

# Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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## Indians, Lady Indians play hard-fought home matches vs. Rabun Gap

By Jeremy Foster  
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Towns County's Indians and Lady Indians Basketball Teams played their second home games of the season on Tuesday, Nov. 30, facing off against the Rabun Gap-Nacoochee School Eagles.

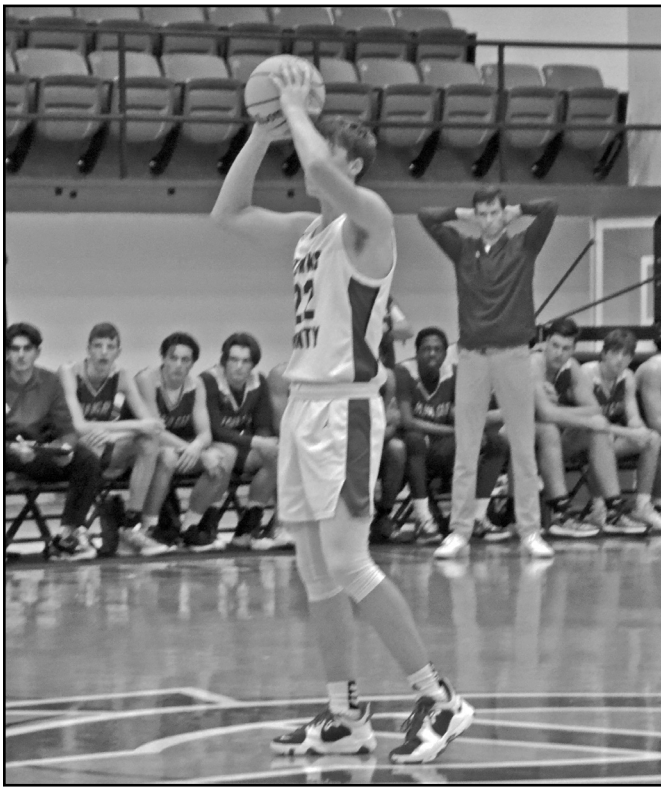
The girls were up first in the evening's battles, with the guest Lady Eagles taking first possession from the tipoff to quickly score the first two points of the game.

Maintaining control for the most part after several back-and-forth switches, the Lady Eagles had an 18-0 lead before junior Sarah Shook was able to get the first points for the home team on a successful steal to end the first period 18-2 in Rabun Gap's favor.

The second period saw sustained control by the opposition as the Lady Eagles forced unsuccessful attempts by the Lady Indians to take a 33-2 lead before Shook was once more able to make a steal and slam down a great 3-point shot.

Following a successful Towns County free-throw and two more points, the girls entered their respective locker rooms with the home team down 45-8 at halftime.

Rabun Gap continued to dominate in the third period,



L-R: Sophomore Zane Floyd sets up the Indians offense during the second half vs. Rabun Gap. Sophomore Emma Lallement (11) battles for rebounding position as junior Tabitha Barnes dials up a long distance trey in last week's contest vs. Rabun Gap. Photos/Lowell Nicholson

but the Lady Indians mustered a little more offense starting with freshman Kaleigh Beaver scoring her first two points of the game, leaving the third period at 62-12.

Junior Brooke Murrell gained a nice 3-pointer in the fourth period, but heartbreakingly, the end of the game saw the Lady Eagles winning by a wide margin, 71-17.

"It was a great Rabun Gap team," Lady Indians Head Coach Shea Taylor said. "Probably one of the best girls' teams I have seen at the high school level. It showed us we have a long way to go in order to prepare for region play."

The boys' game started with Indians sophomore Tanner Cunningham gaining first control with a steal that went



out of bounds from the Eagles in a transition that resulted in sophomore Zane Floyd netting the first two points of the game for the home team.

Senior Collin Crowder followed suit shortly thereafter with two more points, as well as additional points by Floyd again, followed by senior Kyle Oakes shooting an impressive 3-pointer to end the first period with the Indians ahead at a close 14-10 score.

The second period saw a very even offense and defense from both teams.

Oakes, Crowder, Floyd, junior Grant Ingram, sophomore Connor Chastain and senior Cabe Poston were all instrumental scorers in this round, alongside the rest of the team keeping it a close race, with the scoreboard reading 35-32 in favor of the Indians at halftime.

Back from the half, Cunningham and Crowder served as the main scorers in the third period, but with heavy protection from the whole team, such that the unit saw itself ahead by

a single point, 48-47, to end the third.

Crowder and Oakes were the point-makers for the fourth and final period, with a steady back and forth in points by both teams all the way until the end.

Calling the sense of urgency in the final moments of the game a nail-biter was an understatement, as a missed 3-pointer attempt by the Eagles in the last second brought the Indians victory with a final score of 63-61.

"We talked before the game about it being a good measuring stick for us," Indians Head Coach Brian Hunnicutt said. "I am extremely proud of how the boys accepted the challenge. This game showed us that we can beat really good teams."

"We grew up a lot against Rabun Gap. Outside of Collin (Crowder) and Kyle (Oakes), none of the other guys have played in that atmosphere in a varsity game. Zane Floyd has become a monster on defense. Grant Ingram and Cabe Pos-

ton hit big shots, and Connor Chastain had a big game as well.

