

Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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Football: Indians don pads for first ever 'Midnight Madness' scrimmage game

By Chad Stack
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Staff Writer

The Boys in Blue took to the field Thursday, Aug. 1, at 12:01 a.m. for their first padded practice and scrimmage under new Indian Head Football Coach Jason Roquemore. Roquemore comes to Towns County following a seven-year stint as the head coach for Johnson High School in Gainesville.

The Indians have been practicing for two months, but the Georgia High School Association prohibits full-contact padded practices until Aug. 1 each year.

Schools all over the state open pre-season play with a midnight scrimmage, and for the first time, the Indians joined in on the action early Thursday morning.

Roquemore has had two months to work with his team and really likes what he sees — the Indians started offseason workouts meeting three days

a week in June, with offseason training ramping up in July as they started getting in the playbook.

On Thursday, July 25, the Indians began camp, practicing for five days with just helmets on before being able to go in full pads.

All 22 current Indian football players arrived last Wednesday afternoon to have a team dinner, after which the boys spent time bonding and getting to know each other better.

At 11 p.m., the team gathered in the locker room to suit up for a much-anticipated practice with pads.

Just after midnight, the Indians took to the outfield of the baseball field in front of fans who came out to see the team's new look.

They lined up for a short stretch before they broke down into individual drills, and then the excitement came as the sounds of pads popping and helmets hitting started.

Shortly after a few hitting drills, the Indians worked

on some defensive plays and offensive plays during a light scrimmage.

After a two-hour practice, the team broke down with Coach Roquemore and the other coaches and headed into the locker room for a light snack.

"I was excited to see them with pads on," Roquemore said. "They were physical, and that's what we need. That was our first practice with pads on, and we still have a lot more work to do."

Next up after last week's "Midnight Madness" game, the Indians will travel to Lumpkin County for a pre-season scrimmage on Friday, Aug. 16, starting at 7:30 p.m.

And the Boys in Blue will host their season opener under the lights at Frank McClure Memorial Stadium on their brand new \$1 million turf field when they take on arch-rival Yellowjackets from Hayesville, North Carolina, on Friday, Aug. 23, at 7:30 p.m.



Under the direction of first-year head coach Jason Roquemore, the Towns County Indians football team hit the field in full pads at last week's Midnight Madness Scrimmage game. Photos by Lowell Nicholson and Chad Stack.

NASCAR 2019

By Gerald Hodges/the Racing Reporter

Elliott Gets Impressive Win At The Glen

Watkins Glen, NY - Chase Elliott put on an impressive driving show in Sunday's Cup Series road course race, leading 80 of the 90 laps. He won both stages of the race and pretty much dominated the entire event. It was his second win of the season and second consecutive victory at The Glen.

"The car was fast," said Elliott, who started on the pole. "We had a good day on pit road and things turned out in our favor."

"What an afternoon this was. I want to thank all my friends, fans and other people that have gotten me to this point."

Runner-up Martin Truex Jr. chased Elliott for the last half of the race, but was never able to get close enough to make a pass. On the last lap, all he could do was watch Elliott take the checkered flag ahead of him for the second time in two years.

"He did an excellent job," said Truex. "We were fast but couldn't get a run on him when we needed it. It was a good race and good finish, but you never enjoy finishing second. We did real good and we'll keep on working, because there's still a lot of races left."

Denny Hamlin was third. He came in second to Elliott in Stage 1, but never had the speed or car to match the winner. "We needed just a little more," said Hamlin. "We could handle all the turns, but we lacked the speed to overtake him on the straights."

Erik Jones was fourth, while Ryan Blaney came in fifth.

Matt DiBenedetto finished sixth for his fourth top-10 of the season. "It was another good run for us," said DiBenedetto. "Our cars keep getting better and better. I think if we can keep on running like this, we will move to Victory Lane one day."

Kevin Harvick, Kyle Larson, Brad Keselowski, and Kurt Busch were the remaining top-10 finishers.

Kyle Busch encountered problems on the second lap when he spun in Turn 1 while battling William Byron. The two retaliated against each other as Busch bumped Byron's No. 24 through the grass just before the end of Stage 1.

During lap 61 Busch tangled with Bubba Wallace. He banged into the side of Wallace's No. 43, then shoved his way past Wallace. Later, Wallace spun Busch's No. 18 Toyota in Turn 1, bringing out a caution. Despite all the beating, banging, and shoving, Busch still managed to finish 11th.

Top-10 leaders after 22 of 36; 1. Kyle Busch-851, 2. Logano-838, 3. Harvick-777, 4. Hamlin-771, 5. Truex-753, 6. Keselowski-728, 7. Kurt Busch-679, 8. Elliott-676, 9. Almirola-640, 10. Blaney-633.

CINDRIC GETS FIRST XFINITY WIN
Austin Cindric held off AJ Allmendinger at Watkins Glen for the first Xfinity Series win of his career. Allmendinger's car failed the post-race inspection and he was placed

VFW Golf League results

Last week's league competition at Chatuge Shores Golf Course was fierce but the team lead by Ray Ide prevailed by scoring a 65 which is 7 strokes under par. Teammates contributing to the win were Chuck Lehman and Gary Jones. Congratulations! ^{T(Aug7,G1)SH}



Elliott Gets Impressive Win At The Glen

last. Christopher Bell, Justin Allgaier, Ryan Blaney, Tyler Reddick, Chase Briscoe, Cole Custer, Michael Annett, Noah Gragson, and Ryan Preece were the remaining top-10 finishers.

