

Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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Towns County Basketball plays Region Tournament this week

By Jeremy Foster
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

With the Region Tournament tipping off this week, the Towns County Varsity Basketball Teams were certainly glad to get back in the win column over the weekend following recent terrific momentum that was briefly interrupted the week before.

In Greene County on Tuesday, Feb. 7, both teams picked up wins, with the Ladies up first to earn a close-call victory at 65-62.

Top players were senior Sarah Shook with 18 points, 8 assists and 4 rebounds; junior Laura Mauldin with a double-double, 12 points, 10 rebounds and 4 assists; senior Tabitha Barnes, 10 points and 4 rebounds; freshman Scotlyn Fain, 9 points; and junior Emma Lallement, 8 points and 4 rebounds.

"It was a great display of team basketball, as we were missing a couple of players, and some of the younger girls stepped up in a big way," Girls Head Coach Shea Taylor said.

The boys then took to the court to score a convincing 51-38 win. Junior Tanner Cunningham led in scoring with 22 points, 4 rebounds and one assist, and junior Gage Rogers had 12 points with 7 rebounds and 2 assists.

"(Junior) Zane Floyd



With a first-round bye in this week's Region 8-A tournament, the sixth-ranked Towns County Lady Indians have their eye on a region championship and a berth in next week's GHSA State Tournament. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

was able to return to the squad with some limited action, and we were able to score 33 points in the second half after only holding a 2-point halftime lead," Boys Head Coach Brian Hunnicutt said. "So, it was a great defensive and offensive effort. The team really returned to how we've been playing before the two losses."

In their final regular season games of the year, at home

on Friday, Feb. 10, Towns Basketball celebrated two more victories against Washington-Wilkes when the girls won 60-33 and the boys won 68-51.

Top girls' stats went to Shook with 21 points, including five 3-pointers; sophomore Kaleigh Beaver, 10 points, 4 rebounds and 3 blocked shots; sophomore Ansleigh Hardin, 9 points and 2 steals; Fain, 8

points, 2 assists and 2 steals;

and Mauldin, 7 points and 5 rebounds.

"It was a great way to end the regular season and prepare for the Region Tournament," Coach Taylor said. "Closing the regular season with an 18-7 record and a region record of 11-1 is a step in the right direction for this program."

For the boys against Washington-Wilkes, Cunn-

ingham led again in scoring with 23 points and 6 rebounds; Floyd had 16 points, 6 rebounds and 3 assists; Rogers netted a double-double with 11 points and 10 rebounds; and junior Connor Chastain made 10 points and 6 rebounds.

"We played a great game overall against a tough team that was Fourth Place in the Region, and the boys closed the season out successfully by

securing the No. 3 seed in the Region Tournament," Hunnicutt said.

The Region Tournament began after press time on Monday and Tuesday, Feb. 13 and 14, at Lincoln County High School. Court action will continue with the semifinals on Thursday, Feb. 16, and finals on Friday, Feb. 17, in Greene County.

Go Indians!



The Indians weathered the storm while junior Zane Floyd missed multiple games due to injury. But with Floyd's recent return to the lineup, the third-seeded Indians look to soar back atop 8-A during the upcoming region tournament. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

Wrestling: Towns County qualifies three for Sectionals

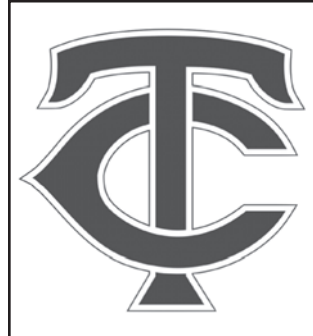
Commerce - Towns County sent three wrestlers to last weekend's Class A State Sectionals tournament at Commerce.

Freshmen River Chauncey and Cooper Floyd, and junior Mason Deal all advanced from the Area tournament to compete at Sectionals.

Deal finished fifth at 132 lbs, defeating Screven County's Hayden Skinner by pinfall. In the quarterfinals, Deal pinned St. Francis' Chase Lent during the final round.

Elbert County's Carter Fleming scored a pin over Deal in the semifinals before Skinner won the rematch in the consolation bracket.

In his fifth-place bout, Deal needed only 90 seconds to pin Bryan County's Colton Gunter.



At 106, Chauncey suffered a first-match pin at the hands of Jasper County's Brody Rice. He later dropped a 20-5 technical fall to Eli Pawlish of St. Francis.

Floyd qualified at 215, dropping his first two matches to Emmanuel County and Kings Ridge.

Chauncey came in third at the Area tournament. Deal and Floyd both placed fourth.

Local Mountain Wrestling Academy sending three to State Tournament

Hayesville, NC - The Mountain Wrestling Academy's (MWA) youth team is sending three individual grapplers to Fayetteville, North Carolina for the NCWAY State Wrestling Tournament.

The MWA squad, which features two wrestlers from Hayesville and one from Hiawassee, will take part in the tournament on Feb. 26.

