

# Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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## Spring sports coming down the home stretch

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Towns County sports have been taking it easy for the last week and won't hit full stride for a little while longer.

The Lady Indians soccer team traveled out-of-state to take on Highlands, NC last week and came away on the wrong end of a 3-1 score.

Neither soccer team is scheduled to play again until Apr. 15th when they visit Hebron Christian Academy. The Hebron boys are currently ranked No. 3 in Class A according to Eurosport and the Hebron girls are No. 2. Both teams defeated Towns 10-0 back on March 21st.

On April 17, Towns visits Lakeview Academy. The Lady Indians defeated the 4-8-1 Lady Lions 5-1, while the guys fell 7-0.

Other games of importance will be played on Apr. 21 and 22nd. Towns pays arch-rival Union County a visit on the 21st in a makeup game and Providence on the 22nd in another makeup game.

The Lady Indians will be looking to return to State once again after being knocked out by Fellowship Christian in the opening round last spring.

The Lady Indians' golf team returns the majority of its golfers and are a stronger, and more tight

knit group in 2014.

After taking the Tri-County Cup over Union County and Hayesville, the Lady Indians, along with the Indians are less than two weeks away from the Area Tournament at Battlefield Golf Course on Apr. 22nd in Ringgold.

They will get a tune up match on Apr. 16 at Prince Avenue in Watkinsville. The Lady Indians are looking to repeat as Area Champions after becoming the first girls golf team to accomplish the feat.

The tennis season is also nearing its postseason with their Area Tournament being held in Rome, beginning on Apr. 21st.

The Towns County Indians

baseball team is currently 3-9 as of press time and sits 28th in the Class A Public School Power Rankings.

The Indians are off until Friday when they host George Walton Academy at 5 p.m. Towns County will travel to George Walton on Tuesday, Apr. 15th.

The Bulldogs are currently the owners of an 11-7 record, are 7-3 in Region 8-A, and sit in the 20th spot in the Private School Power Rankings.

After the home-and-home series concludes, the Indians must face one of their toughest tasks of the season in a 16-1 Athens Christian.

The Eagles are 5th in the

Private School Power Rankings and their only loss came in a 10-5 shocker to Commerce, who Towns County defeated not once, but twice. So anything is possible when the two teams face it up on Apr. 17th in Hiawassee and on April 18th down in Athens.

The *Towns County Herald* would like to make a correction to last week's sports page. The Apr. 2nd edition said that Towns baseball lost 4-3 to Lakeview. The Indians actually fell 4-3 to Prince Avenue on Monday, April 1st.

Joe Collins



### Tips from the Range

There is an old cliché that almost every new golfer will hear from those who are trying to help them learn and that statement sounds like this, "Keep your left (forward) arm straight and your head down." Have you ever heard this while struggling to swing the club?

I am sure most of you have and I am concerned that it might not have been explained properly so here goes.

The concept of keeping the left arm completely straight is a difficult maneuver to execute but is very important in trying to hit the ball consistently.

Many good players will actually find that they bend their forward arm a little at the top and that is not all bad as long as it is not profound and extreme. A slight bend is not recommended but can be a part of a solid swing although the player is trying very hard to limit that subtle angle.

Many top players will allow a slight crook to appear at the top of the swing in order to get a more full turn but will re-straighten as the arms leave the top most point of the back swing arc and drop back in front of the chest on the way down.

Check out the two time U.S. Open Champion Curtis Strange's swing sometime to see what I am talking about. "He is the one player that I carried for in my career that never left shots on the course," stated the late Greg Rita, P.G.A. Tour caddie and a golfing buddy of mine. A slight bend can't be all bad if it produced a U.S. Open Champion, twice!

The importance of the straight forward arm throughout the swing is found in the extension it provides from the core

of the body in relation to the responsibility of the shoulders. It is the one thing that will guide the back arm on the correct path into the hitting area from the top down as the weight transfers to the front side. If the forward arm bends, then there is a good chance that the club head will get "buried" behind your hips and force the hands into action during impact and this is the death of a possible good shot. Keep the forward arm straight to maintain the turning of the shoulders, around the spine, as far as you can into the follow through. This will enhance the extension of the arms through impact and make for a better day on the course.

