

Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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Football: Indians to close out 2023 with Friday's Senior Night

By Daysha Pandolph
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Washington - On the green grass of Tiger Stadium in Wilkes County last Friday Oct. 27, the Towns County Indians fought a tough battle against Washington-Wilkes High School.

Despite their intense effort running the ball and tackling opponents throughout the night, the Indians were unable to match the athleticism of the Tigers, resulting in a final loss of 41-14.

By the end of the game, Towns had four first downs while Washington-Wilkes had six.

In rushing, the Indians struggled to compare with the Tigers' three touchdowns and 18 carries for 206 yards, making only 14 carries for 36 yards with one fumble.

However, in passing, Connor Chastain worked wonders for the team, going 11-for-21 with 203 yards and two touchdowns.

In contrast, Washington-Wilkes was only able to go 5-of-6 for 106 yards and two touchdowns.

Chastain wasn't the only player to make some outstanding contributions at Friday's game, however. Alongside the skillful quarterback, linebacker, Julian Mosley contributed two catches for 83 yards and four tackles. Dustin Barrett added 6 catches for 44 yards, 4 tackles, and one touchdown. Colton Garrett contributed one catch for 65 yards, four tackles, one



Towns County quarterback Connor Chastain (with ball) will be among the players honored at this week's Senior Night festivities. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

good stops,"

Although it may not be apparent from the scoreboard, thanks to their unwavering determination, the Indians made some great progress Friday night to build on as they enter the final week of football this season.

"It's just really hard to simulate the pace of play when you play guys that are so athletic and they play so fast, but we settled down as we got into the game and we were able to do some good things."

This coming Friday at 7:30 p.m., the Towns County Indians will face off against their final opponent, Lincoln County.

Not only will it mark the end of the season, but it will be the last high school football game the seniors ever play. To honor them and their dedication to the team throughout the past four years, there will be Senior Night festivities during the game.

"Senior night is a special night for those kids. A lot of them have been with us ever since they were 8th graders, so I'm sure there'll be some emotions in that," said Roquemore. "Every year for the last five years our underclassmen have done a really good job of playing a great week of prep and playing hard for those guys and sending them off the right way."

Basketball: Indians, Lady Indians soaring high into 2023-24

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With the crisp November air signaling the tip-off of yet another basketball season, the Towns County Indians are already fighting adversity.

With several players out due to injury and conflicting sports schedules, the rest of the team will have to give it their all right out of the gate. Despite this immediate struggle, fans can still expect great things from the Indians this year thanks to a handful of experienced players committing to their goals.

In preparation for the 2023-24 season, the Indians officially started practicing on Mon. Oct. 23, and while one week may not seem like a lot of time to get ready for their first scrimmage, Coach Brian Hunnicutt has plenty of faith in the boys.

"We've been bit a little bit by the injury bug, but it's a great group of kids," he said. "We have six seniors on this year's team that have been with the program all four years. Three of them have started since their sophomore year."

And Hunnicutt is right to wager that seniors Connor Chastain, Tanner Cunningham, Walker Underwood, Kade McConnell, Justin Miles Hill, Gage Rogers and Zane Floyd will be nothing short of exceptional this season, with Floyd returning as the 2022-23 region player of the year.

Hunnicutt is thankful for that, commenting that the team will not fall short in experience. Many players have already seen some huge moments in their high school basketball careers, so he would be impressed if something overwhelms them this season.

"Our biggest weakness will probably be depth," Hun-



The Towns County Lady Indians enter the year with high hopes following last year's playoff run. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

nicutt said in contrast. "We've already lost several players for the year. We have three players that won't be able to play because of injury, one that moved away, and then we have several of our experienced guys starting the year a little messed up. We expect to get those guys back, but that would be the biggest [disadvantage] so far."

Unfortunately, Floyd is among the group of boys who will not start the season active. But even with these setbacks, the Indians' goals are still ahead of them. The team prides themselves on their astute defensive abilities year after year, and plans to rebound the ball impressively while working well as a team. On top of that, Hunnicutt shared that the boys' primary goals rarely deviate

from season to season.

"We always have three goals that do not change," he said. "And that is to win the Battle of the States Championship that we host, to win the Region Championship, and then to make a deep run in the state playoffs."

The Indians will battle their first opponent this coming Tuesday Nov. 7 at a Rabun County scrimmage. This first match will be a little abnormal due to several football players just coming off of a relentless season on the turf. Because of conflicting football practices, these players will only spend one practice with the basketball team before Tuesday's scrimmage.

On the upside, however, the Rabun scrimmage will get

some less-experienced players valuable time on the court.

"We've got a good younger group that are going to have to get varsity experience," Hunnicutt said. "So the scrimmage will be a good time for us to try some things out and get a lot of players experience that have not gotten experience early at the varsity level."

Lady Indians - Get ready for an exciting season as the Towns County Indians girls' basketball team gears up to hit the court.

With several returning players and a remarkable lineup of eager underclassmen, the team is primed for another playoff push.

The girls officially started practicing on Monday Oct. 23, and spent their week of prep

time conditioning, working fundamentals, and getting the playbook situated for the rest of the year.

Seniors Breelan Sieveking, Laura Mauldin and Emma Lallement are sure to take the helm this season alongside three other returning players as they point the younger girls in the right direction.

"Our core group is good," Coach Shea Taylor said regarding the six returning players. "Now we just have to try to build up some younger kids because we're going to have some freshmen that need to step up and play for us this season also."

This will be Taylor's third year with the girls, and he is excited to see them convert the many hours they spend

practicing into wins. He expects the girls to continue on last year's winning streak and maybe even take things a step further.

"We want to pick up right where we left off last year," he said. "Last year was a great season, they won 21 games and we made it to the Elite 8."

To get there, he plans to follow the Indians' tried-and-true strategy.

"The game plan is kind of like a team motto for us: we're always humble, we're never satisfied, and we're going to work hard every day," he said. "We don't want to be satisfied until we achieve a goal."

"We'll stay focused and keep working hard, but long term, the ultimate goal is to be competitive. We're going to compete all year, and we're not going to get caught up in the hype of how well we've done and certain points in the season."

"We want to be playing basketball at the end of February and at the beginning of March, which is late in the playoffs."

The beginning of this long journey tips off this coming Tuesday Nov. 7 at Rabun County, and while the younger girls will get plenty of experience at a JV level, Taylor hopes scrimmages like these will also serve as great learning opportunities for them.

"It's a scrimmage game, but we're going to play it like a real game against Rabun County, and then reevaluate and see where we are from there," commented Taylor.

"We're excited, we're ready, and we appreciate the community support we get. I look forward to seeing people coming out and supporting (both) the boys and girls teams this season."