

# Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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## Indians earn comeback victory against first-place Commerce

By Jeremy Foster  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

Last week, the Towns County Indians Baseball Team played three games against ninth-ranked Commerce High School, one of which featured an amazing come-from-behind win against the first-place team in the region.

Their first game was on Tuesday, March 22, away at Commerce, resulting in a 9-0 loss to the Tigers despite an extremely valiant effort.

The next game was again versus Commerce in a doubleheader, this time at home on Friday, March 25.

Game 1 of the set saw an absolute turnaround for the Indians, who headed into the bottom of the fourth inning behind 9-1, only to come back in true underdog fashion and win 10-9 in the final.

"It was an amazing comeback against the No. 1 team in the region, and we gave them their first region loss," Baseball Head Coach Shannon Floyd said. "Our pitching was excellent in the game, with sophomore Zane Floyd and senior Cabe Poston. Floyd gave up two earned runs, however, Commerce scored seven unearned runs early.

"Our defense has been our strong spot all year, but a few miscues spotted Commerce an early advantage, and I am extremely proud of Poston in the final three innings of excellent pitching."

Thanks to their stick-to-



Sophomore Zane Floyd struck out four Tigers in four innings of work during last week's region victory over Commerce. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

itiveness in the face of adversity, the momentum of the 9-1 game soon changed as the Indians continued to chip away at the Commerce lead.

"We had big hits from senior Collin Crowder, junior Seth Gillis and sophomore Tanner Cunningham. Sophomore Cale Kirby sparked this scor-

ing," Floyd said. "Senior Kyle Oakes' leadership and hustle was also very instrumental in our comeback, and we had two plays that really stood out in this game.

"The first was when junior Lane Rouse executed a perfect squeeze bunt to put us within a run, and the other play

was the last out of the game; a commerce player drove a deep ball to left center field, and Cunningham made a great running catch.

"It was pleasing to watch our guys celebrate with each other."

The second matchup in the doubleheader saw Com-

merce get the win by an 11-1 score, with Floyd commenting that "we were not able to put enough hits together in the second game."

"We had a couple of innings early where we had an opportunity to score multiple runs and did not. Overall, it was a huge win for our guys in Game

1," he said.

This week, the Indians are set to play Thursday, March 31, away at Hiwassee Dam, and on Friday, April 1, away against Union County High School.

The JV team will be gearing up for weekend activity on Saturday, April 2, on a road trip to Rabun for a doubleheader.

## Indians, Lady Indians Soccer win Senior Night home games

By Jeremy Foster  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

More action ensued this past week in Indians Soccer, starting with home games on Monday, March 21, against Barrow Arts & Sciences Academy in which the Lady Indians picked up an 8-1 win with incredible athleticism.

Senior Miranda Spain and junior Sarah Shook each had a hat trick and one assist, while senior Rylie Livingston added a goal off a corner from senior Bazya Smith. Freshman Abby Gardella added a goal assisted by sophomore Elizabeth Edwards.

"Smith was outstanding creating and setting up many scoring chances while having four assists, and junior Alana Stowers chipped in one assist with a very nice free kick," Girls Head Coach Clay Livingston said.

The Indians were up next, and while ultimately losing 6-1, they still maintained a great showing of true grit and determination.

"We lost to a stronger Barrow A & S," Boys Head Coach Rollie Thomas said. "Senior Lane Lallement scored our lone goal off of a free kick from outside the box, which makes 23 goals for him this season and places him first in the region in scoring and seventh in the state."

Added Thomas, "We could not generate any offense in our attack and struggled to stop the through ball defensively, but as we always do, our heads are staying up and we are moving on to the next."

The next matchup for the Lady Indians was a make-up game from a weather



Towns County soccer recognized its seniors during last Friday's matches vs. Greene County. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

cancellation on Wednesday, March 23, against Commerce High School.

"We had a tough one and lost 8-0," Coach Livingston said. "We came out tight and did not play well at the beginning.

"After giving up two quick goals, we settled in and played pretty well for the rest of the first half, but we did not come out in the second half with the kind of intensity I would like to see. I have to do a better job of preparing our kids mentally to play."

Both teams played again on Friday, March 25, at home

against Greene County High School. The evening marked Senior Night, which boded well for the Indians and Lady Indians, as both teams scored wins on their night of senior leadership recognition.

The Lady Indians won 10-0, with many on the team having a hand – and feet – in the scoring.

Seniors Macy Brinson and Spain each earned a goal. Shook was assisted by senior Gali Quijada. Gardella scored two goals assisted by Shook and sophomore Halie Arrowood. Arrowood was assisted by Smith.

Freshman Cheyenne Doche was assisted by freshman Kya Smith. Freshman Jersei Sofield scored two goals, one unassisted and one assisted by sophomore Brittany Cabrera. And sophomore Emma Lallement was assisted by Sofield.

"They played great team soccer, and the girls are very unselfish – they are always looking to set each other up for scoring opportunities," Livingston said. "We are very proud and thankful for our five amazing seniors: Macy Brinson, Rylie Livingston, Gali Quijada, Miranda Spain

and Bazya Smith."

Lastly, the Indians were up and defeated Greene County 3-1.

"Lallement, now with 25 goals for the season, had two beautifully created shots for goals," Thomas said. "And junior Grant Ingram cut across the field at the top of our attacking 18-yard box for an upper 90 shot for a goal.

