

# Roaming Around Reidsville

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If you've been paying attention to Reidsville lately, you no doubt have heard the words "Team Reidsville". We are the "Football Capital of North Carolina" with the most State titles at 20 for our Reidsville High School football team. So we have made the Team Reidsville concept a part of our City's marketing strategy as we have attempted to get our rookies (new residents) to join our Community of Champions while reminding our veteran players (long-time residents) why Reidsville is a great place to live.

While Reidsville is known for its love of football, other local teams are attempting to make sure football isn't the only sport that is championship caliber here. During the past year, the Reidsville City Council has recognized not only



**The Reidsville Recreation All-Stars** Coach-Pitch team was recognized by the Reidsville City Council at their July 9<sup>th</sup> monthly meeting. The Reidsville All-Stars placed second in the State to make it to the national Dixie Youth competition in Louisiana in late July.

the Reidsville Rams for their 20<sup>th</sup> State title and the Reidsville Tigers 10 & Under football team for getting to the All-American United Youth Football Championship but also has honored local teams for their accomplishments on the basketball court and the baseball field. The Lady Conquerors Basketball Team garnered Community Baptist School of Reidsville's first ever State Championship earlier this year, claiming the Carolina Athletic Association for Schools of Choice Central Carolina-East title. The Rockingham Rage JV Basketball Team, a Reidsville-based team of homeschooled students, won the FCHS 2019 JV Boys Division 3A National Championship back in March of this year.

Yet, perhaps it is in baseball that area teams are really beginning to shine. Several of our Rockingham County high schools have had players go on to play in college or even in the big leagues. Among the latest is Nick Richmond from Reidsville High School, who recently signed to play for the Detroit Tigers. Rockingham Community College is beginning to make a name for itself on the baseball diamond. In 2018, the Reidsville City Council recognized the RCC Eagles for making the college's first World Series appearance after capturing the regional and district championships.

The success of these players on the college or professional level in any sport usually stems back to their ability to play quality ball in their younger years. The Reidsville Recreation Department, which has created a firm foundation with its strong football leagues, is often credited with helping Reidsville High School sustain its winning football tradition.

Likewise, when my oldest son played recreation baseball, the Reidsville league was pretty strong and travel ball was only beginning to take off. Players from throughout Rockingham County would play in the rec leagues, transitioning from playing on the same team to competing against each other in high school. He played on a local travel team that played mainly in the Triad area on weekends. These days travel baseball has become very popular and truthfully, has helped lead to somewhat of a decline in youth recreational baseball since some travel teams practice and play non-stop throughout the week.

The question then became ... how do we stop this decline in our recreational leagues? Haywood Cloud, the City's Assistant City Manager of Community Services, came to work in mid-2018. He and City Manager Preston Mitchell talked about ways they could improve local football camps. Cloud, a former Winston-Salem State University football player, called in some favors from friends who were former NFL players and held the City's first football camp in June of this year.

Reidsville recreation staff partnered with local travel teams to come up with viable solutions to the problem of waning interest in the City's baseball leagues. With the help of Scott Strader, co-owner of the Reidsville Luckies Batting Academy and sponsor of several travel teams, the City re-established a fall youth baseball league, which hadn't been done in several years. Strader volunteered to help increase participation and encouraged his Luckies players to sign up for the rec league. Players in the spring rec baseball leagues, many of whom were associated with the Luckies Batting Academy, tried out for the Reidsville Recreation All-Star team that was a runner-up at the North Carolina Dixie Youth Baseball Tournament. This 8 and under All-Star team qualified to compete in the Dixie Youth Coach-Pitch World Series held in late July in Ruston, Louisiana. And while this column went to publication before the outcome was known, it is really impressive that the Reidsville Recreation All-Stars are representing not only the City of Reidsville but also the State of North Carolina in World Series play. (And this Luckies connection keeps a streak going for the Batting Academy. The Reidsville Luckies' 8 and under Coach Pitch team was recognized as the No. 1 team in the nation last year, winning the Super N.I.T. Championship.)

