

Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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Lady Indians' defense clamps down on Rabun

By Joe Collins
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Clayton - The Towns County Lady Indians soccer team traveled to Rabun County last Monday and came away with their first victory of the 2013 season by beating the Wildcats 2-0.

The win boosted their season record to 1-1 and proved they were working on the right things to produce a winning season as they showed much improvement over the opening game against Union County.

The weather was very cold with the temperature in the mid-30's which felt even colder with a constant cold wind but the girls game was hot as they held the Wildcats scoreless in the game on the back of some solid mid-field defense.

The score was tied 0-0 at

the half but would soon change as junior Faithe Robinson scored the Indians first goal at the 56.23 mark which was unassisted from 90-feet out off the left side. It was a hard shot that entered the goal high and right just out of the reach of the Wildcat keeper.

Junior Taylor Vardeman was not to be kept silent as the Indians brought the ball down after a good steal at mid-field by junior Kaila Reece who then passed the ball to junior Vanessa Eller. Eller then had some solid footwork to ease down the left side and provided the assist to Vardeman who delivered a high strong kick that entered the goal on the off field side just over the goalie's head for Rabun. It was a nice arching kick from 75-feet and gave the Indians the cushion they needed for the win.

Eller and junior Makayla Underwood had two good attempts at goal in the first half



Faithe Robinson at Rabun County. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

Eller's shot hit the post on the right side while the attempt by Underwood hit hard off the crossbar. Both shots came following good ball handling and volleys by the Indians.

both halves but particularly well in the second half. We were solid on defense led by the Underwood sisters Makayla and freshman Taylor. The last two halves we've played have shown a lot of improvement and I hope this continues," said Head Coach Peter Byrne.

The Lady Indians have a strong team and move the ball well across the field. Their defense appears to be improving and the offense is handling the ball well. Rabun had a solid team but the Indians refused to give them any opportunities to score.

"I believe our keeper only had to make one save throughout the whole game and that is really good," declared Byrne.

The next game for the Lady Indians is on March 7th as they host Highlands, NC at home.

Game time is 5:30 p.m.

Fuzion Dance brings home awards from KAR Competition in Spartanburg



Fuzion Junior Company



Fuzion Junior Company Trio



Fuzion Senior Company

The Fuzion Dance Company attended the Kids Artistic Revue (KAR) competition in Spartanburg, SC and came home with 10 Top First Place and First Place Trophies.

The Senior Company earned top honors with their trio of Lindy Hollingshead, Caitlin Sheffield and Ansley Vardeman placing 3rd and a duo of Ansley and Caitlin placing 4th overall in the duo/trio category. Ansley Vardeman placed in the top 20 of all senior solos. All 8 of the Senior Company solos and group routines earned Top First Place awards. The Junior Company of Tori Anderson, Amaira Barrett, Ashlyn Leatherwood, Mai Lim, Skylar Stephens, Montana Walker and Carly Woodard earned the Judges Choice award. The trio of Tori Anderson, Ashlyn Leatherwood, and Mai Lim earned a First Place award.

The Fuzion Dance Com-

pany, a project of Brasstown Dance Academy, is a 501 (c) 3 non-profit company for the promotion of dance education and performance. Membership is by audition only. Currently, the Company includes 16 dancers under the direction of Amy McIntyre and Madge Smith.

You can see these dancers perform all of their competition pieces and more at their Benefit Concert on Saturday, March 23 at 7pm at Towns County School. The Benefit Concert will feature Noteariety, the audition only acapella group at Towns County High School under the direction of Chris Adams and the Fuzion Dance Company. The concert will benefit the arts and other local charities that involve Towns County students. It will be a collaboration of amazing local young talent that you don't want to miss!

For tickets or more information call Brasstown Dance Academy at 706-379-2651.

Indians fall to Panthers at Young Harris College

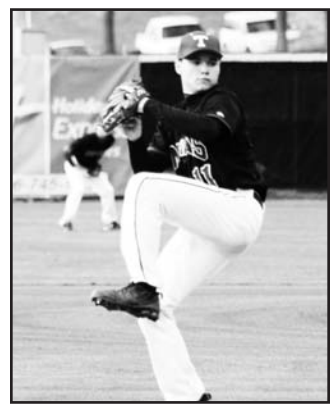
By Joe Collins
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The Towns County High School baseball team hosted the Union County Panthers last Wednesday at the Zell Miller field at Young Harris College because the field at the TCHS Campus was just too wet.

