

# Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports



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## Blue-White game unlocks mysteries for Langford and his coach staff

By James Reese  
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Frank McClure Stadium was thriving with activity on Saturday morning.

Pads were popping, bodies dressed in blue and white flying around all over the place, and, of course, the sound of helmets crashing was definitely evident.

The smell of delicious bar-b-que also tantalized the crowd of folks at Frank McClure Stadium on the outskirts of Hiwassee.

It was time for Spring Camp survivors to lock horns during the Annual Blue and White game.

The two-hour event gave Towns County Indians' Head Football Coach Kyle Langford and his staff a window of opportunity to find out what to expect later this summer and early Fall.

"We've got good character in our young men," Coach Langford said. "They are going to do what we ask them to do. They are going to be accountable to us and each other."

"We like that," he said. "We've just got to make some skills improvements. We've got to get these young guys up to speed. I don't know of anytime that you leave Spring Camp and say 'everything's just great.'"

"If that was the case, you wouldn't need to go through Summer Drills, you wouldn't need to do Fall Football camp," he said. "You'd just start playing."

That's not the case, Coach Langford said, admitting that his Indians have a lot of areas that could use some immediate improvement.

"We need to get better," he said. "That's why you hire coaches because that's our job to get these guys better and as long as the kids keep working like they did this Spring, we're going to be fine and we'll just keep getting better."

The Indians will be the

first team in the state to open the regular season, when they take on border state rival Hayesville on Aug. 19 at Frank McClure Stadium.

"We're playing the first available date," Coach Langford said. "The state granted us permission to play a week early this year to accommodate the other team we play. So we're going to play early this year. It's a week earlier than everyone else and that's what we want, anything to get attention to our school in a positive way."

"It's something good that's going on, something good going on with these students is always good for us," he said. "We know what the goal is; we know where it's at on the calendar. Now it's just a matter of processing information and getting to that point."

Coach Langford and his coaches came away from the Blue-White game with a better understanding of the cards they have been dealt.

"I thought the first unit offensive line looked good as far as technique and being able to adjust to a few different things," he said. "I thought they looked good at what they were doing. I thought we saw good depth at various positions and good quality at running back."

"That's one thing (back-field depth) that we really haven't had a lot of in the past. I feel good about that," he said. "We've got good receivers; we just need to develop more depth at that position. I feel really good about four of them. There are other guys that could potentially be good, but they've got to just keep working."

Depth at quarterback is another question mark, Coach Langford said.

"We need to address the backup quarterback situation. That's something we'll start to evaluate, look at and start to work on to, pretty quick," he said. "That's certainly an issue we'll have to work on this summer. The first group's been



The Indians gather around Coach Langford on Saturday and call it a camp.

Photo By James Reese.



Indians' Quarterback Jackson Noblet throws on the run during Saturday's Blue-White Game.

Photo By James Reese.



Coach Kyle Langford gathers his troops in the huddle during Saturday's Blue-White Game.

Photo By James Reese.

doing this since middle school, so they know how we run this offense. They understand about the timing and spacing. I thought timing was really good with those guys today."

The second group understands there is an adjustment period for them, Coach Langford said.

"Whether they performed good or bad today, I think they gained a lot of valuable experience," he said. They gained a lot of experience through the whole two weeks. Hopefully they'll learn to appreciate and love the game the way we like to play it," he said.

The next phase of devel-

opment will be summer workouts and preparation in late July and early August for the 2011 season's first scrimmage on Aug. 12 versus the Fannin



Rising freshman Cruz Shook looks impressive on a sweep.

Photo By James Reese.



Coach McClure explains the fine art of Football to some young Indians on Saturday.

Photo By James Reese.



Coach Langford watches over his charges during the annual Blue-White Game.

Photo By James Reese.

County Rebels. "I look forward to spending quality time with these young men," Coach Langford said.

## NASCAR 2011

By Gerald Hodges/the Racing Reporter

### "Million Dollar" Carl Edwards

Carl Edwards easily won Saturday night's Sprint All-Star race with a flawless run. While Edwards was beating Kyle Busch to the finish line, his other three Roush Fenway teammates finished in the top-8.

Edwards won three of the four-race segments of the 100-lap feature. On the last and final 10-lap segment, he got a huge jump on runner-up Kyle Busch, and cruised to the checkered flag.

Unlike most past races, that have been filled with crashes and wrecks as the drivers make a wild dash to the finish, this one was lacking of excitement, as the 10-lap segment turned out to be free of wrecks and bumping.

"The key to winning this race are the guys behind me," said Edwards. "One of them is Jody Fortson, who lost his father. I want to say 'hi' to Sheila Fortson watching, but Bob Osborne and my guys, especially the guys on pit road. They could have dropped the ball. That was all the pressure in the world on those guys. They performed a flawless pit stop and we got out in front of Kyle (Busch). He is a bear on those restarts, so if we would have started behind him, I think it would have been really tough."

