

Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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Towns County's 14&U baseball team finishes fifth in State

By Shawn Jarrard
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Staff Writer

Woodstock – The Towns County 14&U recreation baseball team placed fifth at the 2015 State Tournament, the end result of a wildly successful undefeated regular season and runner-up position at the 2015 District Tournament.

"This was a great effort," said Head Coach Cliff Bradshaw following the Tuesday, July 7, game. "We're playing big areas, and we're competing. We're doing good things."

The Towns County Indians lost to the Summerville Indians of Chattooga County, a nail-biter of a game that went all the way to the 10th inning – rec baseball consists of seven innings – and ended in a score of 5-4.

Previously, Summerville had defeated Whitfield County in its district tournament, and Towns County faced Whitfield County in its first game of the state tournament.

Whitfield beat the Indians, but the boys in blue weren't finished yet – Towns County won its next game in the competition against Barrow County, propelling them onward to face Summerville for a chance to advance.

The story of the Towns/Summerville matchup was excellent defense on both sides. In the very first inning of the game,



Towns County 14&U in action vs Summerville. Photo/Shawn Jarrard

pitcher Trent Bradshaw fielded a hopper to the mound and threw the batter out at first base.

Second baseman Kayden McClure initiated a double play to end the inning, catching a pop fly, then making the throw to first baseman Cooper Moss to catch the first base runner, who had made for second, before he could get back to the bag.

Summerville was able to

score two runs in the top of the second, but Bradshaw sent the third, fourth and sixth-place batters back to their bench with strikeouts.

The bottom of the second saw third baseman Andrew Griffin pop a single to shallow right, and he proceeded to steal his way to third base during the next at-bat. He produced the first Towns County run when Summerville

was busy worrying about first base on a swing and a dropped ball.

Towns County hit hard in the bottom of the third, when Brett Denton, Alec Youngblood and Seth Fullerton scored on some fancy base running, each with steals, aided by an RBI double from Youngblood and a two-run double supplied by Griffin.

With a score of 4-2 heading into the fourth inning, Towns County had the momentum moving forward – at least until Summerville was able to score two runs to tie the game up.

And then a stalemate occurred that started in the bottom of the fourth, thanks to tremendous defense on both sides, with each team going three up, three down for the next three innings straight.

Lane Denton broke up the monotony in the bottom of the seventh, giving his team the hope it needed to win the game by singling through a hole in first and second base.

But the inning continued the way the previous three had gone, with the next three Towns County at-bats ending in outs.

To start the extra innings, Summerville sent a grounder to first baseman Moss, but the next two batters to the plate hit singles, which got both teams on the edge of their seats.

After striking out the fourth man in the lineup, Bradshaw was

instructed by his head coach to walk the fifth man, who had been hot at the bat. This proved a brilliant move as, with bases loaded, Bradshaw struck out the sixth batter and ended the top of the eighth maintaining the 4-4 tie.

Griffin singled in the bottom of the eighth but was stranded, and Seth Fullerton came in to pitch the start of the ninth after Bradshaw's eight straight innings at the plate.

Bradshaw left the game with an astonishing 12 strikeouts, and had seen Summerville bring three pitchers to the mound in his eight innings.

Moss caught a foul pop along the first base line to get the first out of the ninth inning, and Fullerton dutifully struck the next two out to give Towns County another chance to end the game in the bottom of the inning.

Ultimately, the Indians would not send any more batters to the bases, and Summerville scored what turned out to be the winning run in the top of the 10th inning.

The monumental effort of the boys on the field that day should be noted as a singular achievement and one heck of a game of baseball.

The Towns County Indians 14U baseball team consisted of many fine young men: Nathan Edwards, Kayden McClure, Cooper Moss, Andrew Griffin, Trent Bradshaw, Kendall Floyd,

Jacob Kinsey, Clyde Ledford, Hunter Moss, Brett Denton, Lane Denton, Devyn Burrell, Corbin Nelson, Alec Youngblood, Seth Fullerton and Manager James Norton.

