

# Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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## TCMS finishes solid but falls at Rabun 32-6

By Joe Collins  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

Assistant Coach Darryll McClure's signature was all over the performance of the Towns County Middle School playoff game with the Rabun County Wildcats last Thursday.

The linebackers were prepared and the defensive front line knew what was coming and were able to stop the Wildcats several times in the first half. It rattled the Wildcat's offense and kept them off balance for much of the game. It was not what Rabun County expected.

The defensive line spent a lot of their time in the Wildcats backfield and shut down the strong running game they had faced the week before. A good football coach knows how to prepare and use what he has to work with and that is exactly what McClure had done with his linemen and linebackers.

"We worked hard this week and the guy's are ready," proclaimed McClure at the beginning of the game, and he was right. Ian Thompson and Walker Ross showed no fear against the huge linemen of the Indians and proved that the Indians had what it takes to play championship football from the defensive side of the ball. Add Cody Williams, Owen Bouchard, Johnathan Watson, Luke Ledford, Nick Shook, Blake Silvers, Dakota Wade, Kendall Barnard and Kobe Denton to the mix and the Wildcat's were in shock that this small bunch from TCMS could possibly stop their offensive attack. But stop them they did. It was very impressive.

The defensive backs were small compared to the receivers

they were having to patrol but the fight was there and, outside of a couple of good breaks, they were in position and had the situation under control. It was a totally inspiring show as the middle school was ready to give the Wildcats all they could handle from great plays made by Russell Cox, Major Moss, Blake Miller, Colton Shook, Chayton McClure, Dalton Key, Zach Davenport, Cole Ledford, Andy Chambers, Harold Cox, Nick Barrett, Chase Williams, Trey Chastain and J.W. Rosser. These guys "manned up" and took on the best offensive team they had faced all year and they let the Wildcats know they had been in a fight. Coach McClure had done his job and the defense knew what to do and what to expect from the Wildcats opening drive on.

The other side of the ball was a different operation completely. The front line was a little loose in the early going but the coaching staff was prepared and utilized the play calling to allow more blocking in the backfield but still the execution was just not there. The Wildcat's defense was strong and had size and speed and the offense was just not ready. They were slow off of the ball and the plays took too long to develop. The Wildcats had a really strong line and they were tough, but the play calling did not allow for this and the Indians just could not move the ball consistently. Head Coach Chris Vardo had his hands full with trying to figure out what plays to call and the Wildcats pounced on the confusion. The passing game took too long to develop and with the speed Rabun had it was devastating. The Indians failed to move the ball and it cost them the game.

The second half saw the Wildcats take advantage of the



Zach Davenport outruns a defender (top). Coach Chris Vardo and quarterback Russell Cox (bottom). Photos by Joe Collins

conditioning of the Indians and their "no-huddle" offense was too much for the Indians who were forced to play both sides of the ball. The defense got sloppy and failed to get set many times as the Wildcats racked up points in the second half and it proved too much for the Indians. The Indians had seen this offense the week before and knew what was coming and did real well in the first half but some turnovers early in the game by the offense allowed the Wildcats point scoring surge in the second half to be too much. "We turned the ball over at two crucial times in the first half. We could conceivably been leading 6-0 instead of trailing 12-0 at the half if it

weren't for those turnovers," declared McClure.

The Indians season was successful and fun to watch. The players worked hard and it showed as they finished the regular season 3-3. Numbers sometimes don't reflect the true composition of a team's season and this team certainly played much better than the record reflects.

The coaching staff should be commended for their efforts and the influence they had on their players' lives. They are a fine bunch of men and with the rising players they will have, we can only look forward to next season.

Way to go Indians. We are proud of you.



Tips from the Range

G.K. from Murphy asks: I hit the ball solid but the ball starts off left and will either hook or slice but always left of my target line. What's going on?

I am so glad you ask me this because this is a common flaw that affects a lot of people. Even professional golfers fight the dreaded "pull hook". Does anyone remember what happened to Mellroy on the tenth tee at Augusta in 2011? Or what Bubba did this year on the same tee during the playoff on Sunday at Augusta? Pull hooks on both shots by two of the world's best.

A pull is when a golfer hits a ball that starts off to the side of which he or she is standing at address. For a right hand golfer it would be to the left of the intended target line. The ball will either hook or slice in its flight depending on the angle of the club face at impact. If the club face is closed to the intended target line, then you will end up with a pull hook. If the club face is open to the intended target line, then you will end up with a pull slice. Either hook or slice spin can occur on the ball when a player pulls the shot, but the initial direction will be to the players strong side of the target line.

