

Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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Zach Davenport joins the 1,000-point club at Towns County High

By Jerry Kendall
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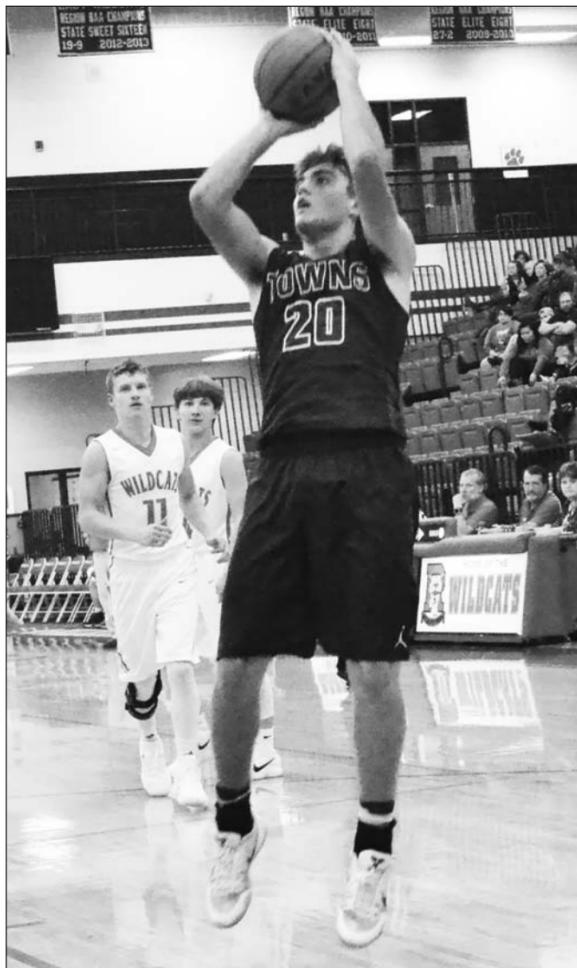
Towns County High School Indians senior three sports standout Zach Davenport became just the thirteenth Indian known to reach the 1,000 career points club in basketball at TCHS last Saturday, November 18, at Rabun County High School in Tiger near Clayton. This accomplishment is unique to Davenport in at least two ways.

First of all, he is the first Indian to reach 1,000 points this early in his career since it is considered by long time followers of the Indians that the legendary 6'4" Bob Bryson reached the total as a junior way back in 1955. Davenport scored 125 points as a freshman, 384 as a sophomore, and 488 as a junior, giving him 997 points through last year and just three points shy of 1,000 as a junior. He scored the first of two first quarter field goals on drives to the basket at the 4:11 mark at Rabun County for 999 points and the second at the 2:17 mark in giving him 1,001 points in the Indians' first 2017-2018 regular season game.

Thoughts of Bryson surpassing the 1,000 points total in his first three years are based upon the presence of the score books for his freshman and junior seasons and the comparatively small number of points he would have needed in between, when he is recalled to have been a prolific scorer as a sophomore, to reach the total as a junior.

Basketball, tennis, and baseball superstar Eddie Rushton is the only Indian to have come anywhere close to Davenport's total at an earlier date since Bryson set a difficult to challenge standard for future Indians. Rushton scored 821 points during his freshmen through junior years from 1972 through 1974 with this total falling 179 points short of 1,000 and requiring several weeks into his 1975 senior season to reach the magic total.

As a family matter, Rushton's mother, June Bryson Rushton, and Bob Bryson were first cousins with kinship interests bringing us to the second unique aspect of Davenport's accomplishment of last Saturday. While quite a number of both Lady Indian and Indian 1,000 point scorers are the sons or daughters of former TCHS basketball players, Davenport is the first third generation basketball player at TCHS to reach 1,000 points.



