

Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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Basketball: TCHS honors 2023's top performers at annual banquet

By Brian Hunnicutt
Towns County Herald
Sports Special

On April 25, the boys' and girls' basketball programs held their post-season awards banquet. The banquet was put off until later due to the success of the soccer and baseball teams at Towns County.

The banquet recognized all boys and girls who competed for the basketball program during the past season.

The boys team honored 20 players and the girls team honored 14 players and manager Jayce Wood.

The girls team honored five seniors: Sarah Shook, Tabitha Barnes, Morgan Pierson, Maddy Lewis and Wood.

The boys program honored four seniors: Jon Dockery, Chance Schmeltz, Layne Rouse and Grant Ingram.

The boys team posted a 17-win season and advanced to the State playoffs for the fourth straight season. The award winners for the boys were as follows.

Tillman Award - Layne Rouse (Sr). Layne is the embodiment of what we want Towns County Athletes to be. He is the most selfless kid that I have ever coached. He is a tireless worker and a great player.

He suffered an ACL injury during his career and played his Senior season on a torn meniscus. There is no doubt that our season would not have been as successful if we did not have Layne's shooting, ballhandling, defense, and leadership. He earned Honorable Mention for All Region for this stellar play. We are going to miss him greatly.

Rising Star - Gage Rogers (Jr). Gage was the team's third leading scorer, second leading rebounder, second in assists and a huge presence on



TCHS junior basketball standouts **Brelan Sieveking (L)** and **Zane Floyd (R)** picked up 2022-23 team MVP honors during last month's basketball banquet. Photos/Lowell Nicholson

the floor for the Indians this year. Gage earned Honorable Mention All Region despite this being his first year of varsity ball.

MVP - Zane Floyd (Jr). Zane averaged 18 points per game, 6 rebounds per game. 3.8 assists, 2 steals, and 1 block per game for the Indians (leading the team in all categories). His stellar play also earned recognition as Region 8-A Player of the Year. Furthermore, Zane was named to the GACA All-State Team.

Defensive Player of the Year - Connor Chastain (Jr).

Connor was the centerpiece of a defense that held opponents to 34.7% field goal percentage for the season. He drew one charge per game and held opposing post players in check, despite giving up several inches to all of his opponents. The defensive success and team success is in large part due to the stellar defensive play of Connor.

Offensive Player of the Year - Tanner Cunningham (Jr). Tanner averaged 10 PPG this season, led the team in 3-pt FG and free throw percentage. He scored both inside and outside, scoring over 20 points



in two big performances when the Indians were without leading scorer Zane Floyd. Tanner became a huge scoring weapon for the Indians this season. His stellar play earned him an election to the Second Team All Region for 8-A.

It was a great season for the Lady Indians. Accomplishments this year were having a season record of 21-9 and a region record of 11-1. We went on an 11 game winning streak after Christmas and made it to the 8-A championship. We would finish as region runner up and go on to reach the Elite

8. This was a big accomplishment for this team after being eliminated in the first round of the state playoffs last year.

We had two players selected as All-Region first team, Sarah Shook and Brelan Sieveking. We had three players selected as all region honorable mention Tabitha Barnes, Kaleigh Beaver, and Laura Mauldin. This team will be losing four seniors Tabitha Barnes, Maddy Lewis, Morgan Pierson and Team Captain-Sarah Shook.

It will be hard to replace these seniors and younger play-

ers will have big shoes to fill.

The Lady Indians award winners were: MVP - Brelan Sieveking. Offensive Player of the Year - Sarah Shook. Defensive Player of the Year - Laura Mauldin. Bright Future Award - Scotlyn Fain. Most Improved - Emma Lallement.

The Indian Awards went to Maddy Lewis, Morgan Pierson and Tabitha Barnes.

With that being said, our overall goals are to make another playoff run next year. TCHS is very proud of these teams for what they accomplished this year.

Dease ropes up scholarship to CMU

By Todd Forrest
Sports Editor
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Blairsville - Hinsli Dease's roping and riding talents have earned the 17-year-old Blairsville native the opportunity to continue her education at Central Methodist University of Fayette, Missouri.

Alongside family, friends and CMU rodeo coach Amanda Harper-Phipps, Dease put pen to paper during a scholarship signing ceremony at the Union County Horse Arena on Monday, May 15.

Harper-Phipps, who grew up in Hiawassee and graduated from Towns County in 2002, proved instrumental in getting Dease to the Show-Me State.

"She used to ride horses with my grandad and babysit me," Dease said of her new coach. "I've been wanting to go to this school because we've known Amanda for a while. She's incredible."

Growing up within the Blairsville Saddle Club, rodeo has been a constant in Dease's plans since she was 11 years old. Shortly thereafter, she realized she could chase her dreams at the college level, made possible at CMU when Harper-Phipps started collegiate rodeo there in 2019.

"It was about middle school when I found out I could do this at college, and Amanda has been wanting me to (go to CMU) for a long time," Dease said. "We looked



Towns County's Amanda Harper-Phipps (L) and Hinsli Dease (R) during last week's signing. Dease is attending Central Methodist University, where Harper-Phipps is the rodeo coach. Photo/Todd Forrest

at a few other schools, but since we knew Amanda, we knew that was the way to go."

