

Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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Indians, Lady Indians finish first week of season with 1-1 records

By Jeremy Foster
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Staff Writer

Hiwassee Dam, NC - On Tuesday, Nov. 16, the Towns County Indians and Lady Indians varsity basketball teams played Hiwassee Dam, North Carolina, away for their first regular games of the season.

The girls won 41-33. Lead scorers were Sarah Shook with 12 points, 7 rebounds and 6 assists; Laura Mauldin with 7 points and 12 rebounds; and Tabitha Barnes with 7 points.

"Although we got into foul trouble, it was still a team effort, as some players had to come off of the bench, and they really stepped up," Head Coach Shea Taylor said. "I am really proud we were able to come off with the win in our first game."

"It certainly helps morale, and going forward, the main things we are going to be improving upon are our rebounding as a team, our free-throw percentage and limiting turnovers. No matter what, though, it is all heart with these girls, and I could not be more proud of them all."

The Indians lost a nail-biter in Hiwassee Dam, 67-64. Collin Crowder led in points with 30, while Zayne Floyd netted 16.

"We got behind by double digits early on, but we were able to come back heavily near the end," Indians Head Coach Brian Hunnicutt said. "The two things that doomed us in this game that we are tweaking going forward are giving up defensive rebounds and missing layups."

"Right now, our biggest detriment is the inexperience of the players, but it won't be for long, because I trust them and see them getting better with every practice. They go hard, and the tougher it is, the

better they will get.

"I never have to get on to these boys for putting in the effort, and I know the main thing you will always see going forward is constant determination."

The Friday, Nov. 19, away games at Highlands, North Carolina, saw reversed results from the Nov. 16 games, with the Lady Indians losing 52-27 and the boys winning 37-22.

Taylor summed up the girls' loss by saying that "we could not seem to get anything going on offense."

"We did not get many turnovers from the press, and Highlands shot very well; they were the better team that night, but we are just getting started and will be better and stronger next time," he said.

For the boys, Hunnicutt said the team played great defensively, "and the game was allowed to be played very physically, which made it hard to develop an offensive rhythm."

Crowder once again led the team in scoring with 20 points, followed by Kyle Oakes, who ended his night with 7 points.

In matchups that occurred after press time, Towns County hosted their first home games of the season and only game Thanksgiving week on Tuesday, Nov. 23, when Hiwassee Dam High School traveled to Towns for a set of games that began at 7 p.m.

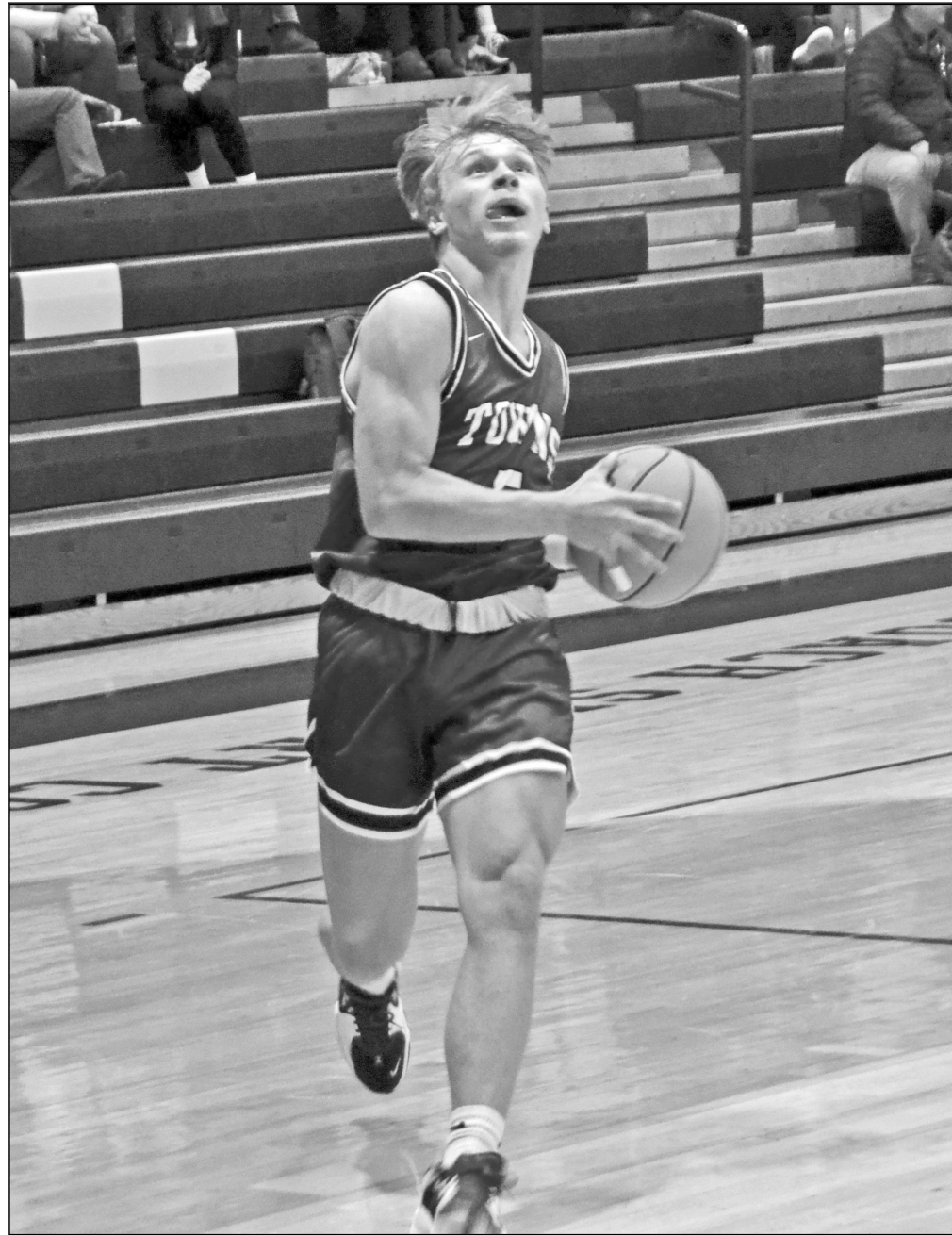
A junior varsity game for the boys also took place at 5:30 p.m. on Nov. 23.

