



Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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Towns County High School basketball wrap-up



The Lady Indians look forward to the fall when they begin another quest in Region 8-A basketball.

By Jerry Kendall
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The 2012 high school basketball season is now over with the completion of state tournament play last weekend in Georgia and North Carolina. Several interesting and sometimes unexpected results were present and we will take a look at a few of these results as follows with final records of teams in parentheses when known:

CLASS A BOYS

The Athens Christian Boys (30-3), the champions of Region 8-A, got past Turner County 46-44 by making two free throws with half a second remaining in the Class A State (Semi-Finals in the Macon Coliseum last Wednesday before taking it on the chin by a 73-49 score to Whitefield Academy (29-3) of Mableton in the championship game on Saturday. The Athens Christian Boys won their first four games in the state tournament by a total of ten points.

CLASS A GIRLS

There were no surprises in the girls Class A State Final Four as Wesleyan (29-4) continued to make a mockery of fair play with their fifth straight state championship and ninth in 11 years in a combination of Classes A and AA. After defeating Darlington by a 95-41 score in the Elite 8 round they

led fifth-ranked Taylor County (26-2) by a 26-6 score early in the second quarter of the semifinals on Wednesday before settling for a 55-40 win and then routed second-ranked Southwest Atlanta Christian (29-4) by a 68-44 score in the championship game on Saturday.

CLASS AA GIRLS

The championship game in the Class AA girls' tournament was noteworthy in the fact that the Buford Girls (25-7) lost to Lovett (27-5) in their attempt to win their fourth straight championship in the classification. Most of the losses for Buford and Wesleyan were to out of state teams as they choose to load up on metro talent and pursue the notoriety of a powerful regular season schedule but choose to follow a pattern of controlling their enrollments and facing smaller schools with state championships on the line. There was probably very little sadness around the state when Lovett took the measure of the favored Buford Girls on Saturday.

Lovett's win is noteworthy as related to the Lady Indians as the Lady Lions barely survived with a 44-43 win over East Hall (26-4) in the second round of the state tournament. The only loss to a public school during the year for East Hall was a 59-56 defeat at the hands of the Union

County Lady Panthers (21-9) in the East Hall Gym. Further, the East Hall Girls barely got in the state tournament with a 46-43 first round win in the Region 8AA Tournament over Dawson County who missed a layup with two or three seconds remaining for what would have been a 44-43 win. East Hall then sank two free throws in the closing seconds for a deceptive three-point win. Of course, the Lady Indians split two games against Union County and won three games by 10, 30, and 11 points over Dawson County during the season.

Pointing out comparisons of scores here and below do not take into consideration the effect of match ups between various teams and such factors as size, speed, quickness, varying defensive strategies, and especially the destructive effect of hot 3-point shooting such as was often present for the Lady Indians and Union County. While the presence of competitive games among other schools do not assure success for small schools such as Towns County if facing them, the comparisons are at least very interesting and certainly can't be totally discounted both here and as described below.

CLASS AAA GIRLS

The North Hall Girls (24-8), who featured star play-

ers in twins Mary Kate and McKenna Rushton who are the daughters of former Indians' superstar Eddie Rushton, gave top ranked Washington County a real battle before Washington County pulled away in the final minute and a half of the game for a 68-52 win in the Class AAA Semi-Finals for their 63rd straight victory.

North Hall trailed by just a 43-42 score near the five-minute mark of the fourth quarter and just 55-49 before the Lady Hawks sank 11 of 12 free throw attempts and a single field goal in the final 1:23 of the game in getting a double digits lead for the first time in the game and taking a deceptive 16-point win. Mary Kate Rushton led her team in scoring for the game with 27 points.

Some interesting comparisons of scores are present in Class AAA just as described above in the Class AA portion of the article. The North Hall Girls lost three times to East Hall during the season and defeated Allatoona 67-58 in the Elite 8 round with Allatoona having defeated Georgia Military by just a 35-30 score during the season and the Lady Indians routing Georgia Military 78-27 in first round Class A action.