Coaches for the season were Coach Bradshaw and assistant coaches Jamie McClure, Shannon Moss and Matt Griffin.

Whitfield County, with a population of nearly 103,000 according to the 2010 Census placed first in the state tournament. Towns County nearly defeated Summerville, with a population of more than 26,000, and the win against Barrow County, population more than 69,000, sent a clear message to the state.

With a population slightly more than 10,000, Towns County put up some fierce competition for the much bigger counties, which had more teams to choose from to send players to district and state than Towns County's single All-Star team.

"I want to thank all the parents and Commissioner Bill Kendall for their support, and definitely all the coaches for their help," said Coach Bradshaw. "A lot of people put a lot of effort into this whole season."

Moving forward, Towns County Baseball made a statement at Hobgood Park in Woodstock that day: Never underestimate the Towns County Indians.

A football camp for Indians of all ages

By Shawn Jarrard
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Staff Writer

The Towns County Youth Football League's annual Youth Football Camp kicked off on Saturday, July 11, and League Director Jimmy Smith recruited 50 players for this year's season.

Helping with the camp were youth football coaches, as well as the varsity Indians and High School Head Coach Billy Barnhart and Assistant Coach Chris Vardo.

The older, more experienced players held workshop stations, where the younger footballers learned the fundamentals of the sport: blocking, tackling, passing and receiving.

Youth cheerleaders were there to lend support, and kids had a blast towards the end of camp, when varsity players held kicking, punting and throwing competitions within each age group, and ended the hot day with snow cones for everyone.

"We are looking for great things out of the rec program this year and out of you guys," said Coach Barnhart to the younger players during camp wrap-up. "I'll be there watching, because I've got one that's on the 9- and 10-year-old team, so we'll be there watching you guys and I'm excited about watching you guys."

Coach Barnhart invited the kids to come out and support the varsity team on Friday nights after school starts back, at which point the children cheered.

Senior kicker Shea Underwood closed the day with a game-worthy 40-yard field goal, to the delight of the children.

"It was a great day, a great camp, a lot of good instruction, a lot of good people here and a lot of good kids," said Underwood, who described his favorite part of the day as seeing the excitement of the children.



Future and present Indians were in attendance. Photo/Shawn Jarrard

ment of the children. "Just seeing them willing to play football and having fun."

Joseph Goble, who head coaches for the Mites, is optimistic about the season in light of the success of Saturday's camp, with its close interaction between the children of all ages.

"Coach Barnhart did a phenomenal job of keeping it in order," said Coach Goble. "You could tell he was organized, he came out with a plan, and he executed the plan. I was impressed with how much the players were really taking time with the younger kids and making a difference."

Youth football sign-ups are ongoing, and will run through Aug. 10, which is five days before the first game of the season.

Parents and players can contact the Towns County Recreation Department or sign up during any of the teams' practice sessions, which will be held Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 6-7:45 p.m. at the high school's practice field.

Those interested should

bring a copy of their child's birth certificate at signup, as it will be provided to the Smoky Mountain Conference as proof of age. 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.

"I'm changing color this year," said Director Smith. "We went with black pants this year instead of blue on blue, just to kind of give it a new look, and new decals this year."

Director Smith is thankful for the parents, all coaches involved, Towns County Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall, and most of all, the kids who will make up his teams.

"It went awesome today – we had 50 kids out today," said Director Smith. "A lot of kids were on vacation, so I've actually got more than that signed up. Coach Barnhart did an awesome job, the high school players did awesome. We couldn't ask for any better; everything went fine today."

TCHS hires new defensive coordinator

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Towns County Schools has hired a new defensive coordinator, Lee Bohannon, and he started working with the Indians last week, who have been busy with practice since early June.

Coach Bohannon is from Rock Spring, and spent the last 10 years at Gordon Lee High School.

He met Girls Basketball Head Coach Jim Melton eight years ago during the Battle of the States Tournament, and Coach Bohannon will help Coach Melton with his team this fall.

