

Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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Coach Roquemore counts on program growth after closing out winless season

By Chad Stack
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

The Boys in Blue finished their season 0-10 under first-year Head Coach Jason Roquemore after falling to Athens Christian Academy in their final game of the season on Friday, Nov. 8, in Frank McClure Memorial Stadium. Towns County won the coin toss, and the game started with an Eagles' pop-up kick to senior Andrew Conrad.

Conrad returned the ball to the Indians 44-yard line, though the Eagles defense forced Towns County to punt after a quick three-and-out.

The Athens Christian team started out on its own 35-yard line after a 25-yard boot from sophomore Kyle Oakes.

On the ensuing drive, the Eagles were flagged for a personal foul, which backed them up to the 25-yard line.

Following the penalty, the Eagles scored a touchdown in two plays, throwing a 42-yard touchdown pass to take an early 7-0 lead after the good point-after attempt.

The Eagles went into halftime with a 42-0 lead after holding the Boys in Blue scoreless through two quarters.

Starting the second half, the Indians tried to catch the Eagles off guard with an on-side kick, but Athens Christian quickly recovered the ball on the midfield stripe.

From there, the Eagles took the first play from scrimmage for a 50-yard score to extend the lead to 49-0.

Following another Ea-



The Towns County line opens up a running lane as quarterback Kyle Oakes gives to Reace Hampton (24) after faking the handoff to Garrett Oakes (5). Photo/Lowell Nicholson

gles touchdown with two minutes left in the game, the Indians were able to put together a positive drive.

Junior running back Reace Hampton and quarterback Oakes took turns running the ball for chunk plays, putting the Indians inside Athens Christian's 5-yard line.

After the 66-yard drive, Hampton took a handoff into the end zone from 4 yards to give the Indians their first score of the game as the clock hit zero.

Following the touchdown from Hampton, Oakes took a hard shot as he leaped into the air for the 2-point conversion, and the game ended 56-8 in Athens Academy's favor.

Despite having a winless record, Roquemore said the Boys in Blue have shown positive things in 2019 in all aspects of the game.

Looking ahead, the Indians are only graduating six seniors this year – Dakota Edge, Clyde Ledford, Zach

Mullins, Andrew Conrad, Shane Sparks and Chris Bogus – so Roquemore is excited about what the 2020 season will bring.

The middle school team finished 2-2 in their season and will advance 12 of the young Indians to the varsity squad next year, adding to the 19 Indians that will return in 2020.

Roquemore said eight of the 12 coming in from middle school will help contribute right away.

Those eight middle school players play on the offensive and defensive line, which is why “we have made an effort to include the middle school into the high school program,” Roquemore said.

These young Indians have already had a year to work with the varsity players and coaches, so they know how things are done at the varsity level and what the coaches expect from them, Roquemore said.

The Indians are a young

football team learning a new system and playing in one of the toughest regions in single-A, and Roquemore said his players have shown they can compete when the competition is apples to apples.

Throughout the offseason, players will spend time in the weight room and work with coaches come spring and summer to get bigger, faster and stronger as they prepare for the 2020 season, Roquemore said.

Wrestling: Towns County hits the practice mat ahead of first match at Banks County

By Chad Stack
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For the last couple weeks, the Towns County High School Wrestling Team has been getting in some quality practice in preparation for their first match of the season on Tuesday, Nov. 12, at Banks County High.

