

# Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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## Indians edge closer to state playoffs in GHSA Power Ratings

By Shawn Jarrard  
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With two games left in the season, the Towns County Indians are looking to make school history by going to the GHSA Class A Public Football State Championship Playoffs.

Both games left in the Indians' regular season are region rivals – Lakeview Academy and Providence Christian – and both games are winnable.

Last season, the Indians handily defeated Providence and lost an extremely close game in overtime to Lakeview, and Towns County has a better season record than both teams.

And per the Georgia High School Association website, the Boys in Blue are ranked 24th in the Class A Public Power Ratings, meaning that wins in their next two games should earn them a spot in the state playoffs.

The Tribe has gotten some valuable experience ahead of its final two games, playing against Commerce High School in a home game on Friday, Oct. 20.

Commerce is one of the best football teams in Class A football, and the Indians put up two touchdowns against them and held the Tigers to a final score of 38-14.

The two Indian touchdowns came off the close-working relationship of offensive leaders Trent Bradshaw at quarterback and receiver Zach Davenport, with two extra points from kicker Wesly Calhoun.

"Commerce is at that level that we want to be," said Indian Head Coach John Cornett. "They're just a better team than us right now, and that's where we hope to build to, their level."

Continued Coach Cor-



The Towns County Indians taking the field on Friday night prior to the Commerce game. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

nett: "It looked like they kept everybody in (the entire game), and I will say this, they've got a lot of kids playing both ways, and I really felt going into the game, if it was close at all, then we'd probably wear them out the second half."

And that's exactly what happened on Friday, as the Indians made more points than they allowed in the second half, putting up 14 to the Tigers' 10.

"Our kids never quit, they play hard, and that's what I love about them," said

Coach Cornett. "We've just got to keep getting better. And like I said, we'd love to get to the level that Commerce is at."

Right now, Coach Cornett is focusing on Friday's big game against Lakeview Academy, but he's well aware that his Indians are close to making school history by heading to the state playoffs.

"I feel like, if we win out, we're in, and that's the only scenario I'm looking at," said Coach Cornett.

Towns County will play its last home game of the year

on Friday, Oct. 27, against Lakeview Academy, with a kickoff time of 7:30 p.m.

"We believe we can beat Lakeview, and Lakeview believes they can beat us," said Coach Cornett. "So, this will probably be the biggest game of the year, right here this Friday."

Be sure to make it to the game early, as the Indians will hold a special pre-game Senior Night event for all the players, cheerleaders and band members who will graduate in the spring.

"It's a big night for

these kids," said Coach Cornett. "They set some goals for themselves at the beginning of the year, which are still obtainable. And here it is, their last home game of their high school career."

"I'm sure there will be a lot of emotions involved, which could go either way. I would think, with our boys, that the emotions will play to their benefit. I think they'll come out fired up and just ready to put on a show."

Friday is also Youth Night at the game, and during halftime, the members of the

Towns County Youth Football and Cheerleading programs will take part in a celebration of their participation in those sports.

Of course, Coach Cornett and the Indians are hopeful that the community will continue to support the program that they've worked to build together over the last two years.

"Give recognition to these players – just continue to praise these boys for their hard work," said Coach Cornett.

## Lady Indian Mites cheer to Second Place finish in competition



By Shawn Jarrard  
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Staff Writer

HAYESVILLE, NC – Congratulations to the Towns County Lady Indian Mite Cheerleaders, who placed second in the Smoky Mountain Youth League Cheer Jamboree on Saturday, Oct. 21, at Hayesville High School.

The Lady Indian super squad of six practiced hard for weeks leading up to the competition, and their dedication to the sport paid off with an excellent performance in Hayesville.

Brooklyn LeQuire, Jadalynn Reynolds, Hailey Wolfe, Kloey Powell, Kaylen Hampton and Nayeli Rios are the six young ladies who cheered their hearts out that Saturday, and their coaches, Whitney LeQuire and Rachell White, couldn't be prouder of them.

"We had to do a three-and-a-half-minute performance that included a cheer and included a dance," said Coach LeQuire, who is Brooklyn's mom, adding that the girls also had to do stunts for competition judges.

The Indian cheerleader squad is the only one from Georgia in the Smoky Mountain Conference, and the Towns County girls started their competition routine by asking their North Carolina counterparts to "Raise Up."

Judges scored the girls on several criteria, and the Lady Indians made high marks in all categories to place second on Hayesville's home turf.

