

Towns County Sports

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Lady Indians fall 56-41 at Clinch County in Elite Eight

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Homerville - The seventh-ranked Lady Indians' postseason run came to an end in the GHSA Class A-Div. II Elite Eight via a 56-41 loss at No. 5 Clinch County.

As of this writing, Clinch County has advanced to the State Championship game to meet another familiar face in No. 1 Lake Oconee Academy. In their first Elite Eight contest since 2014, the Lady Indians couldn't overcome a 16-0 deficit out of the gate.

But Towns County didn't go home without a fight.

Led by 24 combined points between sophomore Kaleigh Beaver and senior Sarah Shook, the Lady Indians kept things interesting all night, moving within single digits, 28-19, at the break.

"We did not come out playing our best basketball in the first quarter," Towns County Lady Indians head coach Shea Taylor said. "We fell behind early and tried to fight our way back. It was a tough loss and not the way we wanted to see our season end."

Still behind 33-24 in the



The Towns County Lady Indians have laid a solid foundation for the future of the program with an Elite Eight appearance and a win over Class A's No. 1 team Lake Oconee Academy during the 2022-23 season.

third, the Towns County surrendered an 11-4 run to close the frame and trailed 44-28 entering the fourth.

Once again, the Lady Indians responded with a 6-0

spurt to trim the margin to 44-34. After giving up six straight to Clinch, the Lady Indians made one final push via a 7-0 run to close the gap to 50-41 before the home team

put the game away with five-in-a-row.

Beaver finished with a team-high 14 points to go with four rebounds and two steals.

Shook added 10 points

and four boards; Emma Lallemand had 6 points and a team-leading six rebounds.

Tabitha Barnes scored 6 points, hauled in five boards and collected three steals.

Brelan Sieveking dished out three assists while chipping in 5 points and three steals.

Laura Mauldin collected six boards; Natalie Barnes had one rebound, one assist and blocked a shot; Ansleigh Hardin added a steal.

"I am proud of these girls and this team for the growth they have shown since last season," Taylor said. "Our goal will be to get back here again next year and try to go a step further."

As for 2022-23, the Lady Indians will need to replace Tabitha Barnes, Maddy Lewis, Morgan Pierson and Sarah Shook but return a young, talented nucleus led by returning starters Beaver and Sieveking.

The duo of Beaver and Sieveking accounted for almost 21 points, 11 rebounds and 5 assists a game this year. Towns will also bring back Mauldin's team-best 6.6 boards a night.

Meanwhile, the Indians will look to fill the void left by Shook's 13 points and three assists a game. Shook also led the team in 3-pointers made with 53.

Barnes ends the year at 6.2 points a game while hitting 44 treys and making 67% of her free throws.

Baseball: Towns County finishes .500 on annual south Georgia road trip

Indians' week highlighted by eight-run rally at Bryan County

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The Indians split four games during last week's south Georgia road trip that included stops at Bryan County, Jenkins (Savannah), Jenkins County and Peach County.

Headlining the trip was a 24-9 thumping of Jenkins and a thrilling seventh-inning comeback from behind victory at Bryan County.

Indians 9, Bryan County 8 - Trailing 8-1 and down to its final out on Saturday, Towns County exploded for eight runs as eight straight Indians reached the seventh.

"We couldn't have asked for a better way to cap off our week," Towns County head coach Shannon Floyd said. "This trip is something we started doing about eight years ago, but with basketball going so deep the last couple of years, it's really limited [the baseball] program early in the year. But coming back like that was a perfect way to finish things off."

Layne Rouse sparked the rally with a one-out single to right field, but following a strikeout in their ensuing at-bat, the Indians were one out away from dropping three of four on the week.

But Seth Gillis lined a base hit to center and Tanner Cunningham loaded the bags with a base on balls, allowing Caleb Berrong to plate the inning's first run on a four-pitch walk.

Matthew Chastain hustled out an infield single to make it 8-3 and Stone Chauncey took another free pass to cut the lead in half and bring the tying run to the dish.

Following a Bryan County pitching change, Kade McConnell dropped a two-strike single into center and Cale Kirby made it 8-6 with an infield hit. Rouse plated three, including the go-ahead run, via a fielding error before advancing to second on the miscue.

Zane Floyd (4 2/3 innings), Braydon Barrett (1 1/3) and Gillis (1) all saw action on the mound in the win.

Chastain finished 2 for 4 with an RBI; Berrong, Cunningham, Gillis and Kirby each went 1



Tanner Cunningham slides into home during a game from the 2022 season. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

for 3 and scored once. Kirby and Berrong added one RBI apiece.

Floyd went 1 for 4 at the plate with a walk and a run; Rouse and McConnell also finished 1 for 4 with a run. Chauncey drew a pair of walks, scored and drove in one during a 1-for-1 performance.

Towns County broke a scoreless tie in the fourth when Floyd reached on a bunt single, swiped two bags and came around on a passed ball. Bryan County answered with two in the bottom half courtesy of a single, two errors and an RBI groundout.

Bryan added five more in the fifth on six hits and one Indian error.

Indians 24, Jenkins (Savannah) 9 - McConnell drove in four runs on Thursday as Towns County broke things open with eight in the third and nine in the sixth, eventually ending the contest early via the mercy rule.