The Indians improved over the last game with Union and took an early lead in the first inning and maintained a tie game until the sixth inning when the Panthers' bats came to life to produce 5 runs and increase their lead 6-1.

The Indians couldn't produce any more runs in the bottom of the sixth, held the Panthers in the top of the seventh but couldn't rally in the bottom of the inning to produce any more runs and lost 6-1.

The Indians drew first blood in the bottom of the first inning as Sophomore Cruz Shook led off with a single to right center. Junior Harrison Hobbs then hit into a fielders choice, which left him on first where Senior Dillon Diehl



Dillon Diehl

pushed him to third base on a sharp single to center. Sophomore Zach Sewell followed Diehl with a ground ball to second base and an RBI when Hobbs crossed the plate for the Indians only run of the game and their first for the 2013 season. The inning ended with a ground out to first.

The Indians held tough for the next 4 innings with 3 singles coming from Junior Slade Davenport in the second, Diehl in the third and Sophomore Boone Moss in the fourth, but produced no runs.

The tribes' pitching held

the Panthers at bay allowing only 3 hits over the next 4 innings but unfortunately for the Indians one was a shot by the Panthers' Wes Aulet in the fourth inning that cleared the fence in left to tie the game at 1-1. The fifth inning remained calm for both teams but the Panthers charged in the sixth, scoring 5 runs and then kept the Indians from doing any damage in the bottom of the sixth and seventh, winning the game 6-1.

Diehl started the game on the mound for the Indians and kept the Panthers in check except for the homerun in the fourth. Diehl pitched 5 full innings having a pitch total of 62 with 37 of those finding the strike zone. He faced 22 Panther batters with no strikeouts and one walk allowing 5 earned runs. He also showed his form at the plate going 2-for-3 with a single in the first and another in the third.

Hobbs took the mound in the top of the fifth inning and faced 10 Panther batters allowing 1 earned run on 2 hits, striking out 2 and walking one. He threw a total of 37 pitches

with 19 of those being strikes. He also scored the only Indian run of the game on offense.

The Indians showed improvement in their second game of the year with Union by putting the bat on the ball better, solidifying their defense and keeping their mistakes to only two unfortunate throwing errors. Head Coach Chris Vardo had his team ready to play and they held up well.

"One of the big positives was that we were much improved in this game over our opening game of the year with Union. Overall our defense was better, we continued to throw strikes and we were more aggressive at the plate. We actually hit the ball on the nose more often but it just happened to be right at a Panther player. We still need to become more consistent at the plate by watching our pitch selection and cutting down on our strikeouts. We will continue to work on every aspect of our game and improve," Vardo said.

The Indians will take to the field again on Thursday at Hiwassee Dam, NC at 4 p.m.

NASCAR 2013

By Gerald Hodges/the Racing Reporter

Carl Edwards is back

It had been 70 races since Edwards had done his traditional back flip in victory lane, but after winning Sunday's Sprint Cup Subway 500, Edwards proved he still has the driving and athletic skills needed to get the job done.

Edwards battled Jimmie Johnson for 69 laps, a late-race caution, and dwindling fuel on the way to victory.

"We're definitely back," said Edwards. "You can bet on that. This win is for Jack Roush. He's the man that never lost hope."

"I don't really know where to start, but I've got to give credit to the entire team. They did an awesome job today. I knew we had a fast car, but with Jimmie on my tail, I knew I had to drive a great race there at the end."

Jimmie Johnson remained second from the time of a restart on lap 243 of the 312-lap race until it ended. He barely beat out Denny Hamlin, who finished third.

Johnson refused comment after the race, only saying what a great job his team did. As one fan remarked after the race, "Jimmie, 'the Vanilla man' has won so many races that coming in second isn't much of a thrill to him."

Denny Hamlin was running sixth as the cars went into turn 3 on the final lap. He cut across the infield, passing Keselowski, and almost getting Johnson.

"It was the guys in the pits that gave me this great finish," said Hamlin. "We had just an average car, but we certainly overachieved today."

Brad Keselowski raced hard, but had to settle for fourth.

"It was a solid day," said Keselowski. "We didn't have the best car, but we had a good one. We raced hard. I thought we had a shot at winning, but we just came up short."

Dale Earnhardt Jr., who came in fifth, led several laps.