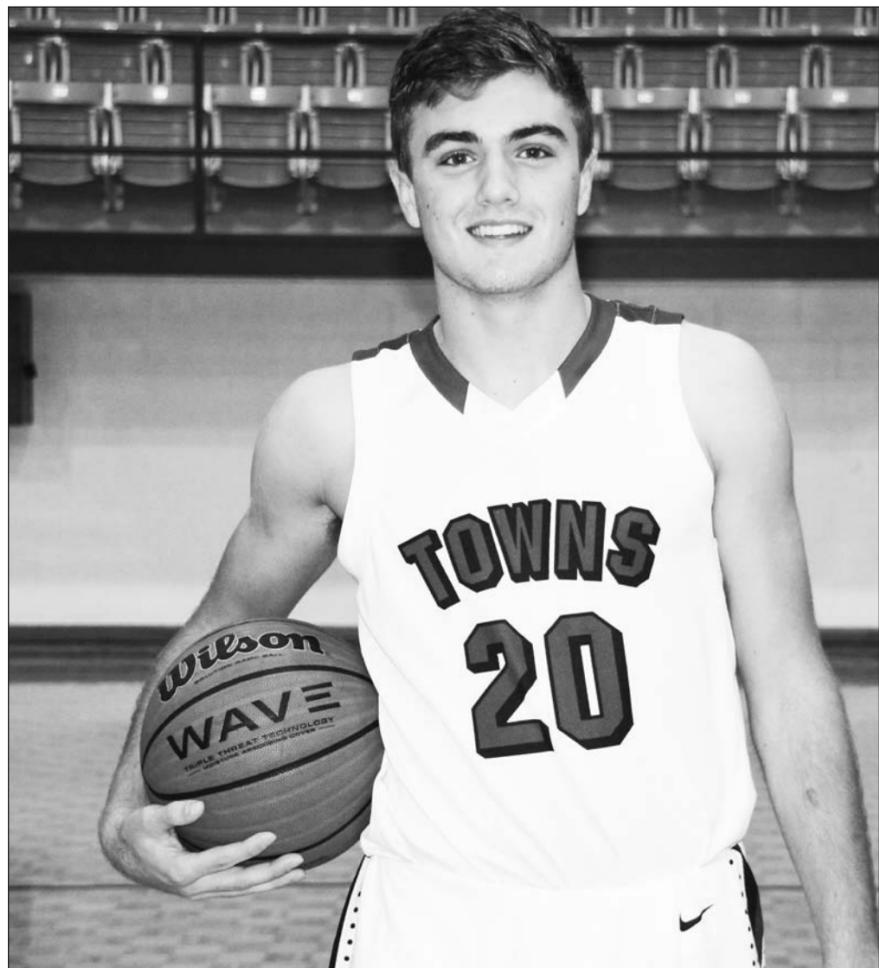
Towns County senior Zach Davenport became the 13th Indian to reach 1,000 career points. Photos by Lowell Nicholson

His mother, Jaclyn Welch Davenport, and both of her parents, Ricky and Doris Moss Welch, having preceded Zach in stardom on the basketball court for the Lady Indians and Indians. With this in mind, it occurred to your reporter that Davenport, Jaclyn, Ricky, and Doris have

most likely scored more points at TCHS than any other such family grouping. The career point totals for all four are available with the search results provided in the following paragraphs.

Ricky was a defensive and rebounding specialist as a three year starter for the Indians through the 1974 season and a long time teammate of Eddie Rushton who also found time to score 486 career points for the Indians during four years while Doris scored 721 for the Lady Indians during four years with the last two being as a starter before graduating at age sixteen in 1975. Ricky was a prime contributor as the Indians reached their first ever state tournament during his

senior year of 1974 and Doris was a top substitute on the Lady Indians' first state tournament team during her sophomore season of 1973 and then the second leading scorer on their 1974 state tournament team.



Jaclyn followed the tradition set by her parents when she sank 463 points during two years with the Lady Indians as a freshman and sophomore, including a family record thirty six points in a game against Highlands during her sophomore season of 1993. Zach's 22 points scored at Rabun County on Saturday bring his career total to 1,019 points at this writing and when added to the 1670 scored by his mother and grandparents, the career total for

himself and his mother and grandparents is 2,689. This total not only presents quite a challenge for other families to aspire to but with that task being made more daunting by the fact that Zach, who has missed just one game during his career as a precautionary measure for a minor injury, has the remainder of his senior year to add to his point totals.

Before closing this article, your reporter would like to relate the first time observing Zach Davenport as a basketball player. Zach was just seven years old and playing on a ten and under team at the Towns County Recreation Department and already an accomplished and polished all around player displaying

numerous skills and even leadership qualities among his mostly significantly older teammates. So it has been very clear to your reporter that God given talent and many years of hard work and dedication have brought about the success we as observers today see in the outstanding play of Zach Davenport.

