

Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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Towns County wins a nail-biter with St. Francis, 35-33

By Joe Collins
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The Towns County High School Indians football team won its second consecutive victory Friday night at Frank McClure Stadium against the St. Francis Knights in a game that literally came down to the final seconds.

A two-point attempt by the Knights with 45 ticks left in the game, skimmed the fingertips of the receiver and the Indians claimed the victory by running out the clock 35-33.

Senior fullback Wesley Bloodworth had 205 yards on 13 carries and two touchdowns while junior running back Jackson Noblet rushed for 101 yards on seven carries and three TD's with one interception. Senior quarterback Joseph Gibson had another superb night going 6-of-11 for 148 yards and one TD. All three men had strong nights on defense as well.

"We knew what we were going to be facing with St. Francis and we tried to control the front line and run the ball and it worked out well. We held St. Francis out of the defense quite a bit to keep him fresh to handle their nose guard. He is a good athlete and we thought if we could control that area then we could run well. Stroud and all the other front line guys did their job and we ran on 'em," said a proud Indians' Head Coach Kyle Langford.

The Indians took the opening kickoff on their own 20-yard line and quickly found themselves facing third and fourteen from their own 17-yard line. Gibson went to one of his favorite set of hands in those of Noblet and hit him at the Indians 40-yard line. With some solid blocking and good footwork, he scored with 9:54 left in the first quarter. The two



The TC defense held their ground during a critical two-point conversion for back-to-back wins. The Indians go for three straight on Friday for the third time in TCHS history. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

-point attempt by Bloodworth was good and the Indians led 8-0.

The Indians stayed on the aggressive warpath and when, the short style kickoff that Langford has become famous for, ended up in the arms of junior linebacker Evan Keyes on the St. Francis 31-yard line, the Indians attacked again. The offensive line went to work on the Knights' defensive front line and Bloodworth bulled his way into the end zone following a solid run by Noblet. Junior Cesar Bustamante hit the extra point and the Indians led 15-0 with 7:05 left in the first quarter.

With 6:21 left in the second quarter, St. Francis found the end zone on a good drive that saw a lot of good defense from senior Joseph Foster, junior linebacker John Davis, sophomore defensive back Joey Mitchell, and junior defensive lineman Cody Canterbury. It was a hard fought drive and the Knights had to earn it. The score and extra point cut the Indians lead to eight, 15-7.

The Indians failed to move the ball on their next series and were forced to punt. The Knights were able to bust a big running play with 3:17 left in the half for another score. The extra point was good and the Indian lead was down to one, 15-14, as the half ended.

The second half started where the first left off and the Knights found the end zone with 9:03 left in the third quarter but missed on a two-point attempt. The score was now in favor of the Knights 20-15. The following kickoff was a short kick by St. Francis and they were able to recover for a turnover. Some wicked defense by the defensive front line caused the Knights QB to stumble on a third down pass play and Noblet came up with the interception. The Indians failed to move the ball and had to punt with 6:43 left in the third quarter.

Senior defensive lineman Luke Parker, junior defensive back Brett Barrett, sophomore linebacker Kyle Davis, junior defensive lineman Gar-

rett Bradshaw, Noblet, Foster, Bloodworth, Gibson and Keyes all had really strong defensive performances in the second half and helped win the game for the Indians.

"They had a lot of guys who could hurt us so we depended on our defense to come through and they did. It was slow to come together but when they finally started playing, they played well," declared Langford.

The offensive line earned its keep on Friday night as they had one of their best games of the year. Junior offensive lineman Dustin Brackett, junior offensive lineman Jaryd Gurley, Bradshaw, Parker and Stroud all teamed up to control the trenches as the Indians' Noblet and Bloodworth moved the ball for more than 350 yards and five TDs, three of those coming in the second half as Bloodworth was nearly unstoppable.

The final few minutes was a tough time as the Indians defense had to fight hard to control a late quarter charge from the Knights. They managed



Friday nights are alright for fighting too. Photo/Lowell Nicholson



The Indians take the field. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

to score with 45 seconds left on the clock and pulled within two points of the Indians 35-33. The two-point attempt would tie the game and the Indians knew what they had to do. Some good defense on a short pass play by the Knights kept the ball out of the receiver's hands and the Indians had their second win of the season in the bag.

The win set two milestones for the TCHS Indians football team. First, Coach Langford has now broken the "Most wins by an Indian Head Coach" that was held by Hosea Collins and it marks the second time (2008) in known history that a TCHS football team scored more than 30 points in four games in a row. When

asked about the record Langford said, "I am proud for our team because it just shows how much talent we have."

The Indians have been on a more level playing field for the last few weeks and it proves that they could be a dominant team in the region if they played a region schedule.

