

# Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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## TCHS hands out accolades at annual Athletic Banquet



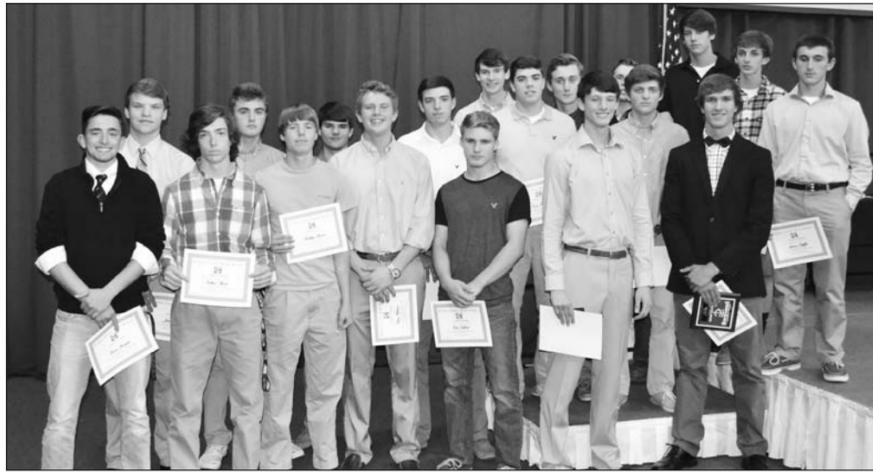
Towns County baseball. Photo/Lowell Nicholson



Towns County tennis. Photo/Lowell Nicholson



Towns County girls basketball. Photo/Lowell Nicholson



Towns County boys basketball. Photo/Lowell Nicholson



Towns County football. Photo/Lowell Nicholson. The remaining banquet photos will appear in next week's edition of the Towns County Herald

## New Pickleball Tournament coming to Hiawassee, May 20-22

Towns County will be showcasing their new 14 Pickleball Court Complex at the First Georgia Mountain Spring Pickleball Classic, May 20-22.

The Tournament will bring in players of all levels from Beginners to Advance, as well as players coming from many different states. Commissioner Bill Kendall has been supportive of it from the time that Betsy Wilkowsky and Judy Spiliott approached him over eight months ago.

They are the main point people who are coordinating everything from the chair people for all the various volunteer committees, to parking, the Social "Meet and Greet" on Thursday Night, hotel discounts and the food vendors that will be available for players and spectators each day of the tournament.

The Pickleball Complex has 14 New Designated Pickleball Courts, windscreens, a new paved parking lot and with other facility improvements scheduled. Pickleball is the fastest growing sport in the United States, and to have a designated facility in Hiawassee,

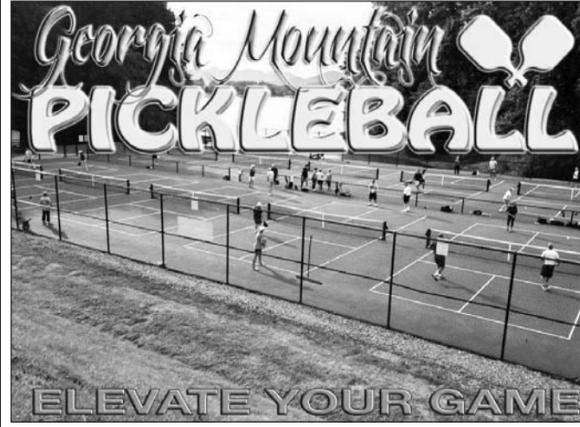
has put Towns County ahead of many other areas.

The economic impact that the tournament will bring to Hiawassee will be great for all businesses, restaurants, lodging, campgrounds, and all the activities that the area has to offer.

Pickleball Specialties LLC will be the tournament Directors and will also be organizing Clinics that will be open to the public as well as players on Thursday, May 20th and Sunday May 22nd. These clinics will be for the very beginner who is learning to play, advanced beginners, intermediate, all the way to the advanced to improve their skills and learn new ones. Pickleball Specialties LLC. will be bringing in 4 top level players who will be teaching. It is a wonderful opportunity to learn from some of the best!!

For more information please go to Pickleball Specialties.com to see the Tournament Flyer which will have all the detailed tournament information.

Hope to see you at the Hiawassee Pickleball Sports Complex! Player or spectator!



## Lake Chatuge Memorial Day 5K Fun Run & Walk

Calling all ages! Join us at the Towns County Senior Center Memorial Day - May 30, 2016 for our 1st Annual Lake Chatuge Memorial Day 5K Fun Run & Walk to benefit our Towns County Senior Center & Meals on Wheels.

Wear your patriotic attire & bring your pets dressed in red, white and blue.