Much appreciation is extended to Zach and his family for such formidable contributions to the Indians and Lady Indians fortunes for a period of well over forty years and best wishes are extended to Zach in his future endeavors in sports and other activities.

Towns County wrestlers throw down in Union County and at home

By Shawn Jarrard
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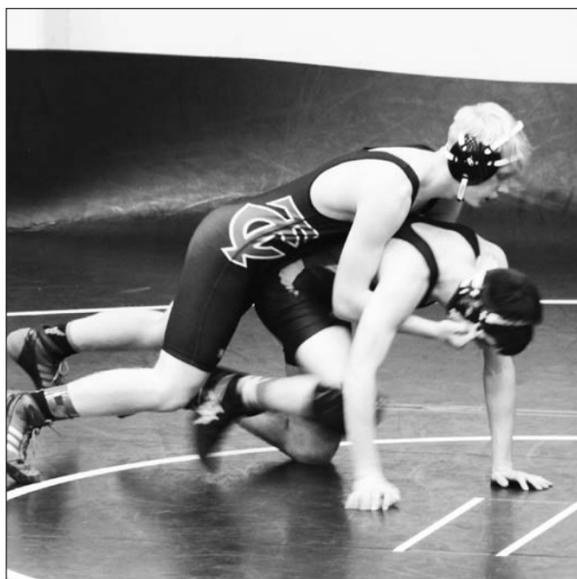
The Towns County Indians high school wrestling team went to Union County for the annual Panther Throwdown on Saturday, Nov. 18.

There, Austin Edrington and Blaine Rogers wrestled in "The Pit" and went 5-0 in matches, while Tyler Swanger and Wesly Calhoun each went 4-1. Dylan White, Nick Bradley and Garrett Oakes won two matches apiece and lost three.

"This was a great tournament to start the year off for our younger guys and those that are just joining us from football," said Indians Wrestling Assistant Coach Brandon Rowland. "Wrestling is a whole different monster when it comes to athletic shape, so some of the football athletes really benefited from this tournament, because it guaranteed each wrestler five matches."

"So, even though points weren't kept, and awards were not given, it was a great way for us to get experience for our wrestlers."

Towns County wrestling has been gearing up for several weeks now, though as Rowland pointed out, some kids who played a fall sport have started back more recently, like cross country runners



Photos by Shawn Jarrard

and football players.

"We're just really getting warmed up right now," said Indians Head Coach Jeff Stowers. "We're getting everybody acclimated to the gym, and stuff like that."

"It's early in the season, we've got a lot going on, and people scattered everywhere. It's good to get started."

Back home in Towns County that Saturday, the Indians had

their hands full with the Middle School King of the Mountains tournament.

"The team didn't place as a whole because we did not have a full lineup," said Middle School Coach Clay Worley. "Colson Hoffman placed third. He was 4-1 and wrestled very well."

"Casey ("Red") Galloway was 3-2 and finished fourth. He fought hard all day. Connor Davis won multiple matches and got



some good experience. Zion Calhoun worked hard and got some valuable mat time."

"I thought it was a good way to start the season and get acclimated to wrestling."

Kids from as far away as Robbinsville attended the tournament, and teams from school systems closer to home came as well, including Lumpkin, Fannin, North Hall and Union counties.

This is the first year in

several that the middle school has had a wrestling team, and though there are only four kids wrestling now, that's four more kids that are working to build their wrestling skills looking forward to the high school level.

That's why tournaments like King of the Mountains are so important, to give these kids as many opportunities to hit the mat as possible.

"It's good for our middle

school kids to get to wrestle at home, and it brings in a little money to buy some uniforms and other things, so that's always good," said Stowers. "It's fun for our kids, it's a good wrestling event, and we just have a good time with it."

Middle School King of the Mountains is a smaller version of the High School King of the Mountains, which will take place the first weekend in December at the Towns County Recreation and Conference Center at Foster Park.

Coach Stowers is confident that his high school team will be competitive this year, and since the high school tournament will feature close to 30 schools, his players will get some good experience.

