

Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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Towns County wrestling takes down Rabun Gap, honors its seniors

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

The Towns County Indian grapplers battled their last home match of the season against Rabun Gap on Friday, Jan. 23.

Rabun Gap took a clobbering, too, losing to Towns County 78-6.

For four Indians in particular, the occasion took on special tones – it was Senior Night, and these four graduating students would never again take place in a home matchup as part of the team.

Team manager and senior Kayla Davis received flowers from Head Coach Jeff Stowers as part of a ceremony honoring the departing seniors.

Joining her in front of an attentive audience were senior wrestlers Kyle Davis, Aaron Collier and Cruz Shook.

“For me, it’s bitter-sweet,” said Coach Stowers. “It’s fun to see kids like Kyle Davis, who have been with us since sixth grade, and see how far they’ve come, and see him grow into the young man that he is today. It’s good to see kids like him and Aaron Collier, and see all the time they’ve put in pay off. And kids like Cruz,



Coach Stowers and wrestlers of all ages on Senior Night.

who wrestled early on in his career, to come back out as a senior, and spend some time with us.”

But Coach Stowers said it’s not about saying goodbye to his seniors.

“It’s just another step, they’re opening another chapter in a book and moving on to the next things that they’re going to go on and do,” said Coach Stowers. “It’s fun to watch them grow up. Some of the guys that wrestled on our

first wrestling team here I still talk to all the time, and so it’ll be fun to see what these guys go on to do and the adults that they become.”

Just before the Indians took to the mat, the lights in the gymnasium went out.

Members of the audience, especially the children in attendance, stood out against the darkness wearing neon glowing headbands and glow sticks.

The center light kicked



Indians wrestling manager Kayla Davis

on, illuminating the mat where Towns County would take Rabun Gap to task.

To cheers from the crowd, the Indians took to the mat, running first in a circle, then proceeding to warm up on the perimeter while the three seniors on the team warmed up in the center.

Then, the wrestling ensued.

Morgan Gay at 145 pounds won by forfeit; Kyle Davis at 220 won by pin fall;

heavyweight Daniel Crowder won by forfeit; Kaine Hoffman at 106 won by forfeit, but also won an exhibition match that didn’t count for points; Thomas Mitchell at 113 won by forfeit; Angel Moss at 120 won by forfeit; Peyton Smith at 126 won by pin fall; Keanu Nguyen at 138 won by pin fall; Dalton Key at 145 won by forfeit; Dylan Roberts at 152 won by pin fall; Nick Shook at 160 won by forfeit; and Daulton Rogers

at 170 won by forfeit. “I’m glad we won, and our intention was to win and to win big, and we did, but I understand where the coaches at Rabun Gap are and where their kids are,” said Coach Stowers of the relatively new program at Rabun Gap. “I tried to encourage them as they got out there and warmed up, and as they were getting ready to leave – it’s going to get better.”

The Towns County Indians won their 100th dual match in school history this season, which is a far cry from the team’s humble beginnings, when the Indians won exactly zero dual matches in their first two years.

And with individual Area matches coming up this Saturday, Jan. 31, at 9 a.m. at Commerce High School, Coach Stowers and his Indians hope to pump up the record books even further.

“From here on out, everything’s individual,” said Coach Stowers. “They will wrestle as an individual in their weight class. The Top 4 in each weight class next week will go to Sectionals the next week, and the Top 4 out of Sectionals will go to State the next week. We are to the point where it’s put up or shut up time.”



Aaron Collier with family



Cruz Shook with family



Kyle Davis with family

NASCAR 2015

By Gerald Hodges/the Racing Reporter

Five new inductees in NASCAR Hall of Fame

The five-driver group of the 2015 class of the NASCAR Hall of Fame, consisting of Bill Elliott, Fred Lorenzen, Wendell Scott, Joe Weatherly and Rex White, will be inducted on Friday, Jan. 30th, at the NASCAR HOF in Charlotte.

Fred Lorenzen was one of NASCAR’s first true superstars even though he was a “part-time” driver never running more than 29 of the season’s 50-plus races.

Lorenzen got his start in NASCAR as a mechanic with the famed Holman-Moody Team in 1960, but was elevated to lead driver by the end of the year. Lorenzen won three races in only 15 starts the following season.

His best overall season came in 1963 as he finished with six wins, 21 top fives and 23 top 10s in 29 starts. Despite missing 26 races that season, he finished third in the standings.

In 1964, he entered 16 of the scheduled 62 races but won eight, including five consecutive starts. During that stretch, Lorenzen led 1,679 of the possible 1,953 laps, one of the most dominant runs in NASCAR history. In 1965, he won two of NASCAR’s major events – the Daytona 500 and the World 600.

