

# Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

www.townscountyherald.net • E-mail: tcherald@windstream.net

## Indians duke it out with Rabun Gap in scrimmage as Barnhart era begins

By Shawn Jarrard  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

Without a doubt, these are Billy Barnhart's Towns County Indians.

The 27-member squad was flying around, hitting, and finding the holes on offense.

Their play reflected the style of football that Coach Barnhart preaches.

It was a sea of Indian blue at Frank McClure Stadium on this Friday night.

Pre-game excitement buzzed throughout the partisan Indian crowd as the stands began to fill up before the opening kickoff. This was Coach Barnhart's debut as head football coach and fans were looking for results. Most were pleased with what they witnessed on this night.

The air was cool, the night was young, and the Indians looked ready to play some football.

The Indians came close on this night, but, fell short to the Rabun Gap Eagles by a score of 20-13.

"From day one, they've worked their tails off, and had great attitudes," said Coach Barnhart. "And I didn't expect anything less tonight, and they gave me what I expected. They're doing a great job and I'm proud of them."

The Indians, who begin play in Region 8-A competition this season, lost a hard fought game, but one thing was clear – it wasn't from lack of effort. These Indians won't quit and they love their new head coach.



Coach Barnhart and the Indian offense during a second half timeout during Friday's scrimmage contest. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

Rabun Gap lit the scoreboard up first with a 70-yard run and failed on the point after attempt. The Indians answered in the second quarter when running back Kobe Denton carried the ball from the 35-yard-line in for a touchdown, and the point after by kicker Shea Underwood was good, giving the Indians a 7-6 lead.

Man to man coverage was on point, as defensive back Colton Shook made sure that Eagles receivers heard his footsteps all night long. The

Indians made the Eagles work for every yard gained, and then some.

The Eagles found the scoreboard again before the game clock was turned on for this scrimmage. However, the Eagles knew they had been in a football game before the final horn sounded.

Coach Barnhart was proud of the effort. That much was evident in his post-game tone.

"We've pushed them hard all summer long, and

they've continued to push and strive each and every day, and just how hard they went at it tonight – it was a long night, and they never quit," said Barnhart.

Indians running back Cruz Shook repeatedly handled the pigskin Friday night, with several progressive carries under his belt. And Denton proved an offensive wonder, scoring his second touchdown of the night shortly before the game ended. The valiant effort made by the Indians may not



The new-look Indians take the field for the first time in 2014. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

have culminated in a win, but the team got out there, played their hardest, and got a good first look at where to improve.

"I thought we played real well defensively," said Barnhart. "But offensively, we've got a lot of work to do up front still, and securing the ball. We can't afford to fumble the ball at all, and we fumbled the ball a few times tonight."

Coach Barnhart knows what to work on, and the Indians will be ready come game time this Friday night, when

they play their arch rival from North Carolina, the Hayesville Yellow Jackets in Clay County, NC at 7:30 for another scrimmage game.

"I didn't sleep much last night (Thursday), and was antsy all day today," said Coach Barnhart. "Just to get this first one under us – I'm relieved, but it was great to get back under the lights. Nothing better than Friday night lights, and that's why I do what I do. I love this right here."

## Youth football splits in SMC debut

By Shawn Jarrard  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

**Ducktown, Tenn.** – Towns County Youth Football League is finally upon us, and the first games opened Saturday at Copper Basin High School, as Towns County kids gave Ducktown, Tenn., something to quack about.

For those of the uninitiated, the league is divided into age-based divisions: Pee Wee, ages 5-6; Termite, ages 7-8; Mite, ages 9-10; and Midget, ages 11-12.

Towns County went 2-2 for the conference against Smokey Mountains, with Pee Wees winning 28-0, Termites going strong at 12-6, and Mites with a near victory at 16-14.

The Midgets struggled a little bit, coming short of a win at 42-0.

"We're just playing all 11-year-olds against all 11, 12," said Youth Football Director Jimmy Smith. "Some of these kids turn 13 we're playing against. It depends on the date. Cutoff is July 31st. That means by Aug. 1st you could turn 13. That's how it happened in the Smokey Mountains."



Jimmy Smith

Several players had time to shine, like Pee Wee quarterback Cruz Kitchens, who went 162 yards for three touchdowns at only six years of age. Putting up numbers like that, it's likely Cruz will be scouted before too long.

Cooper Floyd, also a Pee Wee, was a force to be reckoned with on both sides of the ball. He went 55 yards and got a two point conversion, with eight tackles and a sack to boot. Teammate Aiden Burrell went for 60 yards and a touchdown of his own, and the entire team worked hard to shut down the Smokey Mountain Pee Wees with a 28-0 win.

This year marks Program Director Smith's 18th season with the Youth Football League,

and he loves every minute of it.

"I'm there for the kids, I'm not there for anything but the kids," said Smith. "Just to see the kids win, lose, it doesn't matter. They still love the game of football, so that's why I'm up there."

Saturday saw some ups and downs, highs and lows, but everyone had a good time and tried their best. Towns County should be proud of its youngins, and put Saturday down on its calendars to show some love for the first games of the season on home turf. Congratulations will also be in order for such a promising start to the season.

"This was our first game," said Smith. "We split – we won two and lost two. We've got Hayesville next week, and we've got them at home. Please, everybody, come out and watch us play. We need support from the county to come out and watch our little guys growing up, and for the future of the high school team, I'm hoping, one day."