Dease noted that her connection to Harper-Phipps wasn't the only contributing factor in her decision; her campus visit helped sell her on CMU as well.

"I really liked the school," she said. "It's not too big and not too small, and the people there really helped make my decision much easier."

As for adjusting to college-level competition, Dease doesn't see a significant disparity in what she's already done her entire life in the North Georgia Mountains, with the biggest difference being that "you're on a team."

Dease plans on majoring

in health sciences and hopes to become an ultrasound technician when her college career wraps up. In the meantime, she'll be focusing on the 2023-24 school year.

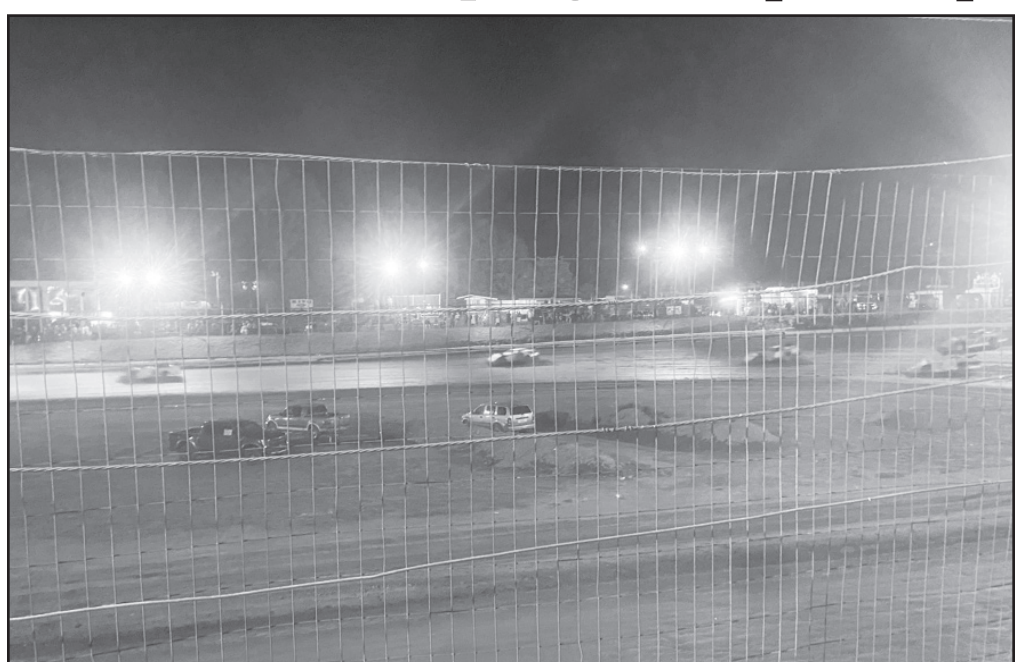
"I'm just going to take it one year at a time," she said. "For now, I just want to get out there and give it my best and see how it goes."

In closing, Dease credited her family for aiding her along the way.

"I want to thank them for helping me get to where I am and doing whatever it takes to do whatever I want to do," she said.

Dease is a homeschooled graduate with a 3.7 GPA. She is the daughter of Robert and Tali (Patterson) Hollis, and Scott Dease.

Tri-County Racetrack hosts King Ford Late Model Spring Championships



King Ford sponsored the Friday, May 19 Limited Late Models Spring Championship at Tri-County Racetrack, featuring a \$1,500 top-prize during the evening's final race.

**By Blake Lynch
North Georgia News
Racing Reporter**

Brasstown, NC - Dirt was flying at Tri-County Friday night during King Ford's \$1500-to-win Crate Late Model. Additionally, the evening included an \$800 top prize in Street Stock and \$800-to-win Open wheel modified.

Street Stock: No. 14 Charles Devine Jr. was the winner, taking home \$800. No. 95 Alex Vance was a very close second. No. 4 Dylan Beaver was third. No. 91 Clint Watkins was fourth. No. 44 Chuck Simms was fifth.

Pony: No. 15 Ryan Crawford took home the win. No. 11 Ricky Dyer was second. No. 88 Steven Beaver was third. No. 10 Shannon Jones came in fourth.

Open Wheel Modified: No. 22 Matt Sandeful took home the checked flag and an \$800 payday. No. 55 Brad Sosebee was second. No. 95 Stevie Clark was third. No. 27 Jamie Cross was fourth.

602 Non Qualifier: No. 100 Copper Twigg took home the win. No. 89 Clay Fancher was second. No. 1 Daniel Helton was third. No. 28 Roy Hardman was fourth.

Interstate Welding 602:

No. 44 Bobby Elkins was the winner. No. 50 Charles Devine Jr. was second. No. 56 Colton Berrong was third. No. 73 CB McKinnon was fourth. No. 4 Lynn Burchfield was fifth.

FWD: No. 59 Matt Coradin was the winner. No. 32 Shannon Jones was second. No. F3 John Fulford was third. No. 32 Logan Exum was fourth. No. 16 Jake Ware was fifth.

King Ford Limited/Crate Late Model: The biggest win of the night was No. 7 Jason Deal. No. 17 Brett Shook was second. No. 371 Drew Benfield was third. No. 81 John Howard was fourth. No. 88 Ricky Smith was fifth.