The typical cause for this miss-direction of the ball flight is a problem with the swing path. The downswing path has to be outside the take away path and therefore the initial direction from impact will be foul; left for a right hand golfer and right for a lefty. Get the picture? The shot will usually feel solid but it will be offline.

Fortunately, understanding the problem makes the fix real easy. If you can visualize the problem with the swing path, then it is much easier to understand what it takes to correct the pull. Sometimes you will hear this swing path pull problem described as "coming over the top" and that phrase does apply correctly in some instances. However; the pull involves an overactive lower body more than coming over the top. The upper body will be controlled by the

lower body and this will make you to open with the shoulders on the downswing. This openness causes the path to be outside the take away path and the pull will occur.

To work on fixing this problem, you must first stabilize the lower body in a balanced position. There is that word balance again. Don't lean in to the shot on the downswing or the lower body will stop its rotation and you must rotate the lower body in front of the upper body to correct swing path issues.

Once you have established a good balanced position, you will need to make sure you use your shoulders to start the back swing and not merely the arms. This will get the club deeper into the back swing arc and allow you more time to commit to your downswing. This is very important when trying to swing on an inside path toward impact by allowing the arms to follow your hips on the downswing. The sequence must be in order to avoid an outside path on the downswing.

Now here is the most important thing to work on when trying to correct the swing path. You must keep your back toward the target much longer than you realize to allow the arms to descend back in front of the chest so you can hold the inside path out of the top and through impact. Nick Watney thinks of it as holding the front shoulder over the impact area longer. Either thought will work just as long as your arms get back in front of the chest on the downswing.

Remember, always try and keep the spine in the original position that you set it up in and make sure your head stays behind impact. This will help the shoulders control the path of the arms and limit the outside to in swing path. Also, you can visualize the ball as a "cube" and try and hit the inside corner of the "cube" as this will help keep the upper body rotation behind the hips too.

Great question G.K I hope this helps. Have a problem with your swing that is hurting your game and taking the fun out of golf. Email me at jcollins.tcherald@windstream.net and maybe I can help put the enjoyment back in your game.

Good luck and I will see you on the course!

## Towns' Cross Country runs at Athens Academy

By Joe Collins  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

The atmosphere at Athens Academy on Wednesday was a lot like the Area Championship will be later this month and Head Coach Jeannie Ledford was very pleased with the way the meet turned out.

There were 13 teams at the meet and the girls and boys got a taste of how the size of the field could affect their performance at Area. This was a course they would actually run at the Championship which is a huge benefit for the teams as far as course knowledge is concerned.

Most of the teams at the meet were larger than the Class A Indians of Towns County and the starting line was very crowded just as it will be for the Area Championship.

"Our teams got to finally feel what it is like to have a massive amount of runners in a meet and we needed that because that is the way it will be when we go to Area. Our runners were bunched up and had to fight their way through and get in good position at the beginning of the race," Coach Ledford described when com-



Towns County Lady Indians Cross Country at a recent meet

paring Wednesday's meet with the Championship later this month. "We are a small school and the starting line was real tight with schools that have bigger numbers."

The boy's team struggled because they are dealing with some injuries and fatigue. They ran hard but they have some issues to work on and Ledford is going to address these problems over the next week. They are struggling with shin splints and sore feet but they still did real well. Tyler Hoffman has a

pulled abdominal muscle which affected his running and the team is loaded with seniors and they find themselves struggling to focus completely on Cross Country with all the distractions that seniors face.

"Chaiz Davenport had another phenomenal race and we finished 11th overall but they lost to Commerce who are in our Area. We've already beat them this year and we lost to them at this meet and the guys were not happy about that," said Ledford.

The girl's team had the best meet of the year last week and Ledford feels they are on the right track.

"We really worked hard last week on refocusing, discipline, expectations and the reality of where we are and Wednesday I got my girls team back in the form that they have had in the past few years. They had fire, they had spark and we tied Athens Academy for second place out of 13 teams and we won the tie breaker because our number six girl, Alana Calhoun, beat Athens' sixth place girl."

Ledford feels the girls' team is back and that the boys have some things to work on but her coaching style is solid and she will get the performance out of her runners that they don't even realize they have. She is confident and she knows it is just a matter of time until the boys come around.