The Indians and Lady Indians' next games will be played at home against Rabun Gap on Tuesday, Nov. 30, starting at 6 p.m. inside the Bill P. Kendall Sports Complex at Towns County High.

Visit www.townscountyathletics.com for more information and complete team schedules for the season.



The Towns County men and women's basketball teams sit at 1-1 after the first week of the regular season. Both squads look to move above .500 entering Thanksgiving with a Tuesday night home win over Hiwassee Dam, NC. Photos/Jeremy Foster



Senior Kyle Oakes drives to the hoop for a layup vs. Highlands, NC. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

Indians wrestling looking to stand tall on the mat

By Jeremy Foster
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Staff Writer

Towns County Wrestlers have been busy hitting the practice mat in preparation for their first meet of the season on Tuesday, Nov. 30, for a three-team round robin duals tournament in Hayesville, North Carolina.

After serving as assistant coach since 2013, Wrestling Coach Brandon Rowland has taken over in 2021 as head coach following program creator Jeff Stowers' decision to leave the team.

"We are doing really well for now as far as getting kids out and excited to join our team," Rowland said. "The goal for this year is to rebuild our wrestling team, as for a long time we did not have a middle school program."

"We are getting a lot of kids coming through as freshmen and sophomores that have never had experience wrestling."

"We have pulled around 20 middle schoolers this year, which is almost double of what they had last year, and we have almost 22 high schoolers coming on board, as we finished last year with only five wrestlers."

And this season will be the first time in about eight years that the team has come close to filling a full lineup of 14 weight classes, "as generally we have had to forfeit most of them."

"Right now, we are more of a building team as we look to prepare to accommodate more weight classes versus the past



Towns County wrestling prepares to open the season with a duals tournament in Hayesville, NC on Nov. 30. Photo/Jeremy Foster

and make a mark to our passion for this community," he said.

Several wrestlers are coming off just completing a football season, and Rowland said that actually helps here at a small school system like Towns County.

"Doing multiple sports can make you better at each sport individually and collectively," he said. "Many football players have said that it makes them a better wrestler, and subsequently, many wrestlers have said it makes them a better football player."

Rowland believes this year the team's biggest strength is that "we have so many guys that are eager to learn and to lead."

"They want to get out there and want to succeed to bring back validity to Towns County Wrestling," Rowland said. "The weakness obviously is just that the knowledge is not quite there right now, but the

passion is unmatched.

"Our kids now have an unmitigated desire to learn this sport, and my years of experience going back to my youth can help them achieve progression because they are hungry."

"I took Third Place in state when I finished up my final season, so I know they look up to me to provide them the adequate knowledge to outlast your opponent and dig deeper inside yourself to overcome the obstacles and know you were meant to achieve great things."

"Even if you did not win, the most important lesson is that you did not give up ever."

Coach Rowland said he wants all opposition to know that no matter how inexperienced his team may be this year, "that we will not just lay down."

"And whether we win or we lose, you will know that you just wrestled Towns County," he said.