Plus, quite a few visitors will be in Towns County over the two days of the tournament.

"It's a big deal, it's big for our community," said Stowers of the upcoming tourney. "The hotels are packed, the businesses will be packed with people coming in, and it's a good thing for our community."

"We'll be showing off the great facility (at Foster Park), and I want to thank Mr. Cliff Bradshaw and all the people at the recreation department that have let us use that facility. It's just going to be a great event, and we're looking forward to another good one."

NASCAR 2017

By Gerald Hodges/the Racing Reporter
Truex Wins It All

Homestead, FL - One of the first things Martin Truex Jr. received after winning Sunday's Cup Series race and the 2017 Championship was a big hug and kiss from his girlfriend, Sherry Pollex.

Truex had a series-best eight wins, the most of any driver, but the championship came down to the last lap of the last race. The distance between winning and being an also ran was less than twenty five feet.

That was his margin of victory over runner-up Kyle Busch.

"I don't know really what to say," said Truex. "We focused on this race for a long time. We knew it was going to be tough. You've got to understand what this means and how big it is. I was just the driver. We've had so many people and partners that made this possible."

Racing was close between Truex and Busch as the laps wound down. Both teams were rooting for their respective driver. But no individual

appreciated Truex anymore than his girlfriend. "I knew Kyle was close to him, but I knew Martin was going to win," Pollex said. "He's not a quitter. He's come too far. I knew he wasn't going to give up." A very disgruntled Kyle Busch is the driver that came up short.

The ending scenario began on lap 230 of the 267-lap race after Kurt Busch spun bringing out the race's last caution. On the restart, the front four drivers were: Truex, Kevin Harvick, Kyle Busch and Joey Logano. Truex pulled away, followed by Harvick. Logano had gotten into Busch, causing him to slip and lose several spots.

Truex and Harvick raced each other, while Kyle Busch regained his momentum. By lap 245 Busch had passed Logano and was running third. Five laps later, he had gotten by Harvick for second-place. With ten-to-go Busch had closed to within one hundred feet of the leader.

During lap 264 Kyle Larson, who was also racing for the



Crew Chief Cole Pearn and 2017 NASCAR Cup Champion Martin Truex Jr.

win got into the rear of Busch's No. 18, causing Busch's car to slip. Busch had to let off the gas briefly, but it was enough to allow Truex some breathing room, and Busch could only watch as Truex took the victory flag and

2017 Cup Series championship twenty five feet in front of him.

"Well, I can tell I had a lot of buddies out there today," said Busch referring to Logano and Larson. "We had the fastest car and gave it all we had."

It's unfortunate that last caution came out and it put us out of our format. That's racing. We'll be back next year, and maybe we'll get them then." I'm quite sure that Busch will reward Logano and Larson with some type of payback in 2018. Larson who led the most laps (142) was third and Kevin Harvick, another Chase driver was fourth.

"I thought we did pretty well at times, but we had several little handling problems," said Harvick. "The first one was loose handling. We got that fixed, and then we were too tight going in. It was like that all during the race. We just didn't quite have what we needed." Chase Elliott was fifth, while Joey Logano was sixth. Brad Keselowski, the fourth Chase driver was seventh. He led one lap but was never a threat to the other leaders. Almost every time he entered his pits, he would lose two or three spots due to slow team efforts.

"We were just about two/

tenths off today," he said "We didn't do the things we needed to do today. We've got to work on our speed. Things just didn't play out the way we needed it to. I think we need some time off."

Matt Kenseth, Denny Hamlin and Ryan Newman rounded out the top-10 drivers. Danica Patrick's day ended in a bad way. She had a right rear tire go down, causing her to hit the outside wall. Kasey Kahne ran into the back of her car, setting it on fire. She was unhurt but finished her last NASCAR race in 37th position.

Final top-10 leaders: 1. Truex, 2. Kyle Busch, 3. Harvick, 4. Keselowski, 5. Elliott, 6. Hamlin, 7. Kenseth, 8. Larson, 9. Blaney, 10. Johnson. racing folks. Sadler finished second in the final points standings, followed by: Allgaier, Hemric, Custer, Brennan Poole, Matt Tifft, Ryan Reed, Michael Annett, and Brendan Gaughan.