CLASS AAAAA GIRLS

In a final interesting case of comparing scores, Class AAAAA State Champion Miller Grove (26-4) only defeated Forsyth Central (20-10) by a 52-45 score at Miller Grove in the Sweet 16 round with one of Forsyth Central's losses being by a 57-45 score to Union County in an early season tournament game at White County. Many additional comparisons could provide suggestions that the Lady Indians would be very competitive against public schools in higher classifications while other scores which might be reported would shed a different light on the comparison of scores at the Class AA, AAA, and AAAAA levels. The bottom

line, however, would seem to indicate that the Lady Indians would have been very competitive against many public schools in higher classifications.

CLASS AAAAA GIRLS

This is likely the first time for Towns County basketball to have a connection to both Class AAAAA State Finalists with this being through the Battle of the States Tournament. The McEachern Girls (33-0) of Powder Springs, who won this year's championship game, appeared in the 1996, 1997, and 1998 Battle of the States Tournaments, finishing fifth, first, and second in that order. Further, Head Coach Sheryl Fowler of this year's runner up Hillgrove (26-4) was head coach of the McEachern girls' team in those tournaments before taking on the challenge of beginning the program at the newly formed Hillgrove for the 2007 season.

Fowler has made it to the state tournament for an incredible 15 years in a row at a combination of McEachern and Hillgrove, beginning with the final two years her teams played in the Battle of the States. Finally, former Lady Indians and Union County Head Coach and former Young Harris College Women's Assistant Coach Robbie Stancil served as an assistant coach in establishing the program at Hillgrove under good friend Fowler.

NORTH CAROLINA CLASS A GIRLS

The Bishop McGuinness Girls (27-5) of Kernersville continued their portrayal as the "Wesleyan" of North Carolina Girls basketball by taking a 60-44 win over Chocowinity Southside in the Class A North Carolina Finals at the Smith Center in Chapel Hill last Saturday. It was the seventh straight state title for the private school

located near Greensboro, High Point, and Winston-Salem since being admitted to the formerly all public school North Carolina High School Athletic Association, breaking the record of six straight state championships by neighboring Hayesville from 1988 to 1993.

The head coach of the Lady Jackets in those days was Darryl McClure who has served for a number of years as a football and wrestling coach at TCHS and as an assistant for the Indians Basketball team during the 2011 season. Most, if not all, of the wins by Bishop McGuinness during the seven years have been by much more comfortable margins than the overtime victory over Cherokee in the state semi finals game after Cherokee took a very competitive win over Murphy in the Final 8 round game as reported in last week's Herald.

ALABAMA CLASS 3A GIRLS

From among the Tennessee and Alabama teams participating in the Battle of the States, the Hokes Bluff Girls (28-5) had the most impressive finish to the season. After falling to Union County 42-32 in the opening round, defeating Murphy 51-46 in the second, and losing to Polk County, Tenn., 54-43 for a sixth place finish in the Battle of the States, the Lady Eagles won 17 straight games and earned a 10th place state ranking in Alabama. Their season came to an end just two wins short of the state final four by a 78-73 score in overtime in the semi-finals of the Class 3A Northeast Regional tournament at Jacksonville State University to second ranked Pisgah (29-3). Pisgah, by the way, fell to the Lady Indians by a 65-46 score in the Towns County Tip Off Classic at the start of the 2010 season.

The Diamond Indians off to an 0-7 start this season

By James Reese
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The Towns County Indians took four losses on the chin last week as they lost to Commerce, Athens Academy and twice to George Walton Academy.

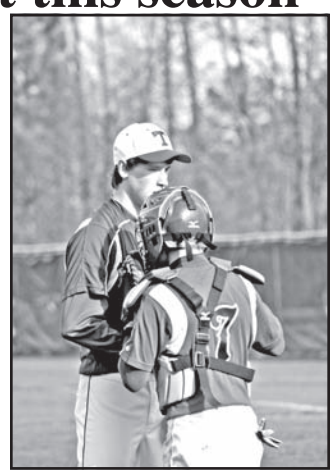
The losses all count in Region 8 play.

