

Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports



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Towns County Sports Memories

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This week's article completes coverage of the recently completed TCHS basketball season with a second trip down memory lane in recognizing family connections between current Lady Indians and Indians and some of the Towns County athletes of the past. This is in effect a continuation of an earlier article honoring Jordan Moss for reaching the 1,000 career scoring total and last week's memory lane article addressing the accomplishments of several previous teams aided immeasurably by relatives of 2011 TCHS basketball players.

This week's article acknowledges additional sports related accomplishments of the past by individuals connected by kinship to 2011 TCHS varsity and JV players. Readers are reminded again that acknowledging all family relationships of the current players would be endless in some cases with just a sampling of accomplishments and events possible within the confines of available newspaper space.

It is very likely that some individuals and events worthy of inclusion have been overlooked and apologies are extended for any such omissions. Anyone thinking of such a performance or event is invited to inform or remind your reporter for possible inclusion in a future article of this type. Headings for this week will include the names of basketball players from the 2011 season with sports memories brought about by their participation following their names.

EMILY ANDERSON – The scorebook for his senior season of 1982 is missing but Michael Anderson was an ultra productive all around player for the Indians during that season when they captured the Sub-Region 8A North Tournament Championship in the Towns County Gym. The Indians won the tournament by taking a 92-61 win over Dawson County in the semi-finals and a 61-53 victory over Banks County in the finals.

Actually the score sheets for the two sub-region tournament games and two regular season games are available with Michael averaging 12.8 points per game in those four games. Of course, he has served with distinction for many years as a coach in various sports for the youth of the county, including as the Indians JV coach and as an assistant on the Indians varsity during the 2011 season. Michael is the father of Lady Indian Sophomore Emily Anderson.

ALI BLECKLEY – Lady Indian Junior Ali Bleckley followed in the footsteps of her mother, Cheryl Acree (Bleckley), and her uncle, Brent Acree, in playing basketball at TCHS. Cheryl was a member of the Lady Indians varsity basketball team as a freshman and sophomore through the 1972 season while Brent was a three year member of the Indians varsity through his senior season of 1976 when he was a starter for much of that season, averaging 3.8 points and 3.6 rebounds per game.

ELIZABETH TURNER – Although no records are known to exist, Todd Turner was a member of the Indians varsity football and baseball teams in the late 1970's. He is the father of Lady Indian Freshman Elizabeth Turner and Todd's father, Ralph Turner, was the highly regarded and highly respected Towns County Recreation Director when the agency was initiated some forty years ago.

BRETT AND GARRETT

BRADSHAW – The Bradshaw Brothers, Senior Brett and Freshman Garrett, were born in metro Atlanta but moved to the home county of their grandfather, Clifford Bradshaw, Sr., several years ago where numerous relatives have made their mark in sports activity. Among the most prominent are great uncle James Bradshaw and cousin Sheri Bradshaw (Hardin).

James was not only a fine scorer with scoring averages of 11.7 and 14.0 points per game during his junior and senior years of 1968 and 1969 but he is remembered as a tenacious rebounder and defender as well. Sheri was also a fine all around performer and is especially remembered for reaching the 1,000 point career scoring total while averaging 8.0, 17.5, and 15.3 points per game her final three years through the 1993 season. The scorebook for her freshman year when she played a prominent role with the Lady Indians is missing.

SLADE DAVENPORT – Few Lady Indians or Indians can claim three direct ancestors who were prominent members of the Lady Indians and Indians basketball teams but Indian Freshman Slade Davenport is a perfect fit for this category. His mother, Jaclyn Welch (Davenport) was a prominent member of the Lady Indians Varsity as a freshman and sophomore during the 1992 and 1993 seasons, averaging 7.2 and 13.2 points per game during those years.

During the 1993 season, she tied the school single game scoring record of thirty six points under full court rules set by Amy Allen (Silvey) during the 1986 season. Of course, this record was surpassed by Nikki Winn with a 37-point game during the 2008 season with this record also falling to a 43-point performance by Gabby Arencibia during the recently completed season.

Both of Jaclyn's parents, Ricky and Doris Moss Welch, were standout players at TCHS back in the early to mid seventies. Ricky was a three year starter for the Indians through his senior season of 1974, averaging 5.3, 6.9, and 7.4 points per game while being better known for his defensive and rebounding talents. He averaged 5.5, 7.9, and 6.6 rebounds per game during those years when his teams combined for forty seven victories, including the Sub-Region 8A North Tournament Championship and the Indians' first trip to the state tournament in 1974.

