

Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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Gibson accepts dual roles at TC High School

By Joe Collins
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Jonathan Gibson is following a statewide trend all the way to Towns County High School.

The school's new assistant principal is now the school's full-time athletic director. Georgia high schools are now utilizing their assistant principals as their system-wide athletic directors.

Gibson comes to Towns County High School from Hardaway High School in Columbus, where he taught health and has been a successful coach.

Actually, he has coached for a number of years. He spent four years at quarterback for Austin Peay State University in Clarksville, TN, and during his playing career at Austin Peay, he would finish his teams' football practice and then hustle 40 minutes down the road to assist his father with his duties as a



Jonathan Gibson and daughter Kayla. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

head football coach at the high school level.

"I loved helping my dad coach and worked as offensive coordinator with his team and this began my journey into coaching," Gibson said. "I have coached at the high school level for 10 years with seven of those years as offensive coordinator."

Towns County High

School and the Towns County Board of Education hired Gibson in the summer to fill the assistant principal's position. Later, they named him athletic director.

Gibson was born in Sylva, N.C. and still calls Western North Carolina home, where he still has extensive family living.

"Family is very impor-

tant to me and the move to Towns County has allowed me and my immediate family the opportunity to get back to my roots," Gibson said.

Gibson and his wife Kelley have a beautiful daughter, Kayla, who is 3 years old.

"Coming home is very special for us in that my daughter will now be able to spend more time with her family in North Carolina and for that we feel blessed," he said.

Gibson's roots in education run deep. Early in his childhood, his parents made the move to Nashville, Tenn. where they both taught.

His father was a coach and athletic director for many years and this inspired him to follow in his father's footsteps.

"My dad was the greatest teacher I could have ever asked for," Gibson said. "He groomed me for the work I do now from my earliest childhood years.

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The Stance Begins the Process

Last week in tips we looked at what many golf instructors believe is the "DNA" of the golf swing and that is the issue of balance. Without proper balance, a golfer has a poor chance of making a good solid

golf swing. The rub of that concept is that there are many influencing factors that can affect your balance throughout the entire swing.

If you would allow me to indulge myself, and our most excellent editor approves, I would like to spend the next few weeks discussing the swing from the ground up. This way we can look at the swing as a whole and not just in parts.

When starting out as a beginner or trying to find the source of your flaws, one must look at the basics of the swing. Professional golfers often find that their individual problems are corrected by working on basics. This may seem trivial but basics are extremely important.

The stance is the first basic I would like to "address" as we begin our journey down the path to the correct golf swing.

To achieve the proper stance, one must first align the tips of your toes parallel to the target line. The target line is the desired path you want the ball to travel on, so choose it wisely. There is no drill to correct carelessness.

Next, place your feet a little less than shoulder width apart and stand straight up from the ground with your back as straight as your spine will allow. From this position, keep your legs straight and bend from the waist so that your arms hang loose under the shoulders. Bring your hands together to a point directly under your chin and this will indicate where the grip of the club will fit.

At this point, you should feel as though the upper body is "heavy" or leaning out over the ball and that your balance is forward. This is what happened to poor Charles Barkley. This is what makes you "over the top" on the downswing.

Here is the crucial step for all golfers in finding the proper stance. While trying to keep the very bottom of the spine back over the heels, bend the knees until you feel your center of gravity align over your ankles. This will place you in the athletic position that will allow you to return the club head to its original position on the downswing. At this point, you should not feel as though you are leaning backward or forward but balanced completely on both feet. Imagine a balanced shortstop in baseball preparing to move left or right to field a ground ball and that feeling will tell you that your stance is correct.

It is very important that you maintain this center of balance as you start the downswing because the force you create from the top combined with the weight of your arms will try to pull you into the ball at impact. This ability to resist getting "heavy" over the ball is what separates a proper swing from a faulty one.

Practice this at home or at the range before your next outing and if you find your balanced stance, and hold it throughout the swing, you will find the fairway much more often.

Good luck and I will see you at the course!



