

Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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Indians draw first blood but fall at Rabun County 45-7

By Joe Collins
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The first quarter of last Friday's game looked as though the Indians had put the loss to Fellowship behind them as they came right at the Rabun County Wildcats at Frank Snyder stadium.

The opening drive saw the Indians hold Rabun and force a punt and then put the ball over the goal line to draw first blood in their first possession of the game.

Junior Jackson Noblett took the reigns at Quarterback and led his team down the field behind some good inside running by Senior Wesley Bloodworth and the sure hands of Senior Joseph Gibson. The Indians drove the ball to their 22-yard line where Noblett followed his front line into the end zone on a keeper. Junior Cesar Bustamante nailed the extra point and the Indians led 7-0 with 6:22 left in the first quarter.

The Cat's next possession ended when a tipped pass was intercepted by Noblett at the Cat's 44-yard line and he returned it to their 25-yard line. The excitement was short lived as the Indians failed to get a first down on fourth and four from the Wildcat's 18-yard line with 2:57 left in the first quarter. This would be the last time the Indians threatened to score.

Rabun got the ball on downs and five plays later had their first score of the game. The extra point was good and the score was tied at 7-7 with



Juniors Jackson Noblett and Vonya Baldwin on offense for Towns County. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

1:55 left in the first quarter.

This series of downs by the Cat's saw some really strong front line blocking and the Indians just couldn't close the holes.

The Indians took the ball on their own 20-yard line after the Cat's kicker, div. 1 prospect Senior Carlos Diaz, put the ball out of the end zone. Bloodworth found about 5-yards of running room on first and ten but the Indians couldn't find any more yards and had to punt.

The Cat's drive was short lived as Junior Evan Keyes made a great stop and a host of Indians forced a fumble on the next play that the Indians recovered on their own 19-yard line.

The Indians couldn't gain

any yardage as it seemed that Rabun had found the Indians number and Bloodworth was again called on to punt. He hit a booming punt that took a favorable Indians bounce and ended up on the Cat's 42-yard line. Two plays later the Cat's led 14-7 with 8:35 left in the half.

The Indians were unable to move the ball on their next possession and were forced to punt yet again. The Wildcat's returned the punt for a touchdown and they now led 21-7 with 6:49 left in the half.

Junior Brett Barrett was able to return the following kickoff to the Indians 40-yard line after a penalty on the Cat's for unnecessary roughness was marked off on the kickoff. The first two downs for the Indians



Seniors Wesley Bloodworth and Joseph Gibson, and sophomore Kyle Davis line up defensively for the Indians last Friday. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

were solid as Noblett found Junior Harrison Hobbs for a gain of about 8-yards and a hand off up the middle to Bloodworth resulted in a first down for the Indians but they couldn't move the ball anymore and were forced to punt. The very next play from scrimmage for the Cat's resulted in another TD and the Cat's led 28-7 with 3:21 left in the half.

The Indians picked up another first down on the following kickoff when Noblett found Gibson over the middle. They were able to gain another first down when Noblett hit Sophomore Joey Mitchell for a pick up of 12-yards.

Unfortunately, an Indians fumble resulted in a turnover and the Cat's were able to score another TD with 4 seconds left

on the clock in the first half. The half ended with the Indians trailing 35-7.

The second half started with the Indians showing some renewed spirit but the Cat's defense was just too much for them as they could not gain any ground in the second half and the Cat's went home with the victory 45-7, the highlight being when Diaz hit a 48-yard field goal that had room to spare.

The Indians defense played hard in the second half and Junior John Davis, Senior Colton Stroud, who had four sacks in the second half, Sophomore Cruz Shook, Junior Vonya Baldwin, Junior Jared Gurly, Junior J.R. Bennett, Sophomore Kyle Davis, Junior Dustin Brackett, Bloodworth,

and Noblett all had a really good second half holding the Cat's to only ten points but the game was lost in the first half and the Indians couldn't find any momentum on offense to go along with the good defense during the course of play in the second half.

The Indians are a Class A school competing in a non-region 2012 schedule and they seem to always be in a "David vs. Goliath" situation by having to play larger schools.

These guys play with integrity and character in games where the opponents seem destined to do what it takes to win. The odds are stacked against them and hopefully next season they can compete more often in their own region without having to face such gigantic odds.

