

Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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Towns County football ends with 28-13 win over Hebron

By Joe Collins
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Senior Night this past Friday at Frank McClure Stadium will hold a lot of special memories for several of the Towns County High School Indian athletes.

The senior football players enjoyed a well played victory, meanwhile the senior athletes from the fall sports teams were recognized as having ended their high school careers in their respective sports.

It is always bittersweet to say good-bye to the athletes we have been cheering on for the last four years, but it was much more sweet than bitter this year.

The Indians football team played a whale of a game with some of the hardest hitting of the year. There were Hebron Christian Lions lying all over the field from the start of the game to the final quarter.

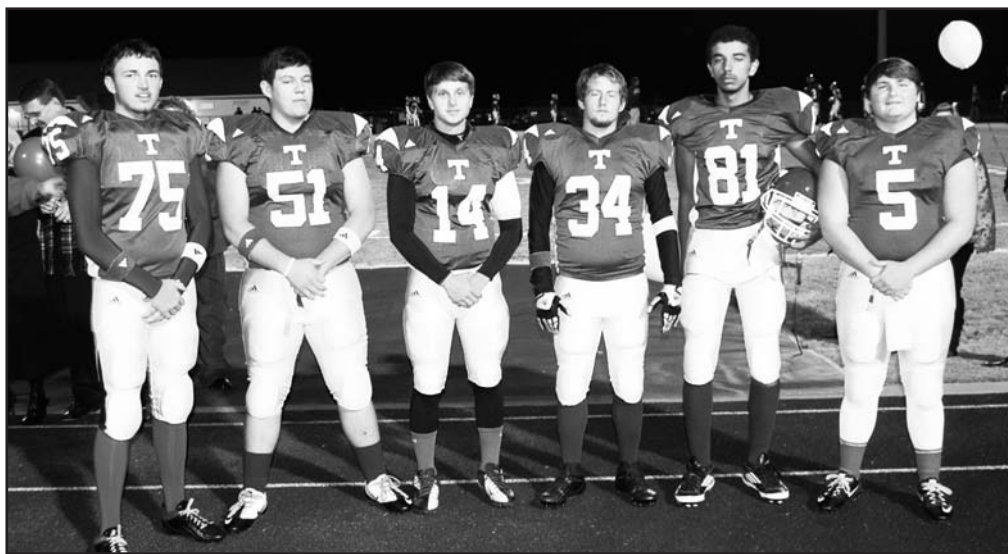
Senior lineman Colton Stroud was on a mission as he made several great down field offensive blocks on the evening.

Senior lineman Luke Parker along with junior lineman Jaryd Gurly, junior lineman Dustin Brackett, junior lineman J.R. Bennett, junior lineman Cody Canterbury and sophomore lineman Kyle Davis played some really hard-hitting defense in the trenches, to silence the aggressive offense of Hebron.

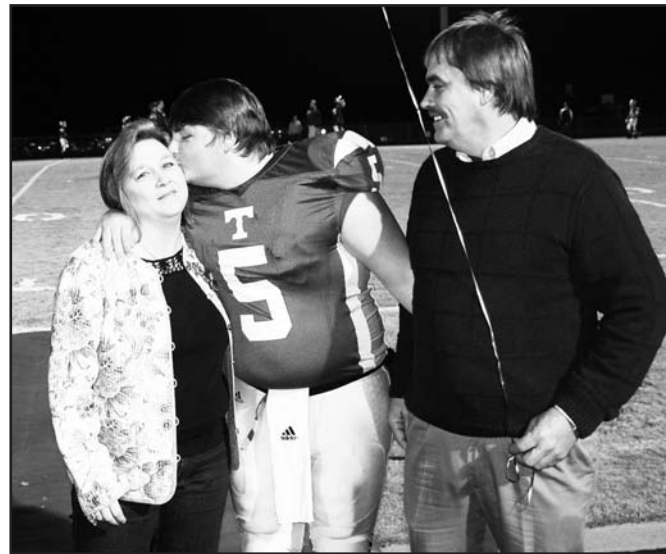
Evan Keyes was strong on defense with 13 tackles and 2 interceptions.

It was also good to see sophomore lineman Kevin "Gigantaur" McConnell in the game for some serious playing time. He is young and has size and speed. He will be a big weapon for the Indian attack next year.