"We used strategy to get up front," he said. "The car was fast, but I lost the lead to Carl on pit road when the 13-car got in front of me. I had to slow down and that cost me positions. Once I got on the track, I knew it was going to be hard to make up what I had lost."

Clint Bowyer was sixth, followed by Matt Kenseth, Tony Stewart, Jeff Gordon, and Jeff Burton.

Danica Patrick had a right front tire blow out during lap 186, sending her into the outside wall. As she bounced off the wall, she was struck in the left side by David

Ragan, and finished 39th.

Top-10 leaders after 2 of 36: 1. Johnson-90, 2. Earnhardt-82, 3. Keselowski-82, 4. Bowyer-72, 5. Hamlin-72, 6. Biffle-66, 7. Martin-65, 8. Stenhouse-60, 9. Gordon-60, 10. Almirola-60.

ROWDY WINS NATIONWIDE RACE

Kyle Busch was determined to win Saturday's Nationwide race.

He overcame a pit road speeding penalty, several cautions that kept bunching the field, and Brad Keselowski, who in the past has found magic out front on old tires.

Busch lost the top spot briefly by pitting under caution on Lap 152, as Keselowski and three other drivers remained on the track, but he regained the lead on Lap 164, clearing Keselowski as the cars streaked into Turn 3.

Busch stayed out front the rest of the way. The victory was his first in the No. 54 Toyota and a record 52nd in the Nationwide Series.

"It's great to be back, working with (crew chief) Adam (Stevens) and these guys," said Busch, who was winless last year in the Nationwide Series driving for his own team. "It was a bummer deal not to be able to get a win last year. It's a phenomenal day for us to get back to Victory Lane, to feel the taste of it again."

Keselowski held second by stretching his fuel to the end without pitting. Justin Allgaier ran third and leaves Phoenix tied for the series lead with Sam Hornish Jr., who came home seventh. Trevor Bayne and Elliott Sadler completed the top five.

Top-10 points leaders after 2 of 33: 1. Hornish-79, 2. Allgaier-79, 3. Scott-73, 4. Sadler-69, 5. Kligerman-65, 6. Smith-65, 7. Larson-63, 8. Piquet-62, 9. Dillon-61, 10. Bowman-54.

WILL THE NASCAR UPSWING CONTINUE

The 2013 NASCAR racing season has started off on a high note.

For the first time in several years, the Daytona race was almost a sellout.

Television ratings jumped nearly 24 per cent.

Danica Patrick seems to have sparked new fan interest in the sport.



Edwards broke a 70-race winless streak at Phoenix furnished by NASCAR

"The number of races we attend is determined by the money that is available," said James Kendrick of Myrtle Beach, SC. "We made four last year, but this year we had to cut our schedule back. We aren't experiencing any serious economic hardships, it's just that a dollar doesn't buy as much as it used to."

"Our motorhome gets about six miles to the gallon on gas. Gas increased about fifty-cents a gallon over last year, so our costs went up even before we left home."

"There is drama, but the actual racing doesn't provide the thrills it did in the past. Our two sons prefer to stay at home."

"It's a commitment going to a NASCAR race. Getting everything ready, then driving 400 miles or more is a big deal, and an expensive proposition."

A weakening economy and a lack of compelling "storylines" as races became safer and driver personalities grew more restrained have certainly affected the sport.

While NASCAR has an entire public relations department trying to figure out how to market the races to younger people; Hispanics, and African-Americans, it hasn't been successful. Like the two Kendrick brothers, most young white males aren't buying into the sport.

Danica Patrick's early exposure after winning the Daytona 500 pole certainly turned some heads, but unless she is able to "run with the boys," her fan base and popularity is not going to hold.

"The Phoenix race gave us a good baseline of what we needed to do," said Patrick. "Tony (Gibson, crew chief) and I are still trying to figure out how to get the most out of our car. We still have a lot to work on."

The economic decline in particular has hit the hardest, with many better-paid manufacturing and construction jobs disappearing, as fans are left without the dis-

posable income to attend races.

Wall Street Analysts advise tracks to look at different propositions, to try and draw people back, or to at least stall for more time until the economy improves. Unfortunately, their lower-middle class base of support is getting hammered anew, this time by a combination of an increase in payroll taxes, higher gasoline prices, and rising healthcare.

I think the biggest question in the mix is whether NASCAR is simply becoming less popular generally, as drivers have become more sophisticated and restrained.

