

Sports

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Chattanooga wrestlers tutor locals at Union County camp

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Former NCAA All-American and current University of Chattanooga Wrestling Coach Jon Sioredas, along with two of his Moc wrestlers were at The Pit last week for a 6th-12th grade wrestling camp.

Union County coaches Michael Smith-Foot, Bob Williams, Art McCann, and Justin Byers in conjunction with Towns County Head Wrestling Coach Jeff Stowers, brought in the Division I wrestlers and coach to instruct young wrestlers from around the area.

Union County, Towns County, Fannin County, Murphy, NC, and Hayesville, NC each took part in the camp. Meanwhile the wrestling coach from Franklin County was also in attendance.

"This is a big deal for us," Coach Smith-Foot said. "We've got a major university that's hanging out with us and we hope to do this every year."

For an up-and-coming program like Union County, hosting a camp of this magnitude shows how serious the Panther coaches are when it comes to taking Union wrestling to the next level. For proof, look no further than the attention the camp garnered from around the area.

"We've got the coach from Franklin County here," Coach Smith-Foot said. "He doesn't have a kid in this camp but he's still here taking videos and to learn."

Panther wrestling was well represented at the camp, with Towns County having the second largest group, then Fannin and Murphy. However the youngest camper was a rising sixth grader from Hayesville.

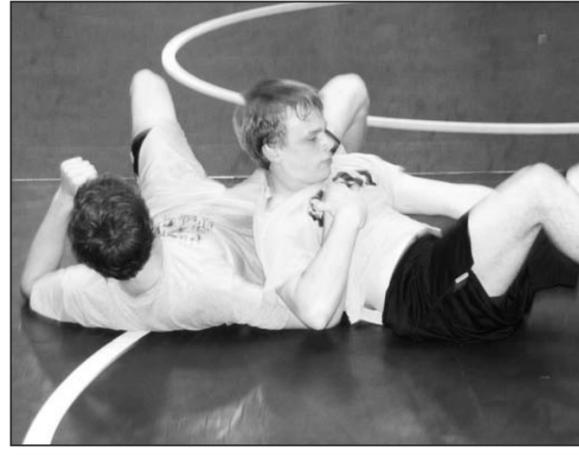
"That's really cool," Coach Smith-Foot said. "It's pretty intense for a sixth grader to come to a college-level camp."

According to Coach Smith-Foot, the camp began as a fundamental camp, then evolved into a more of a skills camp.

"He (Sioredas) showed them the fundamentals and the



Coach Jon Sioredas instructs campers from five local schools and demonstrates some of his unique moves on his University of Chattanooga wrestlers. Photos by Todd Forrest



Members of the University of Chattanooga wrestling team held a camp at the Pit last week with wrestlers and coaches from Union, Towns, Fannin, and Franklin Counties, along with Murphy and Hayesville, NC in attendance. Photos by Todd Forrest

basics, then he showed two or three advanced moves you can do, and that's what I love about it," Coach Smith-Foot said.

Coach Sioredas just recently came to Chattanooga via Old Dominion University, and is known for specializing in the Granby System of wrestling. Yet, after spending a few days at the Union County camp, Coach Sioredas is fascinated with the direction of the Union wrestling program.

"We were impressed with the group and how quickly they picked things up, especially after finding out that the Union County program has only been around for two years," Coach Sioredas said. "It shows the job their staff is doing and we look forward to helping them out in the future."

According to Sioredas' website, www.jstrainingcamps.com, he has been a featured clinician and has conducted training camps across the country including The Martin's Granby School of Wrestling, Terry Brands' Wrestle the World Training Camps, University of Missouri Wrestling Camps, Old Dominion University Wrestling Camps, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga Wrestling Camps, and Workhorse Wrestling Camps.

He has also been featured at the NHSCA High School Nationals, United States Southeast Regional Training Center, Oklahoma Coaches Clinic, and Team Michigan Fargo Training Camp. He has held private training camps at several championship high school programs across the

United States and continues to train some of the nation's best student-athletes.

Union County also held its own "in-house" camp last Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday at The Pit. Every Tuesday and Thursday, Panther wrestling will be hosting practices for younger wrestlers from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. until the end of this month.

"We've got 4-year olds wrestling, we've got 6 and 7-year olds wrestling, we've got mommas and daddies in the stands cheering and clapping," Coach Smith-Foot said. "But I want to give everyone the month of July off, and probably August too, then start back in September."

Union County sent two wrestlers to the State Sectionals this past winter. Pretty



Impressive for a program in just its second year. Not to mention that the Panthers have to go through arguably the most dominant program in the Southeastern United States, Jefferson, just to get out of Region 8-AA.

Football: Panthers hit summer workouts in full stride

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The pads won't start popping for another two months, but Panther football is already back in action.

Coach Allison and his squad are holding workouts three days a week from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

The summer sessions begin at the weight room before heading across the street to Mike Colwell Memorial Stadium for on-field drills.

Last week, Union County was supposed to attend a passing camp at White County, however it was canceled. But Union didn't have to wait long to see how they stack up against another squad.

On Tuesday, the Panthers traveled to Jefferson for a passing camp hosted by the Class AA State Champion Dragons.

On Thursday and Friday, Union County will go to East Hall for a passing camp, before hosting White County on Tuesday, June 18th at 10 a.m. in another passing camp.

The final passing camp of the month will be on Thursday, June 20th when Tellico Plains, Tenn. comes to Blairsville, also at 10 a.m.

The backs and receivers aren't the only ones seeing all the action, so don't feel bad for the guys in the trenches.

On Friday, the Panthers attend a two-day Offensive Lineman Camp at Western Carolina University.

The summer workout routine will continue until the GHSA sanctioned "Dead Week" during early July. After that, the starting date for official practice will be fast approaching. With a brutal Region 8-AA schedule ahead, Coach Allison and his staff realize that time is too valuable of a commodity to waste during the summer months.

"We workout for about an hour then go over to the field and work on football," Union County Head Coach Brian Allison said. "We focus on football skills, football technique,



Coach Neil Setzer (far left) instructs the Panther linemen during blocking drills. Photo/Todd Forrest



Defensive lineman Luther Jones (L) and middle linebacker Chase Barnett (R) will anchor Union's interior defense in 2013. Photo/Todd Forrest



Quarterback Ralston Drake



Teammates encourage their fellow Panther during an early morning workout session outside the UCHS weight room. Photo/Todd Forrest



Graduated kicker Eric Hougrand (middle) returned to work with T.J. Smith (R) and the new Panther kickers. Photo/Todd Forrest

football fundamentals, and mix in a little conditioning. This will be the routine through June, then in July we'll increase the intensity. We have two more passing camps, one here and one at Sonorville. We'll also increase the workouts to four days a week in July."

Until August, all the workouts and camps are voluntary but according to Coach Allison, the turnout has been remarkable and this group is serious about building on last year's six-win season.

"We're hitting between 80-90 percent turnout every

work hasn't been limited to the practice field, the Panthers are getting after it in the weight room as well.

"It's been a great summer so far," Coach Byers said. "The summer is always unique because you've graduated the seniors, held spring practice, and the players start to establish themselves. It's our program in the weight room that begins to solidify us as a team. The juniors and seniors have stepped up and taken these younger kids under their wing, working really hard and accomplishing a lot of great things."

According to Assistant Coach Justin Byers, the hard



Rising junior receiver Robert Prunier gives the defender a stiff arm during passing drills. Photo/Todd Forrest