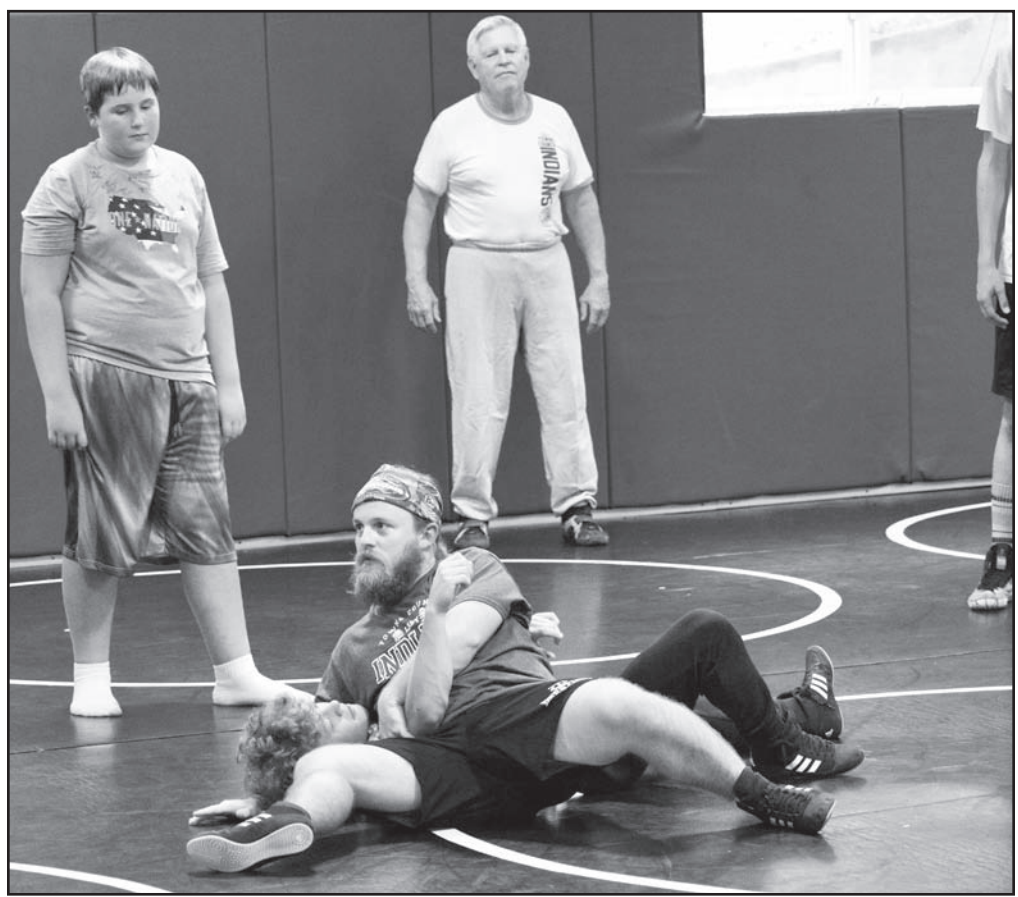
After graduating three of the five wrestlers who qualified for the state tournament last year, Head Coach Jeff Stowers said that, though this year's squad is really young, he expects everyone will get the opportunity to learn and grow as individuals and as a team.

Returning wrestlers from last year's state tournament are juniors Alisa Moss and Garrett Oakes, who will look to lead the 2019-2020 team moving forward.

The Indians wrestling program has long been established as one of the top single-A programs around, with former Indians such as Blaine Rogers, Tyler Swanger and Wesley Calhoun having recently competed and placed in the Georgia High School Association State Tournament.

And fortunately, the young team is returning several grapplers from the 2018-2019 squad.

“Garrett Oakes is our most experienced wrestler, but we also have Austin Edrington, Blythe Smith and Matthew Ledford, as well as Alisa Moss and Hannah Wecker that have been in the program and understand the work that goes



Towns grapplers are hard at work in preparation for the 2019-2020 season. Photo/Chad Stack

in,” Stowers said.

Smith was new to the program just a year ago, and Ledford couldn't wrestle last year due to injury, so Stowers said he is expecting both of them to take big strides this season.

Also this year, Evan Woodard is filling the role of middle school wrestling coach. This is the first time in four years the middle school has had a coach, and Stowers is optimistic about the future.

“We are excited about

our freshmen and our younger wrestlers and are looking forward to watching them grow and compete throughout the year,” Stowers said. “We are also really excited about our women's team and the four ladies that have come out and have been working incredibly hard.”

There have been lady wrestlers for some time in the state, but new to wrestling last year was the addition of an all-girls state tournament. Since then, the wrestling team has added Lady Indians Bazya

Smith and Lindsey Giles.

The Indians will compete in 11 different weight classes this year, and Stowers said he hopes to fill the remaining three weight classes. Towns County has 18 dates scheduled, and each kid will wrestle between 20 and 40 matches.

“We have several kids that can make some noise late in the season, and it's going to be fun to watch them compete as we reach that point in the season,” Stowers said.

Galvez takes Men's Singles Bronze in Pickleball National Championship



Nick Galvez

Nick Galvez is the Pickleball national champion men's singles bronze winner. Bronze level winner Men's singles (skill level/age 4.0/35+), played Wednesday, November 6, 2019, Indian Springs, CA.

Nick is the son of Young Harris residents Janet Galvez and Rusty Benton. Nick lives and works in Durham, NC with his wife and 2 children. He frequently visits Towns County on business or to see family. You will see him at the Hiwassee pickleball courts picking up a game with local players. Tournament info: usapickleballnationalchampionships.com.

The 2019 Margaritaville USA Pickleball National Championships was held November 2-10, 2019, at Indian Wells, CA which is located just outside of Palm Springs. The event is sponsored by the USAPA, USA Pickleball Association, and draws 2500+ competitors. (Nov13,GI)SH

All Proceeds go towards the Soccer Teams of Towns County as well as the lights fund for the Georgia Mountain Fair

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