtayev broke UCMS records in the 100 IM, 100 Freestyle, and 50 Backstroke, as well as Eli Gwynn breaking the 100 Backstroke record.

Not to be outdone, the Women's 200 Medley Relay team (Courtney Foster, Rachel Reid, Lily Helton and Hannah Sheffield) broke the UCHS record. The future of Union County Swimming is bright, but there's always room for those who want to see if they have and sixth place. what it takes to be a member.

Tallulah Falls hosted the fifth swim meet for our amazing Panther teams, taking place on December 11 at the brand new Tallulah Falls Natatorium.

With the slogan of "I swim and that's my superpower," the UCHS teams competed against multiple schools with these results:

Overall High School team fourth. Overall Men's team - fifth. Overall Women's team - second.

petitors): Foster - fourth: Anniston Howse - seventh; Cassie Flowers - 10th.

50 Freestyle (20 Competitors): Grace Cook - eighth; Howse - 11th; Kazmierzak 12th; Flowers - 14th; Collins 15th; Brooklyn Brown 16th.

### UCMS Boy's Results:

200 Medley Relay - 3rd Place

100 Individual Medley (Five competitors) - Nushtayev first; Eli Gwynn - second.

50 Breaststroke (12 competitors): Nushtayev - first.

50 Butterfly (Six competitors): Gwynn - second.

50 Backstroke: Andrew Farmer - first; Ian Lander - second

50 Freestyle (16 competitors): Wyatt Chandler - fifth; Farmer sixth: Lander - seventh. UCMS Girl's Results:

200 Medley Relay: fourth place. 200 Freestyle Relay: sec-

ond place.

200 Freestyle (Five com-UCHS Women's Re- petitors): Olivia Loyd - second. 100 Freestyle (14 com-

100 Individual Medley

- fifth.

petitors): Samantha Odom 16th.

petitors): Isabel Hoover - first; Clara Kazmierzak - third; Ser-

100 Backstroke (10 Com- tors): Jones - second; Kazmier-Odom - 22nd.

get a couple races here and couple races there. There were a lot of weekends I wasn't at the race track and sitting at home. "I realized what my moti-

vation for racing was – it's not the same as what it was when I was vounger. I put my worth into the results on the scoreboard every week, week-in and week-out and emotionally that's really hard to do at the top level (of NASCAR). There are so many factors that go into it. I also put my worth into what everyone thought of me.

"When you sit back and you don't have it, you realize what you really miss about it and for me it was the opportunity to go to work every day to hone in on a craft. The work, the effort, the process of being a top-level NAŜCAR driver – that's my real motivation. Results will come and go. So, I'm just hungry in a different way and motivated in a deeper and truer way."

While Dillon's four seasons with Germain Racing in Cup netted only a pair of top-five and six top-10 finishes, including a career-best finish of third at Talladega in 2020, he has no regrets over his tenure.

"With respect to Germain Racing, we put together the best effort we could every single week with a great group of guys that worked really hard," Dillon continued.

In just two days of testing at Charlotte this week, his first at a track as part of a two-car team - Dillon can already see a much different landscape when it comes to on-track competition.

The first couple of tests we were just figuring out the components on the car and kind of working through some quality control issues there. Now we're focused on speed and racing," he continued. "Having this second opportunity in my career, I'm absolutely full of gratitude to have it because not many people get it. I've seen the other side of not racing.

### **\$1-MILLION TO TURN** L.A. COLISEUM INTO A RACE TRACK

NASCAR'S first race of 2022 (non-points) will be held on a temporary asphalt track being built on top of the football field at the L.A. Memorial Coliseum. The price to pull it off has been estimated at over \$1 million.

NASCAR Vice President of Marketing Services Patrick Rogers confirmed the figure ahead of the start of construction this week.

Ty Dillon

the entire infield of the historic Motorsports agreed last month to stadium and provide a quartermile track that will host practice and races, during the Busch Light Clash at the Coliseum over the weekend of Feb 6-7.

While the price may sound high for a disposable track, Bristol Motor Speedway CEO Marcus Smith told the Associated Press that his venue spent \$2 million to convert it to a dirt surface for the spring race held there this year.

It's also not the first time a paved track has been built at the Coliseum. The Stadium Super Trucks series laid down asphalt on part of the infield for an event in 2013.

