

Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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Indians improve record to 4-3 as Fullerton pitches a shutout

By Chad Stack
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Due to cold weather and rain all last week, the Indians baseball team was only able to play one game, which they won 6-0 against Hiwassee Dam on March 7.

The Indians had to cancel their March 5 doubleheader against Atlanta Jewish Academy as well as their March 9 doubleheader against Tallulah Falls and Hayesville. Rescheduling for those games will be announced at a later date.

Towns County is the only baseball team in its region without an indoor training facility, but what they do have is an indoor batting cage near the Middle School gym.

So, when the weather doesn't allow for them to practice outside or play games, the Indians can still get some work in.

And while having an indoor batting cage definitely benefits the team, it still only allows for one person to get reps at a time.

"I'm thankful for what we do have, but having some more space would allow for the team to practice together," said Head Coach Shannon Floyd.

In their game against Hiwassee Dam in North Carolina, the Indians started the top of the first inning with three quick outs, though sophomore shortstop Aidan Berrong did come up with a line-drive hit for a single.

Seth Fullerton started on the mound against the Eagles, and he didn't give up a hit in the first or second innings. Top of the second inning, the Indians loaded up the bases but were unable to capitalize and



The Towns County Indians in action during last week's 6-0 victory over Hiwassee Dam, NC. Photos by Chad Stack



bring anyone in to put points on the board.

Fullerton started the bottom of the third with three strikes in a row for the first out, and the Indians were able to escape the inning catching two fly balls to end the third.

Senior Kayden McClure hit a line-drive single to get things started in the fourth, and Devyn Burrell also picked up a single, though the Indians were unable to capitalize on their hits.

Bottom of the fourth, Fullerton struck out a batter, then made a great play catching a ground ball and making the throw to first base for the second out. Fullerton finished the inning with another strikeout, and both teams were scoreless through four innings.

The Indians started the fifth inning with Brett Denton getting walked, then stealing

second base. Andrew Griffin hit a line-drive RBI single as Denton scored the first run of the game and last run of that inning.

In the bottom of the fifth, the Indians went back on defense, where Fullerton continued his dominance. The Eagles hit a line drive to shortstop Berrong, who made a great play but overthrew Lane Denton at first base, allowing the Eagles their first hit of the game.

Fullerton did not let that affect him, however, as he caught the next ground ball to throw the batter out at first.

This left the Eagles with a baserunner on second and one out. Fullerton struck the next batter out swinging, and Burrell caught a fly ball hit to right field to bring the inning to a close, shutting the Eagles out through five innings.

Heading into the top

of the sixth, the Indians had a one-score lead over the Eagles. Senior Trent Bradshaw got things started with a line-drive single. Bradshaw moved into scoring position with only one out after Burrell hit a single of his own.

Lane Denton hit an RBI ground ball, allowing Bradshaw to score, but Denton was thrown out at first – but not before Burrell got into scoring position.

Jacob Kinsey continued the hitting in the sixth, getting an RBI single as Burrell scored for a three-run lead over the Eagles.

Brett Denton hit a line drive to a big gap in center-field for a double, putting him and Kinsey both in scoring position.

The Eagles made a pitching change, but the Indians would continue to score runs, as Griffin hit a line-drive

single, sending Kinsey and Denton home for a five-run lead over the Eagles before the inning could come to an end.

Bradshaw caught two fly balls in left field for two outs in the bottom of the sixth, and freshman Collin Crowder made a spectacular play at third base, grabbing a ground ball and making the throw to first to beat the runner.

Fullerton got a line-drive single to start the Indians off in the seventh inning. Chris Long came in for Fullerton as a courtesy runner and stole second base on a wild pitch. Bradshaw hit a fly ball that was caught, but Long was able to advance to third, putting him in scoring position.

McClure hit an RBI single that inning, bringing the score to 6-0 for the Indians.

Burrell hit a single, too, but the Eagles made a great double play as Lane Denton

hit a ground ball to the Eagles pitcher, who threw McClure out at third. The third baseman then made the throw to first base to beat Denton for the third out.

The Indians had a six-run lead going into the bottom of the seventh as Fullerton stepped to the mound to finish his second complete game of the year.

Hiwassee Dam's first batter hit a ground ball to Berrong, who made the throw to first to get the out, and Fullerton struck out his sixth batter for the day for out No. 2.

The Indians' defense made another play on a ground ball for the third out to end the game with a final score of 6-0.

Towns County was scheduled to play a home game on Monday, March 11, which occurred after press time.

Coach Roquemore meets with Indians for first time on March 5

By Chad Stack
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New Indians Football Head Coach Jason Roquemore met with his 2019-2020 players on Tuesday, March 5, the day after the school board hired him for the job.

High School Assistant Principal and Athletic Director Jim Melton introduced Roquemore to returning players, the incoming eighth-graders and other students that Tuesday.

As the students entered the cafeteria, Roquemore did his best to personally greet each young man by shaking his hand.

"This is our new football coach, Jason Roquemore," said Melton. "I'm excited for what he's going to bring. He's going to build on the program from where the previous coaching staff left us and keep going up."

Melton made a point to shut down all the rumors and speculation about the High School not having a football team for the upcoming season.

"First of all, we have a



Coach Jason Roquemore addresses potential football players in his first official meeting as the new head coach at Towns County High School. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

football team, and we'll have a football team next year," said Melton. "We wouldn't have hired Coach Roquemore if we weren't going to have a football team."

Melton also assisted Roquemore with his first task at hand as head coach – trying to get

more kids to play football – by making sure the cafeteria was full of young men with the ability to play football for the Indians.

