

Sports

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UCHS Mock Trial team makes it eight-in-a-row

North Georgia News Special

Dalton - The dynasty that is the Union County High School Mock Trial continues to roll on.

Union came away from the Whitfield County Courthouse during the last weekend in January with another Region Championship title - the eighth straight title the squad has earned.

On Saturday, Jan. 28, Union County's Mock Trial team travelled to Dalton where the plaintiff and defendant teams presented their case through three rounds of matchups.

After more than 12 hours in the courtroom, the team prevailed over Southeast Whitfield County in the championship round.

Several members of the team earned awards (some multiple times) for their performances throughout the day as well. Those students are:

Round 1 - Outstanding Witness: Courtney Moose and Tommy Orchanian.

Round 1 - Outstanding Attorney: Clay Pickelsimer and Stephen Normyle.

Round 2 - Outstanding Witness: Courtney Moose.

Round 2 Outstanding Attorney: Clay Pickelsimer and Stephen Normyle.

Championship Round - Outstanding Witness: Courtney Moose and Alex Bailey.

Championship Round - Outstanding Attorney: Sahory Salazar.

Four Years Mock Trial Participation: Nick Atkinson

"We are super-proud of this team's performance and their achievements this weekend," Union County Teacher-Coach Amy Payne said. "The



team is primarily made up of underclassmen, several of whom have never been a part of mock trial or who have never previously had an A-role position. We now advance on to District Competition (this coming weekend)."

Top: The Union County High School Mock Trial with Teacher-Coaches Amy Payne and April Krieger along with the Honorable Murphy Miller who volunteered as an Attorney-Coach. **Bottom:** The Outstanding Witness and Outstanding Attorney award winners for UCHS. From left to right: sophomore Courtney Moose (Outstanding Witness Award, all three rounds); junior Clay Pickelsimer (Outstanding Attorney, Rounds 1 and 2); junior Stephen Normyle (Outstanding Attorney, Rounds 1 and 2); sophomore Sahory Salazar (Outstanding Attorney, Round 3); sophomore Alex Bailey (Outstanding Witness, Round 3); and freshman Tommy Orchanian (Outstanding Witness, Round 1).

Second half surge propels Dawson past Panthers to bring season to a close

By Todd Forrest
North Georgia News
sports@nganews.com

Rabbittown - A little more than 24 hours after the Lady Panthers saw their season come to a close, the Union County boys traveled to East Hall where they were also forced to take on Dawson County in another win-or-go-home scenario in the first round of the 7-AAA Region Tournament.

Unfortunately, the Tigers pulled away from a one-point game at halftime for the 60-45 victory to halt Union's state tournament streak at three-straight years.

Like the girls, the Panthers were able to lead for much of the opening frame, but unlike the Lady Panthers, the guys only trailed by a point at halftime, and if not of a few unlucky breaks, Union would have taken a lead into the half.

On top 19-16 with 2:00 to play before the intermission, Panther freshman Pierson Allison fouled under the basket with his team in the bonus. But instead of awarding the free throws to Allison, who is one of Union County's leaders in free throw percentage, the officials incorrectly sent the wrong player to the free throw line, and after missing the front-end of the 1-and-1 attempt, the Tigers tied the game eight seconds later when they drove inside, drew the foul, and converted the old-fashioned 3-point play.

Junior Candler Colwell hit 1-of-2 at the line to give the lead back to Union with 26 seconds left in the half. Then on the other end, the ball appeared to bounce out-of-bounds off the fingers of a Dawson player, but possession was retained by the Tigers. With time running out, Dawson connected on a base line jumper to take a 21-20 lead into the locker room.

The third frame opened with the Tigers on fire when a trey right out of the gates was followed by a deuce to put Union in a 26-20 hole, less than a minute in. However, freshman Sawyer Drake answered with two in the paint and junior Marty Kronz drilled a three to pull the Panthers back within a point.

A Tiger basket at the 5:13 mark made it a three-point game, then a trey stretched the lead back to six. Dawson would then hit 3-of-4 at the line to cap off an 8-0 run and take a 34-25 lead as the clock ticked under two minutes to play in the quarter.

A put-back by Drake momentarily stopped the bleeding but by the end of the period, the Tigers had opened up a 41-29 lead until a length-of-the-court pass from Lawson Baenninger to a streaking Cole Davis resulted in an over the shoulder catch and lay-up as the



This questionable out-of-bounds play came right before halftime. After a Dawson player deflected the ball out, the officials ruled it out off of Union. Seconds later, the Tigers took advantage and scored a go-ahead basket for a one-point halftime lead. The Panthers would never lead again.



Sophomore Britt Waller came off the bench and made an impact in the paint with 2 points, 6 rebounds, and a blocked shot. Photo/Todd Forrest

third quarter buzzer sounded to remain within 10.

An RJ Banton lay-up answered a Dawson County bucket with 6:13 to play. Marty Kronz responded to a Tiger trey with a 3-ball of his own but with time running out and trailing by 10, Union couldn't afford to trade baskets.

The Panthers were unable to come up with enough stops over the final five minutes to make a dent in the Dawson lead. Down by 14 with 2:39 remaining, Kronz nailed another trey to pull within 11 but the Tigers delivered

a dagger-three of their own to put the Panthers away for good.

Kronz led Union with 11 points, Drake had 10, Banton scored seven, while Baenninger and Allison added six each.

Cole Wright had 4, points Davis and Waller had two each, Candler Colwell added one.

Dawson would fall in the next round to eventual Region champ East Hall, then to Lumpkin County in the consolation game.

GAC finished second in Region 7-AAA following a 67-61 finals loss to East Hall.



Head Coach Casey Jones (squatting) and assistant coaches Kevin Hughes and Corey Garrett (far right) during a second half timeout vs Dawson County in the 7-AAA region playoffs. Photo/Todd Forrest