"I love my girls and boys and I know they have it in them to run the best they can and we need to find the balance it's going to take to do that," she said.

Her determination is inspiring and the team will feed off of that as the season progresses. Way to go Indians.

## Recreation Dept Info

**Attention Fitness Room Participants:** Listed are the operating hours and new participant orientation hours. Anyone using the equipment must go thru an orientation. The weekly schedule is as follows: Orientation Instructor is Gary Noe

**Hours of orientation:**  
Mondays: 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.  
Tuesdays: 3:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.  
Thursdays: 3:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.  
Hours of Operation:  
Monday thru Friday 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.  
Saturday 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
Thank you for your patience and cooperation. Please enjoy. Towns County Recreation Department.

**Come Exercise With Us:** The Recreation Department wants to remind everyone that we are offering the following exercise classes each week at

the Towns County Recreation Center.

**YOGA CLASSES** - We have 2 separate class times instructed by Pat Tomczyk.

**EVENING CLASS** - Each Monday from 4 p.m. - 5:15 p.m.

**MORNING CLASS** - Each Thursday from 9:30 a.m. - 10:45 a.m. (\$10 per class or \$30 per calendar month.)

**MORNING AEROBICS CLASSES** - Each Monday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings from 9:30 a.m. - 10:45 a.m. Our instructor is Donna McAuliffe.

**Tai Chi** - Each Thursday morning from 10:45 a.m. - noon. Our instructor is Pat Tomczyk. \$10 per class or \$30 per calendar month.

For these programs and any other information we can help you with, just call the Recreation Department at (706)-896-2600.

## Towns' youth football teams split weekend with Gilmer and Pickens

By Joe Collins  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

The Termites continued their strong play but came up shy to Gilmer 34-24 and the Pee-Wee team relied on their offensive/defensive line to shutout Pickens 23-0.

Termite Braylan Rader scored his 23rd touchdown on Saturday against Gilmer and is in line to break the most TDs in a season record while Pee-Wee Colin Crowder rushed for over 100 yards against Pickens.

Both teams played well but a late game fumble by the Termites made the clock their enemy as the Pee-Wee team used their defensive strength too shutout Pickens.

The Termites were coming off a good weekend by beating Pickens last Saturday and started the game with some confidence.

They were facing a team who had only allowed 34 points all season. The Termites managed to score four times for a total of 24 points. The offensive line blocked well and Braylan Rader was able to use



Towns County in action during recent games. Towns County will play host to three games on Saturday. Photos by Lowell Nicholson

his speed to cross the goal line four times. He has two more games and the playoffs to try and reach the record of 29 and he now has 23.

"He has some good speed and they can't catch him once he gets in the open field," said YFL Director Jimmy Smith. The 34-24 loss now has the Termites season record at 4-2.

The Tiny-Mites were off this weekend but the Pee-Wee

team found themselves in Union County for a game against a strong Pickens squad.

The last time these two teams met it became the most exciting game of the season with the Indians having to come from behind during the second half and play some really good defense in the final three minutes to win 27-21.

The Indians knew they were facing a larger and stron-



ger team but they had already played the Dragons and beat them with some solid defensive football and this time would be no different.

The defense came to play and was prepared for the Pickens "wedge" formation that they had used so effectively during their first meeting. The defense shut down the Dragons offensive attack and allowed them no points and only two

first downs all day. Mason Thomas and Payton Ivester both had a safety each.

The offensive line got busy on Saturday and kept the big guys of Pickens under control with some good blocking and opened up running room for the backs.

Hayden McClure, Ricky Krokonko and Thomas were really strong and gave Colin Crowder some holes to

move through from the tailback position.

He spent a lot of his time running up and down the field as he rushed for more than 100 yards and the Indians whooped the Dragons 23-0.

The shutout victory increased their season record to 5-1. Way to go guys!

Towns County YFL Director Smith would like to invite everyone out to support the teams as they spend the last two weekends of the season at home in Frank McClure Memorial Stadium.

The Pee-Wee team will be hosting Union at 9 a.m., the Tiny-Mites will play Pickens at 10:30 a.m. and the Termites challenge Pickens No. 1 at noon.

These little guys are playing some exciting football and they are winning.

They love what they are doing and the games are exciting. The crowds are loud and supportive and the atmosphere is all football.

Come on out and support the YFL of Towns County and watch some good football.

You'll be glad you did.