### PROGRESS AT NASHVILLE

Speedway Motorsports, owner of Bristol Motor Speed-Motorsports, way have reached an agreement in principle with Nashville Mayor John Cooper on a deal to renovate and operate the historic Nashville Fairgrounds Speedway.

But there are many other pieces that must fit together before NASCAR Cup Series racing returns to the historic 0.56-mile track.

It has taken four years to get to this point, and it likely will take until 2024 or later for a Cup race at a facility where NASCAR Cup drivers last raced in 1984.

The announcement appeared designed to boost public support for the Speedway Motorsports plan, in which the idea is not to use dollars from the general fund but instead have 30-year revenue bonds finance the renovation, paid off by rent payments, user fees/taxes on tickets, sponsorship agreements and event revenue.

Costs could be \$100 million or more the track has been in operation since 1904 and is in his wife nudged him and said, "I need of extensive work to bring it to NASCAR national series standards with the exact financials likely to be released soon.

The financial agreement is being vetted by a consultant, and pending the consultant's approval, The Nashville Board of Fair Commissioners must approve the deal. Even before then, the Metro Council must fill the two current openings on the five-member board.

the fair board until early in 2022.

If the deal passes, it could take another 18 months for the renovations, which include resurfacing the entire track and rebuilding the grandstands to seat 30,000.

Finally, where would a The pavement will cover Cup date come from? Speedway

pay \$135.5 million to buy Dover Motorsports, which owns Dover Speedway as well as Nashville Superspeedway, a 1.33-mile concrete oval about 35 miles from the city.

Neither Nashville facility would have more than 40,000 seats, and the fact they are two very different tracks gives credence to the idea that there could be two Cup races in Nashville.

NASCAR has a four-year deal through 2024 to race Cup at Nashville Superspeedway, though as the track operator, Speedway Motorsports likely could end that deal early if it wanted.

Speedway Motorsports controls 15 Cup dates. It owns Atlanta (two Cup dates), Bristol (two), Charlotte (two), Dover (one), Las Vegas (two), Nashville (one), New Hampshire (one), Sonoma (one). Texas (two, including all-star) and the lease to have a Cup race at Circuit of the Americas. The company, owned by Bruton Smith and his family, also is looking into revitalizing North Wilkesboro (North Carolina) Speedway, which it owns.

Can Speedway Motorsports take a race from Atlanta, where it is trying to get approval for an entertainment complex and casino, or one of its Texas events. where certain tax incentives make having three races financially beneficial?

Those are questions that still need to be answered, though not immediately. A lot of work remains before the green flag waves again for NASCAR major series at the historic facility.

Racing Joke: Jeff was in the middle of a deep sleep, when can't sleep. I keep thinking there is a mouse under the bed.

Jeff thought for a moment, and said, "Start thinking there is a cat under the bed and get back to sleep.

**Racing Trivia Question:** Alan Kulwicki died on April 1, 1993, as a result of a plane crash while traveling to a race at Bristol. What year did he win his only Cup Series championship?

Last Week's Question: Any proposal won't go to How many NASCAR Cup Series championships did Lee Petty win? Answer. He was NASCAR's first three-time champion, winning the tile in 1954, 1958, and 1958.

Gerald Hodges/the Racing Reporter is a syndicated NA-SCAR writer and author. You may e-mail him at: hodges@race500. com

petitors): Reese Jones - third. (11 competitors): Ava Serrano 50 Backstroke (21 com-

50 Butterfly: Ava Wheeler - third.

50 Breaststroke (22 Com-

50 Freestyle (28 Competizak - fifth; Hoover - seventh;

Hunter White Overall Middle School team - third. Overall Boy's team - second. Overall Girls

### Team - fourth. **UCHS Men's Results:**

100 Freestyle (15 competitors): White - first place and State Qualifying time. Blake Caputi - sixth; Gabriel Panter - 14th.

50 Freestyle (23 competitors): White - first; Caputi - seventh; Panter - 20th.

sults: 500 Freestyle (Nine competitors): Reid - second.

200 Medley Relay: Third

200 Individual Medley (Six competitors): Helton third.

200 Freestyle Relay: Second and third place.

100 Butterfly (Five competitors): Helton - second.

100 Breaststroke (12 Competitors): Reid - fifth place; Olivia Loyd - seventh; Hannah rano - fifth. Kazmierzak - eighth.

petitors): Foster - fourth; Lilly Collins - sixth.

100 Freestyle (11 Com-