"This area is absolutely gorgeous," said Coach Bohannon. "It's gorgeous right now, but the one year that it snowed when we came over for the tournament, there was snow on the ground, snow on the mountains – you couldn't beat it."

Last year, Coach Michael Huwe served as the Indians' defensive coordinator, but his departure at the end of the 2014-2015 school year left the position vacant.

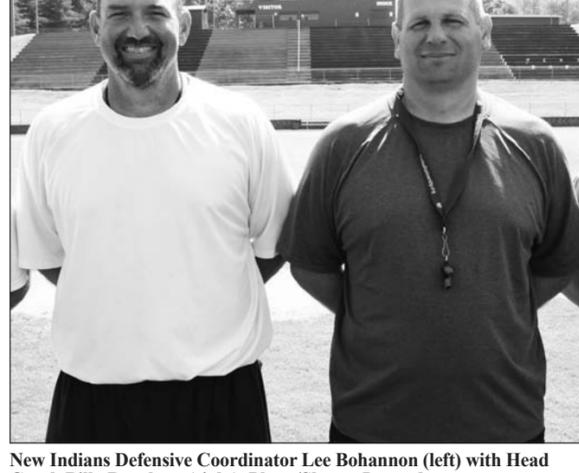
Coach Bohannon, with his apparent love of the sport, gladly stepped into the role.

"I've coached football for the last 25 years," said Coach Bohannon. "At Gordon Lee, the last four years I've been the defensive coordinator. Five years before that I was the offensive coordinator. My first year up there, I was mainly an assistant coach. Those five years that I was the offensive coordinator, we ran the exact same offense as Coach Barnhart, wing T."

Indians Head Football Coach Billy Barnhart and Coach Bohannon each coached with a mutual acquaintance, though separately, and that's another reason Coach Bohannon was on Coach Barnhart's radar.

For Coach Bohannon, high school football is all about the kids, and he couldn't be happier being in the area.

"Gordon Lee, up until last year, was a single A



New Indians Defensive Coordinator Lee Bohannon (left) with Head Coach Billy Barnhart (right). Photo/Shawn Jarrard

school," said Coach Bohannon. "So, the numbers that we've got here and how we're going to have to manage players – offensively, defensively, rotation-wise – is nothing different than I've had to do over the last 10 years."

Coach Bohannon will be taking over all of the weight training classes at the school.

"From what Dr. Hobbs said, the principal, and Coach Melton, we want to see some gains and increases in strength and size," said Coach Bohannon. "I think, from the first week, they understand that things are going to be different than what they've been used to in the past. I'm tough in the weight room. We're going to be pushed hard, we're going to get ourselves stronger and bigger, and hopefully a little bit faster."

As defensive coordinator, Coach Bohannon will be responsible for making sure that his Indians make their opponents work for every single yard gained.

"The No. 1 thing that I've tried to engrain in these kids so far in this first week is – I don't like giving up big plays," said Coach Bohannon. "Whether it's passing, running, whatever. We're going to be taught to line up correctly, be in the spots that we're supposed to be. If we can minimize and make

people go 70, 80 yards, and take 10, 12 plays – basically, my philosophy for 25 years, it's hard for a high school team to put a 12, 14 play drive together without making a mistake."

Along with Coach Chris Vardo, Coach Barnhart has another new assistant coach this year – newcomer Coach Alan Morris, who will teach Math Intervention classes at the high school.

"Coach Bohannon is going to be a great addition to our staff, both of these guys are, to our school and our community, so I'm looking forward to working with both of them," said Coach Barnhart.

The Indians will test their pre-season mettle in a 7-on-7 matchup against Forsyth Central this Thursday, July 16, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the Towns County High School practice field.

2015 Summer Day Camp

Summer is just around the corner and that means hot weather and Summer Day Camp for boys and girls ages 6 thru 12, the session being two weeks, running Monday thru Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Session IV: July 20th thru July 31st.

The fee for the two week session is \$120 or \$60 per week. The fee is payable to the Towns County Recreation Department.