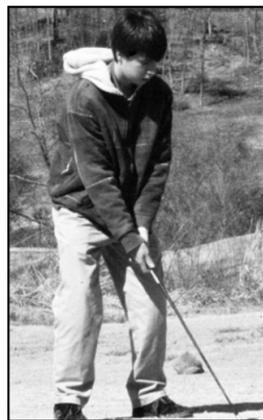
As far as the meaning of "keep your head down" goes, forget it. If you keep your head down, the spine will incur a slight bend at the top where it connects to your head and this will block any hopes of getting a full turn with the chest and shoulders, and in relation, not allow you to turn around the spine.

This reminds me of a turtle that is barely sticking its head out from its shell. The phrase should say, "Keep your chin up, your eyes on the ball and your head still."

Remember, the spine has to maintain its original position established at address to promote good ball striking. You must keep your chin up so that the spine will remain straight. To achieve this, try and pick your chin up enough to make you look over the top of your face cheeks when addressing the ball. You will find that you have more room to turn and a bigger "slot" on the downswing.

Practice is the key to better golf and a more enjoyable experience on the course so find some time to work on your game and you will see it improve.

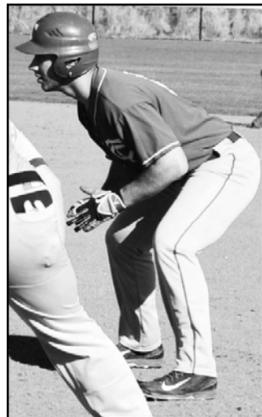
Good luck and I will see you on the course!



Ben Edwards



Eryn Cochran



Jackson Noblet



Faithe Robinson



Junior keeper Dallas Manus goes all out for the Indians. Photos by Lowell Nicholson and Todd Forrester

## Blairsville's Grayson Payne finishes fourth in 2014 FLW College Fishing National Championship

Young Harris College bass fishing team members and senior biology majors Grayson Payne, of Blairsville, GA, and Joe Thompson, of Clayton, GA, recently finished fourth in the 2014 FLW College Fishing National Championship held on Lake Keowee in Seneca, SC, March 6-8.

The three-day competition included the top 49 college teams in the nation. The YHC team ended the first day in third place and finished fifth on the second day before the top 10 teams battled it out on the final day of competition.

Payne and Thompson had a strong showing over the course of the tournament with an impressive three-day total haul of 30 pounds, 12 ounces.

"Placing fourth in a tournament of this scale was incredible," said Payne. "I hate that we didn't win first, but I'm proud of our top five finish. I wouldn't have been able to do as well if it wasn't for the love and support of our friends and family. In fact, my mother is already planning a get-together so our whole family can watch the television special."

The team, who fished



(L-R): Joe Thompson and Grayson Payne

with a combination of jerk baits, A-rigs and drop-shots, ultimately let the wind dictate their fishing.

"It was a tough day. The fourth place finish is still sinking in—we were fishing for the win," said Thompson. "We swung for the fences instead of playing it safe, but it was a great trip."

Payne and Thompson's strong finish at the 2013 FLW Southeast Regional Championship secured the team a shot to compete for the national title and catapulted YHC to the top spot on Bass Rankings' College Ranking list, which

serves as a comprehensive and accurate multi-year ranking system for tournament bass anglers of all levels of experience.

The team, founded in 2009, continues to rack up accolades while regularly competing in fishing events nationwide. In 2013, YHC hosted the Carhartt College Series National Championship—the first time the championship took place outside of Arkansas, where it has been held since its inception.

For more information on the bass fishing team, visit [yhc.edu/bassfishing](http://yhc.edu/bassfishing). NAAP9.23)CA

## NASCAR 2014

By Gerald Hodges/the Racing Reporter

### Texas Cup Race postponed until Monday

Due to persistent rain showers which hampered track drying efforts, Sunday's Sprint Cup Duck Commander 500 at Texas Motor Speedway has been postponed until noon Monday.

The race will be shown live on Fox.

Rain tapered off late Sunday evening but cool temperatures and persistent "weepers," water seeping up from underneath the track led to the decision.