The Indians scored the first 13 runs before Jenkins put up a five-spot in the fourth. Towns tacked on two more in the fifth, but Jenkins scored four in the home half -- trimming their deficit to 15-9.

"We had a couple miscues that let them back in the game and

I think we got a little complacent, but it's early in the season," Shannon Floyd said.

Towns County exploded for nine runs in the sixth -- sending 13 batters to the plate and capitalizing on four Jenkins errors.

After playing station-to-station for much of the frame, the big blow came on a two-run, two-out error off the bat of Rouse. Later in the sixth, a two-run single by Cunningham made it 22-9 before Chastain singled home Gillis, and Cunningham came around on an error.

McConnell finished 1 for 4 with a double; Berrong went 1 for 4 with 3 RBIs. Gillis doubled and scored four times during a 2-for-4 game; Floyd went 2 for 5 with four runs, a walk and an RBI.

Cunningham and Chastain scored three times and plated two runs; Chauncey walked three times and doubled twice during a 2-for-2 game that included 2 RBIs. Kirby drew three walks, knocked in two and scored once. Rouse went 1 for 5 with two runs and an RBI.

Chauncey earned the nod on the hill and tossed 2 1/3 innings of no-hit baseball, fanning three and walking four. Freshman Braydon Baldwin went 1 1/3,

surrendering two hits, one walk and four earned runs.

McConnell went one inning, recording a strikeout while issuing one walk and a hit.

Indians 4, Jenkins County 6 - Towns County couldn't make it three wins in four games, giving up two insurance runs in the fifth inning of a 4-3 game on Saturday.

"We had one or two plays that swung things in their favor, otherwise I think we win that game," Shannon Floyd said.

The Indians got one back in the sixth on Cunningham's one-out triple and Chastain's base knock. Kirby reached on a hit-by-pitch with two away in the seventh but was left stranded following a game-ending ground out.

Jenkins County scored in the bottom of the first but Towns answered with two in the second on back-to-back triples by Chastain and Chauncey. With two down in the frame, McConnell lined a run-scoring single to right, spotting the visitors a 2-1 lead.

Towns made it 3-1 in the third when Rouse and Floyd reached and Gillis bunted the runners into scoring position. Cunningham scored Rouse on a sacrifice fly, but Floyd was stranded

at third to end the inning.

Two singles, a double and a triple helped Jenkins County tack on three in the bottom half of the third. Then, Towns County's promising fourth came to a halt via a 5-3 double-play after Chastain and Chauncey singled.

Still a one-run game in the fifth, Jenkins County's back-breaking two-run single extended the Indians' deficit to 6-3 with six outs remaining.

Chastain and Chauncey raked all week, finishing the contest with a pair of 2-for-3 outings that included a triple each and one RBI for Chauncey. Cunningham went 1 for 2 with a triple, a run and an RBI; Floyd, McConnell and Rouse added one hit apiece.

McConnell went the distance on the bump, allowing nine hits and six earned runs while fanning six. The junior issued one free pass during a 105-pitch outing.

Indians 0, Peach County 10 - Towns County ran into a juggernaut in Wednesday's opener, facing a pair of D1 pitching prospects in Fort Valley.

"We just haven't seen enough pitching yet to handle arms like that," Shannon Floyd said.

The Class AAA Trojans, who sent a Mercer commit and a Georgia Tech recruit to the mound, scored five in the second, one in the third, three in the fourth and one in the fifth.

Peach County head coach

Joey Hiller entered the season with a 625-128 record since taking over in 1997.

In JV action, Towns County notched two wins on the trip, defeating Peach County 6-4 and smacking Jenkins (Savannah) 18-1.

Three RBIs from Eli Newberry led the way in the Jenkins win. The Indians got a pair of ribbies from Braydon Barrett, Mason Barrett and Grayson Youngblood, along with two strong innings on the mound from Baldwin.

Braydon Barrett, Matthew Chastain, Kyle Davis, Eli McNabb and Tripp Shirley all stole a bag for Towns County. Mason Pierson and Morgan Walker plated one run apiece.

Towns County welcomes Hiwassee Dam, North Carolina in Tuesday's home opener. JV action gets underway at 4 p.m. with the varsity to follow.

The Indians return to the road this weekend to open Region 8 action at Georgia School for Innovations and Classics -- the three-game set opens Friday at 5 p.m. followed by a Saturday doubleheader at 11 a.m.

"We hope everyone can come out Tuesday and catch both teams," Coach Floyd said. "We're a junior-heavy team with a good group of seniors. We also have a bright future with our young guys, so there is plenty of exciting baseball that people can come out and catch."

TCHS Soccer update

The Lady Indians soccer team played Class AAA Franklin County to a 3-3 home draw on Tuesday, Feb. 28.

Jayden Taylor accounted for all three goals with Abby Gardella dishing out a pair of assists.

Cheyenne Doche added one assist and keeper Drew Livingston turned away 21 shots.

The Towns County men suffered a 7-0 loss to Franklin County.

Towns County hosts Greene County on Tuesday in Region 8-A action. The girls game gets underway at 5:30 p.m. with the boys to follow.



Lady Indians vs Franklin Co.