The offense was fired up as they moved the ball well



The Towns County High School Indian football seniors. Photo/Lowell Nicholson



Wesley Bloodworth and family. Photo/Lowell Nicholson



Garrett Bradshaw assists on the tackle. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

over some hard fought turf. Senior quarterback Joseph Gibson had a tremendous night rushing and passing as he threw for 213 yards on eight completions and three touchdowns.

Senior Wesley Bloodworth racked up 101 yards on 18 carries and one score, while junior tailback Jackson Noblet, and junior Harrison Hobbs were both on the receiving end of Gibson touchdown strikes. Junior wide receiver Garrett Bradshaw also had one reception over the middle for a score and another short catch for a two-point conversion.

Senior running back Joseph Foster had an impressive

game in the backfield, as he appeared to be totally healed from his shoulder injury earlier in the year, as did sophomore Cruz Shook who was back on the field after a serious injury a few weeks ago.

Senior wide receiver Cory Griffin got the call on the last play of the 2012 season as he finished his high school football career gaining a couple of yards around the left end.

Junior receiver Vonya Baldwin and junior receiver Brett Barrett both made some really good catches and returns on kickoffs and punts. They were both very instrumental in making the offense work with



The Towns County Indians take the field for the final in 2012. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

their receptions and aggressive returns.

Baldwin showed no fear as he stood his ground and hauled in several punts with a fair catch call while Lions surrounded him.

The Tribe played a solid football game and ended their year on a positive note with a win over Hebron 28-13.

Next year looks to be very promising for the Indians football program, as a lot of young talent will be returning. Coach Kyle Langford will lose six seniors off of this year's club and we would like to thank them for the memories and wish them well in their futures.

The graduating senior group includes Wesley Bloodworth, Joseph Gibson, Joseph Foster, Luke Parker, Colton Stroud and Cory Griffin.

Senior night would not have been complete without recognizing the Girls Class A State Public Schools Championship Cross Country team at halftime.

The girls Cross Country team has been the talk of the town since Nov. 3 as they made Towns County proud by becoming the first ever team from Towns County to win a State title in Cross Country.

Congratulations again go

to Head Coach Jeannie Ledford and her running Indians from Towns County. The ladies Cross Country has no seniors on their team and will be returning all their State Champion athletes again in 2013

The football and cross country teams are not the only award winning groups to win an impressive award this year as the Towns County High School's Band of Blue brought home a Superior rating from competition recently.

They are really good and they also deserved their honor after their hard work and dedication this season

It's basketball season at Towns County High

By Jerry Kendall
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

After hosting Class AAAA Gilmer High School of Ellijay in preseason scrimmage games on Tuesday of this week, the Towns County Lady Indians and Indians Varsity Basketball Teams will travel to Class AA Rabun County on Friday of this week for their 2012-13 regular season openers.

Their regular season home openers will then follow next Monday, Nov. 19, against Highlands, NC.

The Lady Indians will be looking to continue unprecedented success over the last five seasons during which they have compiled an overall 126-26 record with no fewer than 23 wins in each season and they included a trip to the state tournament each year. Included were two record setting seasons and three region 8-A Tournament Championships. The 2008 team made it to the state Final Four in Macon and set a school record for victories in completing a 28-4 season while the 2011 team set a school record for the



Lady Indian Coach Jim Melton

highest winning percentage of 93.1 percent on the strength of a 27-2 season.

Both TCHS teams absorbed heavy losses to graduation but both return significant experience from last season and prior years. The Lady Indians have some especially huge shoes to fill as they will be playing without three graduating seniors who have continued their careers at the college level. Gabby Arencibia set two state 3-point field goal records with 13 treys in a single game during her junior year and 312 treys in her four-year career and is continuing her career



Indians Coach Ken Hamilton

at North Georgia College and State University in Dahlonega. All Region player Ali Bleckley will be seeing action this year for Oglethorpe University in Atlanta and Lindsay Patton at Point University in West Point, Georgia.

The Lady Indians also lost to graduation Kindle Moss who missed her entire senior season due to injury.

The Indians lost three seniors to graduation in the persons of Rylan Albach, Dakota Barrett, and Brandon Henderson.

Despite the losses to graduation, the Lady Indians

and Indians return a nucleus of youth and veterans with admirable varsity experience, including three All Region underclassmen in junior Eryn Cochran and sophomore Stephanie Patton for the Lady Indians and sophomore Dallas Manus for the Indians.

