

Towns County Sports

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Lady Indians Overwhelm Mt. Zion; Reach Class A Sweet 16

By Jerry Kendall
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The Towns County Lady Indians Varsity Basketball Team continued a remarkable and historic season last Friday night in their home gym in dismantling the Mt. Zion Lady Eagles of Carroll County by a score of 67-31 in the first round of the Class A State Tournament. In so doing, the Lady Indians extended their record to 27-1 and qualified for at least the State Sweet 16 for the fourth year in a row. They are currently tied for fourth place in the Georgia Prep Country statewide Coaches Poll with Bryan County of Pembroke near Savannah.

At the conclusion of the game, the Lady Indians did not know the name of the opponent or the location of their second round game. A coin toss would be required to determine which team held home court advantage if second ranked Southwest Atlanta Christian Academy (SACA) had defeated eighth ranked Pace Academy of Atlanta in the SACA gym. It wasn't long until word got to Towns County that Pace Academy had upset SACA, the Region 9A champion, by a score of 60-54.

This left the Region 8A Champion Lady Indians as the higher seeded team over Pace Academy, the third seed from Region 5A, with Pace required to travel to Towns County for the second round game on Tuesday of this week at 6:30 p.m. The winner of this game will then travel to Marietta High School this Saturday, March 5, to face the winner of a Tuesday night game between



Lady Indians ran away with a win over the Mount Zion Lady Eagles to reach the Class A Sweet 16 Photo by James Reese.

third ranked St. Francis of Alpharetta and the sixth ranked Darlington School of Rome on the Darlington home court. The winner of the game in Marietta will qualify for the state final four in Macon next Wednesday, March 9.

In a start typical of first round state tournament play, the Lady Indians and Mt. Zion got off to a bit of a slow start as it required nearly two and a half minutes for the visiting Lady Eagles to score the first basket of the night for a 2-0 lead. It required just eighteen seconds after that, however, for Gabby Arencibia to take a Jordan Moss pass and sink a 3-pointer at 5:14 for a 3-2 lead the Lady Indians would never surrender. Arencibia followed by taking a steal near mid court to the basket for a 5-2 Towns lead which became 9-3 on two free throws each by Lindsay Patton and Eryn Cochran and then 11-5 on a steal near mid court and layup by Ben Pong at the first quarter buzzer.

Arencibia converted an-

other steal, this time in the back court, into a lay up and then more than matched a Mt. Zion basket with a trey for a 16-7 Lady Indian lead barely a minute into the quarter. Ali Bleckley had a hot scoring hand after that, sinking two treys and two free throws between the 6:11 mark and the 4:20 mark for

a 24-9 Towns lead. Two free throws by Patton and a baseline jumper by Makayla Underwood had the Lady Indians seemingly cruising with a 28-9 lead with 3:40 remaining until intermission. The Lady Indians went cold after that, however, failing to score for the remainder of the quarter but with the Lady

Eagles only able to sink a pair of field goals themselves for a still prominent 28-13 Towns lead at the half.

Moss came alive at the start of the third quarter, scoring nine of the Lady Indians' first eleven points on a trey, 4 for 4 free throw shooting, and a drive for two by the 3:54 mark, putting the game on easy street as the Lady Indians led 39-15. They led 48-21 entering the fourth quarter and it didn't get any better after that for the Lady Eagles as the Lady Indians extended their lead in the fourth quarter for a 67-31 victory.

Scoring leaders for the game for the Lady Indians were Arencibia with 20 points, Bleckley with 14, Moss with 9, Patton with 6, and Pong and Underwood with 5 each. Leading in assists, according to your reporter's tally, were Underwood with 4 and Bleckley and Patton with 2 each. Five different Lady Indians sank at least one trey in the game for a team total of eleven with Arencibia and Bleckley leading the way with

four each. And the Lady Indians returned to a season pattern of excellent free throw shooting with fourteen for seventeen accuracy after struggling a bit at the line in the Region Semi-Finals and Finals.

The large crowd attending the Mt. Zion game was treated to an inspiring version of the National Anthem by Note-ariety, a wonderful young ladies choir conducted by TCHS Chorus Director Chris Adams. As a plug for the choir, readers can help them with expenses to a vocal competition in Boston, Massachusetts, scheduled for April 16-20 in one of two ways. One way is by purchasing a set of 1,200 Thread Count Egyptian Cotton bed sheets—twin, full, queen, or king size for \$35 a set—or a second way is to make a donation to the choir. Anyone interested in purchasing sheets or making a donation to the group may contact Melanie Hale Beighley at (770) 633-3765 or mhbeighley@aol.com or they can contact Mr. Adams directly through the school at (706) 896-4131.