MWA is a family-owned business and all travel expenses for the upcoming tournament are being covered by coach Andrew Reynolds. If anyone is interested in helping the team cover the costs of this tournament and future events, as well as purchasing wrestling gear, please visit mountainwrestlingacademy.com. There is a gofundme link at the bottom of the home page.

Mountain Wrestling Academy is a wrestling club looking to make kids better not only on the mat, but in



life. Your skill level does not matter. MWA will work around your schedule with kids aging from 4-18.

Reynolds has coached hundreds of State and National placers and is sanctioned and certified by U.S.A. Wrestling and U.S. Center for Safe Sport.

The MWA wants to grow kids of every age and their motto is 'get better.'

MWA can be reached at 219-588-2926 or at andrewbriar@aol.com.

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Towns County basketball in action



Junior Tanner Cunningham scores in the paint during a game last week. Photo/Lowell Nicholson



Sophomore Ansleigh Hardin releases a jump shot during a recent game. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

Model A Club holds Annual Sweetheart Tour Event



Model A Club Sweetheart Tour



The Brasstown Valley Model A Club held their Annual Sweetheart Tour on February 11th. The scenic drive began at the Hunter-

England Cabin & Historic Homestead in Union County, NC that is interested in the Keeping with the Sweetheart theme, as Valentine's Day approaches, the group also visited Cupid Falls in Young Harris, while enjoying the scenery on the drive to Hiwassee for lunch and shopping. Anyone in northern GA and western Ford Model A is welcome to join Club. For additional information on the club you may contact Jim Cannon @ 832-692-2288 or Dick Couture @ 706-400-1036. NT(Feb15/23)CA

NASCAR 2023

By Gerald Hodges/the Racing Reporter

Daytona 500 Is Coming Up

It's almost race time for the 2023 Daytona 500.

The Daytona 500 is a 500-mile-long NASCAR Cup Series race held annually at Daytona International Speedway. It is the first of two Cup races held every year at Daytona, the second being the Coke Zero 400. From 1988 to 2019, it was one of the four restrictor-plate races on the Cup schedule. The inaugural Daytona 500 was held in 1959, coinciding with the opening of the speedway.

The Daytona 500 is regarded as the most important and prestigious race on the NASCAR calendar, carrying by far the largest purse. It is also the series' first race of the year; this phenomenon is unique in sports, which tend to have championships or other major events at the end of the season rather than the start. From 1995-2020, television ratings for the Daytona 500 have been the highest for any auto race of the year, surpassing the traditional leader, the Indy 500, which in turn greatly surpasses the Daytona 500 in in-track attendance and international viewing.

The race serves as the final event of SpeedWeeks and is also known as "The Great American Race".

SpeedWeeks, NASCAR's biggest week of racing kicks off Feb. 15-19. It will be the first points racing of the season for all three of NASCAR's major divisions.

All the racing will be on the 2.5-mile Daytona International Speedway oval, and terminate with NASCAR's Crown Jewel, the Daytona 500 on Sun. Feb. 19.

Weekend Racing Schedule:

Wed., Feb. 15; Front Row Qualifying (For the two front starting positions only); Start time: 8:15 pm ET; TV: FoxSports1.

Thurs. Feb. 16; Qualifying Dash 1; Start time: 7:00 pm ET; TV: FoxSports1.

Thurs. Feb. 16; Qualifying Dash 2; Start time: 8:45 pm ET; TV: FoxSports1.

Fri. Feb. 17; Truck Series race; Start time: 7:30 pm ET; TV: FoxSports1.

Sat. Feb. 18; Xfinity Series race; Start time: 5:00 pm ET; TV: FoxSports1.

Sun. Feb. 19; Cup Series Daytona 500; Start time: 2:30 pm ET; TV: FOX.

IN OTHER RACING NEWS

Kyle Busch has never won the Daytona 500. But the two-time NASCAR Cup Series champion was in the news last week after being detained by Mexican authorities in Cancun, Mexico.

According to the Cancun newspaper, Riviera Maya News, and reported by the Associated Press, Busch was stopped and detained for having an illegal 38-caliber revolver and ammunition in his luggage.

Busch was reportedly planning to fly back to the United States on January 27 at a private terminal next to the Cancun Airport, after vacationing in the area.

Private security got suspicious of Busch while he was at the airport and informed the National Guard that he might be carrying a gun. When the gun and ammunition were discovered, Busch was detained and went before a Mexican judge. He was sentenced to three and one-half years in prison and fined \$1,000.

Busch said he had a "valid concealed weapon carry



Kyle Busch In 2022

permit from his local authorities (in North Carolina), but made a mistake by forgetting it was in his bag."

"Discovery of the handgun led to my detainment while the situation was resolved. I was not aware of Mexican law and had no intentional of bringing a handgun into Mexico," Busch said in a statement.

The Federal Attorney General's office said the judge allowed a conditional punishment and let Busch leave the country after posting a bond.

Busch's final statement was, "My family and I consider this issue closed."

NASCAR said the incident would not have any impact on his racing career.

