

Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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Indians play hard but lose home opener to Union County 17-14

By Joe Collins
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Two second half scores weren't enough as the Towns County Indians dropped their home opener at Frank McClure Stadium on Friday night to the Union County Panthers 17-14.

The game, which saw the Indians score 14 unanswered points in the second half, could have gone either way.

"Our guys showed some real character when they came out for the second half and that proves that we are maturing as a team," said Head Coach Kyle Langford. "We just didn't get it done tonight."

The Indians, trailing 17-0 at the half, shutout the Panthers in the second half and almost found a way to beat their rivals from Union County.

The Indians took the opening kickoff and appeared to be on the move for a couple of plays with junior Jackson Noblet finding sophomore Cruz Shook on 3rd and 6 for a first down, but the excitement was short lived as the Indians were forced to punt.

The teams exchanged punts for the next couple of series until Union took advantage of an Indians' defensive secondary collapse and found the end zone for the Panthers first score of the night. Quarterback T Bentley found receiver Josh Kim for a 47-yard hookup. The extra point attempt by Eric Hougrand was good and the Indians trailed 7-0 with 1:25 left in the first quarter.

Excitement began to build again for the Indians as senior Wesley Bloodworth broke a left side trap for the Towns 21-yard line for a 35-yard and into Panther territory. The Panthers defense was



Indian senior quarterback Joseph Gibson looks down field for an open receiver.

stingy and held the Indians and forced yet another punt.

On the Panthers next drive, Noblet saved a possible Union score with a great defensive play, preventing senior Lalo Rivera from coming down with a long Bentley pass inside the Towns 20-yard line.

That was followed by a staunch defensive play by junior Evan Keyes, who was able to get into the backfield of the Panthers and create two consecutive losses.

However, a pass interference call moved the ball to the Indians 41-yard line. Another Indians penalty later in the drive gave the Panthers excellent field position on the Indians 8-yard line. Clay Burnette finished off the drive with an 8-yard score on a left side sweep. Hougrand's kick was good and the Indians trailed 14-0 with 6:39 left in the first half.

The Indians moved the ball well on the ground throughout the second quarter but just couldn't seal the deal

on consecutive first downs and were forced to punt. The Panthers got the ball on their own 24-yard line with 1:57 left in the second quarter and moved the ball to the Indians 24-yard line. Hougrand connected on a 44-yard field goal as the horn sounded to end the first half. The Indians trailed 17-0 at the end of the first half.

The Panthers got the ball at the Union 36-yard line to start the second half. The Indians proved to have some fight left in them as sophomore Kyle Davis broke through the front line and stopped the Panthers' Robert Prunier for a 3-yard loss.

A bad snap over the head of quarterback Bentley gave the Indians the ball at the Union 19-yard line. Facing a 4th and 7, the Indians were unable to move the ball and turned it over on downs. It was a huge defensive stand for the Panthers.

The Indians defense got busy again and stopped the Panthers, forcing them to punt it away. The following series



The Towns County defense prepares to make a stand vs Union



Junior defensive back Brett Barrett breaks up a Panther pass during last Friday's game

found the Indians in Panther territory when a pass interference call on the Panthers moved the ball inside the Union red zone.

Senior quarterback Joseph Gibson found Noblet, who made an amazing run into the end zone for the score. The two-point conversion was good and the Indians now trailed

17-8 with 1:08 left in the third quarter.

On the following kickoff, the Panthers were assessed a personal foul penalty on the extra point for a late hit on the kicker by Kim.

Union started their next drive on their own 25-yard line. Third play of the drive, Bentley tossed a pass that was

picked off by Cruz Shook. The Indians took over on their own 29-yard line with 2.2 seconds left in the third.

The Indians were not able to make the needed first down and had to punt. On the first play of the Panthers' next drive, the Indians defense forced a fumble that Noblet picked up and headed down field. He returned the ball to the Towns 32-yard line. Unfortunately, Noblet stepped out of bounds by less than a couple of inches but the Indians still had possession on their own 32-yard line with 9:53 left in the game.

The Indians found themselves moving in the wrong direction and were forced to punt again. With 5:05 left in the game, the Indians were in a bad way as Union was moving the ball well and threatening to score. Gibson was able to strip the ball from a Panther ball carrier and the turnover placed the Indians on their own 34-yard line.