"I am proud of the way our boys stepped up, and I am also proud of our TC fans. They brought the juice that helped with keeping pressure on the opponent, while lifting our boys up."

"The challenge now is to continue to compete to our standard. That game means nothing now. Our schedule is full of good teams, so we will have to continue to bring a blue-collar work ethic every day."

Next, the Indians and Lady Indians visited Tallulah Falls School on Tuesday, Dec. 7, for a pair of games that occurred after press time beginning at 6 p.m. The Towns County teams will be heading to Union County for games on Friday, Dec. 10, starting at 7 p.m.

Check out [www.townscountyathletics.com](http://www.townscountyathletics.com) for complete scheduling information.

## Towns County grapples with the best for 'King of the Mountains' title



(L-R) Sophomore Stone Chauncey, Second Place, 195 weight class; Junior Mason Yeomans, Third Place, 152 weight class; Senior Alisa Moss, Fourth Place, 113 weight class; Junior Seth Gillis, Third Place, 182 weight class; Junior Zion Calhoun, Fourth Place, 170 weight class. Photo/Jeremy Foster

By Jeremy Foster  
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Staff Writer

Towns County Wrestling hosted its annual King of the Mountains tournament in the home Middle School Gym on Saturday, Dec. 4.

The tournament featured high school wrestlers out of Towns, Banks, Union and Rabun counties in Georgia; Swain, Cherokee and Clay counties in North Carolina; and Walhalla in South Carolina.

In the week prior, on Nov. 30, the Indians had their first official match to start the season with a tri-meet at Hayesville, North Carolina, against Franklin and Hayesville, which proved to be a good warm-up for the big King of the Mountains tournament.

"We lost 68-18 against Franklin, but we turned around and defeated Hayesville 60-6," Head Coach Brandon Rowland said. "We were glad to get the first match jitters out of the way, as both teams are pretty well established."

"I was very proud of our team for being able to battle back, and even in the matches that we lost, they were not total blowouts."

As for King of the Mountains, after an almost eight-hour long and grueling day, the tourna-

ment resulted in Swain County winning Third Place as a team, Banks County earning Second Place, and Union County taking First Place and earning the title as 2021 King of the Mountains.

Although the Indians did not place as a team, they still devalued some competition in their own right with five individual wrestlers earning medals.

Senior Alisa Moss got Fourth Place in the 113-pound weight class. Junior Mason Yeomans earned Third Place in 152. Junior Zion Calhoun came in fourth in 170. Junior Seth Gillis placed third in 182. And sophomore Stone Chauncey went to the finals to earn Second Place in 195.

"I could not be any prouder of the team we have," Rowland said. "They are getting out there and don't just want to win, they want to get better. Even when we lose, I am still seeing progression in the next match and even at practice."

"Our biggest thing right now is getting everyone at the best weight class for them and continuing to work on our conditioning, as we are doing a lot of live wrestling in practice as well."

One thing Coach Rowland said he loves about his team is, technique wise, everyone is comfortable on their feet in scoring

takedown points from neutral, "and they are not afraid to take shots instead of just trying to muscle people over."

"We are really good at getting out from the bottom position, and I do not think there is any team out there that can hold us down for two minutes," Rowland said. "But controlling the match from on top is an area we will be focusing on a little bit more going forward."

"These kids have goals, and I thoroughly believe they are achievable, because we are not as complacent as we used to be, and that shows when they lose—it just eats them up. So, when we get success, we just want to use that to keep building upon each other."

"How we did in this tournament overall has shown me that we set a bar at a really good level for us. We have a really good starting point, and I do not think we will get under that; the only way is up."

The Indians' next match was set for Tuesday, Dec. 7, in another tri-meet at East Hall that occurred after press time. They will travel to Union County for the 515 Classic at 4 p.m. on Dec. 8, and will participate in a Lumpkin County Dual Meet starting at 4 p.m. on Dec. 14.

Visit <http://www.townscountyathletics.com> for complete scheduling information.

## Towns County wrestling returns to the mat on Wednesday for Union County's Hwy. 515 Classic



Coach Rowland's squad will face Pickens, Gilmer, Fannin County and Union County in Wednesday's Hwy. 515 Classic in Blairsville. Photo/Todd Forrest

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Just four days removed from the grueling King of the Mountains Tournament, Towns County wrestling will face another tough test on Wednesday as the lone Class A program in Union County's Hwy. 515 Classic.

Joining the Indians and Panthers are a pair of elite

programs in Fannin County and Gilmer, along with Class AAAA Pickens.

The Rebels are fresh off their first state title since 1999 last February. En route to their championship, Fannin County topped three King of the Mountains' opponents at the Area Championships: Second-place Banks County, third-place Union County and fourth-place Rabun County.

Meanwhile, Gilmer en-

ters as one of the most stories programs in north Georgia with seven State Championships in nine years between 2008-2016 - the last four coming in Class AAAA.

The five-team tournament is scheduled to get underway at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday at the Union County Elementary School gymnasium (the old high school gym, aka 'The Pit').