

Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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Barrett makes it look easy with hat trick in GACA All Star game

By Todd Forrest
North Georgia News
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Brunswick - Soccer in the Northeast Georgia mountains is quickly catching up to the metro-Atlanta hot beds, and last month's Georgia Athletic Coaches Association's (GACA) All Star game is another example why.

Suiting up for victorious North team were Union County's Layne Baenninger and Brenna Innis, along with Towns County's Brooke Barrett.

Joining the trio of local players were Union County High School coaches Tim Hunter and Lee Baenninger.

Playing at Glynn County Academy, the North team jumped out to a 2-0 advantage before pulling away in a 5-1 victory. Barrett lead the charge for the North with 3 goals and one assist.

This, the first annual GACA All Star game, is designed for rising-seniors and was divided into four 15-minute quarters (instead of two 40-minute halves) due to the scorching South Georgia heat. The extra breaks were used to keep the players hydrated.

The scoring got underway during the first minute when Jefferson's Lizz Quilliams put the North on the board off a feed from Locust Grove's Chloe Welch.

Just beyond the midway point of the second, a pair of former Mountain United Soccer Association (MUSA) teammates hooked up to spot the North a two goal advantage.

Goal two came with 9:42 to play in the second period when Union's Layne Baenninger found Towns' Barrett, who laced a rocket past the South keeper from 25 yards out. The Baenninger-Barrett connection came much to the delight of Coach Lee



The Towns-Union trio with coaches. Left-to-right: Lee Baenninger, Brooke Barrett, Layne Baenninger, Brenna Innis and Tim Hunter. All photos courtesy of Blairsville's John Innis - Official Photographer of GACA Soccer

Baenninger who coached all three girls in the local youth leagues. He has also been vital to the growth of soccer in Union and Towns counties.

"I have to thank Lee (Baenninger) for all that he does for our program and for our kids," Hunter said. "He does so much and never seeks the credit that he deserves."

Meanwhile, the South squad quickly responded to Barrett's kick with its first and only goal of the day -- trimming the North lead in half at the intermission.

Still clinging to a 2-1 lead early in the third and looking for breathing room, the North team knew where to turn.

At the 13:34 mark of the quarter, Chapel Hill's Devyn Thompson dished off to Barrett and she found the net once again -- making it a 3-1 game.

Barrett returned the favor with an assist in the fourth quarter when she set up Wayne County's Andrea Mendez for

another North goal.

Then with just under five minutes to play, the North put an exclamation point on its dominant performance.

The North's fifth goal was also Barrett's third on the day with the assists going to Thompson and Welch. Baenninger set up the score with a dish to Thompson and those four moved the ball around with ultra-quick passing to create what Hunter described as, "one of the most amazing looking goals that I have ever seen."

Barrett has committed to play at Georgia Southern despite receiving offers from Georgia and Kentucky. According to Hunter, she chose GSU for the opportunity to contribute immediately.

"Brooke played an outstanding game," Hunter said. "She is a special player and has committed to Georgia Southern to play soccer. When she scored her first goal, which was from about 25 yards out, the North boys team behind

us was going crazy yelling about it.

"I think GSU will be a great fit for her. I know she had offers from SEC schools, but she will be able to compete for playing time quicker (at GSU) and be an impact player for that team even quicker."

As for the entire event, Hunter, who is also the GACA Chairperson, has championed the idea of an all star soccer game for years and finally saw it come to fruition.

Originally Hunter was not expecting to coach but when one of the coaches was forced to back out, he was thrust onto the sidelines.

Although, when you have players as talented as Baenninger, Barrett, and Innis, coaching becomes effortless and more enjoyable.

"These three girls grew up playing soccer together," Hunter added. "But this was a huge event for all the kids who took part. These were incredible players but even



The opening kickoff: Innis kicks to Barrett to get the inaugural GACA All Star Soccer game underway. Photo/John Innis



The local GACA all stars with photos superimposed from a 2009 tournament when all three were on the same team. Photo/John Innis

more so, they were great kids to be around. We practiced at an amazing facility on St. Simmons Island that was separated from the beach by about 100 yards of palm trees. There was a boardwalk that we walked down and let the kids walk on the beach.

"I'm so proud of all the kids who participated and I'm very proud of the event. I told the kids at the end, 'there will be a lot of special events that happen in this game in the future, but no one else could be a part of the first (GACA All Star Soccer game) ever.'"



Towns County's Brooke Barrett blasts a shot past a South defender. Photo/John Innis

TCYFL registration continues through July

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Towns County Youth Football League signups continue this Saturday, July 15, between 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. at the old Towns County Rec Building.

Interested young athletes new to the league and their parents should bring a copy of the child's birth certificate at signup, as it will be provided to the Smoky Mountain Conference as proof of age.

Kids who played last year will not need to provide copies of their birth certificates at signup.

