

# Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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## Towns youth football headed to the Smoky Mountain Conference

By Todd Forrest  
Towns County Herald  
sports@nganews.com

Towns County Youth Football Director Jimmy Smith believes that it's time for a change.

This fall Towns County will be taking the field at some unfamiliar places against some unfamiliar faces in North Carolina's Smoky Mountain Conference (SMC).

Smith expects the travel time to games to be no different, and the opposition will no longer be from an area/school that is five times larger than Towns County.

Smith has been considering making the switch for a few years now, and last month announced that this time, the change is final.

"Towns County Youth Football has been in the North Georgia Youth Football League (NGYFL) for 17 years and the conference is growing and getting bigger with the competition is getting tougher," Director Smith said. "Towns County is the only Class A school in the league. Therefore, this is the reasoning for the transition to the Smoky Mountain Conference. I believe that our boys will be able to compete better in this conference and have a chance to advance further in the playoffs."

When the Indians kickoff in August, they won't be the only out-of-state team in the SMC, Copper Basin, TN is also a member of the conference.

But Smith is correct when it comes to the sizes of the schools. When the latest enrollment numbers came out early this year, Towns County High School is shown with 366 students - less than



Teams across the Smoky Mountain Conference must now face the difficult task of preparing for the Towns County when the Indians jump into the mix in this coming fall. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

70 away from the Class A / Class AA cutoff.

However, much of the Indians' youth competition comes from schools in Class AAA or larger. Habersham Central, for example, has an enrollment of 1,842 students, Flowery Branch currently has 1,744 students, and Gainesville has 1,714.

Madison County, also a member of the NGYFL, is the third largest school in Class AAAA with 1,374 students. Not far behind are Pickens County and Gilmer Coun-

ty at 1,293 and 1,233, respectively. White County will be moving up to Class AAAA in the fall with 1,143 students to join North Hall and other Hall County schools in the youth football league.

In the Smoky Mountain Conference, the largest team that the Indians would face is Franklin, NC with an enrollment of 1,056, which would put them in Class AAA in Georgia. Smoky Mountain (Jackson County) in Sylva, NC would also be in Class AAA with 969 students. Meanwhile, the rest

would all be Class AA or smaller.

Out of the 10 schools in the conference, Towns would be seventh largest based on enrollment. Robbinsville - 362, Copper Basin - 316, and Andrews - 279, are all smaller than Towns. In the NGYFL, the closest teams in enrollment, and in location are Union and Rabun Counties. Union has 754 students and Rabun has 662.

Other schools in the NGYFL from Class AA include Jefferson, who is making the jump to Class AAA in the fall with 862

students.

Currently, the NGYFL's representatives in Class AAA are Fannin County - 862, Banks County - 867, Jackson County - 1,048, Lumpkin County 1,053, East Hall - 1,059, West Hall - 1,061, and Dawson County - 1,087.

When the 2014 season kicks off without Towns County, there will be nearly 30 teams in the NGYFL, which makes the population differential more of a factor, and also causes travel issues. Smith believes that the SMC will alleviate

a lot of those problems with travel. "In the SMC the teams will all play in the same county on Saturdays making easier on the parents who have children on different teams," he said. "I believe this is the right decision for the football program."

As for Smith's claim that the Indians will be able to compete in the SMC, all one has to do is look at the enrollment of past champions to determine that Towns stacks up much better vs North Carolina.

The 2013 Cracker Bowl Champions were as follows: Peebles - Robbinsville (362), Termite - Andrews (279), Mites - Swain County (572), and Midgets - Smoky Mountain (969). It should also be noted that the 2013 Cracker Bowl was played just minutes away in Hayesville, NC.

As for the Yellow Jackets, with an enrollment of 418 students, they finished second to Smoky Mountain in the Midgets division. Other teams in the SMC are Murphy with 603 students and Cherokee with 500 students.

Another bonus, as Smith said, is knowing where the Championship games will be held in advance. In 2014, Cherokee, and their beautiful new facility will host the Cracker Bowl. In 2015, it will be held amongst the oak trees at Robbinsville High School. In 2016, Swain County, a top-notch and tradition-rich facility will host, and in 2017, the Cracker Bowl returns to Cherokee County when Andrews plays host.