Doris was the top substitute as a sophomore for the Lady Indians and then a top flight starter for two years prior to graduating as a sixteen year old senior in 1975. The Lady Indians compiled a 63-18 record during those three years and included two sub-region tournament championships and two state tournament appearances, when just two teams from each region made it to state, among their successes. Doris averaged 12.0 and 12.2 points per game as her team's second leading scorer during her two years as a starter. She averaged 2.5 rebounds per game while restricted to half court play as a forward under rover rules as a junior and then 5.3 rebounds per game while playing full court as a rover during her senior year. She placed second on her team in both rebounds and assists during that senior year after leading in assists as a junior.

STETSON HEDDEN – Donna Hooper (Hedden) was a member of the Lady Indians varsity basketball team for four years through the 1986 season. Her most productive season was during her junior year of 1985, usually as a starter that



Luke Parker is a legacy link to former Lady Indians star Lana Brown Parker Photo by James Reese.



Emily Anderson (55) is a legacy link to former Indians star Michael Anderson Photo by Lowell Nicholson.

year, with perhaps her most memorable contributions being in three games against Banks County. The Lady Leopards had taken a 58-54 overtime victory in Hiwassee in early December and a 68-66 triple overtime win in Homer in mid January with Donna scoring ten points in the first game and six in the second.

The two teams then came face to face in the semi-finals of the Sub-Region 8A North Tournament at Banks County with the Lady Indians hoping to reach the sub-region tournament finals for an amazing fourteenth year in a row against the home standing Lady Leopards. Incredibly, a third overtime game would occur with the third time being the charm for the Lady Indians as they took a 43-41 victory. Donna scored seven points in that game with two coming on a field goal in the fourth quarter when the Lady Indians overcame a 32-29 deficit for a 37-37 tie and another on an important free throw late in the overtime period of the clutch win.

Donna is the mother of Freshman Stetson Hedden who made his varsity debut after promotion from the Indian JV's and scored his first varsity points on a late field goal against Prince Avenue in the Indians' Region 8A Tournament game at Commerce.

DEVIN HENDERSON – We fast forward now a couple of years to the 1987 season when the Lady Indians were looking this time to extend a streak of winning on opening night of the Sub-Region Tournament for an unprecedented eighteenth year in a row under veteran head coach Dion Eller. The Lady Indians had a tall order against Dawson County on this evening in the Towns County Gym after having fallen by a 67-49 score at Dawsonville in mid December and by a 75-52 score to the Lady Tigers at home in early January.

The Lady Indians would pull off a stunning 46-44 upset on two free throws by Sophomore Amy Sanders in the closing seconds of the game. The two teams had missed numerous chances at the foul line in the fourth quarter with the

Lady Indians having sunk just four of ten attempts with all six misses being one and ones and the Lady Tigers were four for eleven in the quarter with five of their misses being one and ones.

Making two free throws in such an atmosphere was quite remarkable for a sophomore making her first trip to the line in the quarter but Amy was up to the task in extending the Lady Indians' incredible string of opening night successes. Amy is the mother of Indians Senior Devin Henderson. Further, she is the daughter of 1960 TCHS graduate Jerry Sanders, a very promising young basketball player whose play was eventually restricted significantly by an injury to his shooting hand sustained in an automobile accident.

LUKE PARKER – After having been a capable but reluctant scorer as an impact defensive player and rebounder for the Lady Indians during her sophomore and junior seasons, Lana Brown (Parker) stepped forward as a senior during the 1987 Lady Indians season following the departure of nearly 3,300 career points by 1986 seniors Amy Allen (Silvey), Angela Rogers (Kendall), and Tonia Haney (Anderson). She averaged 13.9 points per game as the only senior in leading a very young squad to late season success after a very difficult start typical of such young and inexperienced teams against a very challenging schedule.

After a 1-14 start but with increasingly competitive contests, the Lady Indians avenged early season home court losses with late season victories at Banks County and Jackson County sandwiched around a second win over Rabun Gap at home for a 4-17 record entering the opening round game against Dawson County in the Sub-Region 8A Tournament described above. Lana included a field goal and 2 for 2 free throw shooting among 12 points for the game in the decisive fourth quarter in the win over Dawson County.