Kyle Petty said on SPEED, that in the old days, drivers like Dale Earnhardt Sr. were seen as more "blue collar," the kind of people who had the same pastimes and the same roots as the fans in the stands. But as the sport got bigger and more lucrative, drivers were forced to present a more clean-cut image acceptable to their corporate sponsors.

NASCAR must accept the responsibility for that shift, given its driver policy.

In an article in USA Today, Richard Walter quoted a fan as saying, "When I'm hungry and crave a sandwich, I don't go to a hardware store."

The racing fans I talk with seek and demand emotion, not polished data and fine-tuned speeches.

How well NASCAR fares in the future will certainly be based in part on our economy, but they must provide real excitement, not a facsimile of emotions.

WEEKEND RACING: It's on to the fast city of Las Vegas' 1.5-mile oval for the Nationwide and Sprint teams. If you're in a hurry, or want to miss the traffic, you can catch a helicopter before and after the race for only \$850. You can still purchase a good three-day seat for \$245. A cheaper one in the economy section of the main grandstand is only \$215. Of course those prices are for advance purchase tickets. The trucks do not race again until Apr. 6.

Sat., Mar. 9, Nationwide Series, race 3 of 33; starting time: 4 pm ET; TV: ESPN2.

Sun., Mar. 10, Sprint Cup, race 3 of 36, starting time: 3 pm ET; TV: FOX.

Racing Trivia Question: Who owns the Las Vegas track?

Last Week's Question: When was the first NASCAR race at Phoenix International Raceway? **Answer:** The first race was Oct. 6, 1988.

You may contact the Racing Reporter at hodges@race500.com. NT(Mar6,C1)ac

4th Annual Towns County Touchdown Club Lake Chatuge Bass Tournament

At The Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds (Hiawassee, GA) March 16, 2013

1st Place	\$500
2nd Place	\$300
3rd Place	\$200
4th Place	\$100
5th Place	\$75
Big Fish	\$100

- Entry Fee \$75 per boat. (No more than two people per boat)
- Additional \$75 prize places will be added for every (3) boats over 50.

- Only Black Bass Family may be weighed in, all fish must be at least 12 inches to weigh in.
- Only artificial lures may be used.

- All state and federal rules/regulations must be followed.
- Tournament time is 7 a.m. until 3 p.m.

- Contestants must stay at least 50 yards apart during tournament.

- Tournament officials have the right to inspect all live wells in any boat.

- If three or more dead fish are present at your weigh-in your weight will be disqualified.

- If a tie occurs for total weight, big fish will determine the winner. If there is still a tie, a coin flip will determine the winner.

- If a tie occurs with the Big Fish prize, parties may agree to split the winnings or flip a coin for a sole winner.

- All entry fees are final - no refunds will be issued.

- One person from each boat must be present to receive team launch number. Launch numbers will be issued in the order of initial tournament registration.

- Any concerns should be brought to the attention of tournament officials and all matters will be handled by the tournament committee.

- The City of Hiawassee/Towns County, the Towns County Touchdown Club and members shall not be responsible for any accident that occurs during the tournament. By entering the Towns County Touchdown Club Bass Tournament each fisherman acknowledges the fact that he/she will fish at his/her own risk.

- All winners are subject to polygraph examination to verify tournament results.

If you have any questions or need registration information call Nathan Noblet (C&J Mountain Outfitters) 706-896-7543.

The Towns County Touchdown Club is a non-profit organization committed to the financial support of the football program of Towns County, GA.

Fish for Food Fishing Tournament

Matthew 25 Food Ministries presents "Fish for Food Fishing Tournament" beginning March 9th at Lake Chatuge. 60% of tournament money goes to feed needy families in our area. The remaining 40% will go to tournament prize money. Prize money will be awarded for 1st Place, 2nd Place and 3rd Place and biggest fish. Actual prize amount will depend on number of entries.

Entry fee is \$50 per

boat, the tournaments begin in March and end in October, occurring the second Saturday of each month rotating between Lake Chatuge, Woods Grove Boat Ramp and Lake Nottely, Deaver Road Boat Ramp, from 7 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Tournament schedule: March 9th - Chatuge; April 13 - Nottely; May 11 - Chatuge; June 8 - Nottely; July 13 - Chatuge; August 10 - Nottely; September 14 - Chatuge; and October 12 - Nottely. (NMar6,Z15)