Also if you would like for your business to be a sponsor and have a guaranteed spot on the back of the t-shirts please call our office at 706-896-3138 by May 18, 2016 for sponsorship.



Run/Walk Pre-Registration cost \$20, race-day registration \$25 at 7:30 a.m. Race starts at 8 a.m.

Please run/walk to help the seniors of Towns County - who have walked many miles in their lives for each of us.

T(May18,F)SH

## NASCAR 2016

By Gerald Hodges/the Racing Reporter

### Kenseth wins at Dover

DOVER, Del.--Matt Kenseth took the lead on lap 354 after avoiding a big wreck that involved 18 cars, to get his first Sprint Cup win of the season. The race had been red flagged with 46 laps to go in the 400-lap race after Jimmie Johnson backed up the field on a restart. Kenseth managed to stay in ahead of runner-up Kyle Larson for the remainder of the race, and finished a scant 0.188-seconds in front.

"I didn't think I'd catch him but I got a shot at the end," Larson said. "I tried to be patient. He made a couple mistakes but I couldn't pass him. I was too patient."

Chase Elliott was third, and moved up to seventh in the point standings, while Kasey Kahne was fourth, and Kurt Busch rounded out the top-5.

Brad Keselowski had an up and down day. First, he was clipped on the right front by Austin Dillon during lap 281, then was penalized twice after that for having too many crewmen over the wall. He wound up sixth.

The remaining top-10 finishers were: Denny Hamlin, Ryan Blaney, Martin Truex, and Trevor Bayne. Johnson said his car wouldn't go into gear on the restart, and seemed somewhat surprised after the incident. He was leading on the outside line when suddenly his car slowed, and cars started piling into each other. "I honestly don't know what happened," said Johnson. "I couldn't get it into gear. As soon as I tried to go from second to third, I got up into the neutral gate on the transmission and it didn't even go to third. It stopped before it got to third. Then I tried fourth, and then third and fourth, and then I got hit from behind. It just wouldn't go into gear."

Kevin Harvick led the most laps (117), and was one of the drivers in contention to win, but was caught up in the lap 354 wreck and finished 15th.

Dale Earnhardt, who was also involved in the big wreck finished 32nd.

Tony Stewart saw his hopes of making this year's Chase diminish. He lost an engine in his No. 14

and finished 34th. Stewart needs to break into the top-30 in the standings and win a race by Sept. 10.

Top-10 leaders after 12 of 36: 1. Harvick-418, 2. Kyle Busch-397, 3. Kurt Busch-386, 4. Edwards-381, 5. Johnson-370, 6. Keselowski-368, 7. Elliott-341, 8. Logano-340, 9. Truex-336, 10. A. Dillon-315.

### JONES GETS DOVER XFINITY RACE

Erik Jones had the field covered in Saturday's Xfinity Series at Dover.

During the race's last caution, Jones and his team elected to keep him on the track, instead of pitting for fresh tires.

The decision was the right one.

When the race went green with five laps remaining, Jones jumped to the front, and by the time the checkered flag had been dropped, he was 1.8-seconds ahead of runner-up Darrell Wallace Jr.

"I wasn't too sure about staying out on that last caution, but it turned out to be O.K.," said Jones.

Alex Bowman was third, followed by Justin Allgaier, Ty Dillon, Elliott Sadler, Joey Logano, Matt Tifft, Daniel Suarez, and Brennan Poole.

Top-10 leaders after 10 of 33: 1. Sadler-349, 2. Suarez-346, 3. T. Dillon-319, 4. Allgaier-317, 5. E. Jones-309, 6. Gaughan-305, 7. B. Jones-290, 8. Poole-282, 9. Wallace Jr.-268, 10. Reed-244.

### CRAFTON GETS FIRST TRUCK WIN OF 2016

Matt Crafton captured his first Truck Series win of the season by taming Dover's Monster mile last Friday.

Daniel Suarez was second, followed by Christopher Bell, Johnny Sauter, Cole Custer, Spencer Gallagher, Tyler Reddick, Ryan Truex, Daniel Hemric, and Kaz Gaia.

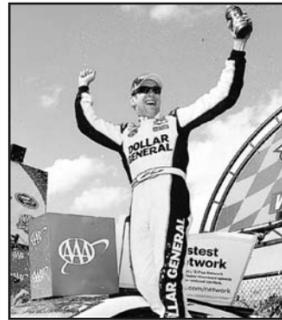
Top-10 leaders after 5 of 23: 1. Crafton-124, 2. Peters-122, 3. Hemric-119, 4. R. Truex-118, 5. Gallagher-112, 6. Byron-111, 7. Nemechek-106, 8. Young-101, 9. Bell-99, 10. Reddick-96.

