

Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports



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Diamond Indians on a roll, take two in a row



Jimmy Pearce fires a fastball in last week's matchup with Commerce. Photo by James Reese.

By James Reese
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The Towns County Indians are finding their groove on the baseball diamond.

The Indians (4-16) have won two in a row by a combined score of 37-12 for Head Baseball Coach Chris Vardo.

On Friday, the Indians traveled to Gainesville to take on Region 8-A rivals Riverside Military Academy. They blasted the Eagles by a score of 21-7.

On Monday, the Indians traveled to Cashiers, NC to take on the Blue Ridge Bobcats. The Indians had little trouble with Blue Ridge as they outlasted the Bobcats

16-5. The win over Riverside avenged a 15-14 loss at Kimsey Field. The win for Riverside left the Eagles celebrating their final inning win like it was the seventh game of the World Series.

Their attitudes changed somewhat in Gainesville on Friday as the Indians scored early and often to claim the region win over the Eagles.

Earlier last week, the Indians hosted the 14-4 Commerce Tigers.

It wasn't a pretty affair, but the Indians hung in their and didn't quit despite losing the game 10-5. The Tigers' starting pitcher, Josh Swisstak helped his own cause, belting two home runs for the cause.

The first was a two-run blast giving the Tigers an 8-2 lead. The second, a solo shot to lead off the top of the sixth inning, put the Tigers up 9-2. The Tigers added another run in the sixth on a run-scoring double by sophomore Chase Ledbetter to make the score 10-2 Tigers.

The Indians added another run late, narrowing the gap to 10-3.

Going into the bottom of the seventh inning, senior Alan Turpin connected on the fourth of his four singles. Senior Taylor Denton followed Turpin with a two out, two-



Alan Turpin swipes second against Commerce. Photo by James Reese.



Jimmy Pearce continues his hot hitting ways against Commerce. Photo by James Reese.

run homer cutting the Tigers' lead to 10-5.

The Tigers however managed hold onto the lead and preserve the 10-5 Region 8-A victory.



Billy Meier slides in safely at home against Commerce. Photo by James Reese.



Billy Meier is safe at third against Commerce. Photo by James Reese.

Lady Indians beat Lakeview; earn first soccer state playoff berth

By James Reese
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The Towns County Lady Indians rebounded on Monday from their worst defeat of 2011 with a 2-0 win over Lakeview Academy in Gainesville.

The Lady Indians, (6-3-2) now advance to the state soccer playoffs for the first time in school history.

The Lady Indians have lost only two games in their Area conference, both coming to highly ranked Athens Academy and Hebron Christian Academy.

The latter, the sixth ranked Lady Lions, shutout the Lady Indians 7-0 on Friday in Dacula.

Minus their star keeper, the Lady Indians fought bravely as they tried to hang with Hebron Christian Academy's Lady Lions.

"We played all right and hung in there for a little while but, you've got to realize when you're playing a more skillful team - and they were the more skillful team - that the better team won on that day," Lady Indians Head Soccer Coach Peter Byrne said. "We might have been able to hang in there a little closer if we would've had our keeper. Honestly, I believe that it still would've been a difficult game."

The Lady Indians also defeated Highlands, NC 1-0 last week in a non-conference match up.

But now, the Lady Indians have done something no other Towns County soccer team can lay claim to, a berth in the state soccer playoffs with the win over Lakeview Academy.



Makayla Underwood heads toward the Lady Lions' goal. Photo by James Reese.



Jordan Moss moves the ball against Hebron. Photo by James Reese.

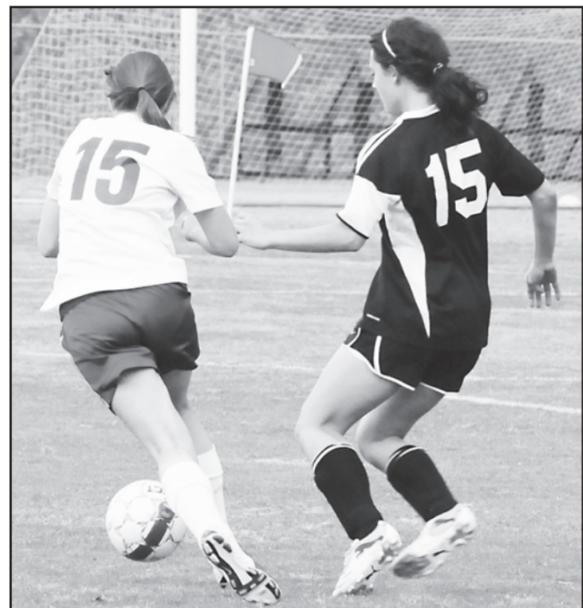
Georgia High School Association rules state that the top four teams out of each Area goes on to the state playoffs. Towns County has earned at least a No. 4 Seed in Area 5.

