

# Sports

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## Lady Panthers use 20-6 outburst in fourth to down Fannin Social Circle no match for Union as Region action resumed on Saturday

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A Union County win against the rival Lady Rebels was way overdue. But on Friday they got the job done at Fannin County by a score of 55-39, in a game that was tight until the Lady Panthers outscored the home team 20-6 in the fourth quarter.

On Saturday, Union's four-game road trip continued at Social Circle where the Lady Panthers (13-5, 5-1) took care of the Rebels to remain one game back of first place Rabun County (10-7, 5-0).

Both Union squads will get Tuesday off before traveling to Greene County on Friday for the fourth consecutive away game.

The Lady Panthers will conclude their road show when they pay a visit to Hayesville, NC on Saturday. The teams split the first two meetings after the Lady Jackets held off a furious Union rally in a heated contest that prevented the Lady Panthers from playing for their first ever Battle of the States Championship.



Lisa Nalaschi's 22 points helped propel the Lady Panthers past Fannin on Friday. She would score nine points in the fourth quarter, including a pair of treys that sparked Union's 16-0 run that put the Lady Rebels away. Photo/Todd Forrest

found another gear and less than three minutes into the fourth, the rout was officially on.

A 16-0 Union County run to open the fourth left the Blue Ridge crowd in a stunned silence as a back-and-forth affair turned into a blowout.

After knocking off the Lady Panthers in consecutive games for the first time in four years, Fannin was denied its third straight, thanks in large part to Lisa Nalaschi.

Union's senior forward tallied 22 points with nine coming in the fourth.

The period opened with a Nalaschi trey, then a Fannin miss turned into a Brooke Maddox lay up at the other end.

Following a Lady Rebels' timeout, Maddox fed Nalaschi, who connected on a corner trey - giving Union a 43-33 advantage.

Fannin turned it over on the inbounds pass then Nalaschi



Layne Colwell drives past a Fannin County defender during Union's 55-39 victory in Blue Ridge. Saturday, she would lead the team in scoring with 12 points during the Lady Panthers' dismantling of Social Circle. Photo/Todd Forrest

was fouled - she hit both shots of the 1-and-1 trip. Union extended its lead to 51-33 with 2:41 to play before the Lady Rebels finally got on the board in the final frame.

After one quarter the game was tied at 13-13 but Fannin opened up a 26-21 advantage in the second and took a 28-24 lead into the half.

With 4:25 left in the third, Kaitlyn Day connected from long distance to put Union on top 32-30,

and they never trailed again.

SCORING: Nalaschi 22, Day 12, Maddox 11, La. Colwell 4, Stroman 3, Larisy 3 REBOUNDS: Stroman 5, Day 3, Nalaschi 3 ASSISTS: Stroman 4, Maddox 3 STEALS: Maddox 5, Nalaschi 5

**Lady Panthers 60**  
**Social Circle 26**

Social Circle - Union made



Coach David Tucker an early statement in the form of a 19-3 first quarter - thanks in large part to 8 points from Day, four from Maddox, and three from Layne Colwell.

Both teams struggled to put points on the board in the second but the Lady Panthers remained in control - 29-10 at halftime.

An 18-5 third quarter delivered the final nail in the Lady Redskins' coffin. Nalaschi scored 7 points, Colwell had five, and Maddox added four in the third as Union took a 47-15 advantage into the fourth.

SCORING: La. Colwell 12, Day 11, Nalaschi 11, Maddox 8, Stroman 5, Fair 2, Larisy 2, Daniel 2, Busse 2 REBOUNDS: Nalaschi 7, Day 4, Maddox 4 ASSISTS: Stroman 9, Maddox STEALS: Day 5, Stroman 5, Maddox 4, La. Colwell 4 BLOCKS: Nalaschi 3

**Lady Panthers 55**  
**Fannin County 39**

**Blue Ridge** - For three quarters the Lady Panthers and Lady Rebels were locked in another classic Union vs Fannin matchup.

With a 35-33 advantage entering the fourth, the Lady Panthers

## Life on the road remains unkind to the Panthers

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The Panthers took not one, but two on the chin over the weekend, falling at Fannin County and Social Circle.

The pair of losses drops Union to 12-7 overall and 4-6 on the road, with the next four games all away from home. The loss at Social Circle drops the Panthers - who were previously in a three-way for first place - to 5-2 in Region 8-AA. Union is currently clinging to the No. 3 spot in the Region with Washington-Wilkes snipping at their heels.

However, a win Friday at Greene puts the Panthers right back in the mix for the top spot. A loss drops Union to two games back of Greene and Rabun.

After returning from Greene, their welcome-home gift is a game at Hayesville, NC - the reigning Battle of the States champion. Union knocked off the Yellow Jackets during an intense showdown in The Pit last month.

vals came to an end last week when the Rebels turned a 37-33 deficit after three quarters into a 55-47 advantage with 1:13 to play.