When Edwards pulled into the infield grass after taking the checkered flag, the front of his car dug into the grass, and he messed up the front-end.

"I feel so bad about tearing up the car, but Bob says he's got a faster one for next week, so I'm pretty excited," continued Edwards.

The win paid Edwards a flat \$1-million.

Despite bringing home his career-best finish in six NASCAR Sprint All-Star Race appearances, Kyle Busch came up short.

"This was a good race for us with our M&M's Camry," said Busch. "We came up a little bit short, but we got beat by a faster car. The best I could've done was something on a restart and I didn't get a great one there - that final one, but I still kept up with him (Carl Edwards) a little bit, but he was just too fast. He got away from me and spread the gap too far. By the time I was trying to run him back down on the top side there, it just took me too long to get back to him. A few more laps, maybe I

would've got him, but all you had was 10 (laps)."

David Reutimann, Tony Stewart and Edwards' teammate Greg Biffle rounded out the top-five.

Matt Kenseth was sixth and David Ragan, who took the checkered flag earlier in the night with a dominating performance in the Sprint Cup Showdown, finished eighth in his first career Sprint All-Star Race.

Kevin Harvick and Ryan Newman comprised the remainder of the top-10.

Dale Earnhardt Jr. was voted into the race by fans as the third driver from the Sprint Show Down, but he had nothing for the winners.

The NASCAR Sprint Cup Series returns to point-paying racing on May 29 with the Coca-Cola 600 at Charlotte. The longest race on the Sprint Cup schedule

### STENHOUSE GETS FIRST NATIONWIDE WIN

Ricky Stenhouse Jr. held off Sprint Cup regulars Carl Edwards and Brad Keselowski to get his first career Nationwide victory in Sunday's John Deere 250 at Iowa Speedway.

Stenhouse, driver of the No. 6 Roush Fenway Ford passed teammate Carl Edwards for the lead with 15-laps remaining in the 250-lap, and held on until the checkered flag was given.

"We've wrecked several cars here in the past, and coming into today's race this wasn't my favorite track, but it is now," said Stenhouse.

Carl Edwards, winner of Saturday night's Sprint Cup All-Star race was second.

"We had a very fast car at the beginning," said Edwards. "During the last pit stop we changed the tire air pressure, and that really messed it up and made the car loose."

Brad Keselowski was third, followed by, Reed Sorenson, Elliott Sadler, Kenny Wallace, Michael McDowell, Justin Allgaier, James Buescher, and Austin Dillon.

Top-10 leaders after 12 of 34: 1. Sadler-418, 2. Sorenson-411, 3. Stenhouse-410, 4. Allgaier-398, 5. Leffler-375, 6. Almirola-366, 7. K. Wallace-355, 8. S. Wallace-315, 9. Scott-303, 10. Wise-289

### "AN ANGEL ON MY SHOULDER," SAID KYLE BUSCH

Kyle Busch credits an angel to helping him win the Charlotte truck race.



Carl Edwards celebrates his All-Star win at Charlotte.

"We didn't have the fastest truck and I got into early trouble," said Busch. "I had an angel riding with me."

"I'm going to say I had some help tonight. It's weird how things work, but, man, when you believe in it and you trust it and you have faith in it, it'll repay you."

The angel, Busch was referring to was Zahra Baker, a 10-year-old girl, whose remains were found in North Carolina, after she had been reported missing.

Busch had put her name and photo on his No. 18 truck prior to the race.

Busch crossed the finish line .317 seconds ahead of Clint Bowyer. The victory was his third straight in the series, his fourth in six starts this season and the 28th of his career, bringing his aggregate victories across NASCAR's top three series to 97. That ties him with Dale Earnhardt and Darrell Waltrip for third all-time in total wins across all three national series.

Cole Whitt ran third and took over the series points lead. At 19, Whitt is the youngest driver ever to lead the series points and the first rookie.

James Buescher came home fourth, followed by Ron Hornaday Jr., Johnny Sauter, Austin Dillon, Parker Kligerman, Justin Marks, and Brad Sweet.

Top-10 leaders after 7 of 24: 1. Whitt-260, 2. Sauter-259, 3. Hornaday-257, 4. Crafton-243, 5. Dillon-240, 6. Peters-225, 7. Buescher-202, 8. Rogers-195, 9. Kligerman-195, 10. Papais-192

**Weekend Racing:** The Sprint Cup and Nationwide teams are at Charlotte. The trucks do not race again until June 4.

Sat., May 28, Nationwide Series Top Gear 300, race 13 of 34, Starting time: 2:30 pm; TV: ABC.

Sun., May 29, Sprint Cup Coca-Cola 600, race 13

of 36; Starting time: 6 pm, TV: FOX.

All times are Eastern. **Racing Trivia Question:** How many Truck titles has Ron Hornaday won?

**Last Week's Question:** Jeff Burton drives the No. 31 Richard Childress Chevrolet. Who did he drive for before RCR? **Answer:** He drove for Roush Racing.