TCMS Indians suffer first setback of the season

By Joe Collins
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An 84-yard kickoff return by Kobe Denton late in the first quarter and an amazing extra points pass from Russell Cox to Major Moss gave the Indians an 8-7 lead but the Union County Panthers followed with some solid offense and showed the Towns County Middle School Indians what they would be facing the rest of the game.

The Panthers front line was quick off the ball starting the later part of the first quarter and on in to the second quarter, which got the Indians of balance a little in the trenches. The Panthers scored late in the first quarter and twice more in the second quarter to find themselves leading at the half 21-14.

The Indians sparred well and answered with some short yardage passes and some well managed receptions by Owen Bunchard and Moss to keep the game close during the first half of Thursday's game but were unable to overcome the size and speed of the Panthers defense in the second half and suffered their first loss of the 2012 season by the score of 35-14.

Cox was able to hold court and stay in the pocket during the first half of the game and because of that he moved his team gradually down the field for the second score of the first half. Some short passes to



Towns County's Luke Ledford carries the ball for the Indians last week against Union County. Photo/Joe Collins

Luke Ledford and Blake Silvers moved the ball to the Indians 42-yard line where Cox found Moss on a post pattern across the middle. Moss was able to shed some Panther tackles and crossed the goal line with 3:53 left in the first half. The extra points were no good and the Indians trailed 21-14.

The Indians defense got tough following the score. Denton made a great defensive play on a pass over the middle and almost had a crucial interception. On second and ten, Walker Ross made a really good tackle to stop the Panthers from getting the first down but still the Panthers threatened late in the half. Johnathan Watson and Ian Thompson showed some true grit on the front line

and stopped the Panthers in the backfield. Nick Shook, Zach Davenport and Denton got together and kept the Panthers backfield quite as they tried to score late in the half. The Panthers were forced to punt but the Indians failed to score and the half ended with the Indians trailing 21-14.

The Indians had some good field position to start the second half but the running game from Cox and Darringer Barrett just could not get going. The Panthers defense learned some things in the first half and shut down the Indians passing attack at the start of the third quarter. With 1:55 left in the third quarter, the Panthers broke a long pass play to score and never looked back. Their

final score came with 6:05 left in the game and left the Indians trailing 35-14. With 3:00 left in the game, both teams let the younger player have some fun and get in the game.

The younger players for the Indians looked solid and made some really good offensive and defensive plays. The defense held the Panthers to minimum yardage and proved to the coaches that they could play. The offense got some time in and picked up a first down as the final horn sounded and the Indians suffered their first loss of the year 35-14.

Head Coach Chris Vardo addressed the team after the game and told them, "We can hold our heads high and be proud of what we did today. We've been knocked down and now we will pick ourselves back up. We got lost in the trash stuff out there and when bad things happen on the field, you still have to execute and stay in the game and not get side tracked. This was a small battle in a big war and come Monday we will work on the things we need to work on to get better."

The TCMS will play its next game at home against Lumpkin on Sept. 20. Game time is 5:30 p.m. This will be the second to last game of the 2012 regular season, so if you haven't been able to catch a game this year then come on out and support the team and watch some good football.

TCHS 2012 Football Schedule

- 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

Joe Collins

Tips from the Range

This week's tips will interest those of you who play golf on a regular basis and find yourself with a shot that is not quite full.

Many of these shots are approach shots that affect the position of the ball on the green and have a direct influence on your overall score. These shots, that are not quite full yardage shots, are typically played with the shortest iron in your bag and are called "half shots". These shots range from 10 yards up to 75 yards and can test your patience to the fullest. Many clubs are broken within this short yardage range.

The key to striking these shots cleanly is acceleration. Just like chipping and putting, it is the acceleration of the club head that is important when faced with these little monsters.

All too often we make a backswing that is way too long and find the club slowing down as it approaches impact and this will cause all sorts of problems. You will see fat shots, skulls that fly across the green like bullets, shanks and high lofted short little nothings that leave you with a long putt when you slow the club down through impact. It will drive you crazy and can even make the preacher cuss. Trust me, I've heard it!

