



# Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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## Eryn Cochran's record setting performance



Eryn Cochran

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There have been innumerable admirable and often spectacular individual accomplishments in the game of basketball at Towns County High School during decades of play. Many but certainly far from all of the scorebooks as far back as 1952 are available for research but no one is known to have ever made more than 17 free throws in a single game at TCHS under full court rules until Saturday, Nov. 19 at Dawson County High School.

On that date, Lady Indian sophomore Eryn Cochran placed her name at the top of the TCHS list with 19 free throws made in just 20 attempts. Margie Gibson (Hooper) sank 24 of 29 attempts against Toccoa Falls during the 1968 season and 19 of 30 against Hiwassee Dam during the same season but under significantly different rules in effect at that time prior to full court play for girls beginning in 1971.

Brandy McNabb (Warren) continues to hold the known Lady Indians school record for free throws made without a miss in a single game with 14 for 14 accuracy accomplished against Franklin, North Carolina, during the 1999 season. And John Allen continues to hold the Indians' and overall school record for free throws made without a miss with a 17-for-17 performance against Banks County during the 2000 season with this accomplishment, those of Margie Gibson, and others addressed in greater detail in an accompanying article from late in the 2000 season.

Beyond the effect on Lady Indians' history, Cochran's accomplishment shakes up the state records listing on the GeorgiaPrepCountry.com Web site. This site lists noteworthy accomplishments as reported by the schools from around the state and Cochran's nineteen made free throws have her in second place in the category for girls' play and tied for second overall. The known

record for both girls and boys is 25 with Cochran alone in second place in girls play and tied for second overall with John Burke of North Springs High School. This Web site is of a certainly incomplete but there are probably few if any additional such accomplishments yet to be entered that would equal or tie Cochran's total.

The girls' free throw shooting list as shown on this Web site has two other names familiar to long time followers of high school basketball and another with unique connections to Towns County. Jill Razor of Athens Academy and Region 8A holds the known state record of 25 free throws made in one game back in the 1990's and former Dade County High School and University of Georgia star Ashley Houts is listed as one of three players having made 18 free throws with Houts having reached that total back in 2005.

The Towns County connection related to the list is Denise Davis of South Gwinnett

who is one of six players listed as having made 16 free throws back in the late 1970s. Davis and former Lady Indians' superstar Martha Moss (Hufstetler) were star teammates in basketball and good friends at Berry College in the early 1980s.

Further, Denise is now Denise Swanson, the mother of former Young Harris College baseball star Mark Swanson who won 18 games as a pitcher in his two years at YHC after setting the school record with 29 wins at Buford High School. And finally as related to this family, Mark Swanson's paternal ancestors were long time residents of the Woods Grove Community of Towns County prior to moving to Gwinnett County after being displaced by the arrival of Lake Chatuge in the early 1940s.

In closing this article, sincere congratulations are extended to Eryn Cochran for a most remarkable feat and best wishes are extended for a very successful and lengthy basketball career.

## Memory Lane: John Allen's 17-for-17 free throw shooting performance

By Jerry Kendall  
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Many readers through the years have expressed enjoyment in reading trips down memory lane so the following article is being reprinted without updates as published in the Towns County Herald more than eleven years ago. Jerry Kendall

John Allen's 17-for-17 performance at the foul line in last Friday night's Towns County Indians game versus Banks County in the TCHS Gym brought about questions as to whether this might be a school record for the most free throws made in one game without a miss as well as the overall record total made regardless of whether a perfect performance or not. Since many score books from the past are missing, there is no possible way to determine

for certain what the record may be, but a thorough search of all the available books reveals that no one "on record" can match the accuracy displayed by the Indians' Senior Guard in the Banks County contest.

Although most score books are available from the late 1960's forward, there are exceptions such as four Boys books and one Girls book from the 1950's being available while a few from as late as the 1980's and 1990's can't be located. Although it appears to not be quite complete, the oldest book to have turned up is the 1952 Boys book and it has the individual scoring but not the free throw shooting for the Girls of that year listed in the back. The oldest Girls book currently available is for the complete 1956 regular season but, as is often the case, the post season tournament games are missing.

At any rate, let's take a look now at what the available books reveal as related to single game free throw shooting. There are at least thirty four occasions where TCHS Boys reached "double figures" at the foul line in a single game beginning with Mike Hedden who was 11 for 15 in a contest played during the 1953 season. On the other hand, there are at least forty one occasions discovered where a Lady Indian accomplished this feat with the earliest record of double figures in a single game only extending back to the 1968 season when Margie Gibson (Hooper) accomplished the feat on six occasions including a 19 for 30 and a 24 for 29 performance.

It may be of historical interest to note that when Gibson sank the twenty four free throws in one game, each one was required for the Lady Indians to

take an 82-81 victory and her 44 point total in that game is the highest known single game total for a Lady Indian. Of further historical significance is the fact that in those days offensive and defensive players were restricted to play on one end of the court with the best free throw shooter on the team taking the free throw attempts when a defensive player was fouled.