### CHASE ELLIOTT CAPTURES TEXAS NATIONWIDE RACE

FT. WORTH, Tex.-- Chase Elliott, son of NASCAR former champion Bill Elliott, led 4 times for 38 laps on the way to his first Nationwide Series win, Friday at Texas Motor Speedway.

"For sure, I gotta put this win right at the top," said Elliott. "I definitely know this is an extremely special win to me. To do it at JRM with Napa Auto Parts and the new deal that came together this off-season just puts me right up there."

"My restarts were pretty terrible tonight and that's one thing I gotta get better on, hopefully next week at Darlington. Kevin (Harvick) looked like he was a little tight and I knew our car would be a little faster if I could ever get around him."

"You always hear people talk about "clean air" and obviously it's extremely important. Getting out front was really big. I had Kyle (Busch) coming hard behind me and I knew I needed to get by Kevin in a hurry or Kyle was going to get me."

"I kept trying to take a different line and Kevin kept taking my line away. I finally predicted what he was going to do in turns 3 and 4, and I was able to get the nose in the clean air a little bit and able to get a pretty good run on him. So that was that, and it worked out and we were able to get by him and get out front and hold Kyle off."

Chasing him to the checkered flag was: Kyle Busch, Kyle Larson, Kevin Harvick, Dale Earnhardt Jr., Matt Kenseth, Regan Smith, Ryan Blaney, Ty Dillon, and

Elliott Sadler.

Top-10 leaders after 6 of 33; 1. Elliott-224, 2. Smith-222, 3. T. Dillon-214, 4. Sadler-208, 5. Bayne-206, 6. Gaughan-193, 7. Scott-192, 8. Kwasniewski-179, 9. Buescher-176, 10. Reed-141.

### NASCAR PLANS ENGINE CHANGES

NASCAR is at it again with another planned change. This time it's the car engines.

Brian France, NASCAR's CEO said last week on SiriusXM NASCAR Radio that modifications to lower engine horsepower was the next step toward racing improvement.

"We're going to make that happen, and that's part of the overall rules packages that we design that hopefully contries costs, hopefully make the racing better," France said. "The engine is an integral part of that. We also have to be in step as much as possible with the car manufacturers and where they're going with technology and different things. It all has to come together, and that's the next significant part of the rules package."

"The engine will get a significant change. I'm not going to say (for) 2015, but we are certainly sizing that up. It's very important for us to get that right."

The most important phrase in France's statement was, "We also have to be in step as much as possible with the car manufacturers and where they're going with technology and different things."

France's wording contains a lot of truth, but not the whole truth.

NASCAR was created and still operates as the France family business. They can spout off all they want that the race fan is their number one priority, but their main focus is still what goes into the family ATM machine.

Modern day racing is about money. And that's why the money men; car manufacturers, large sponsors and television are able to call the shots.

The proposed change is because some group that fuels the sport demands it.

Most of the changes



Chase Elliott, Texas Nationwide winner

made in recent years have focused on the cars, beginning with the rollout of the more brand-identifiable Generation-6 vehicle for the 2013 season, and an aerodynamic package that was further refined before this year. This will be the first time the engine displacement size, or the amount of horsepower produced has been lowered.

Apparently this latest move is to slow down the cars on the track. The ones that would benefit the most, would be the "start and park" teams.

I had a fan tell me, that "NASCAR is like the weather in Chicago. If you don't like it, don't worry, it will change in a day or two."

They will continue to tweak, just enough to keep the TV networks talking and the fans who still want to show up placated, but beyond that, who's kidding whom?

Tony Stewart made the following statement several years ago, "It's NASCAR's way or the highway."

The more things change, the more they stay the same.

**Weekend Racing:** The Cup and Nationwide cars are at the historic one-mile Darlington Raceway. The trucks do not race again until May 9.

Fri., Apr. 11, Nationwide Series, race 7 of 33; Starting time: 7:30 pm ET; TV: ESPN2.

Sat., Apr. 12, Sprint Cup, race 8 of 33; Starting time: 6 pm ET; TV: Fox.

**Racing Trivia Question:** How many Grand National championships did Rex White win?

**Last Week's Question:** Which year did Richard Petty begin his Cup career? **Answer:** 1958. His first race was a Convertible Race prior to the Daytona 500.

You may contact the Racing Reporter at [hodges@race500.com](mailto:hodges@race500.com).