Patton and Manus both shattered TCHS freshmen scoring records last year, surpassing records established many years ago. Patton easily passed the Lady Indians record of 287 points established by Keisha Taylor (O'Hearn) during the 1994 season, finishing the 2012 season with 326 points. Meanwhile, Manus scored 230 points in breaking a 59-year-old Indians freshman record of 199 points set by Bob Bryson during the 1953 season. Patton also established a Lady Indians freshman record with 50 3-point baskets while Manus proved adept behind the 3-point line with 30 for the season.

Fans can expect to meet the remaining Lady Indians and Indians in the newspaper as the upcoming season progresses and they are encouraged to come out and support their teams throughout the season.

TCHS Runners named All-Area

Towns County Head Cross Country Coach Jeannie Ledford is proud to announce that Junior Ansley Vardeman, Junior Caitlin Sheffield, Junior Taylor Vardeman and Sophomore Sierra Nichols have all earned their respected places to represent TCHS on the ladies' varsity All-Area team.

Meanwhile Senior Bradley Smith represents TCHS on the men's varsity All-Area team.

We apologize for inadvertently omitting Alana Calhoun in our coverage of the State Championship last week.

She is an amazing runner and a crucial part of the TCHS Cross Country team while filling an important role in the sixth place position for the team. If the top five scores for TCHS had tied for the meet, then Calhoun's sixth place time of 25:52.01 would have earned them the State Championship as well. Way to go Alana and to all the rest of the team we say thank you

and again, congratulations on a job well done.

Coach Jeannie Ledford and the 2012 Cross Country Teams would like to say a heart felt thank you to the community for the kind words. It is deeply appreciated.

We are proud and honored to bring home a State Championship to Towns County. A special thanks to the following for their support through this season: Dr.'s Susan, Kirk Vardeman and family Dr. Rob Peck, Advanced Spinal Correction, Sharon Staton, and Michael Kimsey; Young Harris College Recreation and Fitness Center, Young Harris College Athletic Training Dan Adams; Athletic Capital Brothers at Willow Ranch, Enrico's, Mrs. Hilda Thomas, The Georgia Mountain Fair Grounds, Ingles of Hiawassee, Scott Hamilton and Bus Drivers, Towns County Bus Garage, Quincey S.O. Patterson, Bloomer S. Ledford, in honor and memory of Coach Buck Carney

Towns-Union Special Olympics' Fall Games another hit

By Todd Forrest
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If you weren't moved by the scene at Blairsville's First United Methodist Church on Thursday morning, maybe you should check your pulse.

The Towns-Union Special Olympics held its Fall Games at Galaxy Bowling and FUMC. And much more was at stake in these games than what could ever be reflected in a medal or on a scoreboard.

Members of Union County High School's Family, Career and Community Leaders of America club lined the entrance to FUMC's gymnasium to cheer on and encourage our local athletes as they entered the gym.

As the participants from Towns and Union Counties exited their buses, the joy and the enthusiasm could be seen all over their faces. It takes as many volunteers as athletes to stage these events, which are a blessing for their families as well.



Coach Jeannie Ledford and Towns County High School Homecoming King Sonny Goodman at Blairsville's FUMC. Photo/Todd Forrest

"It's as much for the families as it is for the athletes," said volunteer and Blairsville's House of Prayer Interdenominational Church Pastor Jerry Helton. "It's very rewarding to be a part of this."

Prior to the events at FUMC, Galaxy Bowling played host to the games, where the Towns County High School Cross Country teams and Head Coach Jeannie Ledford were there to assist and support the athletes as

they knocked down pin after pin. For some bowlers it was their first game, while others looked like seasoned vets. But regardless of the scores, the bowling alley was a 'strike zone' of exhilaration for all in attendance.

Upon leaving the bowling alley, the athletes were provided with a police escort to the church.

Before the games opened at FUMC, Helton asked Special Olympic athlete and Towns County Homecoming King, Sonny Goodman to read the Special Olympics Motto.

"Let me win, but if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt," Helton and Goodman read.

Everyone who participated or had a hand in the Fall Games is a winner and their bravery was on full display. Not only their in the bravery games, but in life as well. Their bravery is an inspiration to us all to conquer every obstacle put in our path, and these athletes tackle each one with no excuses.



Towns County Cross Country celebrates its State Championship