The success of the City's football camp spurred staff on to do the same in other sports. City staff created a free baseball camp for boys and a free softball camp for girls, ages 6-17, both of which just wrapped up in mid-July. These City-sponsored camps featured the help of RCC baseball staff and Queens University softball staff.

"The early success of the partnership between our local youth organizations and the City of Reidsville really exemplifies what "Team Reidsville" is all about," said Assistant City Manager Cloud. "We work together as a team to accomplish our goal of making Reidsville the best place to live, work and play!"

As I have mentioned in previous columns, the City of Reidsville is known for creating partnerships and collaborations in a variety of areas, and this collaboration in the world of recreational sports is no exception. And with such partnerships in play, everybody wins!

### Other Upcoming Events in August

- Every Saturday, Tuesday and Thursday in August, come check out the **Farmer's Market** at Market Square in downtown Reidsville. Fresh vegetables and other offerings are available from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. SNAP/EBT, Farmer's Market WIC, Debit and Credit cards are accepted so make sure to stop by.
- Thursday, August 1: Reidsville Police and the Reidsville Rec Department will hold a **School Supply Drive** (perhaps with a dunking booth?) from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. at the Reidsville Walmart.
- Tuesday, August 6: A **Child Safety Seat Installation** event will be held at Reidsville Fire Station #1 from 9 a.m. until 11 a.m. The fire station is located at the corner of Scales and Williams Street.
- Tuesday, August 6: **National Night Out** begins around 5:30 p.m. with local Community Watch groups meeting with Police personnel at neighborhood events to promote community awareness.
- Friday, August 9: **Second Downtown Fridays** continues in August. Come enjoy the music at Mural Park, kids' activities, food and classic cars & trucks. Also, the Reidsville Police Department will showcase Crime Prevention & Police Services at Market Square between 6-9 p.m. The fun, sponsored by Team Reidsville, Reidsville Downtown Corporation and Reidsville Chamber of Commerce, is from 6-9 p.m. The event ends with the Movie @ Market Square: *The Wizard of Oz*, celebrating its 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary, that begins around dusk/9:15 p.m. Bring a chair or blanket for this free movie on the lawn at Market Square.
- Saturday, August 10: **Youth Outdoor & Hunting Safety Day** is planned at the Reidsville Training Center from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. This free event is open to all ages but for more information, call Tina at 336-342-8101. The day is presented by the Rockingham County Hunting & Wildlife Advisory Commission, Rockingham County Board of Commissioners, the City of Reidsville and the NC Wildlife Resources Commission.
- Thursday, August 15: The Reidsville Police Department will be providing **Elder Abuse Info** at RCARE from 11 a.m. until 1 p.m.
- Thursday, August 15: The Reidsville Police Department and Reidsville Recreation Department will hold a **Back to School Jam** at the Penn House from 6-9 p.m.
- Saturday, August 24: **Music @ Market Square** continues its 2019 Summer Concert series with the **Mason Lovette Band**, which offers a high energy, hard driving mix of country, rock and blues. Bring a chair or blanket for this free concert from 7-9 p.m. The beer garden will be open, and there will be games such as sidewalk chalk, hula hoops, giant tic-tac-toe and more to keep the children entertained.

- Saturday, August 31: The first ever **Water Lantern Festival** at Lake Reidsville will be held and over 2,000 tickets have already been sold. Learn more about the event at [www.WaterLanternFestival.com](http://www.WaterLanternFestival.com).
- And throughout the month of August, every Monday and Wednesday: **Fitness on the Square @ Market Square featuring Zumba** from 6-7 p.m. This free class is sponsored by Annie Penn Hospital. No rhythm required!
- Every Tuesday and Thursday: **Fitness on the Square @ Market Square, this time with Yoga** from 6-7 p.m. Bring a mat or towel and water. Again, these classes are sponsored by Annie Penn Hospital.