Junior John Davis found some running room and picked up a first down. He followed that run with another good gain, which moved the ball to the Panthers 45-yard line.

Noblet came in at quarterback and hit Bloodworth over the middle for good gain and another first down placing the ball on the Panthers' 24-yard line.

Noblet again found Bloodworth in the middle of the field where he made an unbelievable one-handed grab for the touchdown with 1:55 left in the game. Cesar Bustamante's extra point was blocked and the score was 17-14 late in the fourth quarter.

There was no magic left in "Mudville" on this night and the Indians were unable to make anything happen in the closing seconds of the ball

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Towns County football photos by Lowell Nicholson and Joe Collins

Towns' Middle School Wins Home Opener 30-8

By Joe Collins
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

The Towns County Middle School Indians football team won its home opener at Frank McClure Memorial stadium Thursday against the North Georgia Falcons with a final score of 30-8 and increased their season record to 2-0.

The Indians kicked off to open the game and they were able to stop the Falcons on their own 21-yard line. The third play of the drive found Zach Davenport with an interception, which he returned for the Indians first touchdown of the game. The following extra points attempt was successful and the Indians led 8-0.

On the first play of the Falcons possession following the kickoff, Ian Thompson introduced the opponents to some heavy pressure when he dropped the Quarterback for a 2-yard loss. The very next play would find Luke Woody carrying on Thompson's example and dropped the QB again for another 2-yard loss. The defensive front line continued to dominate as Walker Ross stopped the Falcon tailback on fourth and one, which forced the Falcons to punt. This would be a pattern the Indians repeated all night.

This punt represented the



first possession of the Indians in the game. Darringer Barrett hit a big hole created by some great blocking by the offensive line and picked up the first down for the Indians. Quarterback Russell Cox found Major Moss off the left side for another first down and Barrett found another big hole on the left side and scored the second TD of the night for the Indians. A 3-yard completion to Moss added the extra points and the score at the end of the first quarter was 16-0 in favor of the Indians.

The Falcons found some running room on their third possession of the game and moved the ball to the Indians 4-yard line where a "goal line

stand" found Thompson in the backfield again for a 4-yard loss. Nick Shook was able to sack the QB on fourth and 8 and the Indians took over on downs at the Falcons 8-yard line with 1:35 left in the first half. The Indians were unable to score again before the half ended so the score remained 16-0 Indians at halftime.

The Indians took possession on the opening kickoff of the second half and returned the ball to mid-field where Barrett again found the big holes that the offensive line were making. His two consecutive runs put the ball on the 25-yard line of the falcons. Cox found his favorite target Moss again and

with some brilliant open field running, quick footwork and good team blocking, Moss found the end zone. The extra points attempt was good and the Indians led 24-0.

On the second possession of the half, Barrett found some running room on second and fifteen from the Indians 49-yard line and moved the ball to the Falcons 21-yard line. Cox tossed a soft pass into the right hand corner of the end zone where Chayton McClure caught it for the Indians final TD of the night. The extra points attempt failed and the Indians led 30-0.

The TCMS B-Team finished most of the fourth quarter and allowed the Falcons to break a long run for a score, but were very impressive outside of that one play. The extra points attempt was good and the final score saw the Indians with their second win in as many games, 30-8. "We did a lot of good things today but we need to work on our offense this week to prepare for Lakeview. It needs to improve," stated a concerned Head Coach Chris Vardo.

The TCMS Indians will travel to Lakeview Academy on Thursday, Sept. 6 to do battle with the Lions and try to extend their winning streak.

Come out and support the Indians in Gainesville. Game time is 5:30 p.m.
Go Indians!

TCHS 2012 Football Schedule

- Sept. 7: @ Fellowship Christian
- Sept. 14: @ Rabun County
- Sept. 21: vs Rabun Gap
- Oct. 5: @ Copper Basin, TN
- Oct. 19: vs North Cobb Christian
- Oct. 26: vs St. Francis
- Nov. 2: @ Lakeview
- Nov. 9 vs Hebron Christian

Joe Collins

Tips from the Range

For several weeks now, we have been studying the mechanics and fundamentals of the golf swing to try and understand how the whole of the swing works. We've looked at balance, posture, grip, alignment, rotation and weight transfer. All of these elements need to be as close to proper as possible in order to give yourself a decent chance of moving the club to what our focus will be about this week and that is our ultimate goal, impact.

