

Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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Indians' defense gives Basin a bad case of the blues

By Mason Mitcham
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Staff Writer

Friday night was extra special for the boys in blue. Also for all of the young men and women of Towns County High School.

Towns County held its Homecoming festivities and after a week of increased school spirit, the Indians won their first game of 2013.

The Indians played Copper Basin, Tenn, beating them soundly 17-8, awarding Towns County Coach Blair Harrison win number One with the Indians.

The scoring started with a field goal by sophomore defensive back and kicker Shea Underwood at the 6:47 mark of the first quarter. The kick was good from 30 yards out and the Indians had just their second lead of the season.

Yet they would never relinquish this one.

With the 3-0 lead, the Indians began to gain momentum. Senior quarterback Jackson Noblet and junior running back Cruz Shook dominated offensively.

With 2:50 to play in the first quarter, Noblet scored off a first-down run from Shook. Underwood's kick was good, making the score 10-0 in favor of the Indians.

The second quarter didn't go as well for Towns County, however. Copper Basin increased its offense, though Shea Underwood stepped up on defense.

At one point, about three minutes in, Head Coach Harrison became involved in a heated discussion with one of the officials about a questionable first down call. The debate led nowhere. Shortly after, Towns County faced a slew of penalties for off-sides violations, losing yardage.

Despite a first-down run by freshman running back Kobe Denton and a pass block by senior tight end Harrison Hobbs, Copper Basin scored a touchdown with 4:57 left before the break. Basin followed up with a successful 2-pt conversion, bringing the score to 10-8.

The boys from Tennessee were held to goose eggs for the rest of the night.

The Homecoming Court was introduced at halftime, which saw Ansley Vardeman crowned Homecoming Queen next to Homecoming King Garrett Bradshaw - who also recorded three tackles.

In third quarter, Shook and senior running backs Brett



The Towns County Indians celebrate the first win of the 2013 season. Photo/Lowell Nicholson



The Indians take the field on Homecoming Night 2013. Towns County's defense stifled the Copper Basin offense all evening long. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

Barrett and Vonya Baldwin went to work.

Shook had several first-down carries, and Baldwin caught an picked off a Cougar pass and returned it for a significant gain.

Defensively, Underwood and Noblet became more aggressive, persistently stuffing Copper Basin's rushing attack.

The Indians scored again with 6:48 to play in the third. Underwood's kick was good, bringing the score to 17-8.

There was no change the rest of the game.

During the fourth quarter, Copper Basin appeared to lose heart. They were barely able to stop the Towns county onslaught, although their defense hung on.

Despite efforts by Shook and Hobbs, and a failed field goal attempt by Underwood, Towns was unable to add some points. The contest ended with Towns on top 17-8.

The Indians came in averaging 157.6 yards per game on the ground. The last two weeks have seen the Indians' rushing attack peak as they went for 200



Junior Cruz Shook holds as sophomore Shea Underwood kicks a 30-yard field goal to make it a 10-0 game. Photo/Lowell Nicholson



Senior Harrison Hobbs chases down a Copper Basin Cougar ball carrier preventing a would-be touchdown. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

against Rabun County and 199 at Rabun Gap.

Against Basin, Noblet led the Indians, who overcame three fumbles, to a season high 210 yards rushing, with the senior quarterback shredding the Cougars for 111 yards and two scores.

Shook carried 11 times for 54 yards, Barrett added 31 yards

on 8 touches.

Junior Kyle Davis led the defense with 9 tackles, sophomore Daulton Rogers had 8 stops, and Baldwin added a pick.

Towns gets another bye week before a two-game road trip takes the Indians to North Cobb Christian on Oct. 18th and St. Francis on Oct. 25th.

Lady Indian softball salutes Sutton

By Mason Mitcham
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The softball season is drawing to a close and Tuesday was a bittersweet day for the Towns County Lady Indians' softball team.

On the one hand, it was Senior Night, and senior Bailey Sutton was honored mid-game.

On the other hand, Towns County lost to Prince Avenue 7-2. Even the loss is has a positive side, however, because the game showed huge improvements from the Indians.

Previously, Towns lost to Prince Avenue 10-0, so the score in this most recent game was much less lopsided.

Towns held Prince Avenue to a 1-0 score until the third inning, whereupon Prince Avenue hit a grand slam, followed by a solo home run, making the score 6-0.

In the top of the fourth, Prince Avenue scored again, making the score 7-0. The Indians were having a hard time dealing with Prince Avenue's starting pitcher, Emily Soles, and her formidable speed.

However, at the bottom of the sixth, perhaps emboldened by the Senior Night fanfare, Bailey Sutton connected with a base hit that brought two runners home for a score of 7-2. Perhaps, given time, Towns could have raised the score, but the game ended after the bottom of the seventh.

The Towns County Lady Indians have no more games other than the Region Tournament this Thursday and Friday, where they will face Prince Avenue and Commerce again.

"I'm really sad to see it end," Towns Coach Jessica Berrong said. "We made a lot of improvements from this summer." She mentions that Towns has made gains since the last time they played Prince Avenue. "If I'm not incorrect, there wasn't a hit," she said.



Senior Bailey Sutton and family is honored by teammates, coaches, and fans at last week's Senior Day. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

"They are much improved," Berrong said. "The past couple of games, everything started to click, so it's a sad moment that it's over, because we had two wins in a row before this. I really credit those two wins to the confidence.

We had more confidence today batting."

"I wish we could have won our last game. Of course, that would be everybody's answer," Berrong said. "But I'm pleased with our improvements."

Cross Country takes on 8-AA's RMA

By Mason Mitcham
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Gainesville - The Towns County cross-country team ran at Riverside Military Academy on Oct. 1st, competing against both Riverside and Commerce. Towns will face Commerce in the Area Championships.

"It was a good chance to see a glimpse of what we are against in Area," said Coach Jeannie Ledford.

Unsurprisingly, No. 1 runner Ansley Vardeman took first place with a time of 22.34. Unexpectedly, however, freshman Amaria Barrett, was close behind, second for Towns County and sixth overall. "Amaria is the wild card," Ledford said. "She's new to cross-county, but continues to learn and improve."

Taylor Vardeman, Sam Quijada, Ally Settles, Alana Calhoun, and Kenzi Jenkins had back-to-back finishes, coming in at 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, and 11th, respectively.

The girls' team finished just behind Commerce. Injured runner Caitlin Sheffield was unable to participate due to a stress fracture in her foot, Ledford said that she's looking forward to Sheffield being cleared to run next week.

Tyler Grimsley continued to lead the boys' team. He got 6th overall with a time of 20.09.

"I keep Tyler focused on last year's state runner Bradley Smith's times," Ledford said. "Tyler is determined and dedicated to his charge to make it to State."

Senior Cesar Bustamante, a first-year runner, was the Towns County's no. 2 runner, finishing 12th overall. Marshall Ledford finished 13th, Thomas Mitchell finished 14th, Chaiz Davenport finished 22nd, and Austin Watson came in 23rd.

The boys finished 3rd, overall, just behind Riverside and Commerce.

"It's always a harder fight on the boy's side," Ledford said. "There are more teams and stronger competition. However, my



13th place finisher Marshall Ledford coming down the stretch at a recent Indians meet. Photo/Mason Mitcham

boys are working hard."

Towns has a big week this week, scheduled to compete in back-to-back races at Hayesville and Union County. Ledford admits that the Carney Classic, in Hayesville, is especially meaningful to her.

"It's an emotional race for me," she said. "The late Coach Carney was my coach and mentor."

The Carney Classic will be in Hayesville, NC on Wednesday, and the Union County meet will be on Thursday.