And though the Hayesville Mite Cheerleaders placed first in the competition, several parents of the champion Yellow Jackets approached the Towns County cheerleaders afterward to say that they had loved their cheering.

"This is the first time that they've ever gone to competition, and they pulled in Second Place," said Coach LeQuire of her team. "They had a sleepover after they

won the competition. It was me, the assistant coach, and all six girls.

"They got pizza and stayed up all night, and they were just really excited. They actually asked if we could keep getting them together all year even though the football games are over, so I think we've formed some good friendships."

Earlier that Saturday, the Towns County Youth Football Teams played home games against Cherokee County, North Carolina, and though they weren't able to come up with wins, Football Director Jimmy Smith said he was proud of his players.

The games, played by Indian Mites and Termites, were the last of the season, and Director Smith said that the youth football players and cheerleaders will have their annual banquet soon.

A couple weeks ago, the Termites celebrated a big Homecoming win at Foster Park, and the boys are already looking forward to next season.

Smith said he was proud of all his youth football participants, including the 9- and 10-year-old Lady Indian Mites for their Second-Place victory on Saturday.

"All the kids have done an awesome job, and my coaching staff, they worked hard with the kids every week at practice, and in the games," said Director Smith. "No one ever gave up, and they did an awesome job."

This is Director Smith's last season as leader of the Towns County Youth Football program, and he has said that, though he will miss it, he feels good about the program being run by the county rec department moving forward.

"These kids played their heart out," said Smith, looking back on the season. "They came out every Saturday and played. I just want everybody to know how proud I am of the kids, and I'm proud of my cheerleaders, they did an awesome job."

## NASCAR 2017

By Gerald Hodges/the Racing Reporter

### Truex Gets Seventh Win

Kansas City, KS -- Martin Truex Jr. took control of Sunday's Cup Series race about midway and cruised to his seventh win of the season, by 2.24-seconds ahead of Kurt Busch.

Truex started on the pole but was sent to the rear of the field at the start of the 267-lap race for going below the white line before the green flag was given. He worked his way back up through the pack and it was evident that by lap 145, he had the dominant car.

"Oh man I can't say enough about this team," said Truex. "It's unbelievable. We never dreamed we'd win this many races at the beginning of the season. I had a great car today. We had good runs and kept ourselves in the right position to win."

The remaining top-10: 2. Kurt Busch, 3. Ryan Blaney, 4. Chase Elliott, 5. Denny Hamlin, 6. Chris Buescher, 7. Dale Earnhardt Jr., 8. Kevin Harvick, 9. Aric Almirola, 10. Kyle Busch.

The race was pivotal for several drivers, because the Chase field was reduced from 12 contenders to eight.

Several Chase drivers didn't finish the race and were eliminated. Both of the Ganassi Racing drivers, Kyle Larson and Jamie McMurray weren't around at the finish.

Kyle Larson was the first driver out of the race. He pitted on lap 71 due to engine problems with his No. 42 Chevrolet. He lost three laps while his team made repairs. He returned to the track, but his engine went up in smoke during lap 77.

"We lost oil pressure," said Larson. "It's disappointing, because up until now we've had a good year. We were hoping to continue on. Even though we're out of the Chase, we'll continue to race as hard as we can."

Larson's teammate, Jamie McMurray couldn't miss a big wreck that happened in front of him on lap 198, and he was done for the rest of the race. "The 77-car just got loose," said McMurray. "I over corrected and got into him. I thought we had one of the best cars on the long run, but that's the way it goes."

Both drivers were cut from the Chase field. The lap 197 wreck, which involved McMurray, claimed nine other cars including Chase contenders Matt Kenseth and Kasey Kahne.

It all began to happen as the field came out of turn-2. Erik Jones got loose, lost it and swerved into the outside wall. Many of the cars behind him had no place to go and slammed into each other.



Truex Gets Seventh Cup Win of Season

"I just lost it," said Jones. "I really feel bad for all those other guys. We had a fast car and had worked our way up to the front, but the back end just came around."

Jimmie Johnson had handling problems throughout the race. It looked like he was playing bumper cars several times. His first spin came on lap 187, causing him to brush the outside wall. He pitted for fresh tires and returned to the track. Ten laps later he spun again. He was involved in the big wreck during lap 198, but managed to keep his car going and finish the race.

"The car wasn't handling like we would have liked it," said Johnson. "Sometimes it would be hard to steer coming out of the turns, and at other times, it would be difficult entering a turn. We definitely have to get better in the next couple of races."