The Panthers overcame a sluggish start where Fannin opened up a 15-5 lead with 1:45 to play in the first. Union County Head Coach Casey Jones benched his starting five and the Panthers' backups provided a spark.

Sophomore Parker McCombs nailed a trey and senior Lake Arnick added a basket to get Union back in the game at 16-10.

The starters returned for the second quarter and regained the lead 23-21 after three straight buckets from Chase Shook - who ended up with 16 points. The Panthers went on to take a 25-23 advantage, and momentum into the locker rooms.

The third opened with a Hunter Hughes layup that stretched the Union lead to four points.

But momentum can change sides at the drop of the hat - and that's exactly what happened moments later.

At the 6:28 mark of the third, Hughes was called for an offensive foul and was given a technical foul after he expressed his disagreement with the call. Not wanting to risk another technical and a guaranteed suspension to

his leading scorer, Coach Jones sat Hughes for the remainder of the contest.

With Shook and Kyle Hamby in foul trouble, seniors Tyler Odom and Lake Arnick, junior Andrew Brown, and sophomore Lawson Baenninger picked up the slack to allow Union to cling to a 37-33 lead entering the fourth.

Eight seconds into the final period, Shook hit 1-of-2 at the line - extending the lead to 38-33. The Rebels answered with a 7-0 run before Shook hit 2-for-2 at the stripe to knot the score at 40-40 with 5:58 to play.

Trailing 44-41, Hamby dribbled the length of the court and hit a pull up jumper to get the Panthers within a point. Odom scored the next four points as Union remained within one.

Fannin scored seven unanswered points to put the Panthers in a 55-47 hole. Odom did his best to keep the Panthers close, scoring 12 of his team-high 22 points in the fourth, but the Rebels hit enough free throws to keep Union at bay.

Union's 10 straight wins over Fannin was the third most

over an opponent in the last 15 years. Towns County - 35 games (2000-present), Rabun County - 18 games (2001-09), Fannin County - 10 games (2010-15).

SCORING: Odom 22, Shook 16, Arnick 7, Hughes 4, McCombs 3, Hamby 2, Drake 2, Brown 2, Baenninger 1

**Panthers 48**  
**Social Circle 49**

**Social Circle** - The 5-9 Redskins picked up their second Region win of the season after upsetting the Panthers 49-48 on Saturday.

After a loss at Fannin, the Panthers were on upset alert as they visited an improved Social Circle squad. Despite losing 71-24 to Greene and 71-47 to Washington Wilkes, the Redskins owned a win over Oglethorpe and hung around during a 65-52 loss to Rabun.

The Redskins held Union to seven fourth quarter points in the upset.

SCORING: Hamby 16, Hughes 13, Shook 8, Rogers 6, Drake 3, Odom 2

**Panthers 59**  
**Fannin County 62**

**Blue Ridge** - Union's 10-game winning streak over their ri-



Tyler Odom's 12 fourth quarter points and 22 points overall at Fannin weren't enough as the Panthers fell 62-59. Photo/Todd Forrest



UC's cheerleaders support the teams at Fannin. Photo/Todd Forrest



Junior Chase Shook fights for position. He had 16 points at Fannin County before fouling out in the final minute. Photo/Todd Forrest

## Union wrestling hosts Senior Night; State on the horizon

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While honoring senior Adam Williams, Union County wrestling hosted its last home match of the year against Fannin County and Rabun Gap on Wednesday.

Against Fannin, Grizzly Breedlove won at 152 pounds, Bryan Nelson won at 160 pounds, and Zach Payton won at 182 pounds.

"We lost against Fannin County, but five of our boys were winning and in a pin when they were reversed to their backs and stuck," Union Wrestling Coach Michael Smith-Foot said. "That means we had the chance to win the dual even with forfeits but just got out of position. That is a mistake that can be fixed by the end of the season."

The Panthers had better luck against Rabun Gap - winning with a convincing 60-18 score. Brendan Mason won at

106 pounds, Brandon Mickens won the most exciting match of the evening at 120 pounds, Adrian Shaw won at 126 pounds, James Rosser won at 132 pounds, Evan Browning won at 138 pounds, Adam Williams won at 145 pounds, Breedlove won at 152 pounds, and Zach Williams won at 182 pounds.

Tyler Camp and Noah Bierce didn't compete due to injuries suffered at the Area Tournament.

Adam Williams was celebrated for his four years of hard work and dedication, to go with all of the blood, sweat, and tears that he's shed for Union's upstart wrestling program.

Adam Williams is also Union's first four-year wrestler.

"He has been a joy to work and train with over these past years, and we expect big things from him at the end of the season and after high school," Coach Smith-Foot said.

He plans to attend Appalachian State in Boone, NC and earn a degree in economics.



Adam Williams is the only senior wrestler on this year's squad.

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