For all players, a one-time payment of \$90 will be required at the time of signup in order to cover costs of playing during the season, including insurance, a game jersey that kids will get to keep at the end of the season, and a trophy at the end-of-year banquet.

Athletes can also sign up on the following Saturdays: July 22 and July 29 at the old rec center between 2 p.m. and 4 p.m.

Team practices begin on July 31, and Aug. 12 will be the cutoff date to sign up for one of the teams.

Towns County Youth Cheerleading will be signing up participants alongside football players this Saturday, July 15.

Again, in order to be accepted on one of the teams, parents of new players will need



to provide a copy of their child's birth certificate at the time of signup, along with the \$90.

Teams are broken down into categories according to age: Pee Wees are 5 and 6-year-olds; Termites are 7 and 8-year-olds; Mites are 9 and 10-year-olds; and Midgets are 11 and 12-year-olds.

As previously reported, the 2017 season will be Youth Football Director Jimmy Smith's 21st and final season as director of the Towns County program.

"I've had a ball doing this," said Director Smith. "There just comes a time when it's time to go. I've enjoyed every minute being with the kids. I'm sure I'm going to miss it."

"I've had great kids over the years, with great support from parents and the community. It

became part of my life and I'll never forget it, but it's just about time to move on and let somebody else take over."

After this season, the Towns County Rec Department will be heading up the youth football program, and Director Smith said he feels good about Towns County Recreation Director Matt Youngblood leading the youth football charge in 2018.

2017 Towns County Youth Football kicks off its regular season on Saturday, Aug. 19, in a home game against the Cherokee Braves out of North Carolina, to be played at the Towns County Recreation and Conference Center at Foster Park.

All youth games begin at 9:30 a.m., starting with the Pee Wees.

MUSA Fall Registration

Mountain United Soccer Association's fall soccer registration is open for boys and girls ages 4-16.

You may register online at www.mountainsoccer.org. Registration deadline is Aug. 9. Players registered after deadline will incur a late fee and will be placed on roster waiting list.

Volunteer coaches also are needed. Questions: email: musa.soccer@gmail.com

Looking for a free fun summer activity?

How about four days of free dance classes ages 5-12! North Georgia Dance Arts "Try Everything!" Free! Ballet, Lyrical, Tap, Jazz, Hip Hop, and Acrobatics. It's true! North Georgia Dance Arts is paying it forward with free dance classes this summer! Open to everyone ages 5-12! No obligation, no fees! Just come and dance! Create memories!

Dates: July 11th and 13th 9:30-12; July 18th and 20th 9:30-12. Call now to register or check our Facebook page! Or walk-ins welcome! 706-896-0016. NJul12,217/CA



Local Charity Golf event to benefit Enotah CASA

The 2nd annual Battle of the Sexes golf tournament, organized and hosted by the Butternut Creek Ladies Golf Association, will be held Thursday, August 3, 2017 at Butternut Creek Golf Course. Registration and breakfast are from 8 a.m. to 8:45 a.m. Shotgun start at 9 a.m. sharp! Cost is \$45 per golfer and includes golf, breakfast and lunch.

The format is Net Better Ball of your twosome and works this way: Two players, either two Lads or two Lassies, on the team each play their own golf ball throughout the round. On each hole, the two team members compare scores, and the lower of their two net scores (the better ball counts as the team's score.) While you may be playing with your spouse in the foursome, scoring of the Battle will consist of taking the net better scores of all Lassie pairings, against the net better scores of all Lads pairings. Lads

or Lassies will be announced as the winner during lunch. The top three winning teams from both the Lads and Lassies will each receive a free round of golf at Butternut. No partner? No worries! We will assign a partner for you!

Checks and registration form must be received by July 27, 2017. Forms are available at Butternut or by contacting Karen or Jane. Make checks payable to: BCLGA amount \$45 per golfer. Mail to Karen Mussoline, 179 Scout Trace, Blairsville, GA 30512 or leave at the Pro Shop desk. Deadline to enter is July 27, 2017. Contact Karen Mussoline @ (352) 638-3649 (msmoose2@gmail.com) or Jane Childers @ (706) 838-5599 for questions or additional information.

The "Lads & Lassies" will be battling for bragging rights, but the real winners are children from Union & Towns counties whose lives have been

changed by the CASA organization. Enotah CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate) plays a vital role in the lives of the abused and neglected children in our community and is the local affiliate of Georgia and National CASA. The effectiveness and quality of our advocacy has been recognized locally, statewide and nationally. We gratefully appreciate your support to help us continue to advocate for our community's neglected and abused children by donating proceeds of your golf tournament which will be used to recruit, screen, train and supervise CASA volunteers and meet the needs of these deprived children. All proceeds will be donated to Enotah CASA after golf & lunch costs.

In 2016 thanks to the wonderful participation of local golfers, the Battle of the Sexes donated \$500 to a local charity. Let's make it bigger and better in 2017! NJul12,AS/CA