Tips from the Range

Lady Indians begin season with great expectations

By Joe Collins
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

The Towns County Lady Indians softball team has officially begun the 2012 season.

The Georgia State High School Association set Aug. 1 as the day when girls' high school softball could begin and the Lady Indians certainly took advantage of the opportunity to get it going.

The girls had been working out during the summer but had been limited to voluntary gatherings to familiarize themselves with the techniques that will carry them through the season.

Head Softball Coach Tonya Martin was excited to learn that the whole team had been involved in the voluntary workouts and praised the girls.

"This is wonderful to have girls that think enough of their team to meet without any coaches' direction to prepare



Coach Martin addresses her squad. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

for the new season," Coach Martin said. "I've been waiting to get busy with some serious practice drills that will bring this team together."

The girls met last week for their first official practice with great enthusiasm, but also with some concern.

Not only was this their first practice of the season, but it was the first practice with their new head coach.

The tension was broken as Coach Martin assembled the team on the field and immediately began work.

declared Moss as he explained the form the players needed to use in order to keep their backs loose and their gloves at the ready.

Conditioning will be the order of the day for the Indians as they prepare for the opening game of the season with Hart County on Friday, Aug. 10 at Lowell Nicholson Field starting at 4:45 p.m.

"Our seniors are excited and ready to go," Coach Martin said. "Look for some good pitching and strong hitting. Hopefully we can get several runs across the plate and open our season with a win."

Fans will not be disappointed with the efforts of this year's Lady Indians' Softball team.

They are talented, athletic and have a good coaching staff. Their games will be played from the heart and that makes for a very interesting and exciting year. Come out and support the Lady Indians' Softball this year.

You may be surprised.

Middle School Indians have high hopes for 2012

By Joe Collins
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

The Towns County Middle school football season has begun amid high hopes and expectations.

Head Football Coach Chris Vardo believes his players are as ready to go as any middle school team he has had the privilege to work with.

"We have a lot of players out this year and several returning veterans," Coach Vardo said. "The kids who are returning are eager to get going and they are helping the newer guys with their fundamentals both verbally and by example. That really helps us as a coaching staff."

This is Coach Vardo's first year as head football



Middle School practice is underway. Photo/Lowell Nicholson.

coach and he seems to have a grasp of the situation as he commands the field like a seasoned veteran. The drills are organized and very efficient with the players hustling from

one training area to the next.

"Every player knows that no starting lineup is settled yet and they are really working hard to capture their desired position," declared Vardo as he

examined this year's roster.

The Middle School is very fortunate to have a solid coaching staff as the 2012 season gets underway.

Coach Shea Taylor is responsible for the defensive backs and wide receivers and Coach Darryl McClure is taking charge of the offensive line and linebackers. Together this staff has several years of coaching experience and the players respect them for it.

Coach McClure is a treasure that Towns County should appreciate. He hails from Hayesville, NC where he coached girl's basketball for many years. The proof is in the pudding when looking at his record because he has six state basketball championships in his career. This experience is invaluable for the middle school.

TCHS 2012 Football Schedule

- Aug. 17: @ Dawson Co. (Scrimmage)
- Aug. 24: @ Hayesville, NC
- Aug. 31: vs Union County
- Sept. 7: @ Fellowship Christian
- Sept. 14: @ Rabun County
- Sept. 21: vs Rabun Gap
- Oct. 5: @ Copper Basin, TN
- Oct. 19: vs North Cobb Christian
- Oct. 26: vs St. Francis
- Nov. 2: @ Lakeview
- Nov. 9 vs Hebron Christian

Incidentally, his son Jason is the line coach for the high school football squad.

"At the middle school level we get to work more on fundamentals than at the high school level and that helps the kids focus on getting better," Coach Vardo said. "It also prepares our eighth graders for the jump to high school ball."

This year's schedule has six games. At the end of the season, teams in the region are ranked and the playoffs begin. The playoffs offer the top four ranked teams a chance to play for the championship.

"Our goal this year is to be in the top four and have an opportunity to play for the overall championship," Coach Vardo said. "I believe we have a strong chance of doing just

that."