Expect a high-octane weekend this Saturday, as the Youth Football League takes on Hayesville all day, beginning at 11 am at Towns County High School.

## TCMS sweep double header vs GWA

By Shawn Jarrard  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

The Towns County Middle School Lady Indians had a terrific day Saturday, as the girls won both games of their doubleheader against George Walton Academy.

And Head Coach Jessica Berrong couldn't be happier with their performance.

"I was very pleased," said Coach Berrong. "They're a talented, young group of girls. Most of them are sixth graders, so we're extremely young compared to the other middle school teams."

One player in particular stood out, and the slap of her glove on her leg reverberated throughout the stands with every pitch.

"She's got the arm of a high-schooler," said Towns County Schools Resource Officer Donnie Jarrard.

Kennedy Henson, a sixth grader who just turned 11, isn't the first in her family to play for the Lady Indians. Her older sister, Kristen, is on the varsity team, which also played a doubleheader before the start



Kennedy Henson

of middle school play. Her mother showed up to support the teams, and spoke well of Kennedy's ability following the two wins she pitched.

"She's got nerves of steel," said Robyn Henson. "Nothing seems to rattle her."

The team as a whole played solid ball, both at bat and around the diamond, ending the first game with an 11-2 victory in five innings, and the

second game 8-4. Pitching and teamwork ruled the day.

"We had great pitching today. Kennedy Henson shut them down, more or less," said Coach Berrong. "Our catcher, Sophia Shook, did really well, too. For the most part, it was just them back and forth, because Kennedy kind of dominated, but we had a solid infield as far as steals, throwing people out, and tags."

The TCMS Lady Indians put on one heck of a show, and represented what there is to be proud of in Towns County youth.

"We've got the best kids here of any school in the nation," said SRO Jarrard. "They're good kids."

Judging from the way the girls coordinated with each other on the field, one would hardly believe that the team was less than two weeks old.

"We picked the team the first day of school, which was the 7th," said Coach Berrong. "So nine days later, they've made a pretty good group."

Next up is an away game on Tuesday, Aug. 19th against Oglethorpe at 5 p.m., so stay tuned.

## George Walton takes two from Lady Indians

By Shawn Jarrard  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

The Varsity Towns County Lady Indians debuted for their first home games at Lowell Nicholson Field on Saturday against George Walton Academy in a doubleheader that ended in a double loss.

But the Lady Indians played a fine couple of games, regardless of the outcome, and Head Coach Brandon Rowland, who is starting his first year coaching the varsity team, has faith in his girls.

"They're getting together, they're coming together as a team," said Coach Rowland. "We were a little rocky starting off, but I think they're playing well together now. I just look forward to the rest of the season."

The first game went for a 9-3 loss, with the second game ending after five innings with a 9-0 score in George Walton's favor.

Coach Rowland sees the potential in the team, and has a good idea of where to start improving.

"I'd say our defense, we're throwing the ball around a little too much," said Coach Rowland. "I'd like to see them hit the spots a little better. And then offensively, we have our good days and we have our bad, but I would say we probably need to crack down a little bit on defense and get a little better there."

The girls are playing in Region 8-A, and the softball sea-



The Towns County Lady Indians' infield converges on a George Walton pop up. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

son has only begun. Here at the onset, Rowland would like everyone to remember why they're all out there in the first place.

"Really, I told them one thing," said Rowland. "I wanted to come in here and make sure they're having, for one, a good high school experience. Coming in here, having a good time, and learning the game a little bit. They've gone through a few coaches in the past, and I told them I'm no different. I want to come in here, make sure we're having fun, but at the same time learning the game and playing ball."

Losing twice on Saturday was not entirely unexpected,

and Coach Rowland feels the worst is behind them and takes the good with the bad. Pitchers Tori Morgan and Emily Ledford threw a game apiece, and second baseman Carly Gilfillian hit a particularly sweet double in the last inning of the game.

"We did very well as a team," said Rowland. "The pitching was looking good. We had a few errors around the field that we want to work on, but it's early. We've got our two toughest opponents out of the way early."

On top of the recent doubleheader, the varsity girls have a Region loss to Prince Avenue by an 8-0 score, as well as losses of 6-2 to Gainesville, 8-0 to East

Jackson, 8-0 to East Hall, and 13-3 to Hart.

But heart is in generous supply, as the Lady Indians gear up to take on Lakeview Academy at home Tuesday, Aug. 19th at 4:45 p.m.

## VFW Golf League news

Thursday was another great day for golf. Bill Kiser and his teammates won again. Playing with Bill were Butch Patterson, Larry Jordan and Tom Moyher. They had a round of 8 under par for a score of 64. August 28th will be our tournament. T(AUG20,GI)S

**2nd Annual Ragin River Rubber Duck Dash**

1st place \$800.00  
2nd place \$350.00  
3rd place \$150.00

Race Day: August 30, 2014  
Race time: 1:00 PM  
Race Starts: Riverbend Campground  
2626 Streakhill Road - Hiawassee, GA 30546  
Finish Line: Streak Hill Bridge  
Cost: \$20 per duck  
Contact a TC Wrestler or Jeff Stowers to purchase your duck at jstowers@townscountyschools.org

**All Proceeds Go To TC Wrestling!**

Make your check payable to the Takedown Club.  
Any duck whose weight/structure has been modified will be disqualified.