Continue to check the *Towns County Herald* for registration information as Director Smith makes details available later in the spring.

## Lady Indianstopp Union at Old Union G.C.

By Todd Forrest  
Towns County Herald  
sports@nganews.com

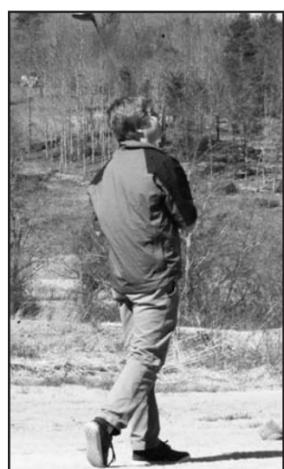
Blairsville - The Towns County Lady Indians knocked off Union County last Wednesday at Old Union Golf Course, the Lady Panthers' home course.

The win marked the second time that Towns' women have taken care of Union this season.

In a match that was shortened to 12 holes, the Lady Indians shot a 135 to Union's 136. The win averages a 95-98 loss to Union at Old Union earlier last month.

Towns County defeated the Lady Panthers at Brasstown Valley 90-93. At another earlier match, Union picked up a 95-104 win over the Lady Indians at Chatuge Shores in Hayesville, NC.

The Towns men fell last week at Old Union G.C. to Union, 176-310. The two teams also met earlier with Union taking both matches 191-237 and 183-213.



Joe Collins  
**Tips from the Range**

This simple game of golf that we play is a determination of accuracy. If you are accurate, then your scores will be lower. We work really hard and practice ways to hit, pitch and putt the ball better and in turn we learn how to move the club properly. This is, and should be, a major priority when pursuing the game.

If your swing is solid then theoretically you should play better, but if your aim is bad, then it doesn't really matter how well you strike the ball.

As the old Scotsman's caddie was quoted as saying after his boss hit a shot into the sand, "Aye man, ya hit that a good one but you're towards was off." What the caddie was actually saying in today's translation would be, "Your alignment was wrong boss." It doesn't matter if you hit it well if you don't line up your shots correctly. Alignment is very important.

Watch the pros very carefully next time you view a tournament or happen to be there in person. They really pay a lot of attention to correct alignment. The "Big Easy" checks his alignment almost every time by simply looking at his feet in comparison to his mid-section and then finally the shoulders. He wants all three to be aimed at the same point and not the feet in one direction and the shoulders pointing somewhere else. This will cause you to cast the club and change the

path of the club head.

It is hard to aim at a point far away so pick out an "intermediate" target that is only a couple of feet in front of your ball position. To do this you need to stand behind the ball and find a small target to represent your main target point. A blade of grass or spot on the ground that is directly in line with your aiming point but in front of your ball. By standing behind the ball you can see the target line that the ball should start on. Always align your body parallel to the target line. As you address the ball keep that spot and your target line in your peripheral vision until you have finished your alignment sequence and are ready to hit the ball. Now do a visual to see if you are aimed correctly by checking to make sure that you are square and pointed in the right direction.

It is correct to be a little open to your target at address because the club path is inside on the downswing if you are swinging correctly.

Pay attention to your alignment and watch the ball striking get better. Our goal is to control the swing with our sub-conscious so that it is reactionary.

Build your swing on good fundamentals but always remember that if you line up wrong the swing will be compromised and it will react to the false alignment. Poor alignment can sneak into your game at any time and cause all sorts of problems to your fundamentals and mechanics. Always take a little more time and make sure your "towards" is correct. Good luck and I will see you on the course!



Towns County High School golfers at the Tri-County Cup held at Old Union Golf Course in Blairsville. TC golf photos by Todd Forrest

## Athens Academy overpowers, Lions hold off Indians



Towns County fell to 3-10 on the year after a 16-0 and a 8-2 loss to Athens Academy. In the shutout loss, the Indians managed just one hit while the Spartans pounded out 17 hits, most coming in an 11-run second inning. In the second contest, Towns led 1-0 midway through the first but AA got four in the fifth and two in the sixth to blow open an 2-1 game. On Monday, Towns got three runs in the seventh but it wasn't enough in a 4-3 Lakeview victory. Photos/Lowell Nicholson