You may contact the Racing Reporter at hodges@race500.com. NT(MAY25,C)ac

### Vogel's Kids Fishing Rodeo

Vogel State Park and The Vogel Volunteers will host a Kid's Fishing Rodeo on Saturday, June 11 from 8 a.m. until noon. Vogel State Park is located 11 miles south of Blairsville on Hwy. 129/11.

Wolf Creek will be stocked with trout for children 12 years and younger to fish. Your child must be present at the registration tent for signing and to receive a free t-shirt prior to fishing. The first 300 children will receive a t-shirt. Also the lucky ticket holders will receive a prize.

Park staff and volunteers will be helping by giving out bait, baiting hooks, taking fish off, and giving out prizes. Prizes are donated by the local businesses. A limited supply of loaner rods/cane poles, corn and worms will be available. So, please bring your own if possible. All fishing laws are to be followed. We want to teach the children to protect and conserve the resources while having fun.

For further information call 706-745-2628 or visit www.GeorgiaStateParks.org. NT(MAY25,Z)CA

### Ride with the Mountain Miatas

Do you have a Mazda Miata? The Mountain Miata's have formed a group right here in the North Georgia Mountains. We ride on the first Saturday of every month and a few rides in between. Come join us. Call Jon or Pegg at 706-897-3784. NT(MAY25,Z)CA

### Feel Good Friday

If you're tired of all the bad news and want to be around positive people and ideas, come to the Wellness Center at 144 Blue Ridge Street, Blairsville, at 7 PM the first Friday of each month. Chat about the good things going on, learn, share, and feel good. Positive support for the changing times. Complementary, call for more information 706-781-4048. NT(MAY25,Z)CA

## Local Racing Action

By: Carl Vanzura

### Bounty on Ledford continues after four wins



David Payne #8 was after the bounty on Danny Ledford #4 but had to settle for third

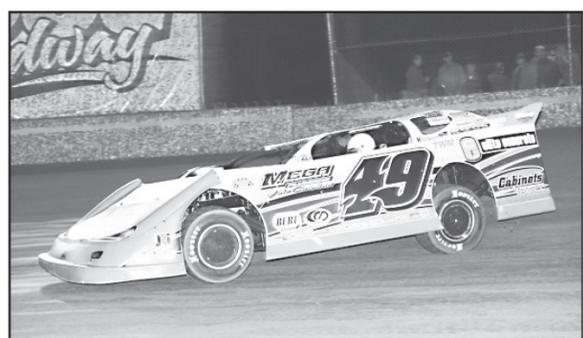
Hiawassee driver Danny Ledford fought off a strong field of challengers after a \$300 bounty was placed on his head for anybody that could stop his three win streak. Out of townner Brent Dixon showed he meant business when he out qualified Ledford and raced side-by-side for a hand full of laps until the blue number 4 pulled ahead by a dozen car-lengths to take his fourth win of the season. Dixon led David Payne, Young Harris's Randy Nichols and George Mashburn in the top five to cross under the checkered flag.

The race of the night saw 21-cars start the feature in the Limited/Crate class with 10 of the strongest drivers in the south doing battle around the quarter mile dirt track in Brasstown thrilling the crowd. Hayesville's Charlie Parker won the race with Shannon Bearden right on his bumper all night in Blairsville owner Randy Shoppe's car. Bobby Panter, Devin Dilbeck and Jason Payne rounded out the top five. Hiawassee's Kevin Bradshaw and Blairsville's Jamie Lunsford placed in the top 10.

Jeffery Wood won the Modified feature in front of Brasstown's Greg Sudderth in an action packed race. The Stock main event saw veteran driver and former track champion Johnny Burnett return to

Victory Lane after a two year absence from racing. Hiawassee drivers Stacy White and William Watson ran second and fourth. Hayesville's Jamie Cross won the Pony feature with fellow Hayesville driver Travis Robinson taking second. The next race at Tri-County will be Monday night May 30 for the big money Memorial Day special event.

Blairsville driver Jonathan "Superman" Davenport won the Southern All Star \$5000 to win race Saturday night at Cleveland Speedway. Davenport had to battle a field of 24 cars out of the 37 entered and an extremely fast but very rough race surface to win the exciting event. This was the first time I had the chance to see Mt. Holly, NC, driver Chris Ferguson race, but I am definitely now a fan. He had two flats, a spin in lapped traffic and made it all the way back up front to battle Chris Madden for second place when Madden lost it and both wrecked. Murphy High School coach David Payne finished second in the 50-lapper. Over at Dixie Speedway, Wayne Nichols won the Super Late Model event. Former track manager Randy McCoy has agreed to reopen Toccoa Speedway in early June and Westminster Speedway is going back to racing on Friday nights. NT(MAY25,C)ac



Blairsville's Jonathan Davenport was \$5000 richer after his win Saturday night