Wednesday's game be-

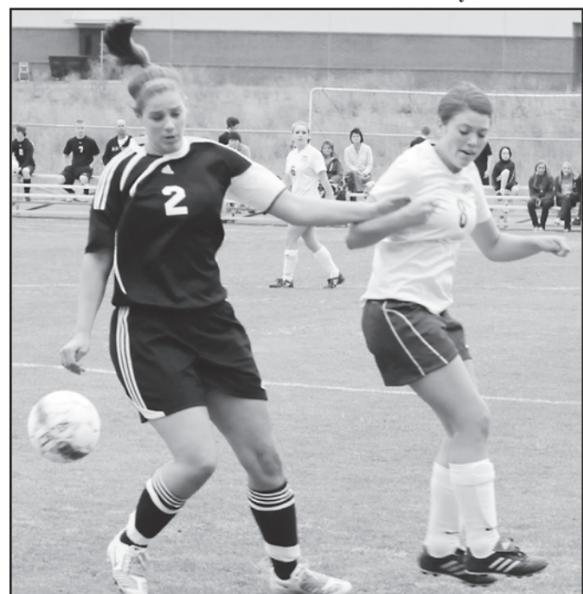
tween Aquinas and Athens Academy will determine the Lady Indians state tournament seed. The No. 3 Seed out of Area 5 belongs to Towns County if Athens Academy, the No. 2 Seed in Area 5, defeats Aquinas, currently tied

with Towns County for No. 3.

Mathematically, the Lady Indians should take the No. 3 seed even if Aquinas beats Athens Academy by virtue of a 2-1 loss at the hands of the Lady Indians on March 11th, giving the tie-breaker to Towns County.



Makayla Underwood tries to cut a Lady Lion off at the Pass. Photo by James Reese.



Ali Bleckley gains control of the ball from a Lady Lion. Photo by James Reese.

Mountain Lions' Sports Festival a blast for local youth



Mountain Lions Head Baseball Coach Rick Robinson gives a youngster a bit of advice on Saturday. Photo by James Reese.

By James Reese
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The Young Harris College Athletics Department opened its doors to area youth on Saturday as it hosted a two-hour Mountain Lions Sports Festival.

Children ages 5-13 took part in the event, getting to meet Mountain Lions from a variety of the college's sports

teams.

The youngsters got a chance to meet, participate, and even get a few tips from players and coaches. Most all the children took the opportunity to get an autograph from their favorite players. Each Young Harris College team had a station in the College's Recreation and Fitness Center as children rotated through each station getting to meet players from

every sport.

Young Harris Baseball Head Coach Rick Robinson and his baseball team along with Women's Softball Head Coach Eric Geldart lined the kids up to clock their fastball pitches on the Jugs Gun.

Geldart demonstrated specific throwing mechanics and techniques prior to the radar gun session. Robinson perhaps found future flame-

throwers with speeds clocked in excess of 50 mph.

Following the dazzling diamond display, the kids group moved on to meet with YHC Golf Head Coach Brett Beazley, who demonstrated putting and chipping techniques. The group next went upstairs to try out the new track with the YHC Cross-Country team.

Waiting back downstairs were YHC basketball coaches Pete Herrmann and Brenda Paul, both anxious to teach the children dribbling, ball-handling and lay-up skills.

A few kids managed to slam dunk with a little help from Herrmann's players. Finally, on the opposite end of the basketball court, YHC Men's Soccer Coach Mark McKeever displayed fancy footwork as the group of children took turns trying to kick soccer balls past the YHC goalies and "Luke the Mountain Lion."

Afterwards all of the Young Harris athletes, coaches and children attending the festival came together for a photo opportunity and autograph session.

After the festival, children and their parents were encouraged to stick around and support a few of the Young Harris College teams in action on Saturday.

Lady Indians fall in state playoffs

By James Reese
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Lilburn - A 3-2 loss last week to Athens Christian Tennis Team in the Region 8-A playoffs put the Towns County Lady Indians in a precarious position.

They made it to the Class A Preliminaries where they faced the No. 4 seed from Region 5-A, Providence Christian Academy.

In what must now seem like a whirlwind affair, the Lady Indians (13-3) exited the state tournament very early. Providence Christian prevailed 5-0.

The Providence girls' tennis team defeated the visiting Lady Indians in a play-in match to advance in the Class A state tennis tournament. The Lady Stars (15-5) advance to play Aquinas in the next round on April 22.

Dani Crist, Christy North and Madison DeMoss swept the singles points for Providence, while the Lady Stars got doubles wins from Emma Crist and Robin Ferris at No. 1 Doubles and Alex Schlesener and Abby Mazza at No. 2 Doubles.

"We got smoked," Lady Indians' Head Tennis Coach Shannon Floyd said. "That team was a No. 4 Seed. I would hate to see the three teams that would've beaten them because we could play that team 100 times and they could beat us 100 times.

"We weren't very competitive on our end. We finished a four seed, I felt like we should've been a No. 2 Seed," he said. "We didn't get the job done at the region tournament. We drew the region that will likely have the State Champion."

"I expect that the region that Providence is in is going to have the State Champion," Coach Floyd said. "Mount Pisgah (No. 1 team in Class A) has three nationally ranked players. When we played Providence, the girl that Alexa Arencibia played was the No. 2 ranked player in the state. She would've beaten me."

"I'm real proud of what the girls did. We lost 5-0 to Providence but, we had a really good season overall and I'm proud of their accomplishments. We just didn't have the horses to plow the garden in that game," Coach Floyd said. "They were just a lot better but, that doesn't take anything away from what these kids did this year. They had a great year and it's just a little different league."

"Their coach (Bill Hannigan) told me that they couldn't compete against the other three Region 5 teams Wesleyan, Mount Pisgah and Pace Academy. Unfortunately we got matched up with that Region," Coach Floyd said.