With this in mind, it would seem certain that many Lady Indians reached double figures in free throws with added opportunities at the line during the many years these rules were in effect through the 1970 season, although there were no such occurrences during the 1956 season and it happened only one time during 1969 and just three times during the 1970 season.

In getting back to the issue at hand, it's clear from the information available that it's not uncommon for players to reach double figures in single games at the foul line but it is quite rare when there are no misses when attempting a large number of shots as is evidenced by Allen's accomplishment against Banks County being only the ninth time this has been known to occur in both Boys and Girls play. The highest previous perfect total currently on record actually

occurred last year when Brandy McNabb was 14 for 14 at the line in the TCHS Gym against Franklin and she will continue to hold the Lady Indians' school record but relinquishes the overall school record.

Four Towns County Players have registered 12 for 12 performances beginning with Darlene Palmer (Woodruff) during the 1976 season and including Indians Head Coach Chet Kendall in 1986, Keisha Taylor in 1996, and Scotty Fain during the 1998 season. Ten for ten performances have been recorded three times with Eddie Rushton, who was one of the referees during Allen's accomplishment against Banks County, being the first while Jeff Rogers is the only player known to have had two "perfect" double figure performances at the foul line as he had ten for ten performances during both the 1995 and 1996 seasons.

When considering single game free throw excellence under full court rules only, it is interesting to note that Allen must share the record for most free throws made in a single game with his first cousin, Amy Allen (Silvey), who reached double figures at the foul line on twelve occasions during a spectacular four year career ending with the

1986 Season. She made seventeen of twenty attempts at the foul line in a game during her freshman year and nearly duplicated the feat with two games of sixteen for twenty as a senior. Of further historical significance, Amy led her teams in scoring average for all four years she played at TCHS and holds the School's highest known career scoring total of 1,753 points. As further evidence of the Allen touch at the foul line, the name of Tammy Allen, Amy's sister, appears on the double figures list with a nearly perfect eleven for 12 games during the 1975 season.

As for Boys play, Allen takes over the known school record for most free throws made in a game as the seventeen of last week surpassed a sixteen for twenty three performance by Allan Gribble during the 1969 season and sixteen for eighteen and sixteen for nineteen totals registered by Jeff Youngblood during the 1984 and 1985 seasons.

It is hoped this research and a bit of a trip down memory lane has been of interest as we honor John Allen on a most significant accomplishment which was never achieved as far as is known during play at Towns County High during the 1900's. Jerry Kendall

## NASCAR 2011

By Gerald Hodges/the Racing Reporter

### Edwards came out a winner

One of the things Carl Edwards has going for him is character.

In his loss to Tony Stewart for this year's Sprint Cup championship, Carl Edwards was the first to congratulate Stewart.

"He beat us fair and square," Edwards said after the race.

Edwards did virtually everything right in the Ford 400 Sunday in pursuit of his first Sprint Cup championship.

He led 119 laps, 54 more than anyone else. He led 90 of the first 112 laps without a serious challenge. He drove a mostly flawless race. He scored a second-place race finish for the third consecutive event.

Yet he fell short of the big prize by a margin so narrow that it really wasn't a margin. Edwards and Tony Stewart tied for the championship at 2,403 points, but Stewart won the title using the first tiebreaker, race wins (five to one).

It was the first end-of-season tie atop the point standings in the history of NASCAR after a final race that already has been labeled as one of the greatest in the sport's six decades.

Stewart won the race despite a laundry list of problems during the event, finishing 1.30 seconds ahead of Edwards. It was a tough loss after an eventful season, but a defeat that Edwards absorbed with class.

"Whether we won tonight or we lost, I mean, tomorrow is the start of the next season," Edwards said. "I was prepared before this race began to do exactly what I'm going to go do, and that's to be even better next year and to apply what I've learned here."

"We knew we could come into this thing and we knew that of all of the circumstances that could happen, this one [the tie] was the least probable. I mean, for us to finish like that, tied, fighting for the win. That is the least probable outcome."

"And so I was prepared for anything. I knew that this was a possibility, though, and I was prepared for this. And I told myself, I told my family that the one thing I'm going to do is I'm going to walk back to that motor home, win, lose or draw, and I'm going to be a good example for my kids and work hard and go to better next season. Because, you know, we talked about it before the race, even if we won this thing, you go halfway through next season and struggle, that's quickly for-

gotten.

"As painful as this is right now, I know that we have—we are fortunate to have the opportunity to go to Daytona [in February] and just start all over again and go race."

After the race, Edwards met briefly with crew chief Bob Osborne, who seemed particularly shaken by the night's results. They shook hands before Edwards continued with a raft of post-race media responsibilities.

