

Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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Indians run winning streak to seven games with two wins at Union

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Blairsville - The Towns County Indians (13-8, 7-5) swept a non-region doubleheader at Union County on Tuesday, April 4, leading wire-to-wire in an 11-2 game-one victory before holding off a late Panthers' rally in a 6-5 win to finish off the twin bill.

The doubleheader was rescheduled from Monday when rain washed out Union County's trip to Hiwassee. As a result, Tuesday's rematch in Blairsville became two games.

Towns County visited Robbinsville, North Carolina on Monday and will resume region play on Friday when they travel to Aquinas. The Indians will host Aquinas on Saturday for two games starting at 11 a.m..

"We would like to invite the community out Saturday for a special day for Towns County baseball," Indians head coach Shannon Floyd said. "Not only because of the playoff implications, but we have some other things planned for that day as well. So we really encourage the community to join us on Saturday."

Union County (1-22, 1-8) jumps back into Region 8-AA action on Tuesday when they welcome East Jackson to Blairsville at 5:55 p.m. The series shifts to Nicholson on Friday for a 5 p.m. doubleheader.

Indians 6, Union County 5 - Towns County jumped out to a 6-2 lead in game two of last Tuesday's doubleheader before Union County answered with two in the fifth and one in the seventh.

Cale Kirby recorded two quick outs in the top half of the seventh inning, but Hunter Fleming walked and Hayden Hughes singled, putting the go-ahead run aboard. Eli Gwynn's eight-pitch at-bat ended with a Towns County error, allowing Fleming to come around and moving Hughes within 90 feet of tying the score at 6-6.

With the game on the line, Towns County turned to senior Seth Gillis to nail down the final out - a swing-and-miss strikeout.

Towns' Tanner Cunningham finished 3 for 4 with an RBI. Connor Chastain, Caleb Berrong and Stone Chauncey ended with two hits each.



Kade McConnell drove in four runs and worked six innings on the mound in the game-one win at Union. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

"Some of these guys are really hitting their stride," Shannon Floyd said. "With basketball overlapping so much, it puts us in a tough situation early in the season. You want basketball to be successful, but while everyone is getting better at baseball, we had six of nine starters still playing basketball." "It was about this time last year that we really started to take off and started playing our best baseball."

Hughes walked and drove in two during a 3-for-3 performance for Union.

Braydon Barrett logged the win on the mound, working five innings and striking out three. He allowed six hits, two walks, and three earned runs. Kirby punched out two Panthers over 1 2/3 innings, giving up a hit and one unearned run.

Maddox Patton tossed 5 1/3 for Union County, surrendering 14 hits, one walk and six earned. Gwynn worked 2/3 of an inning in relief, walking one and giving up a hit.

Union County, the visitors in game two, got on the board in the first when Patton singled to lead off the game and Hughes drove in courtesy runner Holton Fleming with a base hit to left field.

Towns answered with four in the bottom half when

four of the first five batters singled to start the frame. RBI singles by Berrong and Chauncey made it 2-1, a groundout by Kade McConnell opened up a 3-1 score and Cunningham's base knock provided the Indians a 4-1 cushion.

Union County cut the lead in half during the second courtesy of Lane Haney's lead-off double and Mayo Collins-Spiva's run-scoring groundout.

Chastain and Chauncey used back-to-back RBI singles to build a 6-2 lead in the second, but both pitchers settled down to keep the score at 6-2 into the fifth inning.

Collins-Spiva's base hit opened Union's two-run fifth and Connor Swanson entered to run for the first baseman. A one-out single by Patton placed runners at the corners, and Hunter Fleming's walk loaded them up for Hughes.

Another walk trimmed the margin to 6-3 before Gwynn's sacrifice fly made it a 6-4 game in the middle of the fifth. Patton worked around a one-out single in the bottom half and Kirby retired the Panthers 1-2-3 in the sixth.

Gwynn replaced Patton in the Towns County sixth and escaped a bases-loaded one-out situation via a pop-up and a strikeout.



Braydon Barrett allowed six hits over five innings during Tuesday's 6-5 victory at Union County in game two of the non-region doubleheader. Photo/Todd Forrest

Zane Floyd finished 2 for 2 with a pair of runs for the Indians; Berrong drove in two runs and stole a base; Chastain and Chauncey plated one apiece.

Eli McNabb went 1 for 2 and Gillis scored once during a 1-for-4 game. Kyle Davis stole a bag and scored; Matthew Chastain went 1 for 3 with a run.

Patton finished 2 for 4 for Union County. Haney scored during a 1-for-3 game; Collins-Spiva went 1 for 2 with an RBI. Holton Fleming scored twice; Hunter Fleming walked twice and scored; Swanson added a run.

Holton Fleming, Hughes, Patton and Swanson stole a base for the Panthers.

Indians 11, Union County 2 - McConnell drove in four runs and fanned six over six innings on the bump as Towns County jumped out to an 11-1 lead through four.

Gwynn went 2 for 4 and scored a run for Union County. Connor Chastain scored three times, doubled and drove in two during a 2-for-3 game for the Indians.

Towns County scored three in the first off Gunnar Akins, beginning with Connor Chastain's RBI double. Chauncey's two-out triple built a 2-0 advantage and McConnell

punctuated the top half of the first with a run-scoring double.

Moses Stevens put Union on the board with a base hit to right - scoring Gwynn in the second inning. But three walks to begin the third had Towns County back in business, and McConnell made the Panthers pay with a two-run single. Kirby's base hit up the middle brought home two more, spotting the Indians a 7-1 advantage.

Connor Chastain's two-run single capped off three-straight hits to start the fourth off new pitcher Will Duncan. McConnell made it 10-1 via an RBI groundout, later a Union County error extended the Indians' lead to 11-1.

Gwynn's two-out single in the fifth prevented the mercy rule when Patton scored from third. Duncan singled to put two Panthers aboard, but McConnell induced a fly out to left field that ended the inning.

Towns County loaded the bags in the sixth and Union stranded a pair in the bottom half.

Gillis scored two runs and went 1 for 4; Zane Floyd scored during a 1-for-5 day. Chauncey finished 1 for 1 with three runs and three walks. Kirby drove in two during a 1-for-3 day.

Patton went 1 for 4 with a run for the Panthers. Duncan and Eli Sosensky each finished 1 for 3; Stevens drove in a run during a 1-for-3 day.

Gillis tossed a perfect seventh for the Indians with a pair of strikeouts.

Meanwhile, Akins lasted three innings in the start, giving up five hits, seven earned runs and five walks to go with four strikeouts.

Duncan walked four and surrendered three hits over three innings, recording one punch out and giving up three earned. Holton Fleming fanned one batter and didn't allow a baserunner in one inning on the mound.

The Indians are in a position to lock down at least the No. 3 seed in Region 8-A. They could potentially climb as high as No. 2, or fall out of the playoff picture, depending on the Aquinas series, as well as the Lincoln County-Washington-Wilkes series, and LOA's meetings with GSIC and Aquinas.

"If Washington-Wilkes beats Lincoln twice and we sweep Aquinas, we could end up as the No. 2 and hosting a [State] playoff series," Shannon Floyd said. "But if we end up with the same record [as Lincoln] they would hold the tiebreaker over us."



Towns County celebrates a win over Union County. Now the Indians' attention turns to improving their postseason position with a three-game set vs. Aquinas on deck. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

Soccer: Indians, Lady Indians qualify for postseason



The Towns County men visit Mt. Zion-Carroll on Wednesday in the first round of the GHSA State Tournament. The Lady Indians earned a bye and will travel to Portal on Apr. 17. Photo/Lowell Nicholson