

Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports



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Hiawassee, Georgia

Lady Indians season ends in loss to metro all star team



Wesleyan's Kaelyn Causwell forces a jump ball with Towns County's Jordan Moss. The Lady Indians' season ended with a 81-37 loss to the Lady Wolves.

Photo/Lowell Nicholson

By Jerry Kendall
For the second season in a row, the Towns County Lady Indians Varsity Basketball Team saw a wonderful season come to an end at the hands of the Wesleyan Lady Wolves, this time on their home court in Norcross. It further seems a near certainty that this will prove to be the third year in a row for the Lady Indians' season ending loss to be at the hands of the eventual Class A State Champion.

The Lady Indians fell to Calvary Day, a private school from Savannah, two years ago in the state final four and to Wesleyan in Marietta last year in the elite eight round of play and Wesleyan is heavily favored to capture the title this year. The Lady Indians completed their season with a fine 23-7 overall record which is part of an overall 96-26 record for the last four years, a school record for most wins during any four year period.

It is very difficult for any sports team with much success under its belt to have to face another team with thoughts of little chance of victory but honesty compels one to consider that to be the case last Wednesday for the Lady Indians in their game at Wesleyan. After all, the smallest margin of victory by the Lady Wolves without a loss in thirty four games against Class A opponents the last two years as been by twenty five points on two occasions and their average margin of victory has been 79.7 to 26.6 in those games. Wesleyan dropped to Class A last year after competing for several years at the Class AA level.

For those who may not know, Wesleyan is a private school with something like one hundred more students than Towns County but boasting a roster including eight girls standing 5'11" and above with half of these at 6' and above. Very rarely will even a Class AAAAA public school have anywhere near such a wealth of height on their roster.

Perhaps the depth and physical strength of the Wesleyan team is of even greater significance than the height, however, as they use some twelve to fifteen players extensively in keeping fresh players on the court at all times, a luxury small schools in limited population areas rarely produce. While schools like Towns County and other small public schools are limited to students from their small populations such as our 10,000 or so, Wesleyan and other private schools can pick and choose which students they accept from millions of people in metro Atlanta.

With all this being stated, the Lady Indians performed heroically in giving the Lady Wolves more than they wanted for awhile, leading for much of the first quarter and staying within striking distance for most of the second. Field goals by Melissa Conrad and Jordan Moss gave the Lady Indians 2-0 and 4-2 leads and a trey by Gabby Arencibia gave them a 7-2 lead just under a minute and a half into the game. An Ali Bleckley basket at 4:25 then had the Lady Indians ahead 9-5 before a 6-0 run had Wesleyan on top 13-9.

Two free throws by Brittany Walls and a second trey by Arencibia gave the Lady Indians what would turn out to be their last lead of 14-13 with 1:41 left in the first quarter as a fast break basket gave the Lady Wolves a 15-14 advantage at quarter's end. Wesleyan's aggressive and increasingly effective full court pressure was primarily responsible for their pulling away in the second quarter but not without some

cording to a report in the Athens Banner Herald newspaper.

As a matter of clarification, Prince Avenue is a private school near Athens showing no obvious signs of stacking the deck with imported players and was perhaps as much a victim of the metro all stars as the Lady Indians and other small public schools. Fannin and Prince completed outstanding seasons with 22-5 and 26-4 records respectively with one loss for Fannin and two for Prince being at the hands of the Lady Indians.

Another Lady Indian opponent, the Class AA Rabun County Lady Wildcats, used a rousing comeback similar to that by Prince Avenue in the region championship win over the Lady Indians last Thursday in a weather delayed game to defeat Lovett, still another Atlanta private school, in a sweet sixteen contest at Rabun County. After leading for most

of the first half, the Lady Wildcats found themselves trailing 38-23 quite late in the third quarter but scored the next eighteen points, taking a 41-38 lead by the 5:22 mark of the fourth quarter.

A long trey with twelve seconds remaining in the game gave Rabun a 51-48 victory before a huge home crowd and a trip to the Elite Eight the next night. Like Wesleyan and Greater Atlanta Christian, the quite young Lovett team displayed size, strength, and depth uncommon in Class A and Class AA schools outside large population areas with three players standing six feet tall and above. The Lady Wildcats managed to come away with the victory, however, just as the Lady Indians took the measure of Holy Innocents in their first round state tournament game.

Unfortunately, the Lady Wildcats didn't have much left



Towns County's Ali Bleckley puts up a shot in the second quarter against the Wesleyan Lady Wolves. The Lady Indians' state title hopes were dashed in Norcross.

Photo/Lowell Nicholson

for the following night when traveling some three hours to Dalton to face the powerful Buford Lady Wolves who had a day of rest following their sweet sixteen game. Although Buford is a public city school, they accept students from far and near in what might be considered a semi-private situation and the Lady Wolves took a 48-28 victory over Rabun. The Lady Wildcats completed their season with a 27-2 record with the loss in addition to Buford being at Fannin County.

Now to be clear, your reporter admires the service private schools provide their students and is not suggesting that the Georgia High School Association take action to restrict students from attending their school of choice. Rather, it seems action should be taken to separate schools in both private and semi-private situations into their own division, leaving small schools in small communities in a division of their own

such as was established years ago.