Day Camp offers children sports game activities,

social game activities, field trips, nature hikes and much more. Children need to bring a swimsuit, towel, sprayable sunscreen and sack lunch. The Recreation Department will furnish the ice water for the campers.

Registration will be the first Monday at The Towns County Recreation and Conference Center located 150 Foster Park Rd. For more information please call the Recreation Department at 706-896-2600. T0J15,F1SH

Deadline nears for MUSA registration

Mountain United Soccer Association's Fall Registration is now open. Age groups from U6 to U16. You can register online at www.mountainsoccer.org. Registration forms are also available to print from the website. Forms can be mailed to P.O. Box 1862, Blairsville, GA 30514. Deadline to register is July 18th.

For additional information, please check our website at: www.mountainsoccer.org or email us at: musa.soccer@gmail.com

Dash to the Vineyards 10k and 5k

Join us for a race through the rolling hills of Young Harris! The Second Annual Dash to the Vineyards 10K & 5K Race presented by Towns County Chamber of Commerce & Crane Creek Vineyards will be held Saturday, August 22, 2015.

The 10K race will begin at the Brasstown Valley Resort Riding Stables at 8 a.m. and finish at Crane Creek Vineyards. The 5K will also begin at 8 a.m. but these racers will start and end at the vineyards. Runners will leave the stables and exit the main entrance of the Resort, run down Hwy. 76 to the intersection of Hwy. 66, make a right on Hwy. 66 and continue on to Byers Creek Road. From there,

competitors will experience both downhill and uphill climbs to the finish at Crane Creek Vineyards. It's the best time to dash to the vineyards because Crane Creek in August has the most breath-taking views of the year!

Trophies will be awarded to 10K runners as follows: Top overall male and female, and top male and female finishers of all age divisions. Ribbons and commemorative glasses will be given to top 3 male/female in a variety of age groups.

Shuttles will be available after the race to take 10K runners back to the Stables. T-shirts will be guaranteed to all who pre-register. Registration is now open

at the Towns County Chamber office located at 1411 Jack Dayton Circle, Young Harris (directly across the street from the entrance to The Ridges Resort) or online at www.active.com. Forms are also available on the Chamber's website www.mountaintopga.com. (On the home page click the link for "Things To Do".) Entry Fee is \$25 before 8/07/15 and \$30 after. The cost is the same for both the 10K and 5K race. A portion of the proceeds will benefit scholarships for graduating student athletes.

For more information, call the Towns County Chamber of Commerce at (706) 896-4966, or you can email Candace Lee at candacelee@brmcmc.net.

Chatuge Shores Ladies Golf welcomes the sunshine

After a week of rain, Tuesday dawned clear and sunny signaling good golf weather. The Chatuge Shores Ladies took advantage of the great weather to enjoy a round of golf on the newly trimmed course. In several places, trees have been removed to showcase the view of Lake Chatuge from the tee box. While there is still work to be done to remove some of the downed trees, the results are nothing less than spectacular.

The game on Tuesday was two best balls. In each foursome the two best balls on each hole were selected to determine the final score. The first place winners with a score of 128 were the team of Debi Holland, Nancy Steck, Carol Baxter, and Frankie Medford. Coming in second with a score of 131 were Loretta Hughes, Betty Williams,

Bobbi Lehoullier, and Pat Seely. Third place with a score of 134 went to the team of Vicky Donaldson, Susan Palmich, Donna Workman, and Opal Rose.

The monthly general meeting, chaired by President Vicky Donaldson, followed with the minutes and financial statements being presented by board members. The ladies were thanked for their participation and support of the Chatuge Shores Classic which raised over \$5,000 for needed funds for repair and enhancements of the golf course. Judy Schmitt and Sandy Jersey reminded members of the upcoming Food Pantry Benefit Golf Tournament coming up on August 22, sponsored by the Chatuge Shores Ladies Golf Association for the benefit of the tri-county food pantries. More information will follow



Debi Holland checks her drive on 16.

In the next couple of weeks so mark the date!
Submitted by Desna Wallin Jarrett
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