The Chase field has now been reduced to eight drivers: 1. Truex-4069, 2. Kyle Busch-4042, 3. Keselowski-4028, 4. Harvick-4017, 5. Johnson-4017, 6. Hamlin-4014, 7. Blaney-4009, 8. Elliott-4006.

The field will be reduced to only four drivers after the next three races at: Martinsville, TX, and Phoenix. The highest finishing driver at Homestead, the last race of the season will be the 2017 champion.

### BELL GETS KANSAS XFINITY SERIES WIN

Christopher Bell won Saturday's Xfinity Series race. It was his first victory in five series starts. He chased down Eric Jones in the closing laps and passed him on the low side with four laps to go in the 200-lap race. As Bell drifted back up the track, Jones did not slow down and slammed into the rear of Bell's car. The impact sent Jones into the outside wall, while Bell continued on to victory lane.

"Well, it was racing, but he pulled up in front of me and I just

couldn't stop," said Jones, who led 186 laps and finished 15th. "It wasn't like he was trying to race me, he just wrecked me."

Bell said he would apologize to Jones, but didn't consider his move an attempt to wreck Jones. "I didn't try to and I didn't want to wreck him," said Bell. "I thought I had cleared him. It's just one of those things."

Tyler Reddick finished second, followed by Ryan Blaney, William Byron, Justin Allgaier, Austin Dillon, Elliott Sadler, Matt Tifft, Ty Dillon, and Ryan Reed.

Top-8 Xfinity Series Championship contenders with three races remaining: 1. Allgaier-3066, 2. Byron-3064, 3. Sadler-3055, 4. B. Poole-3038, 5. Tifft-3033, 6. Reed-3032, 7. Hemric-3032, 8. Custer-3030.

There will be two more races before the Xfinity Series playoff field is narrowed to four drivers.

### CLINT BOWYER AND HOMETOWN FANS

Clint Bowyer, like all racers try to put on a good show for their hometown fans. He is from Emporia, Kansas, but considers the Kansas Speedway as his home track.

He was hoping for a good finish this past Sunday at Kansas in order to impress his friends and family.

"It's difficult to go home because of getting pulled in all the different directions - all the while trying to focus on getting a good run, because that's really what's important to you the most there," said Bowyer. "It's important to me to run well in front of all my fans, friends and family."

Ask Clint Bowyer about the impact his hometown of Emporia, KS has had on his racing career and you'll get a rare moment of silence from the 38-year-old Cup Series driver.

Then he'll look you in the eye and respond with a short and

powerful answer. "People are what make you," continued Bowyer. "As you grow up in a community, it's the people within that community who you learn from and everything else."

"Life's all about timing, it's all about chances that you get in life, and opportunities, and then you've got to be able to, I guess, have enough experience to prepare yourself for that opportunity and be able to capitalize on that opportunity."

"It seems like my career within a five- or six-year span went very fast, but we always kept moving. We never stayed in one class or anything, always kept moving up and forward progression, and that always enabled me to get in the next ride, the next opportunity, and capitalize on it really well."

Bowyer hasn't turned his back on Kansas, especially Emporia. He returns often to deer hunt, visit friends or just be part of the community. In March 2013, he bought the Clint Bowyer Autoplex car dealership on U.S. Highway 50, where he once worked as a lot attendant.

Unfortunately, Bowyer's hoped for win or good finish didn't happen.

His 19th-place finish didn't show his hometown fans what he is really capable of.

"A win at Kansas is obviously at the top of the list, right up there with a Daytona 500, or places I'd really like to get a victory," he said. "I just hope that we can get a Kansas win in the future for a lot of people including the Bowyer family."

**Weekend Racing:** The Truck and Cup teams are at the Martinsville, Virginia track. The Xfinity teams have an off week.

Sat., Oct. 28, Truck Series race 20 of 23; Starting time: 1:30 p.m. ET; TV: Fox Sports 1.

Sun., Oct. 29, Cup Series race 33 of 36; Starting time: 1 p.m. ET; TV: NBCSN.

**Racing Trivia Question:** What year did NASCAR began the Chase for the championship?

**Last Week's Question:** Which is the smallest track on the NASCAR Cup circuit? Answer: Martinsville Speedway. The Martinsville track is listed as 0.526-mile, while Bristol is .533. Not much difference in size, but Bristol has much higher banking, making it a faster track.

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