The best way to combat these shots is to stay away from them. Use your game management to leave you with a comfortable yardage into the green. For example: If you are good with your sand wedge and can consistently hit it a certain yardage then try and hit a club from the tee or fairway that will leave you that comfortable yardage from the green. Don't hit a club that will leave you with less than a full swing on your next shot. The pros do this on a regular basis and you should too. You will find that it is easier to hit the green with a full shot instead of a half shot. Also, a full shot will hold the green better than a half shot giving you more control over the distance your ball will roll following its landing on the putting surface of the green. Unfortunately, the half

shot is usually the result of a missed approach shot and is not exactly what you were trying to do. This scenario is what makes the half shot so frustrating because you just missed an easier shot and now you are faced with a more difficult shot than you had previously. Have you ever been in this position? If you play golf a lot you have, and will in the future if you haven't yet, so here is what to do when it happens.

First, don't get mad at yourself for missing the easy shot. Stay calm and focus on the shot at hand. Play the game one shot at a time. You probably still have a chance to make par so follow the bad a shot with a good one and let the putter save you.

Next, find a comfortable stance over the ball that is slightly open with the hands ahead of the club head. Make sure you are balanced and centered. Keep the lower body quiet by allowing most of your weight to stay on the front foot and don't promote a weight transfer through the legs. Use your shoulders to move the club away from the ball and keep your wrist from hinging on the backswing. This will help you accelerate through impact.

Finally, let the shoulders move the club back and through. Make sure the backswing is shorter than the follow through. A backswing that is longer than the follow through will cause the club to slow down through impact instead of speeding up. Keep your eye on the ball and don't move your head. If you move your head, the shoulders will dip and you will not make solid impact.

The half shot is one of the hardest shots in golf and must be practiced. When you practice these shots, judge how far back a comfortable backswing will cause the ball to travel in the air. Be aggressive and don't be scared. Allow the back shoulder to do its work and keep the club moving. Remember, a shorter backswing is better and the more you practice the better feel you will have.

Next week we will look at another very difficult shot: The fairway wood. Also, send "tips" your questions on some of the problems you are having. You can email me at jcollins.tcherald@windstream.net.

Good luck and I will see you on the course!

Lady Indians host Prince Avenue on Pink-Out Day

By Joe Collins
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The Lady Indians softball team observed Breast Cancer Awareness on Tuesday at the Lowell Nicholson softball field. The team wore shirts and hair ribbons colored with the traditional pink associated with breast cancer awareness. The Lady Indians couldn't get the bats to cooperate as the Prince Avenue Wolverines lit up the scoreboard and beat the Indians in six innings 11-2.

Senior Brittany Ledford took the mound against the Wolverines and found the going tough. She had trouble finding the strike zone in the first inning and it would cost her. With two out and the bases full, the sixth spot hitter for Prince Avenue connected with a high fastball and sent a base clearing grand slam homerun over the right field fence to put the Wolverines up 4-0 after the first inning.

In the bottom of the first, the Lady Indians saw the heat at the plate they would face for the rest of the game. The fast-ball they were facing from the Wolverines freshman pitcher



Sophomore Tori Morgan makes the tag at home. Photo/Joe Collins

has been clocked at 64 M.P.H. and she held nothing back. The Indian batters held tough but were unable to get any solid hits until the bottom of the fourth inning when Senior Meagan Ellis hit a solid line drive single to center field.

The hot corner was just that on Tue., but fortunately Senior Claire Wilson had her glove oiled and ready. Wilson fielded a grounder in the top of the third that left the bat so fast that the batter was out before she ever left the batters box.

Wilson never even flinched as the bullet came her way and she made the play to first. This was just one of the many balls she fielded during the game.

The fifth inning turned out to be a crucial inning for both teams. Ledford had trouble throwing strikes and the Wolverines' bats got hot. Two walks and four hits later the Indians faced a possible loss because of the run rule. Trailing 8-0 going into the bottom of the inning it was do or die for the Lady Indians. As they have

done so many times this year, they answered the call.

The bottom of the fifth found two Indians on base at first and second. Wilson connected with a solid line drive RBI single to center and Senior Emily Anderson followed suit with another RBI single past the shortstop.

The excitement was short lived and the inning ended with the Indians trailing 8-2.

The game continued into the sixth inning as the Indians played hard but were unable to break the grind they had been in all game. A couple of walks and some solid hitting put the Wolverines ahead 11-2 at the end of the sixth inning.

The game was called due to the run rule of a team being ahead by at least 8 runs after the fifth inning.

The Lady Indians Softball team has improved as a team this year but their record is not reflecting this fact. As of now their overall record is 5-10 and 1-6 in the region.

Their next game is on Sept. 20 at Hebron Academy. Game time is 4:45 p.m. Come out and support them as they try and improve their region record.