

Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

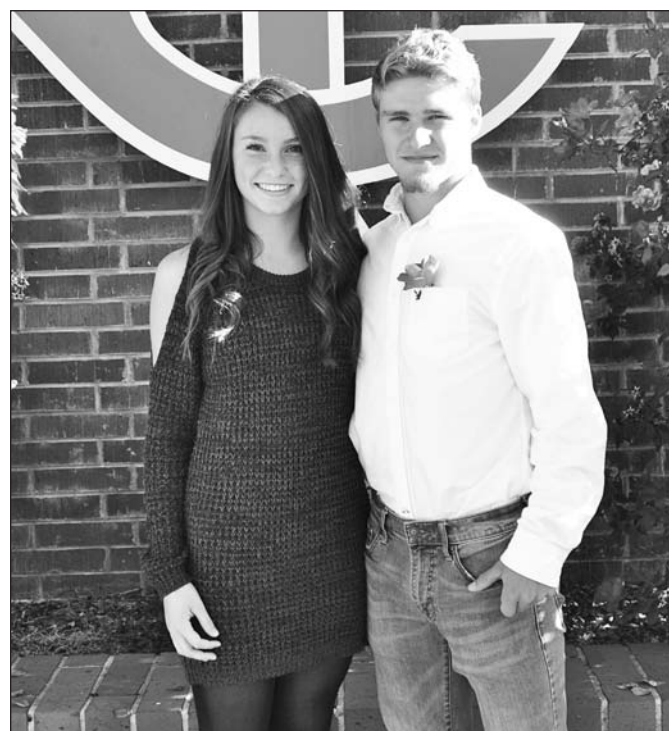
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Towns County Indians to play Athens Christian for Homecoming

Photos by Lowell Nicholson



Brooke Barrett and Andy Chambers



Hannah Whitehead and Cole Ledford



Hayley Stowers and Logan Cowart



Jenna Cole and Harold Cox



Kyra Tallent and Zach Davenport



Lori Cox and Jeremy Mays



Sara Beth Hobbs and Taylor Osborn



Sarah Bastian and Aaron King



Taralee Arrowood and Chase Williams

Georgia Mountain Pickleball Fall Classic Gets a Visit from Nate

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Pickleball has been heralded as the fastest growing sport in the United States, and that's certainly true in Towns County.

Now in its third year, more than 350 participants signed up to compete in the Georgia Mountain Pickleball Fall Classic, which is about double the number of players from the first year of the tournament.

Pickleball players of all ages and from all over the country converged on the Towns County Pickleball Complex & Courts on Friday, Oct. 6, for the start of the tournament.

Competition went smoothly for the first two days, though the third and final day of the tournament, Sunday, Oct. 8, had to be canceled due to too much rain from Tropical Storm Nate.

"For those of you that were able to participate Friday and Saturday, as well as those that were able to participate in the tournament socials, we hope you had a great time in the beautiful mountains of North Georgia. We certainly enjoyed the

American Legion Golf Tournament

The American Legion is having a golf tournament on Thursday, October 12 at 10 a.m. Join fellow Veterans and supporters for a day of fun and golf at Chatuge Shores Golf Course. Cost is \$55 per person. Call 404-295-6462 for more info. TOWNS COUNTY HERALD



Pickleball has been wildly successful in Towns County and the surrounding area, thanks in large part to the passion of those who play it. Photo/Shawn Jarrard

opportunity to put this event on for you," read an online message posted by event organizers.

John Hall, USA Pickleball Association Ambassador and Fall Classic Tournament Director, remembers when, not too long ago, the complex was nothing more than a few neglected tennis courts.

A lot has changed since then. The county built the brand new pickleball-dedicated courts, and the membership and economic impact of the local pickleball club have become apparent to all who stop to talk with those regularly playing in the new complex.

"Back when we first started about three and a half years ago, we had about 15 or 20 players, and I started compiling a list of players that were coming in and adding to it," said Hall. "Now, I've got over 500

on my list."

Continued Hall: "(For this tournament) we've got some from California and Arizona, Montana, Indiana, Virginia, and all the surrounding states.

"It's probably one of the most popular tournaments in the Southeast, I'd say, and evidently the largest (pickleball) tournament ever put on in the state of Georgia."

John and JoJo Henderson of Towns County brought their 3-month-old son Auswin to the tournament, and they were walking proof that the sport is suitable for all ages.

The Hendersons have been playing pickleball for a year and a half, and they became involved in the sport after stopping in to see what all the hubbub was about at the courts.

"It's a great sport, you make new friends," said JoJo,

as John added, "It's not just for old people."

PJ Dillingham of Asheville, North Carolina, showed her passion for the sport by competing in an American Dream superhero outfit during the tournament, and she rewards herself with a new superhero or supervillain costume each time she medals in pickleball.

"This is the most amazing sport as far as being able to engage all generations, and being able to really have something where you can utilize strategies," said Dillingham. "I don't have a background in athletics, I did not ever play an organized team sport or anything like that. I just found (pickleball) this year, and it's so fun."

For results of the Georgia Mountain Pickleball Fall Classic, check out www.pickleball-tournaments.com.



Tori Cox and Luke Woody



JoJo and John Henderson with 3-month-old son Auswin at the Georgia Mountain Pickleball Fall Classic. Photo/Shawn Jarrard