

Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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Lady Indians third at Class A Public Cross Country Championships

Towns County men finish 11th at State Championships; place two runners in top 35

By Todd Forrest
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Carrollton - Once again, Towns County Head Coach Jeanie Ledford and her Lady Indians Cross Country squad were locked in a battle at the Class A Public State Championships.

Each position lost or gained was critical. Every point mattered; from first place through 101st.

As Ledford checked off each runner that crossed the finish line, her confidence received a boost when Towns County's top five all crossed the finish line ahead of anyone else.

Telfair County had two girls in the top five, Gordon Lee could claim an individual state title, but the Lady Indians were the only team to place five girls in the top 26.

With several positions resulting in a photo finish, involving Towns, the final standings were too close to call.

However, when the dust settled, Telfair County was declared the victor with 64 points. Gordon Lee took second with 82 and Towns was third with 85.

"It was just one of those things in cross country where the distribution factor kicks in," Ledford said after the Class A Public awards ceremony on Saturday. "We had our five (runners) in."

Generally, if you get your five in you win. The distribution factor has always smiled in our favor over the years in tiebreakers and these exact situations. This year our favor ran out."

No one else was even in the same neighborhood as the top three. Fourth place Atlanta Classical Academy was 49 points behind Towns County. Commerce came in fifth, 40 points back of ACA with 174 points.

While it wasn't the preferred ending to Ledford's coaching career, her Lady Indians confronted adversity head-on this season and emerged on the medal stand in Carrollton, where they came within an eyelash of



The Towns County Lady Indians on the medal stand with their third place trophy. Photos by Todd Forrest

an unprecedented sixth straight state title.

"We started the season battling injuries and we only had four girls," Ledford said. "So we went from barely even having enough for a team to fighting back to literally being neck and neck (for a state title)."

Leading the way for Towns County was Hannah Whitehead, who crossed the finish line seventh at 23:15. Not far behind was 15th place Taralee Arrowood at 24:36 and 16th place Taylor Cornett, who came on strong late in the race to clock in at 24:47.78, forcing a tie at the with Hawkinsville's Sarah Andrews Rucker. Placing 23rd was Lydia

Moss, who passed ACA's Clara Mastrion at the finish line with a time of 25:26.26. To put it into perspective the significance of each point, Moss edged Mastrion, who clocked in at 25:26.78, by a half-second to steal a point for Towns County - while also taking a point from the competition. The end result: a 2-point swing.

Rounding out the top five was Jasmine Miranda in 27th place with a time of 25:50, two seconds ahead of Gordon Lee's Riley Cash.

The remaining members of the Lady Indians squad were Hayley Stowers in 50th and Sara Beth Hobbs in 97th place. Gordon Lee's Gracie

O'Neal took home first overall with a time of 20:23 - two minutes better than second place Shayla Cook of Telfair County.

As for Whitehead, she finished five seconds back of seventh place and seven seconds ahead of ninth place.

In the boys race, Kayne Hoffman and Blythe Smith placed 33rd and 34th, respectively, with times of 20:50 and 20:52.

Caleb Ledford came in 55th with a time of 21:50; Jordan Lovelace placed 61st at 22:10 and Liam King rounded out the Indians' top five in 75th at 22:40.

Other Towns County competitors were Ryan Tyler in 88th and Xavier Hogsd in 106th.

"Kaine Hoffman was the leader of both our teams and he will be missed, but the boys had two freshmen that really stepped up this year and made a difference," Ledford said. "They have a bright future ahead for the coach that decides to take them on."

In the team standings, Towns was three points shy of a top 10 finish, as Claxton held off the Indians with 240 points. Twenty-three points ahead of Towns was ninth place Terrell County and 39 points in front was eighth place Schley County.

While the Indians were in the hunt for a top eight placement, they put some distance



Kaine Hoffman



Blythe Smith

between themselves and the teams chasing them.

In 12th was Telfair County - 38 points back. Meanwhile, Greene County placed 13th - 60 points behind Towns County.

"The reason I returned for one more year was for these 11 seniors and they gave every single thing they had today," Ledford said. "Their performance was beautiful. Absolutely beautiful."

"You won't find a better group of kids than these two Towns County cross country teams. We are so elated to represent our town, our community, and our school."

Indians make state playoffs, celebrate 42-21 victory against Providence

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Football Head Coach John Cornett and the Towns County Indians set a high bar for themselves at the beginning of the season: to make the state playoffs for the first time in school history.

And as the final seconds of the game ran down in Providence Christian Academy's Vaught Stadium on Friday, Nov. 3, word had begun to spread that the Boys in Blue were heading to the GHSA Class A Public State Championship Playoffs.

The Indians defeated Providence 42-21, bringing their official season record to 5-5, the best Towns County football season in almost a decade, and the best ever in region play.

But they needed more than just a win against Providence to secure a spot in the playoffs.

Despite their stunning 56-13 defeat of Lakeview Academy on Oct. 27, the Indians moved from 23rd to 25th in the GHSA Class A Public Power Ratings, and only the Top 24 teams in the state go to the playoffs.

So, heading into the final game of the season against Providence, they needed both a win against Providence and at least one or two other teams ahead of them in the rankings to lose.