Lorenzen retired in 1967 but made a brief comeback from 1970-72. He was an extremely popular driver with fans, to the point that he had several nicknames – “Golden Boy” and “Fearless Freddie.”

He has lived in a Chicago assisted living facility for the past several years.

Joe Weatherly competed from 1952-64, had 229 starts, 25 wins, 18 Poles, and two championships (1962-63).

But that’s only part of his story, which is long on versatility. A decade earlier in 1952-53, he won 101 races in the NASCAR Modified division,

capturing that championship in 1953. He even tried his hand in NASCAR’s short lived Convertible Division from 1956-59 winning 12 times.

When he won his first NASCAR premier series championship in 1962, he drove for legendary owner Bud Moore. When he repeated as champion a year later, he drove for nine different teams. Those were the only two years Weatherly competed in the premier series full-time. “Awesome” Bill Elliott from Dawsonville, Georgia, was born on Oct. 8, 1955.

His lone championship came in 1988, but he competed from 1975-2012, with 828 starts, 44 wins, and 55 Poles.

plishment came in 1988 when he won the NASCAR premier series championship with six wins, 15 top fives and 22 top-10s in 29 races.

All that, combined with a likeable demeanor, endeared him to fans who adored him, and that adoration led to a record 16 Most Popular Driver Awards.

Consistency was the hallmark of Rex White’s NASCAR career. He finished among the top five in nearly a half of his 233 races and outside the top-10 only 30 percent of the time, even though he only raced from 1955-1964.

White was a short track specialist in an era in which those tracks dominated the schedule. Of his 28 career wins in the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series, only two came on tracks longer than a mile in length. White’s victory total ranks 24th among all-time premier series winners.

He won six times during his 1960 championship season posting 35 top-10s in 40 starts. He was the fourth driver to win a premier series championship in his own equipment.

White hails from Spartanburg, S.C., once the hub of stock car racing and a community that produced NASCAR Hall of Famers David Pearson, Cale Yarborough, Cotton Owens and Bud Moore. White was named one of NASCAR’s 50 Greatest Drivers in 1998.

Wendell Scott wasn’t the first African-American to compete in NASCAR’s premier division. But the Danville, Va. native, whose career on wheels began as a taxi driver, was the first of his race to become a full-time competitor in the series.

Scott served three years in the U.S. Army during World War II where he honed his mechanical skills in the motor pool. Scott started racing in 1947 and experienced immediate success behind the wheel. He won over 100 races in the next decade at local area tracks.

He made his first start in NASCAR’s premier series March 4, 1961 at Piedmont Interstate Fairgrounds in Spartanburg, S.C. He made 23 starts that season, posting five top-five finishes.

On Dec. 1, 1963 at Speedway Park in Jacksonville, Fla., Scott became the first African-American to win a NASCAR premier series event. Scott won the 100-mile feature race after starting 15th. The trophy was originally given to another driver, who was white. After the crowd left NASCAR told Scott they were mistaken, and he was the winner. He was handed the trophy, with no fanfare and credited with the win. There was speculation that it wouldn’t be good publicity for NASCAR if a white tro-



Fred Lorenzen in 1963

phy-girl was seen hugging or kissing a black man on the front page of the nation’s newspapers.

Over the next 13 years, Scott would make 495 starts, which ranks 35th on the all-time list. In his distinguished career, Scott accumulated 20 top-five finishes including eight of them in the same season he won his first career race, 1964. He also posted 147 top-10 finishes, more than 25 percent of the races he entered.

Note: The HOF Induction Ceremonies will be televised on NBC Sports Network, beginning at 7 pm ET.

Meanwhile, next season will be the last for Jeff Gordon as a full-time driver.

The 43-year-old Gordon, who ranks third all-time with 92 career Cup victories, enters his 23rd season

at Hendrick Motorsports. He has four Sprint Cup championships and if he is to get a fifth it must be in 2015.

“As a racecar driver, much of what I’ve done throughout my life has been based on following my instincts and trying to make good decisions,” Gordon said. “I thought long and hard about my future this past year and during the offseason, and I’ve decided 2015 will be the last time I compete for a championship.

“I won’t use the ‘R-word’ because I plan to stay extremely busy in the years ahead, and there’s always the possibility I’ll compete in selected events, although I currently have no plans to do that. I don’t foresee a day when I’ll ever step away from racing. I’m a fan of all forms of motorsports, but particularly NASCAR.”

Gordon won his first championship at age 24 in his third full-time season in 1995 and followed that with championships 1997, 1998 and 2001. He seriously challenged for a fifth title in 2014, winning four races and scoring the most points of any driver throughout the year. But he missed the final cut for the championship round.