They are very talented and their coaching staff is solid. Their next game is in Gainesville at Lakeview Academy on Nov. 2. Game time is 7:30 p.m. Come show your support on this the next to last game of the 2012 season.

Lakeview is tough and the Indians will need their fans to help them out.

Lets boost them to three in a row.

Lady Indians dust the competition at Area Championships

By Joe Collins
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ATHENS - Towns County High School Cross Country teams made a big statement on Thursday when they traveled to Athens Academy to compete in the Area 4-A public schools championships.

The Lady Indians brought home two first place finishes in the varsity girls meet and the Indians senior Bradley Smith finished third overall for the varsity men.

Junior Ansley Vardeman completely ran away from the field as she won the ladies individual title and anchored her team.

Towns County ladies captured four of the top six spots in the team meet as they won overall.

The mens team was scheduled to run first and started their meet at 2 p.m. The temperature was pushing 80 degrees as the meet got underway.

The course at Athens Academy is a difficult course and the heat added to the complications the runners already faced.

"Some of the guys were injured and others were having trouble with allergies but they stood up to the starting line and ran the race so we could qualify as a team," praised Head Coach Jeannie Ledford. "I am so proud of them gutting it out like they did. I know it was hard."

Smith has been the lead runner for the Indians all season and has shown some amazing talent, but his performance at the meet was nothing short of impressive. Suffering from pain in his shins, they taped him up and he ran like an Indian across that course coming from behind on sheer guts to overtake third place and leave many runners in the dust with a solid time of 19:35. His third place finish overall qualifies him to compete at the State level.

"I consider it an honor to represent my varsity team at the State Championship. I'm glad all my hard work has paid off," said an elated Smith when asked about his finish.



Towns County Lady Indians take home first in last week's Area Meet. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

The girls started their meet at 2:30 p.m. immediately following the guys. The temperature and conditions were basically the same when the meet started. Ansley Vardeman had a good start and she took advantage of it. She was patient early and allowed her stride to get settled and then fell into a comfortable pace that made tracks between her and the other runners. She led at the halfway point and she never gave up that lead finishing with a time of 23:10, one minute and 14 seconds ahead of second place runner TCHS junior Caitlin Sheffield.

The girls blistered the field and won with a score of 26, which was half of the second place score of 52.

Sophomore Sierra Nichols took fourth place overall with a really good time of 25:19 and junior Taylor Vardeman earned the final medal place with a sixth place overall finish and a time of 26:21.

Since it takes five times to qualify a team, the Indians turned to their fifth runner for a good finish and she did not let them down.

Karlie Albach finished 13th overall and fifth for the team and her score of 27:50 locked in the victory for the Lady Indians.

Alana Calhoun crossed the line next to place 14th and in case of a tie her score would have counted and would have also given them the win.

Miranda Queen rounded out the girl's team with a 25th-place finish and a time



Coach Jeannie Ledford and Ansley Vardeman celebrate their championship. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

"I am so very proud of my cross-country family, boys and girls. They've worked so hard. I say we are family because that is how we are. We all care about each other and that is a key to doing well. We all hate it for the boys team but we are all proud of the girls and the guys are right there with us. We are one big family and that helps us run better," said Coach Ledford while talking about the attitude of the teams going into the Championships.

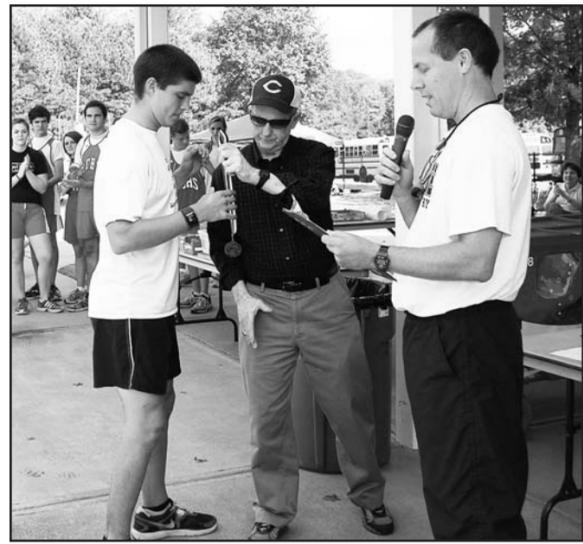
The possibilities of a bringing home a State Championship in Macon are very good but no matter how it all turns out, the TCHS Cross Country teams are champions. Good luck Indians!



Ansley Vardeman



Bradley Smith



Bradley Smith awarded his 3rd place medal. Towns County Cross Country. Photo by Lowell Nicholson.



Both teams celebrate their performance at the Area Championships. Photo/Joe Collins