"I just wanted to make sure that Bob knew that I believe he's the best crew chief here, and that he will be my crew chief for as long as he wants to be, and I'm behind him and his decisions 100 percent," Edwards said.

"As tough as it is for me, you know, it's tougher, I think, for those guys, the guys that prepare these cars and determine which things we are going to work on throughout the year and what strategies we are going to use. They make some very, very big decisions that they can't turn around."

Aside from the obvious disappointment of falling short of the championship, Edwards said the run through the Chase will make him a better racer for future title opportunities.

"There are lessons that I learned and things that I learned about myself, about competition, about failure and things about success; things that I could not have learned any other way," he said. "If there weren't any pressure, there wouldn't be any diamonds, that's what my trainer says."

"We dealt with a lot of pressure, and I feel very proud of the way our team and myself and everyone has handled everything through this, and I feel that we made it all the way through, and although we didn't come out with the outcome that we wanted, that we are better because of it, you know, and I'm not trying to be philosophical or anything."

"I'm truly telling you, if I'm in this position next year, I'm going to be better at it. I'm going to be—I'll be better. So that's cool. That's something you don't get every day is a lesson like this."

It takes a real man to come through situations like Edwards did and still remain upbeat.

**NATIONWIDE TO LOSE A RACE**  
The 2012 NASCAR Nationwide Series will have one



Carl Edwards, at Pocono in 2011

less race. It will be down from the 34-race schedule in 2011, to a 33-races

Nashville Superspeedway, which had two races this year, opted not to have any NASCAR races in 2012, and one of those races will go to Kentucky Speedway.

The race at Montreal, Canada is back on the schedule after months of speculation that it might be dropped after the promoter did not get financial incentives from the government to market the race.

### TRUCK SERIES RACES CUT FROM 25 TO 22

NASCAR has reduced the number of races in the Camping World Truck Series from 25 to 22 for 2012.

NASCAR VP Steve O'Donnell indicated they will continue looking at other tracks.

"Looking ahead, interest in the Truck Series continues to grow in a number of different markets and we're excited about what the future holds for next season and beyond," O'Donnell said in a news release.

Nashville Superspeedway, which had two dates, has closed. The series also won't return to Lucas Oil Raceway, New Hampshire Motor Speedway and Darlington Raceway.

The series will go to Rockingham Speedway for the first time and it added a second date at Iowa Speedway.

**Racing Trivia Question:** What is the relationship between Austin Dillon, the 2011 Camping World Truck Series Champion and Richard Childress?

**Last Week's Question:** Which city will host the 2011 Sprint Cup Banquet? **Answer:** It will be held in Las Vegas on Friday, Dec. 2. It will be shown on the Speed Channel beginning at 9 pm ET.

You may contact the Racing Reporter at hodges@race500.com

## Towns County Special Olympics 2011



Participants in the Towns County Special Olympics.

Towns and Union Counties enjoyed the annual fall Special Olympics on November 10, 2011. Athletes of all ages enjoyed a game of bowling at Galaxy Bowling in Blairsville before moving on to a variety of basketball events such as passing, dribbling, and shooting. Basketball events were organized and carried out by Coach Jeannie Ledford and her class from Towns County High School.

At Galaxy Bowling, the athletes enjoyed the assistance of several members of the Young Harris College soccer team accompanied by Head Coach Mark McKeever and Assistant Coach Ciaran Traquair. Their enthusiasm and sportsmanlike behavior was a shining example to all.

Jerry Helton once again did an amazing job with announcing the events. His enthusiasm and quick wit always help the athletes to get in the spirit. After the basketball events, the group was treated to a delicious meal provided, prepared, and served by the Kiwanis Club. Gold, silver, and bronze medals were given out after lunch by Pro-Therapy.

We would like to thank the many people who contributed to make this event possible. T-shirts for Towns County athletes were sponsored by Jeff and Lisa Scott of Hiwassee.

Monetary donations were given by Blue Ridge Mountain EMC, Upper Hightower Baptist Church, and Saved By Grace Church. Desserts were provided by Macedonia Baptist Church, FBLA,

FCA, and Becky Keenum. Many thanks to Jerry Helton, Coach Jeannie Ledford and her students, Pro-Therapy, and

the Young Harris College soccer team.

You all made this an event to remember! T(11Nov30.H2)SH

## Upward basketball is back!

Upward Basketball is back! Registration forms are available at the church office and at evaluations Tuesday, December 6th, 5:30-7:30 p.m., and Saturday, December 10th, 9-11 a.m. Evaluations will be held in the McConnell gym.

Everyone must attend one basketball evaluation.

The registration cost per child is \$65. Deadline for registration is December 10th. After December 10th, the cost is \$75. T(11Nov30.F1)SH

## Towns County Lady Indians 12 and under team take 3rd place



The Towns County Lady Indians 12 and under team took third place in the Hayesville Thanksgiving tournament in North Carolina, beating Cooper Basin 44-7