The middle school and the high school really want to thank Youth Football Director Jimmy Smith and his coaches, for their tireless effort in preparing these athletes for their future in football. A large majority of the talent, on the field for each school, have come from the Youth Football League and the knowledge they gain from this great program benefits both teams.

If you attend one of the middle school games, remember to stay for the fifth quarter. This is when the younger kids get to shine. This helps them learn to play football in an organized setting in front of an actual crowd.

Good luck TCMS Indians and go get 'em!

TC Youth Football League practice underway

By Joe Collins
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

The Youth Football League of Towns County got underway last Monday with the first official practice of the 2012 season. Sixty-four kids aged 5 years to 9 years met at the Towns County High school practice field to begin and continue their journey into organized football.

The Youth Football League of Towns County is part of the North Georgia Youth Football League and should not be confused with the Recreation Department football program. Director Jimmy Smith has been at the helm of this league for 16 years and is very determined to continue this program that proves to be a training ground for future high school and middle school football players.

"Our goal is to teach good solid fundamentals to these kids but we also hope to win the overall championship. We've finished second three times over the last several years and this year is looking pretty good to break that bridesmaid



Pads were popping at football practice. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

syndrome," stated a hopeful Smith.

The YFL is an amazing program. There are 14 coaches spread out all over the field working with the 5 and 6 years old group, the 7 and 8 years old group and the 9 years old group.

The pads were popping when the 9-year-old group started practicing tackling and ball control drills.

These kids really enjoyed finally getting to do some hitting and the enthusiasm spread throughout the rest of

the squad.

The 7 and 8 years old group started with some simple agility drills and later moved into passing and catching maneuvers. There was one defensive player and one offensive player running patterns down the sideline as the young quarterback threw really nice passes averaging around twenty yards. That is pretty good for a kid of 8.

The 5 and 6 years old group suited up in helmets only and learned the fundamentals of the basic drills that they will use

all the way through their career. This attention to basics is what will benefit Towns County football teams in the future.

Director Jimmy Smith would like for the parents to know that he appreciates their understanding in the way he and the coaches have worked out the practice routine and for obeying the rules that have been established for the practice sessions. "It's really helpful when the parents let us do our job and work with their children during practice. The rules have been set up to benefit the kids but also to make the parents a part of the program without hindering the performance of the young stars of tomorrow. The coaches and I would just like to say thank you for that," a grateful Director Smith said.

These kids work hard and it's showing. When the coaches demand performance, the young athletes obey with hustle and eagerness. Football is a passion they are developing and their desire to be the best they can be is inspiring. The future of Towns County football is looking up thanks in a big way to the YFL.

TC Rec Department Info

Attention Fitness Room Participants:

Listed are the operating hours and new participant orientation hours. Anyone using the equipment must go thru an orientation. The weekly schedule is as follows:
Orientation Instructor is Gary Noe

Hours of orientation:
Mondays: 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

Tuesdays: 3:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Thursdays: 3:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Hours of Operation:
Monday thru Friday 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Saturday 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Thank you for your patience and cooperation. Please enjoy. Towns County Recreation Department.

Come Exercise With Us

The Recreation Department wants to remind everyone that we are offering the fol-

lowing exercise classes each week at the Towns County Recreation Center.

YOGA CLASSES - We have 2 separate class times instructed by Pat Tomczyk.

EVENING CLASS- Each Monday from 4 p.m. - 5:15 p.m.

MORNING CLASS Each Thursday from 9:30 a.m. - 10:45 a.m. (\$10 per Class or \$30 per calendar month.)

MORNING AEROBICS CLASSES - Each Monday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings from 9:30 a.m. - 10:45 a.m.

Our instructor is Donna McAuliffe.

Tai Chi- Each Thursday morning from 10:45 a.m. - noon. Our instructor is Pat Tomczyk. (\$10 per Class or \$30 per calendar month.)

For these programs and any other information we can help you with, just call the Recreation Department at (706)-896-2600.