

Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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Shook, Rogers place second; lead Towns to sixth at KOM

By Shawn Jarrard
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Staff Writer

The two-day King of the Mountain wrestling tournament came to a close on Saturday, Dec. 6, and the Towns County Indians placed favorably amid the 17 other high schools that competed in the event.

"Our goal with this tournament is to have a tournament where everybody can succeed a little bit, for our kids to get some mat time, for our fans to get to see some quality wrestling and for our community to be able to see it and get involved in it and embrace it," said Indians' Head Wrestling Coach Jeff Stowers.

Overall, Towns County placed sixth in the tournament, behind first place Banks County, second place Dacula, third place Stephens County, fourth place White County and fifth place Rabun County.

"It wasn't what I was hoping for," said Coach Stowers. "I was hoping to be in the Top Five – that was our goal. I felt like we had an outside chance to be in the Top Three, but we just ran out of horses."

Plus, day one of the tournament fared better for the Indians than day two.

"We wrestled really well yesterday – not quite as well today," said Coach Stowers. "And it hurt us in the team standings some, because we had some kids that I felt like could have come through the consolations and placed and



Towns County finished sixth at this year's King of the Mountain wrestling tournament with two second place, one third, and one fourth place finisher. Photos/Lowell Nicholson

scored some points for us. And we didn't score as many in the consolations as we thought we might."

Nick Shook made the finals, placing second under the light on the center mat in his 160-pound weight class.

Daulton Rogers also placed second in the finals in the 170-pound weight class. Making it to the consolation round, Kyle Davis finished third in his weight class of 220 pounds, and Kaine Hoffman, 113 pounds, finished fourth.

"Overall, we wrestled pretty well," said Coach Stowers. "We had two in the finals, two in the consolation finals, and we were missing Thomas Mitchell. He wrestled yesterday, got the flu and went home.

He's at home with a 102-degree fever, so he was a scratch. Our starting heavyweight was a scratch yesterday because he's got an upper respiratory sinus infection thing."

And while missing wrestlers definitely hurts the team score on the whole, there were some great individual Indian matches during the tournament.

"Daulton Rogers and Nick Shook had a great tournament," said Coach Stowers. "Nick wrestled the best match of his life in the semifinals to get to the finals, he eat a kid from Banks County who had beaten him before. Daulton's not real flashy, but wrestled pretty steady. Keanu Nguyen won a big match last night,



wrestled probably the best match of his career last night against a kid from Dacula.

"So, we did some good things individually, but when you're in a tournament like this, every point counts and every win counts for points, and we just didn't win enough today to catch some people that I felt like we're probably almost or as good as."

As always, Coach Stowers is optimistic about his Indians.

"I'm proud of the effort put forth, the strides that we've made individually in individual matches," said Coach Stowers.

Looking ahead from King of the Mountain, the Indians face a few more proving



grounds before Area and State Duals in January. The Indians grappled with Hayesville and Rosman at Hayesville on Tuesday, Dec. 9, at 5 p.m.

"That's always a fun match, it's a big rivalry between us and Hayesville," said Coach Stowers. "It's always good to see the guys over at Rosman. The next weekend, we step our competition level up, and we're going to the Creekview tournament down there, and expose our kids to some State Championship caliber competition."

The Creekview Invitational will be held in Woodstock, on Saturday, Dec. 13, and Sunday, Dec. 14.

Coach Stowers is thankful for those who make Towns

County Wrestling possible.

"Our administration does such a great job helping us out and is so supportive of our program," said Coach Stowers. "Our parents are phenomenal. They step up and do what they've got to do to make this thing go off, because without them, this thing doesn't happen."

"It goes off every year without a hitch, and everybody always brags on the people in the Hospitality Room, and the administration and how well it runs. And all that is a tribute to our parents and their support, and our administration and their support. It's great to work in a place where wrestling matters, and it does here, and that's a good thing."

Lady Indians fall to Union; rebound for come-from-behind victory at AA

By Jerry Kendall
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

It was a split decision for the Class A Towns County Lady Indians Varsity Basketball Team last weekend as they took it on the chin in a home court loss to Class AA Union County on Friday night, but made the long trip to Oconee County on Saturday and came away with an impressive, come-from-behind victory over the Athens Academy Lady Spartans, a Region 8-A foe.

The week's work left the Lady Indians with an overall 2-3 record, including 1-0 in the region.

**Lady Indians 22
Union County 63**

It was a tough night from start to finish for the Lady Indians against the Union County Lady Panthers who rallied from a slow start themselves with just a 2-0 lead more than three and a half minutes into the game for a 14-0 lead with 2:11 left in the first quarter with turnovers being especially costly for the Lady Indians.

The Lady Panthers held a 20-6 lead on a late trey after one quarter and extended the lead to 44-9 at intermission and 56-15 after three quarters in taking a 63-22 victory. The win extended the Lady Panthers' early season record to



After a home court loss to Union on Friday, the Lady Indians went on the road and knocked off Athens Academy. Photos/Lowell Nicholson

2-2 when including an eight point win over Banks County at Phillips Arena in Atlanta and home court losses by 12 and four points to Dawson County and Fannin County.

Nine-of-10 Lady Indians seeing action in the game entered the scoring column with leaders being Savannah Dyer with 5 points and Karlie Albach with 4 while Misty Lindemuth led in assists with 2.