And that's what became clear on the sidelines at the very end of their winning game against Providence, that all the cards had fallen in the Indians' favor - right there at the end of one of the best seasons they'd ever had, The Tribe learned they were heading to the playoffs.

Post-season play means that the team's 11 seniors will get at least one more game together as Towns County Indians, and Coach Cornett is excited to be able to afford them that opportunity.

"This is what we set out to do this year, and we knew we could do it," said Coach Cornett, who enjoyed a celebratory ice bucket from players after Friday's win. "These seniors are unbelievable, to have the history we do, and for them to believe that we'd win it and be in the playoffs."

The team worked hard this season to make their goal a reality, setting off on a journey that had its ups and downs, but that ended with the Indians playing as a well-oiled machine.



Coach Cornett gets an unexpected ice cold shower following Friday's win. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

"We really believed we could pull off one, maybe two other games," said Cornett, looking back on the season. "And it didn't happen, but I really felt like if we got five, we'd make the playoffs."

The Indians' fierce determination to never back down, even in the face of adversity, won them their spot in the playoffs, and Coach Cornett said that their upcoming opponents are about to have their hands full.

"If I was another coach, I would not want to play us coming

into the playoffs," said Cornett. "I think we're a dangerous team right now. We've got history on our side and the kids believe in what we're doing - we're not done."

Continued Cornett, addressing the community: "Just come support us this week. Our kids deserve it, they've worked hard all year. They set a goal and they accomplished it. Now, we want everybody to buy in to what we're doing."

Senior Luke Woody, known for his ability to rally

fans from the sidelines, said after Friday's game that the season had taken on a surreal quality, especially after everyone learned that the Indians had made the playoffs.

"What more could you ask for?" said Woody. "It's almost euphoric. I've played ball since I was a freshman, worked my tail off, and it's just nice to see the fruits of that labor, finally."

"I just want to say thank you to the community for coming out and supporting us in all our home games, and coming and

traveling with us. I hope y'all come out and support us in our first ever playoff appearance."

Cole Ledford is another senior who will get to play at least one more game alongside his fellow Indians, and Ledford's mom, Penny, will have at least one more opportunity to take pictures of her son from the sidelines.

Rain or shine, Penny Ledford has photographed Cole and his teammates at sporting events for years, including all four years of high school football.

She's proud of all the Indians, many of whom she watched grow up alongside Cole, and she

said it was a parent's dream to see her son perform at such a high level.

"It's good to see a group of kids that's played all these years together make it to what they've wanted to since they were little," said Mrs. Ledford.

The Indians will face off against 10th ranked Pelham High School on Friday, Nov. 10, in Mitchell County near the Georgia/Florida line.

Game kickoff time was not available by press time, but readers can monitor the GHSA webpage for more information and a finalized schedule.

TCHS Basketball gets underway

By Jerry Kendall
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

The Towns County Lady Indians and Indians Varsity Basketball Season will be underway by the time most readers receive this newspaper as a result of a late change in the date of preseason scrimmage games at Robbinsville, North Carolina.

The games were originally scheduled for this Thursday, November 9, but were rescheduled for Tuesday, November 7, at 6:00 pm.

Regular season play is scheduled to begin next week with the Class A Lady Indians traveling to Class AAAA Stephens County in Toccoa on Tuesday, November

14 at 6:00 pm with the Lady Indian JV's to play at 4:30. The Indians will not face Stephens County as two games against Stephens for the Lady Indians balance their schedule with that of the Indians who must face Region 8A opponent Riversville Military Academy which has no girls team.

The Indians are then scheduled get their regular season underway when they join the Lady Indians in competition at Class AA Rabun County on Saturday, November 18.

Fans planning to attend the Rabun County games should take note that these games will have much earlier than usual starting times with the JV games beginning at 1:00 pm and the varsity games beginning at 3:30.

New Liberty Baptist Church Heaven Bound Sportsmen's 6th Annual Coon Hunt

COME OUT AND JOIN US FOR SOUPS, SANDWICHES AND CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

Lots of Door Prizes to be Given Away
Coon Squalling Contest 12 & under

"Behold, I will send for many fishers, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of rocks." Jeremiah 16:20

Will be held Saturday, November 11, 2017
Sign in From 4pm-5pm at New Liberty Baptist Church
5741 Town Creek School Road, Blairsville, GA 30512

Meeting and Door Prizes at 5pm
Any child under 12 and will receive a special door prize
MUST BE PRESENT TO WIN

Check-in a coon of any size by Midnight and You will be entered for the Grand Prize
\$10 per Dog Entry Fee

Come Out & Join Us for some Good Christian FUN!
Remember to always take a child hunting with you!

For Questions Contact Treva Elliott 706-281-8883,
Joann Seabolt 706-833-6978, or Tim Bahannon 706-281-4168

Find us on facebook: NLCB Heavenbound Sportsmen
Instagram: heavenboundportsmen

Bonfire/Pep Rally for TCHS Indians Football November 9



A community bonfire/celebration will be held for the TCHS Indians Football team this Thursday at 6 pm on the track at the Fire Pit. The Indians Football team has advanced to the play-offs for the first time ever. The community is invited to come out and show their support of these great young men! T(Now8.H)SH