Lady Indians Head Coach Jim Melton readies to send in reinforcements Photo by James Reese.



Freshman Eryn Cochran fights through traffic in the Lady Indians' 67-31 win over Mount Zion Photo by James Reese.



Senior Crystal Bishop fights for a rebound in the first round of the state Class A basketball tournament Photo by James Reese.



Gabby Arencibia nails one of her four 3-point baskets against Mount Zion Photo by James Reese.



Makayla Underwood drives to the basket against Mount Zion Photo by James Reese.

Six local wrestlers head to state USA tournament in Marietta



Back row (L to R) Coach Terry Parker, Coach Jason Hoffman, Coach Jake Davis, Coach Le Church, Kaine Hoffman, and Kyle Davis and Front row (L to R) Keanu Nguyen, Harold Cox, Nick Shook, and Jonathon Owenby.

By James Reese
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Towns County's USA Wrestling team brought home two gold medals during Saturday's State Qualifier Tournament in Gilmer County.

Out of 10 Towns County wrestlers battling in the tournament, six advanced to the State Finals on Saturday in Marietta, Coach Jason Hoffman said.

Kyle Davis and Aaron Collier earned gold medals in their respective weight classes to lead the way as the team also brought home three bronze medals for their efforts.

Jonathon Owenby, Keanu Nguyen and Nick Shook finished third place in their respective weight classes. Harold Cox claimed fourth place in his weight class.

Davis, Collier, Owenby, Nguyen, Shook and Cox all qualified to advance to the State Finals held Saturday at Life University in Marietta.

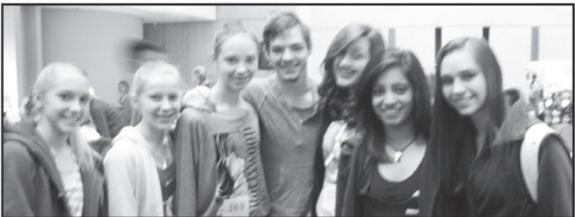
"We're real proud of all of our guys," Coach Jason Hoffman said. "They left it on the mat today, win or lose. It's nice to know when one of your wrestlers walks off the mat, you know he gave it his all."

Coach Hoffman was exceptionally pleased with the efforts of Davis and Collier.

"Kyle Davis and Aaron Collier both placed first and brought home gold medals to add to their collection," Coach Hoffman said. "Both of these guys had some real tough matches that came down to who wanted it more, with the winner being decided in the last 10 seconds of the 3rd period."

"That just shows they have no quit in them," he said.

Fuzion Company competes at JUMP! Dance Competition



Left to right: Ansley Vardeman, Lindy Hollingshead, Caitlin Sheffield, Billy Bell from "So You Think You Can Dance", Katherine Buck, Sarina Kurrimbukus, Ginny Rhoades. Not Pictured: Easton Payne and Taylor Vardeman.

The Fuzion Dance Company of Brasstown Dance Academy recently competed at the JUMP! Dance Competition and Workshop in Atlanta, GA. They performed four group pieces, three solos and a duet. The group cumulatively earned seven "High Silver" medals for their performances. Along with the competition, the dancers participated in a weekend full of

exciting and challenging workshops in ballet, jazz, theater, hip hop, tap, and lyrical dance styles. The JUMP! Dance Competition is made up of some of the industry's leading professionals, including Gil Stroming, Teddy Forance, Nick Lazzarini (So You Think You Can Dance season 1 winner), Mike Minery, Bobby Newberry, Misha Gabriel, Doug Caldwell, and Katy Spreadbury. The group

was excited to meet Billy Bell, also an alumni of "So You Think You Can Dance", as he assisted the faculty and performed in the closing show. Congratulations to all on a job well done.

Your chance to see The Fuzion Dance Company is right around the corner. They are scheduled to perform their Spring Concert on Saturday, March 19th at 7 p.m. at the Towns County School Auditorium. Tickets can be requested in advance or purchased at the door. Don't miss this great opportunity to enjoy the art of dance right here in our own community.

Call or visit Brasstown Dance Academy for information about classes or the Fuzion Dance Company performance schedule. Studio hours are Monday-Thursday 2 - 6 p.m. and the phone number is (706) 379-2651.