Top-10 leaders after 20 of 33: 1. Reddick-889, 2. Bell-859, 3. Custer-790, 4. Allgaier-742, 5. Cindric-698, 6. Briscoe-663, 7. Gragson-661, 8. Annett-629, 9. Haley-627, 10. Nemechek-605.

Here are the top-10 finishers of last week's NASCAR Truck Series race held at Eldora Speedway on Thursday, Aug. 1: 1. Stewart Friesen, 2. Sheldon Creed, 3. Grant Enfinger, 4. Mike Martar, 5. Todd Gilliland, 6. Christian Eckes, 7. Chase Briscoe, 8. Tyler Dipple, 9. Tyler Ankrum, 10. Matt Crafton.

Top-10 leaders after 15 of 23: 1. Enfinger-622, 2. Crafton-570, 3. Friesen-567, 4. Moffitt-564, 5. Rhodes-507, 6. H. Burton-506, 7. Gilliland-473, 8. Creed-450, 9. Hill-431, 10. Sauter-418.

JOHNSON CHANGES CREW CHIEF, AGAIN

For the second time this season Jimmie Johnson has a new crew chief. Since 2002, Chad Knaus was Johnson's top man. But after a dismal 2018 season, the Hendrick Motorsports driver switched to Kevin Meendering for the 2019 season. After 21 races, Meendering is out and former race engineer Cliff Daniels is atop the pit box.

The explanation was simple for Johnson, who is 17th in points and 12 points behind the playoff cut line with five races to go in the regular season.

"We have to act now is the bottom line," Johnson said. "We don't have any time to waste. We're always trying to figure out how to make our team better. What's tricky is when it boils down to people and needing to make a change. It's never easy. It's never fun."

Johnson, who turns 44 in September, has 83 career victories but none since June 2017 at Dover and is mired in easily the longest losing streak of his career. He has just three top-five finishes this season and eight top-10's.

This season isn't the first time Johnson and Daniels have worked together. Daniels played a role in Johnson's record-tying championship season in 2016 as an engineer for then-crew chief Chad Knaus.

While Daniels has no prior experience as a crew chief, it's the instant connection with the 31-year-old that invigorates Johnson in his quest for an eighth title.

"Coming back and being ingrained with the team and those levels of communication, we did in a lot of ways pick up where they left off," Daniels said. "In some new ways — and I've commented to him several times — his fire is so

intense right now. The level he is trying to perform, the level we know the team needs to perform is all there. We just have to execute it properly."

Meanwhile Tony Stewart is back in the news for his temper. A video posted by TMZ sports, show Stewart punching a fan that harassed him at a sprint car race in Jackson, Minn., the weekend of July 27. Stewart can be seen chasing after the race fan once the two have a heated exchange.

The incident may not have been all Stewart's fault. It seems his sprint car lost an engine before the night's racing was over, and Stewart went over to sign autographs. That's when the fan started heckling him. Stewart gave him the finger first, then after more insults, Stewart punched him.

Incidents like this one limit his ability to be more effective in racing, but sometimes you just gotta do what you gotta do.

Racing Joke: Kurt and his girlfriend are attending a party with some local folks from the Methodist church at a private countryside resort. Kurt and his friend set off to explore the area, and presently they came upon an old bridge that crossed a quiet pond.

Unfortunately, they didn't notice a sign declaring the bridge to be unsafe. As they crossed it, the caretaker came running after them. "Hey! You there! Get off that bridge!" he shouted.

"It's all right," said Kurt. "We are in this resort with permission. We're part of the Methodist group."

"I'm not worried about that," replied the caretaker. "But if you don't get off that bridge, you'll all be Baptists."

Weekend Racing: The Cup and Truck teams will be at the 2-mile Michigan International Speedway while the Xfinity teams are at Mid Ohio Sports Car Course, a road course auto racing facility located just outside Lexington, Ohio.

Sat, Aug. 10; Truck Series race 16 of 23; Starting time: 1 PM ET; TV: FoxSports1.

Sat, Aug. 10; Xfinity Series race 21 of 33; Starting time: 3 PM ET; TV: NBCSN.

Sun, Aug. 11; Cup Series race 22 of 36; Starting time: 3 PM ET; TV: NBCSN.

Racing Trivia Question: Which NASCAR series does Brendan Gaughan drive in?

Last Week's Question: Which Cup team does Ryan Blaney drive for? He drives the No. 12 Ford for Penske Racing.

Gerald Hodges is a syndicated NASCAR writer and author. His books may be viewed online and ordered at Amazon.com. You may contact him by e-mail at: hodges@race500.com

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3rd Annual
Chatuge Regional Golf Tournament

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Registration & Lunch
1:30 p.m.
Shotgun start
\$135 per person
\$540 per team

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