

# Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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## Towns County sweeps Highlands, games at Warren rescheduled

By Todd Forrest  
Sports Editor  
Towns County Herald

The Indians and Lady Indians picked up double-digit victories over Highlands, North Carolina last week, but that was the only action of the week as Friday's contests at Warren County were rescheduled to Tuesday, Jan. 28 at 6 p.m.

**Lady Indians 39, Highlands 25** - The ladies went to work on the Highlands, NC Highlanders on Jan. 21st, and in an exciting match up, they won with a final score of 39-25.

"We had a couple injuries last Saturday down at LOA and we really missed those girls tonight - Natalie Barnes and Scotlyn Fain," said head coach Alan Rogers.

"Can't wait to get them back as soon as possible. But I tell you what - we had some girls that really stepped up. Jamie McCarter really played her but off tonight. Chloe Sutton played some big minutes for us and that helped build us some depth moving forward.

"Every night they just come and they battle and they run through the wall. They work their tails off and I just love these girls. I'm so proud of them," said Coach Rogers.

"Offensively tonight we did a great job finding Kaleigh Beaver who led us with 21 points. Ava Thompson shot the ball well and poured in 9 points. Jamie McCarter dropped in 4 and made a lot of rebounds, Ansleigh Hardin dropped in 3, Chloe Sutton hit a big 2 right at the end of the half that really gave us some momentum.

"We played great defense. Back side rebounding, taking care of the ball, not turning it over - big moments for us moving forward. Girls stepping up in the absence of 2 starters who we sorely missed but a lot of kids really grew up



Senior Kaleigh Beaver scored 21 points in the Lady Indians win over Highlands, NC last week. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

tonight," said Rogers.

**Indians 66, Highlands 36** - The Indians' work paid off on Tuesday Jan. 21 against the Highlanders when the Indians came out smelling like a rose with a final score of 66-36.

"That was a good game; the whole team shined. We got back to our identity," said Coach Brian Hunnicutt. "We've been out of our routine a little bit and we had a tough week last week, so I was really proud to see the guys get back to sharing the ball, playing good defense and getting everyone involved. The whole team was great.

"We have this saying, 'if everyone shares then everyone will get fed.' I felt like we did a great job of that tonight. We didn't worry about getting our

own, we made sure everyone got fed. We score more points like that. We hit a little rut there for a while where our ball got stationary, our defense got stationary, so we really wanted to focus tonight on moving on defense, moving without the ball and moving the basketball, and I was happy in all three phases."

"Daylen Sosebee is out with an injury and we've got a couple banged up but you get into this time of year and you expect. Connor Williams is back and rounding back into form, a senior who will help us as we get into the tournament. Hopefully we can have a last good two and a half weeks and make it back up to Towns County for the region semi-finals," Hunnicutt continued.

The previous weekend, Towns County suffered a pair of losses at Lake Oconee Academy.

On Saturday, January 18th the Lady Indians really worked hard trying to defeat the Lake Oconee Titans but couldn't close the deal with a final score of 38-31.

The ladies lost a couple of starters early in the game - Fain and Barnes.

"Our bench players stepped in and played great in the absence of Scotlyn and Natalie. I'm very proud of the resilience and the effort we played with," said Coach Rogers.

"Kaleigh Beaver led the team with 19 points, followed by Ava Thompson who scored 5. Before injuries, Natalie



Tucker Engert drives in for a layup during last Tuesday's victory vs. Highlands, NC. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

Barnes scored 3 points and Scotlyn scored 2 points. Chloe Sutton also scored 2. These girls work so hard and I'm blessed to be able to coach them," added Rogers.

The boys took on Lake Oconee on Saturday January 18th and lost a close one with a final score of 48-41.

Lake Oconee led from the start of the game and held the lead throughout the whole first half. Towns came out strong to start the second half and cut into Lake Oconee's lead. Towns was able to briefly grab a one-point lead late in the third quarter, but LOA quickly hit a big 3 pointer to go ahead.

"We continued to play extremely hard and provide a challenge throughout the game but could not quite catch

up," said Coach Hunnicutt. "LOA is a tough place to play and they are playing extremely well this year. The boys played extremely hard, but we could just never get anything clicking offensively.

"Overall, this was a tough weekend to get to the top teams in our region. I feel like it was a disadvantage for our boys that they were out of school all week.

"It's hard to get out of your routine and practicing and having your body ready to play these games and then flipping the switch off on Friday and Saturday. I'll give these kids credit. They played their guts out both nights. We just came up short. We will continue to work. We still have big contests ahead of us."



Cruz Kitchens fires from the corner during Towns County's win over Highlands. Photo/Todd Forrest

## Wrestling: Traditional postseason tournaments get underway this weekend



Senior wrestler Nick Vargas with family.

By Shelly Knight  
Staff Writer  
Towns County Herald

On Tuesday Jan. 21, Towns County wrestled but lost to Rabun Gap 45-33.

"We wrestled pretty well, but the multiple forfeits we gave up as just too much to overcome," said Coach Clay Livingston.

"We also wrestled Franklin NC and lost a tough one with a final score of 39-36. We had some opportunities to cut into and overcome the 3-point deficit, but it just didn't happen. Franklin's kids deserve a lot of credit for that.

"We were led that night by freshman Will Walls who

went 2-0 with two pins. Jack Stowers went 2-0 with a pin and a major decision. Gabe Calhoun was 2-0 with a pin and a minor decision.

"And our only senior, Nick Vargas, went 1-1 on Senior Night. He followed up a tough loss with a gritty win in his second match. That grit and determination that we have come to expect from him will be sorely missed.

"On Friday, we traveled down to Pickens County for one of the largest and toughest 2-day tournaments in the state. With close to 30 teams, and many 3, 4 or even 5A classes, it's a tough one. We like to attend the Burnt Mountain Classic every year right before the

individual tournaments crank up to get the kids ready for the postseason.

"Jack Stowers went 3-2 in a very deep 165 lb. weight class. Nick Vargas went 2-2 in an equally tough 132 lb. weight class. River Chauncey also went 2-2 in the 126 lb. weight class, only losing to the eventual runner-up. In the consolation rounds, his loss was to the eventual fourth place finisher.

"We also had some good showings from some of our freshmen in the junior varsity portion of the tournament. Overall, it was a very productive weekend," said Livingston.

Watch for regionals coming up in early February.