Well, this pretty much closes out coverage of high school basketball games for this year as the Lady Indians and Indians look to next year with high expectations due to a wealth of returning talent for both teams. T1Mar10.TCSpts5ac

BASKETBALL INDIVIDUAL SCORING

WESLEYAN Lady Indians (Grade)	
Gabby Arencibia (10)	12
Ali Bleckley (10)	6
Melissa Conrad (12)	6
Jordan Moss (11)	3
Lindsay Patton (10)	2
Brittany Walls (11)	2
Heather Hamilton (12)	1

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Lady Indians' senior Melissa Conrad puts up two points as Lady Wolves' Grace Leah Baughn (No. 4) and Brittany Stevens (No. 5) try to contest the shot. The top-ranked Lady Wolves ended Towns County's title hopes last week.

Photo/Lowell Nicholson

Indians rally in sixth for 15-13 win over the Skins

by Jim Bryant

It was a coach's dream. A late rally by the home team and three quick outs in the final inning to take a come-from-behind 15-13 Region 8-A win. It started badly for the Indians as the Social Circle Redskins took a quick 2-0 lead in the top of the first. The Tribe answered in the bottom when Billy Meier opened with a double and Matt Beni's single put runners on the corners. After a couple of Indians were plated, it was a 2-2 tie. The Skins broke the game open in the top of the third with a base clearing HR over the center field fence to go on top 6-2. In the fourth, the visitors plated their eighth run, 8-2 and the Indians sent Jake Mullins to the hill in relief of starter, Taylor Denton. The Tribe got a break when two straight Indians took a hit for the team and an RBI single by Cody Harkins plated Billy Meier and the game moved to 8-3. After getting Indians around the diamond, a RBI double by Kyle McConnell got more runs across and the Indians had battled their way back into the game, 8-6.

In the middle of the game an RBI single in the gap by Billy Meier scored Houston Moss to get an 8-8 tie. A triple followed by an RBI double by the Skins regained the lead 9-8. As the late evening shadows covered the infield, the Tribe made their second pitching change to Kyle McConnell. A little dink hit down the third base line let a Redskin runner dash to the plate. In the bottom, again the Indians got into scoring position when James Mullins hit a single, stole second in a headlong slide and motored to third on a passed ball at home. Unfortunately, Mullins was left standing on third. In the fifth, the Skins touched McConnell for their second homerun over the centerfield fence, 11-8. After getting runners in scoring position, an RBI double to left made it appear to be all over for the Tribe at 13-8 late in the contest.

However, the sixth inning belonged to the Indians. In the top, Matt Beni made it three mound changes for the Tribe and in the bottom of the game took a one hundred eighty degree turnaround. After moving to 13-9, they loaded the diamond with the tying run at the plate. A run walked in by the Skins made it 13-10 and it was time for the visitors to make a pitching change. The Tribe walked to reload on the new hurler then Jimmy Pearce sent a grass-stainer to the shortstop who booted the ball and another run crossed the plate 13-11. A 2-RBI to right by Billy Meier knotted



Matt Beni takes a shortcut to the second base bag in 15-13 rally win over Social Circle. Photo by Jim & Lisa Bryant

the score 13-13. Matt Beni walked to reload the bases then the Indians took the lead off a 2-run RBI line shot by Cody

Harkins, 15-13. A couple of putouts at second and first in the final inning and the Tribe was one out away from a huge

comeback win. Matt Beni finished the miracle as he fanned the final Redskin for the 15-13 region win. T1Mar10.TCSpts4ac

Indians double up against the Rabun Wildcats

by Jim Bryant

According to Coach Shannon Floyd, "it was a big day for the TCHS tennis team" as they took on a couple of strong Class AA teams from Rabun County on the home courts. While the boys polished off the Wildcats easily 5-0, it was a tougher battle for the girls but they pulled it out with a 3-2 win. For the boys, it was their first victory in three starts. After shifting around several of his players, the Tribe took care of business. Douglas Haigler, Alex Spiegler and Walker Guss played in the #1, #2, #3 spots respectively. For Spiegler and Guss, it was their first wins of the season.

Singles: Douglas Haigler won 6-4, 6-3; Alex Spiegler won 6-4, 5-7, 7-2; Walker Guss won 6-1, 6-2.

Doubles: Ethan Burch/Matt Hogsed won 6-1, 6-1; Eli Barrett/Corbin Gilfilian won 6-1, 6-2.

Floyd stated that the girls "had a little more suspense." They did take a 3-2 win against an AA team that was one of the best in their region. It was a thriller for Alexa Arencibia. After taking a 4-1 lead in the first set, she lost nine consecutive games to drop the first set, 4-6. In the second set, she was trailing 0-4 before she laced up the shoe strings and rolled off six games to take the set 6-4. This set the stage for a third set to decide the winner. Now on a roll, Arencibia took the win easily 6-1, 4-6, 6-4, 6-1. Coach Floyd was notably proud of her accomplishment. Playing at the #2 seed, Ginny Rhoades won easily 6-2, 6-3 after trailing 0-3 in the second set. Kristin Fuhs tool the #3 seeded win at 6-1, 6-0. All three of the seeded players are juniors. The Tribe succumbed to losses in the doubles matches but took the 3-2 win. Despite the two losses, Floyd praised their play at the net and their refusal to give in. He felt that "the third set was great for their confidence."

Singles: Alexa Arencibia 6-1, 4-6, 6-4, 6-1; Ginny Rhoades 6-2, 6-3; Kristin Fuhs 6-1, 6-0.

Doubles: Jordan Moats/Courtney Farmer 1-6, 4-6; Kristie McConnell/Kayla Olin lost 1-6, 6-4, 6-8. T1Mar10.TCSpts3ac



Alexa Arencibia battled back to take a come-from-behind win at the #1 seed. Photo by Jim & Lisa Bryant



Walker Guss took his first win of the season against a strong Wildcat team. Photo by Jim & Lisa Bryant