

Towns County Sports

Town's County's Leader In Sports



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Blue-White game a Towns County classic

By Charles Duncan
TOWNS COUNTY HERALD

The clock is ticking toward Aug. 27th at Frank McCure Stadium.

The Towns County Indians' spring practice and game are both history and Head Football Coach Kyle Langford saw exactly what he had hoped to see when the Blue and White lined up on Friday evening.

Langford and his coaching staff witnessed 66 points from the two squads. The Indians played with aggression, intensity and fire in the belly. The focus now shifts to opening night this fall against the Union County Panthers.

"The clock is ticking but there is still a lot of work to be done between now and Aug. 27th," Coach Langford told his players at mid-field following the annual Blue-White scrimmage. "I'm proud of all of you, the effort you displayed and the heart and courage it took to pull on that uniform."

"From this day moving forward, we're a team," he said. "When we go into that locker room, everyone is on the same page. Hard work, heart and courage are rewarded at the end of the day."

Coach Langford was well pleased.

"All of our kids can get lined up and they gave great effort," he said. "Our execution is going to get better, but we were pleased to see that they had learned from those days of spring practice."

Rising freshman quarterback Jackson Noblet opened up the scoring early with a 70-yard scoring strike to rising senior Billy Meier. It wasn't long before Noblet found the end zone again, this time breaking to the left and down the sidelines for a 70-yard scoring run. White was on top, 12-0.

Not to be out done, Blue quarterback Zach Stroud pulled off a 70-yard scoring run of his own. In short order, Stroud and the Blue had the ball again and kept the wave rolling.

Stroud hit receiver Austin Green for a 49-yard completion. Running back Joseph Foster made a quick transition from the 21-yard line into the end zone to knot the game at 12-12.

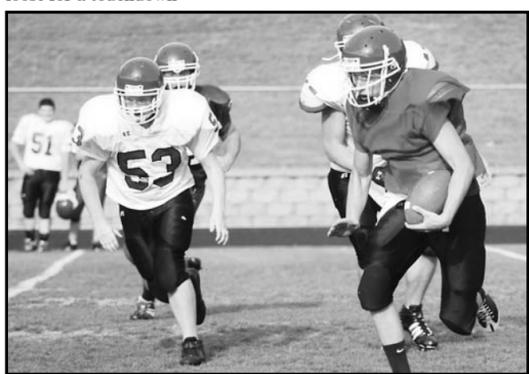
Then in a bold mid-game move, Coach Langford turned his Blue squad into his



Brandon Henderson breaks loose for a touchdown



Spring game barbecue



Zach Stroud on the loose



Jackson Noblet on a breakaway keeper



Joseph Foster races to the endzone

defensive unit, working both Stroud and Noblet behind the White offense.

Noblet got the first shot. He led his team 25 yards before

breaking loose on a 45-yard scoring run. He followed that up with a 45-yard touchdown pass to huge wide out Brandon Henderson.

Photos by Lowell Nicholson

Hamilton ready to cut to the chase

By Charles Duncan
TOWNS COUNTY HERALD

Ken Hamilton is getting defensive about his 2010-11 Towns County Indians' basketball team.

Actually, he wants to make his team the most aggressive defensive basketball squad in Class A — straight from the mold of Ken Hamilton, the player, who once led the Indians in scoring as a senior in 2001.

He's satisfied he can accomplish his goal.

"I scored my share of points as a player, but I've always believed in defense," he said. "Defense creates offensive opportunities that otherwise might not be realized."

"The best offense is a great defense," Hamilton said. "We're going to get after people next year. We're going to learn to put the defensive pressure on our opponents. If we can put our opponents in pressure situations, we can turn that into offensive opportunities."

Turnovers and the points created off turnovers are some of the most exciting plays in basketball, Hamilton said.

"We're going to learn the program and learn how to make the program work," he said. "We're going to play up tempo basketball, the way it's supposed to be played."

Hamilton said his team will run the court when it's time to run and play the half-court game when it's appropriate.

"Overall we'll play situational basketball. We'll be improved," he said. "We'll reach our goals. It's my program now and I'll build it the way that I believe it should be built. I have to give a lot of credit to those guys last year. They respected me from Day One. That's an advantage as



Towns County High School Principal Roy Perren congratulates Ken Hamilton on his new professional duties. Hamilton takes over as the Indians head boys' basketball coach.

Photo/Charles Duncan

we head into next season."

Much like the moments when he got the hot hand shooting during his playing days, Coach Hamilton rallied a young Indian team to play hard, aggressive basketball after stepping up at mid-season from his duties as assistant coach.

Hamilton knows his team like the back of his hand. It's the benefit of watching these young men grow up on the basketball court as an assistant and interim head coach.

"Right now we've got five seniors and they're all pretty good ballplayers," he said. "We've got both big men, Brett Bradshaw and Brandon Henderson coming back. We've got the likes of D.J. Rogers and Bradley Swanson that will make things happen night after night. Corbin Gilfillan is back and ready to make a difference."

"Devin Henderson is something else as well," he said. "I'm very excited about this ball club."