The Indians are returning 13 players from last year's team but have several incoming freshmen next year.

Roquemore has spent the

last seven years as the head coach at Johnson High School in Gainesville. He applied to coach at Towns County three years ago, when John Cornett was hired.

"We're going to start a new tradition here at Towns County," said Roquemore. "When I say we're going to give

Coach Melton two, were going to clap twice real loud. Give Coach Melton two! Give him two, give him two!"

Continued Roquemore, "Today is not about football. If you're here for football, then you're here for the wrong reasons. And you need to understand this today if you don't understand anything else – there's power in the TC, and you have to have the courage to embrace that."

"We're not going to be defined by our successes and failures. Right now, I could care less about the scoreboard. I care about the men in this room and what we're going to do together. We're going to invest in each other, because that's what men do."

"We're going to hold each other accountable. We're going to pray for each other and be considerate of ourselves and the others around us, because that's what men do. It is a privilege to be here."

Roquemore delivered an impactful speech about the opportunity to coach at Towns County, saying that he wanted to build and continue where Coach

Cornett has left off.

"Showing the students here at (one of) the smallest public schools in Georgia they can compete and win playing in a region that is mostly made up of highly ranked private schools is no small task," said Roquemore. "It's important that we continue to be competitive and win so we can try to keep a positive program with confident young men who feel they can compete and win games."

Returning seniors like Shane Sparks and others will step into leadership roles next season, getting other students to play and embrace Indians football.

The Indians have done some amazing things in recent years, including beating cross-state rival Hayesville three years in a row, going 5-5 in a single season, and making it to the playoffs for the first time ever.

Towns County has been competitive in almost every game over the last few years, and Roquemore is looking forward to continuing to build on the culture of excellence the young men have helped to cultivate.

Mountain Gymnastics Center competes in Athens, Buford and Cumming

By Todd Forrest
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Blairsville's Mountain Gymnastics Center has remained busy with three competitions in three weeks, beginning with the Made in the USA meet in Athens on Feb. 15-17.

Nine-year old Emma Schuette recorded a first place all-around score of 36.375 in the USA Gold level. Schuette recorded first place scores on the vault and the beam and second on the bars.

Shaylyne Davis also placed first in Athens with an all-around score of 35.725 in AAU Level 2 competition. Davis was first on the beam, second on the bars and third on the floor.

Samantha Blackwell was second in AAU Silver with a 35.7 all-around score. She was second on the bars and third on the floor and vault. Also in AAU Silver, Carly Barnett placed third with a 35.3 all-around total after coming in third on the bars and the beam.

Neveah Leopold was fifth all-around in AAU Silver and Madelyn Earley placed fourth in AAU Level 1.

Reagan Gwynn and Keely Shook recorded sixth place



USA Gold Level 6 placed second at the Sterling Classic in Buford

all-around performances in AAU Level 2 while Shy'Ann Beasley and Addison Harkins each came in eighth and Lindsey Hammond was 18th.

Rounding out the USA Gold performances were Mia McCombs' fourth place all-around finish, Lola Patton in seventh, Erin Raper in eighth and Reese Chambers in 10th.

Annalyse Kiernan and

Josie Poston each posted a seventh place score on the vault while Jacey Lee was seventh on the beam.

In AAU Level 1, Savannah Ryan placed eighth all-around. Raegan Albritton was ninth and Maieli Ravelo came in 10th.

At the Super Cate Jumpstart to State meet in Cumming on Feb. 23, Ryan placed second

all-around with a first place score on the bars. Earley was third all-around, Albritton came in fourth and Ravelo was fifth with a first place performance on the vault.

In AAU Level 2, Beasley turned in a 36.80 all-around score to take home first. She placed first on the vault, beam and floor.

Davis came in second all-around thanks to first place scores on the vault and the bars. Harkins and Hammond each placed fourth while Gwynn was fifth.

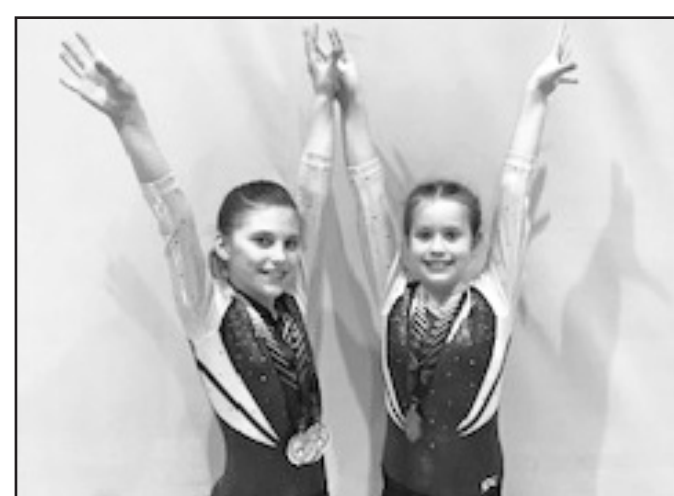
Blackwell highlighted MGC's AAU Silver competition with a second place all-around score of 35.925. Kara Lodge came in seventh after a first place score on the bars.

March got underway with the Sterling Classic in Buford and the USA Gold Level 6 team placed second behind four top six finishes.

Patton came in second, Lee was fourth, Kiernan took fifth and Poston placed sixth.

Chambers was fourth in USA Gold competition with a high score on the beam. Schuette was fifth with second place scores on the vault and beam.

In Level 7 competition, McCombs came in eighth and Raper took ninth.



MGC's AAU Silver gymnasts



MGC's AAU Level 1 gymnasts