**Scoring (vs Union)
POINTS: Dyer 5, Albach**

4, Landress 3, Johnson 2, Ledford 2, Lindemuth 2, Stroud 2, Byers 1, Henson 1

**Lady Indians 36
Athens Academy 21**

Athens - Turnovers and ice cold shooting had plagued the Lady Indians in their game against Union County on Friday night and these woes continued at Athens Academy for just over two and a half quarters before they came alive and



raced away with a 36-21 come from behind victory.

The Lady Indians managed just 11 points the first 22.5 minutes and found themselves trailing 6-1 after one quarter, 12-9 at intermission, and 15-11 by the 4:22 mark of the third quarter. Incredibly, they more than matched that 11 points production with 12 the final 3:27 of the third quarter in taking a 23-15 lead by quarter's end.

They continued the onslaught by outscoring the Lady

Spartans 13-6 in the fourth quarter in taking the 36-21 win. Madison Stroud, who seemingly sparked the Lady Indians with her quickness and high energy defensive level of play during the lengthy closing rally, triggered the run with a field goal at that 3:27 mark.

In fact, it might be described as a "Madison" closing run as three Lady Indians named Madison contributed heavily to the surge. Stroud wound up with

six points during the run as did Madison Johnson while Madison Landress added four. Two free throws by Misty Lindemuth got the Lady Indians a 15-15 tie at the 2:21 mark of the third quarter and Johnson got them ahead, for good as it turned out, 17-15 with a field goal at 1:21. Karlie Albach and Lindemuth contributed three assists each during the closing overall Lady Indian scoring run of 25-6.

For the game, scoring leaders were Albach with 8 points, Landress with 7, and Johnson and Stroud with 6 each while Lindemuth led in assists with 5 and was followed by Albach with the aforementioned 3.

On Tuesday, Towns will host Class AAAA White County. The Lady Warriors enter with a 5-0 record following a 58-27 win over Lumpkin County.

On Saturday, the Lady Indians are home once again as they host Region 8-A foe, Athens Christian.

The Lady Indians are currently sporting a 1-3 record with all three losses by double-digits. Their win came in the opener against Georgia Military College by a 37-21 score. The 37-point output is still their season-high.

**Scoring (vs AA)
POINTS: Albach 8, Landress 7, Stroud 6, Lindemuth 4, Dyer 3, Byers 2**

Acclaim continues for Towns County's Cross Country program

By Shawn Jarrard
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Just when it seemed like things had settled down for Towns County High School's Cross Country teams, more accolades come in.

And if it weren't enough that the girls' team placed first in the State Championship this year, and the boys' finished runner-up, the teams have even more to celebrate going into the holiday season.

"I am pleased to announce that our men's and women's Cross Country teams were selected as Team of the Year in each division from BLITZ," said Cross Country Coach Jeannie Ledford. "Tyler Grimsley was selected as BLITZ Runner of the Year, and Hannah Whitehead was Runner-Up."

BLITZ is a "web-based and cable television high school sports show" in Northeast Georgia, according to its website. The show is hosted by Brian Carter, and can be seen on Channel 4 on Windstream Cable.

Furthermore, Grimsley, Marshall Ledford, Whitehead, Taralee Arrowood and Alana Calhoun were selected to the Georgia High School All-State Cross Country Teams.

"Georgia All-State are the top 15 finishers at the State Cham-



Championship race," said Coach Ledford. "I'm extremely proud of my teams and each of the runners individually. Their achievements took discipline, sacrifice, lots of quality hard work and believing that they could achieve excellence if they were determined enough."

Coach Ledford recognizes that the challenge of becoming State Champs three years running was not an easy task.

"To be the best we had to compete against the best," said Coach Ledford. "They gave up their Fridays, they had to eat clean, they ran and drilled in extreme heat, rain and cold, their grades and behavior had to be good. I put them in races against larger schools and races I knew would have fierce competition."

Teamwork was the ultimate law of the land, which is

something Ledford knows well from years of experience coaching winning teams.

"We had to do all these things together as a team family with a positive mental attitude in order to give us the best chance at another State Title," said Coach Ledford. "I want them to feel what it's like to be the best as a reward of hard work no matter what the challenges that faced them: small Class

A public school, income, graduation of many teammates, starting the season late, inexperienced runners or injuries. The harder the challenge, the sweeter the victory."

Looking back on the season, the highs and lows of sports competition have certainly paid off.

"The joy, gratitude and excitement of success never goes

away," said Coach Ledford. "To win a State Title, now three, and a boys Runner-Up, it seems unreal at times. I'm just glad I could give all of my kids a chance to know they can be and are the best."

"When I look at the banners, the trophies, the State shirts and the smiles on my runners' faces, it makes it all real. I'm humbly grateful for every kid that has ran for me since I started coaching Cross Country."

And there's a reason Coach Ledford has been so successful – she's got a passion for the sport that propels her and her kids forward.

"From the first day as coach, this was my dream," said Coach Ledford. "I wanted to give my kids the same chance my high school coach, Coach Buck Carney, gave me and my teammates. He is still winning State titles."

Coach Carney of Hayesville passed away several years ago, taken in an untimely manner by cancer, but he keeps winning those titles through the lessons he imparted to his pupil, Coach Ledford.

"What comes next for my team family is the same as each year," said Coach Ledford. "We are going to show up and run, giving it the best, stubborn, will-to-win effort we can, God willing. I want my boys to get a State Championship of their own."