There is no word on how Busch's prison term might be served. In all probability, he will arrange for his attorneys to make a cash settlement with the Mexican authorities.

Meanwhile, Toyota is hoping to add new teams for 2024.

"We've got some good irons in the fire now," Pres. David Wilson said last weekend at Daytona International Speedway. "What was once a very effective strategy to amass our resources across fewer cars, with the marginalization of the areas that we have to play in and the flattening out of the playing field, we definitely need some more help."

When TRD entered NASCAR's premier series as a fourth manufacturer 16 years ago, the target was fielding roughly a quarter of the 43-car field. But Toyota's Cup fleet always has remained in the single digits even as NASCAR shrunk to three manufacturers and a 40-car field.

Last year, there were six full-time Camrys in Cup between Joe Gibbs Racing (four) and 23XI Racing (two). Wilson said "nine to 10 cars is probably our sweet spot with this new car."

Travis Pastrana will make his return to the NASCAR Truck Series for the first time in three years, piloting the Niece Motorsports No. 41 Chevrolet during the 2023 season-opening race at Daytona International Speedway on Feb. 17.

"I've had the pleasure of working with Al Niece, Cody Efav and the whole Niece Motorsports crew quite a bit since the team was formed," said Pastrana. "I was looking forward to as much racing as possible during SpeedWeeks this year and couldn't be happier to drive their 41 truck in my first Daytona start."

His last start with Niece Motorsports came in 2020 when he drove the No. 40 truck at both Kansas and Las Vegas.

"In our second year

with Niece Motorsports and competing in the Truck Series, we're proud to have Travis kick off the season," said Mike Grayson, executive vice-president. "Travis is an amazing ambassador of the brands he represents, and we're honored to be alongside his other sponsors. Travis is a fierce, multidisciplinary competitor and we share his passion for excellence and always pursuing new goals."

With the Clash at the Coliseum finally in the rearview mirror, the season will really ramp up as teams and drivers gear up for Daytona. With two races under their belts and notebooks in the NextGen car, everyone should have a better handle on how to set up their cars and what to expect during SpeedWeeks.

Racing Joke: A young woman was dating a young, aspiring racer. Since they were recently engaged, she decided to bring him to her house to meet her parents. After dinner, her mother told her husband to find out about the young man. So the young woman's father took her fiance into his study to discuss "man to man."

"So what are your plans, young man," asked the father.

"In addition to racing, I am a Bible scholar," he replied.

"A Bible scholar. Hmmm," the father said. "admirable, but what will you do to provide a nice house and life for my daughter, if you don't make it in racing?"

"I will study," the young man said. "God will provide."

"And how will you buy her a beautiful engagement ring, such as she deserves," asked the father.

"I will concentrate on my racing and studies," the young man answered. "God will provide."

"And children," asked the father. "How will you support children?"

"Don't worry Sir," the fiance answered. "God will provide."

The conversation proceeded like this for quite an amount of time. Every time the father asked a question, the young man always answered with, "God will provide."

Later, after the young man had left, the mother asked her husband, "How did it go?"

The father answered, "He has no job and no plans, but the good news is, he thinks I'm God."

Racing Trivia Question: Which driver has the most Daytona 500 wins?

Last Week's Question: Who won the 2022 NASCAR Truck Series championship? Answer: Zane Smith.

Gerald Hodges is a syndicated NASCAR writer and author. You may contact him by e-mail at: hodges@race500.com.

Chatuge Shores Men's Golf Association

For those of you who may not be aware, there is a men's golf league at the Chatuge Shores Golf Course. It is called the Chatuge Shores Men's Golf Association (CSMGA) and it has been around since at least the 1990's, maybe earlier. They meet and play 18 holes of golf every Monday and Wednesday morning, weather permitting, all year round. The CSMGA is open to all residents in the area - full or part time.

Monday's round uses the Stableford point scoring system and, on Wednesday, they use the two best balls with handicap system to determine the winners. There are individual, team and closest to the pin awards. Handicaps are established after the first 5 rounds of golf. Each year, in early September, the CSMGA holds a two-day tournament with an awards and annual meeting luncheon after the last round on that Wednesday. Annual dues are \$35 which includes the annual meeting and the luncheon. The CSMGA has members

of all ages from their 50s to their 80s and a whole range of golfers from 4 to 26 handicaps. All golfers are welcome. You can have some fun, get a little exercise, meet new people, be competitive or just enjoy the company, the course and the scenery. The next season begins in

April so it's now time to join and get your handicap established for the new golfing year.

For info on how to join or just try CSMGA out as a guest, contact President Jerry Cause at 706-994-6900 or Secretary/Treasurer Richard Purdy at 303-909-1090.

Towns County Recreation Department
T-Ball, Softball,
& Baseball Registration

Ages 5 to 14

\$60 for T-Ball

\$75 for Baseball

\$75 for Softball



Registration: January 16 - February 18
Late Registration: February 19 - February 24
 \$10 late registration fee
 You can register online at townscountyrec.com or in person.