"Being head coach of the Towns County Indians is something I've always want-

ed to do," Hamilton said. "I played here and I always wanted to come back to Hiwassee and be the coach. I'm finally getting the opportunity to do that."

Hamilton patterns himself as a coach after the likes of Seth Vining, Mike Cottrell and Chad Bridges.

"I saw Seth Vining build a dynasty at East Hall, I've watched Mike Cottrell and also Chad Bridges at Commerce," Hamilton said. "I'm a fan of the college coaches, but I'm a student of the really great high school coaches."

"Hopefully, one day, I'll meet their stature," he said.

Hamilton said the key to success is knowing when to admit you're wrong and learning from the experience.

"We'll make mistakes, I'll make mistakes," he said. "Even the great ones (like Coach Vining) have made mistakes. The important lesson derived from mistakes is to learn from those mistakes and don't make the same mistakes twice."

Clay Dotson Open attracts more than 150 golfers

By Jessica Keaton
TOWNS COUNTY HERALD

Local golfers came out to enjoy the greens and support Young Harris College at Brasstown Valley Resort on Monday. The Clay Dotson Open, consisting of two flights in the morning and afternoon, brought out enthusiasts for a good cause: scholarships for Young Harris College students.

"The Clay Dotson Open is named after Clay Dotson, our long time friend of the college, former History professor, and twice interim president who is, himself, a great golfer," President Cathy Cox, decked out in Young Harris purple, said as she rode to the clubhouse just in time for the second flight tee off. "He comes out and enjoys this every year and is so respected in the field that it really helps us attract a lot of players."

The event named in Dotson's honor assisted in bringing out 151 golfers to both the morning and afternoon flights combined. Complete with a complementary breakfast and lunch, the event turned into an all-day shindig benefiting student scholarships. Prizes also were awarded for low net and



The first group of golfers finish the second flight during the annual Clay Dotson Open golf tournament at Brasstown Valley Resort on Monday. The tournament is a scholarship fundraiser event for Young Harris College.

Photo Jessica Keaton

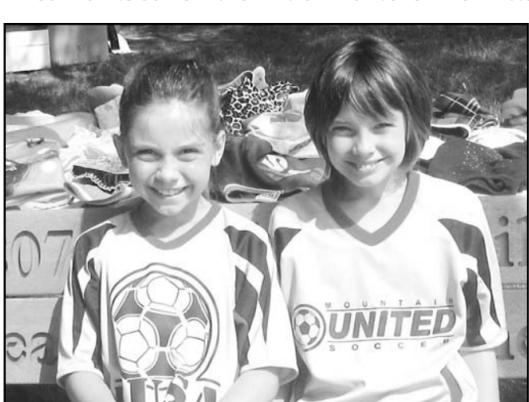
low gross categories in each flight. However, the focus throughout the day was on the students.

"This is one of our biggest fundraisers of the year for Young Harris College student scholarships. Given this tough economy, those scholarship dollars are more important than they have ever been," Cox continued, as she stepped out of her golf cart. "We really want to thank all of those who

came out and played, area businesses that supported us with sponsorship. It's been a great day for Young Harris College students."

Dotson's name was used with utmost respect. Along with holding various positions at the college, he can be remembered as not only a Young Harris College celebrity, but a golfer who makes a difference for the community by combining his love for education and the links.

Yard sale venture benefits local soccer



By Jessica Keaton
TOWNS COUNTY HERALD

Saturday morning, the Towns County Recreation Department Girl's Traveling Soccer Team, also known as the Blizzard, held their yard sale fundraiser on the square. With items including clothes, toys, books, purses, trinkets, and even more, visitors to the sale could expect to go home with treasures. Each treasure purchased contributes to helping the girls with tournament entry funds.

"The entry fees are anywhere from \$165 to \$500 per tournament. We pay for our own travel expenses and uniforms," Coach Amy Barrett said, "We made it to nationals

again this year, so we're hopefully going to Disney if we raise enough money."

The team consists of girls, between the ages of 9 and 10, from Hayesville, Hiwassee, and Blairsville, which includes Brooke Barrett, Alyssa Hunter, Hannah Whitehead, and Laney Bennager.

"We've gone to several tournaments and every one we've been in, we've placed. We're going against counties like Gwinnet and DeKalb that actually have 2,000 girls to choose from and won. We pick four girls that play soccer out of our three counties' Recreation team and we've only been together for a year," Barrett continued, "The girls have

really grown from this experience."

"It looks like we've had a great turnout. I'm looking at all the stuff and it looks like we've sold a lot," Barrett said, scanning the tables. "Some of the items were donated by us and some were donated by members of the community. We really thank Bank of Hiwassee for putting up a tent for us."

Coach Barrett smiled as her enthusiasm grew.

"Soccer is a great sport, in general, for all kids because you run and keep in shape. It's a great sport for girls because it's something that they can actually get scholarships in," she said. "Right now, the most scholarships offered for females is in soccer. So, a lot of our girls are serious enough to play soccer in college."

