

Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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TCHS 2012-13 Homecoming Festivities



Photos by Lowell Nicholson

Cross Country runs at Meeks Park in Blairsville



The Towns County Cross Country teams traveled to Blairsville last Wednesday for a meet at Meeks Park. Bradley Smith and Ansley Vardeman led the way for Towns County. The Indians came in fifth place with 182 points. The Lady Indians finished fourth with 70 points. Towns will be back in action on Thursday when they travel to Athens Academy for the Area 4-A Championship Meet at 4:15 p.m. The rain-out date would be on Saturday. Photos by Todd Forrest

Joe Collins

Tips from the Range

I have received many questions from D.L. from Hiawassee asks: How do you hit high chips and pitches that hit the green and don't roll very far. I moved here from Florida and the greens are steeper here and although I get the ball in the air pretty well, it still runs off the green. It's frustrating!

Trust me D.L. I feel your pain. The greens here are brutal and if you miss them in the wrong area, and if judging by your question correctly you have, then it is vital to be able to get the ball in the air and make it stop. These types of shots are called recovery shots and it is best to avoid them.

Recovery shots can be from anywhere. Typically, they're shots from less desirable places on the course like sand traps, roughs, and hazards and yes, even around the green. There are many places around the green that can be almost impossible to get close to the pin from, and these are just as bad as being in the woods in some circumstances. If you have a tight pin in the back of a green that is sloped at you on your approach shot and you hit it long, you're dead. Just keeping the ball on the green in this scenario would probably be a miracle, so that stroke cost just as much as a drop from a hazard.

Let me draw your attention back to the first point made in this tip. IT IS BEST TO AVOID RECOVERY SHOTS!!! Manage your game and try to control your misses better so you can hit the ball to places on the course that are easier to play from. That is the most effective way of scoring better. However, if you're going to play golf,

it is inevitable that you will find yourself in a bad position. Just try and keep the ball away from the trouble as much as you can. Go for the middle of the green when the flag is on the corners. Those are sucker pin placements. The superintendent will put the hole next to trouble and if you try and get close to those pins and miss, it will usually cost you dearly, so stay away from these pins because the price can be high if you miss the green.

When you find yourself in a bad position around the green and need to get the ball up quick, the "Lob" or a wristy version called the "Flop" shots are crucial to help save stroke. Fortunately these shots can be learned with only some simple technique and some practice, with practice being the most important.

Obviously the clubface has to be open to hit high shots that stop quickly so at address simply open the clubface and then grip the club. Always open the club first and then grip it in the open position. Never grip the club square and then open the face by rotating the arms. You

need the face open all the way through this shot. To hit these shots, your stance has to be open to the target. You need to be able to swing across the straight line to the target to make the ball get in the air so open up with your feet and your body. The difficult part here is the club path and the fact that you will still swing the arms from the inside, of your open set-up, on the downswing. The open clubface will be facing right of your address position and will "pop" the ball out toward the target even though your stance is left of the target.

You must keep your hands ahead of the club to make this shot respond. Swing the shoulders and not the hands and body to move the club. Leave the weight on the front foot to make the arc of the downswing steeper and to help with balance. Keep the back shoulder moving so the club accelerates through impact. Any slowing down of the club will cause a miss hit so keep it moving. Keep your eye on the ball until it is gone. This will aid in acceleration. Keep the wrist extremely solid and don't let them break. This is an arm swing as much as anything. Just remember to move the arms with the shoulders.

This is how you hit a lob shot to a high green. The art to this shot is to be able to make it land as though it fell out of the air, straight down and soft. This action removes the forward roll of the ball.

The "flop shot" is hit the same way as the "lob shot" except you work on breaking the wrist at the bottom of the arc. The shoulders control this shot also, so don't involve the wrist and hands until the very bottom of the swing. The better you learn to break the wrist at the bottom, the more arc you will get. Watch this shot though cause if you work on it a lot, you will start incorporating your wrist into your full swing and that can be bad.

These shots require practice. They are easy once you learn them and get some confidence in your technique but they go against the grain a little. I personally enjoy working on these shots cause I like to go for those tight pins and I find myself in some bad spots around the greens. If you will take some time and get a feel for these type shots, it will give you the confidence to hit better approach shots and after all, getting it close is what matters.

Thanks D.L. from Hiawassee, this question was good for all golfers that play in this area. I hope this helps. Let me hear from you on what's bothering your game. It's the enjoyment of the game we are after and if you're struggling with something it takes the fun away and I don't want that for you. Contact me at jcollins.tcherald@windstream.net and let's see if I can help. Remember, practice makes you luckier so keep up the practice.

Good luck and I will see you on the course!

Towns County Youth Basketball Registration

The Towns County Recreation Department began youth basketball registration during the week of Monday the Oct. 8th and will run through Saturday Oct. 27th. You may register your child at the Towns County Recreation Department. Our hours of operation are Monday thru Friday from 9 a.m. till 8 p.m. and Saturday from 9 a.m.

until 4 p.m. Fee for the program will be \$45.00. Age divisions will be 10 & Under divisions (8, 9, & 10 year olds), 12 & Under divisions (11 & 12 year olds). This is for both male and female. For more details please contact The Towns County Recreation Department at (706)-896-2600.

Blairsville School of Dance welcomes yoga instructor Semmes

Blairsville School of Dance is pleased to welcome yoga instructor Susan Semmes to its facility.

she teaches multi-level style yoga and enjoys helping her students reduce stress and meet their goals.

"We are excited to offer yoga," said Angela Puleo, Studio Director. "I believe it fits nicely into our fitness class schedule, which includes Zumba and Hip Hop Toning classes." Susan G. Semmes has many years experience in yoga and completed her 200 hour teacher training under the guidance and instruction of Carol Herndon of Horizon Blue Yoga. Susan's interest in yoga began several years before while learning kempo-karate, a martial arts discipline that utilizes yoga-type stretching as a portion of its training curriculum.

Throughout her teaching sessions, she emphasizes the importance of alignment, because in her profession as a Georgia-licensed, certified orthotist and prosthetist, which entails fabricating artificial limbs and orthopedic bracing, it is essential to have a keen eye for comfort, proper fit and balance.

Over time, while helping her husband James instruct martial arts, Susan not only honed her teaching skills, but also earned a 3rd degree black belt. Now that she is a professional yoga instructor and registered with the Yoga Alliance,

She is looking forward to offering classes at Blairsville School of Dance where experienced and novice yoga students are welcome. Classes will be held on Thursdays at 6:30 p.m. Blairsville School of Dance is located at 80 Blue Ridge Street in the Merchant's Walk Plaza across from the Blairsville Police Department. Participants should arrive about 5-10 minutes before the start of classes. For more information, call (706) 835-1415 or email blairsvilledance@yahoo.com.