You may contact the Racing Reporter at: www.hodges@race500.com. NTJan28,C1A6

DNR proposes changes to fishing regulations

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources’ Wildlife Resources Division is proposing changes to fishing regulations. The proposed changes would remove the ‘mountain’ trout season and open all trout water to year-round angling.

“Previously, the ‘mountain’ trout season was kept from late March through the end of October each year, making streams designated as seasonal unavailable during that period of time,” says John Biagi, chief of the Fisheries Management Section. “This change would allow that ‘seasonal’ regulation to be removed, opening up these streams to trout angling all year.”

The Department has scheduled two public hearings to provide an opportunity to offer input on these proposed changes. Those interested are encouraged to bring these meetings to the attention of others that also may be interesting in participating. All hearings will begin at 7 p.m.

Tuesday, Feb. 10: Fair Street Neighborhood Center, 715 Fair Street, Gainesville, GA; www.gainesville.org/fair-street-neighborhood-center.

Thursday, Feb. 12: Red Top Mountain State Park, Conference Center/Post Office, 50 Lodge Road, SE, Acworth, GA; www.gastateparks.org/RedTopMountain.

These meetings sites are accessible to people with physical disabilities. To request sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids, contact Thomas Litts at (770) 918-6406 no later than February 5, 2015. For more information about the meeting locations, call the Gainesville fisheries management office at 770-535-5498.

Anyone attending the meeting is welcome to provide statements or comments, either orally or in writing. Statements should be concise to permit everyone an opportunity to speak. Participants should register upon arrival and notify the registering official of their intent to give a statement.

Those unable to attend a meeting may submit input electronically or in writing by February 28, 2015. Written statements should be mailed to: GA DNR, Wildlife Resources Division, Fisheries Management Section; Attn: Thomas Litts; 2065 U.S. Highway 278, S.E.; Social Circle, GA 30025.

To submit comments electronically or view the proposed changes and additional information, visit www.gofishgeorgia.com/fishing/proposedregulations or contact the Fisheries Management Section at (770) 918-6406.

No Greater LOVE

5K RACE & 1 Mile Walk
February 14, 2015

Start this Valentine's Day giving the gift of love. Join "TEAM TRICIA"

Tricia Spear has been giving back to this community, day after day for over a dozen years. Now she is fighting a serious illness and she needs all of us to help with her recovery.

Join us and participate in the 5k Race or the 1 Mile Walk
Place : Meeks Park, Blairsville 9am/Registration 10am/Race-Walk

Registration Fees RUN \$25 WALK \$20
All registrants will get a free Race T-Shirt, while supply lasts. Pre-register by January 27th to be guaranteed a Race T-shirt

Registration Forms available online at Active.com or pick one up at Blairsville Chamber of Commerce, Seasons Inn, Mountain Shelter Thrift Store (Blairsville) or the Union General Wellness Center

Interested in being a sponsor and having your business listed on the T-Shirts? Call the Thrift Store at 706-745-0033 by Jan. 27th

The monies raised at this event will go to the Tricia Spear Recovery Fund. Visit our event Page, No Greater Love 5k

FFA 'Coon Hunt

WHEN: January 31st
LOCATION: Union County Agriculture Barn
Blairsville, GA
CHECK-IN: 4:30pm-6:30pm
WEIGH-IN: Midnight
COST: \$15 per dog/ meal ticket provided per dog

FOOD WILL BE PROVIDED AT CHECK IN!!

500.00 cash grand prize!!
Other prizes that will be awarded:

- Electric smoker!
- Dog box!
- And many more!!

For more information call:
Austin Dyer (706) 994-1445
Jake McClure (706) 994-7982
John Clark Pettit: (706) 273-8457

Tai Chi and Yoga at Rec Center

Tai Chi for Arthritis is a program endorsed by the Arthritis Foundation of Georgia. Not only has this exercise been shown to be effective in alleviating joint pain, but it has also been shown to help with other medical issues. Learning Tai Chi will improve balance, promote strength and flexibility, as well as may be helpful with memory. This is a short, easily learned Tai Chi form. For those who cannot stand to do the form, it will also be demonstrated doing seated in a chair.

This class will meet Thursday mornings starting January 29th

at 10:45 AM. This class will be 40 minutes for a total fee of only \$30 (drop ins \$10 for each class session). Class will be led by Pat Tomczyk who has taken the Arthritis Foundation training and is an experienced Tai Chi and Yoga teacher as well as a retired RN. Our Yoga program continues with gentle Yoga at 4 PM on Mondays and Yoga plus Pilates Abdominals work on Thursdays at 9:30 AM. All classes will be held at The Towns County Recreation and Conference Center at Foster Park. For additional information please contact us at 706-896-2600.