The best chance the Indians had to win: a 9-6 loss against Athens Academy. Will Miller picked up the win for Athens Academy, John Braucher picked up the save and Alex Haver and Mason Mallory combined for five hits in the win over Towns County.

The Indians dropped their Region match up against Commerce 16-6.

They lost a double-header to George Walton by a combined score of 24-0.

The Indians play three games at home this week. Their opponents include Hebron



Catcher Vonya Baldwin talks it over with reliever Boone Moss.

Photo by Lowell Nicholson

Christian Academy; Lakeview Academy and Riverside Military Academy.

The Hebron game is on Tuesday, the Lakeview game is on Thursday and the Indians face Riverside on Friday. All game times are at 5 p.m.



The Indians aren't happy about their performance against Region 8's top team George Walton.

Photo by Lowell Nicholson



Indians' catcher Vonya Baldwin makes the tag on Athens Academy's Mason Mallory.

Photo by Lowell Nicholson



Harrison Hobbs deals to George Walton on Friday.

Photo by Lowell Nicholson

Rough week in soccer: boys and girls lose

By James Reese
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The Towns County Lady Indians' soccer team lost two close matchups last week.

They took on neighboring rival Union County on the home field. After a long hard matchup, the Lady Panthers prevailed by a score of 4-3.

On Friday, the Lady Indians played host to Aquinas. The four-hour trip to the mountains didn't affect the Fighting Irish play on the field.

They dealt the Lady Indians a tough 5-3 loss.

The Lady Indians are now 1-4 in season play and 0-1 in Area 5 play.

The Lady Indians host Highlands High School on Thursday at 5:30 p.m. Last season, the Lady Indians won one and tied won against Highlands.

On the flipside, the Indians' boys' team lost 10-0 in their matchup against Aquinas. The Indians are winless on the season. The Indians next game is scheduled for March 20 against Riverside Military Academy. Game time is 5 p.m. in Gainesville.



Cesar Bustamante demonstrates ball control against Aquinas.

Photo by James Reese



Alex Fagin clears the ball out of goal for the Lady Indians.

Photo by James Reese



Ali Bleckley drives toward the Lady Indians' goal against Aquinas.

Photo by James Reese



Makayla Underwood moves the ball against Aquinas on Friday.

Photo by James Reese



Taylor Vardeman tries to regain control of the ball against Aquinas.

Photo by James Reese

Smoky Mountain Flag Football League

Season: Consists of a regular season followed by a single elimination playoff format. Rules: 7 on 7 Non-Contact Flag Football Rules (see website for rules) www.smffl.com. Teams/Rosters: Teams consist of 7 players, however, a team may start/play a game with a minimum of 5 players. Rosters may have a MAX of 14 Players. Teams must be signed up by April 14th and games will begin April 21st. When: Games will be played once a week on the

practice field behind Lowe's in Murphy, NC. This is a Konehete Park sponsored league.

Entry fee: Cost will be \$20 per person. This fee must be paid in full before you play your first game.

Interested in playing but not enough players to make a team? Contact us and we will get you on our free agency list and onto a team.

Includes: League Website, Stat Tracking, MVP, Player of the Week, Pictures, Plus More! NT(Mar14_A2)SH

T-Ball and Farm League registration

The Towns County Recreation Department will be holding registration for T-Ball and Farm League the week of March 19th thru March 31st.

Co-Ed T-Ball is for boys and girls ages 4 and 5. Co-Ed Farm League is for boys & girls ages 6, 7 and 8. The age control date will be prior to May 1st for boys and girls. Boys and girls ages 6 may play in ei-

ther the T-Ball or the Farm League programs.

Cost for these programs will be \$35 per participant. All registration will be held at the Recreation Department. Our hours of operation are: Monday thru Friday 9 a.m. til 8 p.m. and Saturday from 9 a.m. til 4 p.m. For more information please call the Recreation Department at 706-896-2600.