### NEW SPRINT CUP SPONSOR COMING

NASCAR's major series will have a new sponsor come 2017.

Sprint's sponsorship of NASCAR's top series ends after the 2016 season, which raises a simple question: Who's next?

According to Sporting News, negotiations are under way for a new title sponsor, and it appears likely an announcement will



Matt Kenseth Wins at Dover Furnished by NASCAR

come in early fall. That's the word from NASCAR executive Steve Phelps.

In all likelihood, NASCAR will announce the Cup Series title change in September or October. That's when, Phelps noted, current agreements with Xfinity and Camping World were made for the second-level series and the trucks series, respectively.

NASCAR's deal with Xfinity runs through 2024. Its Camping World agreement runs through 2022.

Another key point raised by Phelps: There might be more than one sponsor. Don't be surprised to see a sponsor that is currently involved in NASCAR and one that is new to the sport.

"The first one I'd look at is, what's the best company, the best brand that helps grow our sport?" Phelps said. "What's the best company, the best brand that can bring our sport closer to our fans?"

When NASCAR uses the term "growing the sport," they are referring to how much money a sponsor is willing to put up.

There are reports that NASCAR is seeking \$1 billion for a 10-year sponsorship. Sprint became Cup Series sponsor for the 2008 season, after the telecommunications company purchased Nextel, which took the naming rights in 2004.

Continuity is a hallmark for NASCAR's top series. Before Nextel, tobacco giant R.J. Reynolds had the banner with the Winston Cup Series beginning in 1971. NASCAR started the stock car racing series under the Strictly Stock name in 1949 and changed to Grand National the following year.

Finding a sponsor to match the 33-year run with Winston is unlikely.

Sprint announced in 2014 its decision to let its sponsorship agreement end.

What comes next? After Sprint's announcement, Sporting News reported that businesses in

the quick service restaurant industry (Subway, Burger King, etc.), packaged goods (Coca-Cola, Pepsi, Unilever, etc.), consumer products (Panasonic, LG, etc.) or companies looking to boost their product line (as was Nextel) were prime candidates for NASCAR's next deal.

"It's got to be a big, consumer brand," Zak Brown, CEO of Just Marketing International said. "It's one or two approaches. It's someone like Nextel, who made a really bold step because they were number three or four or five in the category and they wanted to take a big leap."

"Or you go to someone who already is the leader in a category. ... I'd be very surprised if they didn't find one."

An October announcement would come during the Chase for the Sprint Cup. Phelps said NASCAR doesn't want to disrupt the Chase, or affect Sprint's sponsorship. But don't expect the Chase to end without the new sponsor or sponsors on hand at Homestead.

Weekend Racing: The Cup and Truck teams are at the 1.5-mile Charlotte Motor Speedway. For the Trucks, it will be a regular race, but there will only be non-points racing for the Cup Series. The Nationwide teams have an off weekend.

Fri., May 20, Sprint Showdown (non-points); Starting time: 7 pm ET; TV: Foxsports1. Fri., May 20, Truck Series race 6 of 23; Starting time: 8:30 pm ET; TV: Foxsports1. Sat., May 21, Sprint All-Star Race (non-points); Starting time: 7 pm ET; TV: Foxsports1.

**Racing Trivia Question:** Tony Stewart has said this will be his last year of racing in the Sprint Cup Series. When was his rookie year in the series?

**Last Week's Question?** Former Winston Cup (now Sprint Cup) driver Jody Ridley of Chatsworth, Georgia had one Cup win during his NASCAR career. Which track did he win at? **Answer:** It came at Dover in the 1981 Mason Dixon 500.

You may contact the Racing Reporter by e-mail at: hodges@race500.com. NT(May18,C1)ac

### VFW Golf League

This week's event at Chatuge Shores Golf Course was won by Bill Kiser, Jim Hoyt, Glen Greenwald and Sam Wilson. They returned to the clubhouse with a score of 63 which is 9 strokes under par. Congratulations! T(May18,F)SH

## Towns County Water Rescue Recovery Team Big Bass Tournament

Lake Chatuge May 21st 3 PM - 9 PM Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds Boat Ramp Entry Fee: \$60 per boat

Rules: Pay out: Hourly - 1 fish per hour, per boat. \*Black bass family only. Boat capacity or weight limit per boat of anglers. All live wells must be empty upon start of tournament. All fish must be alive at weigh in and successful release for weight to be valid. Obey all laws on water and No Wake Zones. Lake will be off limits Friday, May 20th until Saturday at tournament start. May 21st tournament time: Blast Off at 3 PM.

\$150 each hour for biggest fish weighed in Big Fish prize: \$100 overall All cash prizes will be awarded at the end of the final weigh in. T(May18,F)SH