Behind Coach Barrett, Alyssa Hunter and Brooke Barrett scurried around the greenery, tossing and kicking a soccer ball around the tables. They wore their black, white, and red jerseys that whipped in the wind as they ran laps around the gazebo. To them, our local town square posed as an Olympic field, full of hope and cool grass. Through this fundraiser, they are one step closer to finding their futures.

NASCAR 2010

By Gerald Hodges/the Racing Reporter

Johnson Errs, Kyle Busch Wins

Kyle Busch won Sunday's Sprint Cup Autism 400 at Dover after Jimmie Johnson was caught speeding on pit road late in the race, putting him a lap down to the leaders.

"It's phenomenal," said Busch. "We prevailed and that's what it takes to win one of these races."

"We weren't the best car at the beginning, but at about lap 260 we came on. We did the right things at the right time."

Busch made it two-for-three at Dover. He won Saturday night's Nationwide race, and was leading Friday's Camping World Truck race, when he ran out of gas.

Johnson and Busch were running 1-2 when they both came into the pits for tires with 35-laps remaining in the 400-lap race. Busch exited his pit stall first, and Johnson tried to pass him on pit road, but NASCAR said Johnson was speeding.

"Evidently I got out of the pits a little quicker than normal," said Johnson who wound up 16th. "I didn't want Kyle to beat me out."

Johnson led 225 laps, the most of any driver, but went from hot to cold. The one mistake in the pits probably cost him the win. He dropped from second to fourth in points.

Jeff Burton, Matt Kenseth, Denny Hamlin, David Reutimann, Greg Biffle, Kevin Harvick, Carl Edwards, Tony Stewart, and Joey Logano were the top-10 finishing drivers.

Dale Earnhardt Jr. turned in poor practice times, and never got the race-day handling he needed. He finished 10-laps down in 30th position.

Top-12 Chase contenders after 12 of 36: 1. Harvick-1768, 2. Kyle Busch-1699, 3. Kenseth-1642, 4. Johnson-1637, 5. Hamlin-1618, 6. J. Gordon-1605, 7. Biffle-1581, 8. Burton-1569, 9. Kurt Busch-1531, 10. Edwards-1487, 11. Martin-1475,

12. Truex-1434
Kyle Busch Is Dover Nationwide Winner

Kyle Busch dominated Saturday's Nationwide Series race at Dover, but a late-race altercation between Denny Hamlin and Clint Bowyer, took the limelight.

Busch scored his fourth series victory of the season and 34th of his career by leading all but 14 of 205 laps as the race ended with a green-white-checked finish. He never was truly challenged and pulled away from the field on the final restart.

As Busch celebrated in Victory Lane, Bowyer was waiting in the Nationwide hauler to meet with NASCAR officials. On the next-to-last restart, Hamlin knocked Bowyer out of second place as the green flag waved. The fracas triggered a nine-car accident and an 11-minute, 43-second red flag.

After the red was lifted, Bowyer drove from pit road and slammed into the side of Hamlin's car, causing it to spin. NASCAR immediately parked Bowyer and sent him to the garage.

"(Our team has) had a frustrating year, bringing home a lot of torn-up racecars," said Bowyer. "It is what it is. I don't have a beef with Denny. We'll be fine. I got one taken from me. Just a little payback."

Ryan Newman drove through the crash and finished second to Busch, with Jamie McMurray third. Reed Sorenson was fourth, followed by Braun Racing teammate Jason Leffler.

Kevin Harvick was sixth. Brad Keselowski finished seventh to hold on to the points lead by 11 over Busch. Greg Biffle was eighth, with rookies Brian Scott and Colin Braun rounding out the top 10.

Top-10 points leaders after 11 of 36: 1. Brad Keselowski-1766, 2. Kyle Busch-1755, 3. Harvick-1702, 4. Edwards-1546, 5. Allgai-



Almirola Gets Dover Truck Win

Aric Almirola took advantage of Kyle Busch's empty fuel tank to win the Dover 200 Truck Series race. James Buescher came back from a spin to finish second, passing Justin Lofton on the last lap. Both posted their best career finishes in the truck series. Ricky Carmichael also had his best career finish in fourth, giving Turner Motorsports second and fourth. Todd Bodine sputtered on the final restart but finished fifth.

Top-10 points leaders after 6 of 25: 1. Almirola-920, 2. Bodine-893, 3. Peters-848, 4. Hornaday-795, 5. Crafton-772, 6. Carmichael-765, 7. Sauter-761, 8. Starr-737, 9. Skinner-734, 10. White-733

Weekend Racing: The Cup cars and Camping World Trucks will be at the 1.5-mile Charlotte Motor Speedway. It will be a regular points race for the Trucks, but the Cup teams will compete in their annual non-points All-Star race. Fri., May 21, Camping World Trucks, race 7 of 25: Starting time: 7:30 pm ET: TV: Speed. Sat., May 22, Sprint Cup All-Star race, Starting time: 7 pm ET: TV: Speed.

Racing Trivia Question: What is Bobby Labonte's car number in Cup series?
Last Week's Question: Which Cup team does Jeff Burton drive for? **Answer:** The No. 31 Richard Childress Chevrolet. You may contact the Racing Reporter at: hodgesnews@