

Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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Towns County rallies past Lakeview Academy on Senior Night

By Mason Mitcham
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

The 2013 edition of the Towns County Indians football team has developed an attitude.

A never say die attitude. The Indians, trailing 7-3 late in the fourth quarter hopped on the shoulders of Jackson Noblet and went for a victory ride.

The senior hybrid quarterback/running back found a break in the defensive front of the Lakeview Lions late in the fourth quarter and pounded his way into the end zone.

An extra point by place-kicker Shea Underwood put the Indians up 10-7 to stay, as the Indians' defensive effort was at warp speed to close out the Senior Night victory.

The win gave the Indians their third victory in the season's second half, as they improved to 3-6 in Head Coach Blair Harrison's first season at the helm.

There was a sense of excitement among the hometown crowd at Frank McClure Stadium on this Friday night. The sense of excitement was also evident on the Indians' sidelines.

Under Coach Harrison, the Indians have been steadily improving all season. The momentum firmly on their side, the spectators seemed to sense that Towns County could almost expect another win.

Both the Indians and Lions were unwilling to make potentially fatal errors, as they played conservative, defensive games to the end.

During the first quarter, Towns' offense was unable to find pay dirt, despite the best efforts of Cruz Shook and Brett Barrett. On the other hand, the defense led by Shook, Jackson Noblet, and Kyle Davis kept the Lions out of the Indians' end zone.

Garrett Bradshaw put forth his best defensive effort grabbing an interception 4 minutes into the first quarter, but the Indians were unable to capitalize on the pick.

The second quarter mirrored the first - almost. As he had in the previous week's game against the St. Francis Knights, Evan Keyes continued to prove his defensive worth, never allowing Lakeview's quarterback a moment's respite.

Yet Towns faced difficulties this quarter, not only having to fend off a flurry of offensive passes from the Lions' offensive attack, but also fighting the disadvantage of an early five-yard penalty in the quarter.

It seemed that the second quarter would pass with neither team gaining the lead. But as the clock ran down, Noblet broke loose for 88 yards and was finally downed by Lakeview on the 11-yard line. With 1 tick left in the first half clock,



The Towns County Indians senior football players picked up a thrilling victory over Lakeview Academy on Senior Night. Photo/Lowell Nicholson



Coach Harrison after the Indians' victory. Photo/Lowell Nicholson



Senior Garrett Bradshaw. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

Underwood kicked a field goal. The buzzer sounded as the ball flew through the goal posts, ushering in the second half with Towns leading 3-0.

But Lakeview retaliated early in the third quarter. With 11:32 remaining in the quarter, the Lions scored a touchdown and converted the extra point,

bringing the score to 7-3.

The Indian offensive seemed unwilling to accept the score. Shook and Noblet, already established offensive stars, re-upped their reputation with a furious ground assault that pushed the Lakeview Lions further and further downfield.

Unfortunately for Towns,



An emotional Vonya Baldwin after playing his final game at Frank McClure Stadium. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

they fumbled at the 4:02 mark in the third quarter, and Lakeview recovered the ball, stopping the momentum that Towns had gained. The third quarter ended with Lakeview in command 7-3.

"You got to go out there and fight," Coach Harrison told his athletes waiting on the sidelines, emphasizing the last word. "It's a fight."

They took the advice to heart as the fourth quarter progressed. Harrison Hobbs caught a pass at 4:38 mark that took

him to the Lions 2-yard line. Determined to defend their lead in the last moments, the Lakeview defense dug in. The crowd grew loud and then tensely quiet as, for two long minutes, both teams waged utter war at Lakeview's goal line.

At 2:50, Noblet found a crack in the defense and smashed his way through for a touchdown. Underwood kicked the extra point, giving the Indians a 10-7 lead. The game clock was now Towns County's

friend.

A defensive stand by the Indians allowed the game to end on that positive note, firmly in favor of the Towns County Indians.

The Indians travel to Hebron Christian Academy on Friday to attempt to end the season's second half on a positive note. A win gives the Indians a 4-1 finish to the season's second half. Game time: 7:30 p.m. Travel with the Indians and give them that much needed fan support.

Towns County wrestling season begins next week at Franklin County

By Mason Mitcham
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The start of the wrestling season finds Towns County Indians' Head Coach Wrestling Jeff Stowers in the wrestling room from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. every weekday after school, preparing his team for the battles ahead. He has high hopes for the season.

This is the first time in recent memory that Towns County will be able to fill those all-important 106-pound and 113-pound weight classes, meaning Stowers won't have to automatically forfeit those positions, giving up an important 6 points, in dual matches.

That's not to say that the road ahead won't be tough. There aren't many schools Towns County's size in the surrounding region, except for Murphy, NC and Hayesville, NC.

"Really, we see more of the North Carolina Class A schools than anywhere just because they're closer," Stowers said.

So the wrestling team's schedule is crammed with bigger Class AA, AAA, and AAAA schools, whose starting lineups are usually tougher



Jeff Stowers

because they have more kids to choose from.

"Sometimes we're competitive, sometimes they smash us, it just kind of depends on how the year's going," Stowers said.

One thing is for certain, however, the intense competition can only help the Towns County Indians in their goal to make it to the State Duals.

A mixed crowd has turned out for the team.

"We've got some kids who've never been out on a mat before who are feeling their way through it, and we've got some veterans who are trying to get loosened back

up and get back in shape," Stowers said.

The mixture of experience means that Stowers is starting practice with the basic wrestling techniques necessary to build on throughout the season.

"The first week's about working kinks out, trying to figure out if kids like it, teaching some basic stuff and some review," he said.

He added that the real conditioning would begin once the football players and Cross Country runners return to the mat.

The downside? The intensity of conditioning needed to get "in wrestling shape," means that some kids will quit the program early.

"Some stay, some don't, and that's okay," Stowers said.

Still, Stowers has great expectations for those who stay.

"I really think this team has got a chance to be our best team ever," he said. "I think we've got a couple of outstanding individuals. But top to bottom, I think we'll be better than we've ever been."

The Indians will travel to Franklin County for their first match of the season on Nov. 15.

TOWNS CO. WRESTLING

2013

Date	Opponent	Location	Time/Leave
11/15	Franklin Co.	Carnesville	5:30/2:45
11/19	Asheville School	Asheville	5:00/2:00
11/23	UC Panther Classic	Blairstown	TBA
12/3	White Co./N. Hall	Cleveland	5:00/3:30
12/6-12/7	King of the Mountains	Home	TBA
12/13	Union Co., Franklin, Rabun, Hayesville, Hart Co.	Home	4:30
12/14	Rumble on the Ridge	Blue Ridge	TBA
12/19-12/21	Disney Duals	Orlando, FL	TBA
1/3-1/4	Area Duals	Holy Innocents	TBA
1/9	Hart Co./	Hartwell	5:00/2:30
1/10***	Rabun Co.	Home	5:00/3:45
1/11-1/12	State Duals	Macon	TBA
1/15	Rabun Co.	Clayton	5:00/3:30
1/17	Rabun Gap	Home	6:30
1/18	Union Co.	Home	TBA
1/21	Robbinsville	Robbinsville	TBA
1/24	Hayesville	Home	6:00
1/25	N.E. GA Championships	Toccoa	TBA
1/31-2/1	Area	Commerce	TBA
2/8	Sectionals	Mt. Vernon	TBA
2/14-2/15	State Tournament	Macon	TBA

*** Tentative based on Qualification for the State Duals