That magical point in the swing where the ball actually makes contact with the face of the club is what determines the flight and direction of the shot. All our efforts are focused on the split second that the ball leaves the ground and begins its journey to what we hope is our chosen target. It's the impact, of the ball and the clubface, which gives us the instant feedback that determines what the next word out of our mouth will be when, or sometimes before, the swing is finished. The only way to control the impact is to correctly do the things which return the club to the original set-up position and those are the mechanics and fundamentals we have been discussing the past few weeks.

Once the club head has moved through the ball, or has passed impact, we move into what we call the "follow-through". This area is the mirror image of the backswing with the triangle in front of the chest and the arms extended. This burning off of energy is where you will find out if you have made a good swing or a bad swing so always finish the follow-through or you will cheat yourself out of some good feedback. This information is vital in determining whether or

not you made a good effort at swinging the club.

If we were to try and pick out the one thing that will affect impact the most, when the swing is done correctly, it would have to be the function of the forward arm. Balance is always first and foremost the primary goal, but if the balance is perfect and the forward arm doesn't perform correctly, the shot can still end up bad.

The forward arm should be straight throughout the swing until the follow-through is nearly finished. Always allow the forward arm to rotate naturally so the following arm will finish over the top of the forward arm after impact. This will make the swing feel smooth and graceful.

This concludes my overall look at the golf swing and the elements that define the proper function of the swing. Remember that you want to think of swinging the club and not "hitting" the ball. The ball simply gets in the way as the club approaches the bottom of the swing. Swinging a golf club correctly is difficult and should be given the respect it deserves by practicing. Nobody hits the ball the same way as anybody else and rarely do we hit it the same way from round to round. Someone once asked the great Sam Snead before a tournament round if he was going to play a fade or a draw today and he replied, "can't say cause I haven't been to the range yet, I'll let you know in a little while." This is an example of how fickle the golf swing can be so if he had trouble from day to day then imagine what us normal people will go through.

Next week we will look at the most important and most difficult part of playing the game; chipping and putting. Until then keep practicing the things we have talked about the last few weeks and hopefully your swing will improve.

Good luck and I will see you on the course!

Towns County's Cross Country at Meeks Park

By Joe Collins
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

The Towns County High School Cross Country boys and girls teams traveled to Union County last Thursday to open their 2012 season. The meet was held at the very challenging Meeks Park course with six teams competing.

The weather couldn't have been better when the girls lined up first to get the meet underway. The race started with the TCHS girls in their assigned positions as Head Coach Jeannie Ledford looked on with high expectations.

As her girls began, the field started to stretch out and the more experienced runners kept to their strategies. The

veterans in the field jockeyed for position and stayed true to the form Ledford had taught them. In the end, junior Ansley Vardeman finished first for TCHS and third overall with a time of 22:48.

The boys were next to run as the girls finished their race and the excitement grew as the guys began. Ledford was again at the starting line to make sure all was as it should be when the race started. The guys knew coming into the race that they had a strong field to run against and held their own by doing the things Ledford has worked with them on for the last month.

At the finish line, it was senior Bradley Smith finishing first for TCHS and ninth overall with a time of 20:13.

The teams did not finish

as well as they had hoped but for the first race of the 2012 season, it was pretty good.

"I was pleasantly surprised by the results of today's race. It was a tough meet and some of my new arrivals proved to be an asset just like I knew they would be. They did real good," stated a proud Ledford.

Ledford stated before the season began that it is all about how the teams do at the Area Championship and that she planned to use each meet as a building block to improve the team as the year went on. This meet is just one of those blocks that will help her determine how the runners are progressing.

The next meet is on Thursday, Sept. 6 at Athens Academy where once again the



Ansley Vardeman

Cross Country teams will have their hands, or shoes rather, full. Come on out and support the teams and help cheer them on to victory. Good luck Indian runners.