A sixteenth straight trip to the sub-region tournament finals in the final year of Dion Eller's nineteen years as the Lady Indians Head Coach would not be possible as they fell to Commerce in the semi-finals two nights later but Lana closed out her career with a twenty five point performance against the outstanding Lady Tigers team. Lana is the mother of Indians Sophomore Luke Parker.

DJ ROGERS – Maybe the most unique recognition of this series is that of JB McClure, Jr. of the TCHS Class of 1952 with the Indians scorebook for this season being the earliest for either the Lady Indians or Indians known to survive. JB was better known as Sonny Boy or Sonny and he led the Indians in scoring for that season with an average of 17.0 points per game for the twenty two games available with a few games at the end of the season apparently not included in the scorebook. He is the great, great uncle of Indians Senior DJ Rogers and a long time resident of Michigan.

In addition to the basketball scene, DJ has relatives with significant involvement in other



Ali Bleckley is a legacy link to former Lady Indians star Cheryl Acree Bleckley and former Indians star Brent Acree Photo by Lowell Nicholson.



DJ Rogers is a legacy link to former Indians star Brent Moody and the son of former Indians football star David Rogers Photo by James Reese.

sports at TCHS. His grandfather, Rev. Jimmy Rogers, was instrumental as a volunteer along with Jerry Palmer in getting the football program started at TCHS that continues to this day back in the late 1960's and DJ's father, David Rogers, later became a football player of note for the Indians.

Finally, DJ's uncle, Brent Moody, was not only a fine basketball player at TCHS, averaging 11.6 points per game as a senior in 1990, but a very prominent member of the Indians' Class A Baseball State Championship Team in 1988. He was a power hitting second baseman as a sophomore that season and in addition to stand-out play the next two years at TCHS, he went on to stardom on the baseball field for the Gainesville American Legion for two years and at Berry College in Rome for four years. He was informed at Berry by Major League baseball scouts that it was likely he would be drafted as a catcher in the fifteenth to twentieth round of the

Major League draft after his senior year but a late season knee injury ended his chances at a professional career.

As in last week's article which placed a focus on past team accomplishments similar to some of those during the recent season, the above descriptions give attention to the successes of individual players being honored and just scratch the surface of the accomplishments and dedication of these individuals and their teammates in representing their school and county. Appreciation is extended to all of the individuals involved, whether mentioned in the articles or not, for creating so much excitement and pride for their school in the past, present, and future. Best wishes are extended to all of our dedicated athletes as they create additional memories through their future endeavors.

This is the conclusion of a two-part series by Jerry Kendall on players of Indians Sports Past.

2011 TCCC Fishing For Scholarships

Young Harris resident Tim Murray and his partner Bo Mashburn of Hayesville took home the \$100 fifteenth place prize at the Tri-County Community College Foundation Fishing for Scholarships Bass tournament on April 2.

The team's catch weighed in at 12.53 pounds.

The Roladers, along with 80 other fishing teams, braved the chilly morning temperatures and strong winds on Lake Chatuge for a chance at more than \$4,250 in prize

money. Prizes were awarded to the top 15 teams and to anglers who reeled in the biggest and smallest fish. The first place team edged out the competition with a 17.26-pound total.

Tri-County Bass Club and the Tri-County Community College Foundation presented the fishing tournament. Proceeds from the registration fees will provide two \$1,000 scholarships for Tri-County Community College students.

Sponsors for the tournament were: Pepsi, Murphy Electric Power Board, Bullet, Congressman Heath Shuler, Snap-on, TVA, Take a Break Portables, Signs Fast, Blue Ridge Mountain EMC, Amos Refrigeration, First Citizens Bank, Industrial Opportunities Inc., Ingles of Andrews, Ingles of Murphy, and United Community Bank.

Martial arts program at Rec Center

The Towns Co. Recreation Dept. would like to announce that Sensei Randall Alwine will be teaching the ancient, but highly evolving art of Koga-Ninjutsu. This is a highly effective form of martial art which involves mind, body and spirit. Training is offered for realistic self-defense - defense of family and an aware, healthy lifestyle.

Classes are being held each Monday and Wednesday evening from 6:30 - 8:00 PM at the Towns County Recreation Center. Price is \$60 per month (8 classes).

Our instructor Sensei Alwine is ranked as 2nd degree black belt in Koga-Ninjutsu "nidan". He is really excited about offering this program to all ages of folks in our area. Sensei Alwine also plans to have public seminars, private training, women's self-defense and children's special programs, which are in the works.

So come out and join us for self-defense training. For more information you may contact the Rec. Dept. at 706-896-2600.