"We represented our seniors well in their next-to-last home match of the season. Seniors Lallement and David Hendricks started at the forward positions, Zion Henderson started in the mid-

field, and Dade Joyner started in defense.

"I will miss this great group of seniors that I have had the pleasure of coaching and watching grow into the great men that I know they will become."

The next set of games this week occurred after press time on Tuesday, March 29, away against Commerce High School, and the teams will play again on Friday, April 1, on Towns County turf against Social Circle High School.

Congratulations to this year's Class of 2022 graduating seniors.



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## Towns County soccer pays tribute to Class of 2022 during last week's Senior Night festivities



Senior Macy Brinson



Senior Zion Henderson



Senior David Hendricks



Senior Dade Joyner



Senior Lane Lallement



Senior Rylie Livingston



Senior Gali Quijada



Senior Bazya Smith



Senior Miranda Spain.

### Veterans Golf League Update

The Veterans Golf League will start play at Chatuge Shores Golf Course on April 7th at 9 AM. There are no set teams. Players draw cards to determine playing partners for that day.

There will be a league formation meeting at VFW Post 7807 on Sunnyside Road on Thursday, March 31st at 3:30 PM. Those interested in joining the league should try to attend.

The league is open to all VFW and American Legion members, including their auxiliaries and the SAL regardless of post affiliation.

Any questions, Call Bart Rodgers, 706-970-7008.

### Chatuge Shores Ladies Golf League Opens for 2022

The Chatuge Shores Ladies Golf League is ready for spring and a new golf season. A fun group of ladies, the league has members from throughout the tri-county area. Play is every Tuesday at Chatuge Shores Golf Course with a 9 AM tee time.

Play days start April 5 and league play begins May 3. Membership is open now and all are welcome. Membership dues are \$30 per year and the weekly course fee is \$27 which includes a cart.

Membership requires an official handicap in the USGA system (called GHIN). Establishing a handicap is easy and the league can help with that if needed.

For more information the league web site is www.chatugeshoreslga.com or contact Vicky Healy at 616-292-4686 or vhealy55@gmail.com.

Speaking on behalf of the entire league, Vicky says "Come out and join the fun!"

### Trout stocking sites week of March 21-25, 2022



Jamey Mull, Mitch Pickelsimer, Cory Ingram and Kelly Taylor are busy loading stocking trucks with beautiful trout for distribution into streams.

Fannin: Big Creek, Hemptown Creek, Hothouse Creek, Rock Creek, Rock Creek Lake, Sugar Creek, Toccoa River and Toccoa River Tailwaters (below Lake Blue Ridge Dam)

Gilmer: Boardtown Creek and Rock Creek  
Lumpkin: Dockery Lake, Etowah River, Nimblewill Creek and Ward Creek

Union: Cooper Creek, Suches Creek, Toccoa River and Winfield Scott Lake

\*\*Note: Information is subject to change. Please call the hatchery at 706-838-4723 for questions. Stay up-to-date with stocking and events through Facebook: www.facebook.com/chattahoocheeforestnfh. The hatchery also provides trout for the state. Please contact Georgia DNR for information on sites stocked by the state.

### 2022 Trout Fishing Outlook

Warmer days and trout stocking trucks hitting the road signal abundant trout fishing opportunities across North Georgia. Thanks to the long-standing partnership between the Georgia Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) Wildlife Resource Division (WRD) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), anglers can look forward to another great year of trout fishing.

Popular waterbodies that receive regular trout stockings include Rock Creek in Fannin County and Dicks Creek in Lumpkin County on the Chestatee Wildlife Management Area. Additionally, Holly Creek in Murray County, Johns Creek in Floyd County and the Tallulah River in Rabun County are all great trout streams to visit.

The daily limit is eight trout on general regulation trout waters. Anglers are reminded to respect private property rights along streams flowing through private lands, and to obtain permission before fishing on private property.

Get info online! Information on trout fishing and stocking is readily available online. You can even sign up for a weekly trout stocking email at <http://georgiawildlife.com/Fishing/Trout>. If you need more fresh statewide fishing news, check out our blog report every Friday at <https://georgiawildlife.blog/category/fishing/>.

### NASCAR 2022

By Gerald Hodges/the Racing Reporter

#### The "Watermelon Man" Gets First Win

AUSTIN, TX -- Ross Chastain, who grew up on his family's watermelon farm in Alva, Florida, was the class of the field in Sunday's Cup Series race at Circuit Of The America's road course. He led 31 laps of the 69 lap race, but had to use all his driving skills during the last lap to claim his first series victory.

The last caution sent the race into a green-white-checkered finish. It was set up when Kurt Busch, Kyle Larson and Joey Logano got together in Turn 1 following a restart with four laps to go. All three were able to continue.

Chastain lined up second on the overtime restart to the leader Tyler Reddick, but after only three turns, he had pulled ahead. Reddick and AJ Allmendinger, winner of Saturday's Xfinity Series race battled each other bumper-to-bumper and side-by-side for the first lap, before Allmendinger was able to move into second.

Allmendinger briefly pulled ahead of Chastain on the last lap as the field headed for the checkered flag, but Chastain gave Allmendinger a good bump causing him to lose control. Allmendinger was then hit by another car and spun out. Alex Bowman, who was running a close third moved into second, but was unable to pass Chastain in the short distance left to the start-finish line.

Chastain busted a Florida watermelon during his Victory Lane celebration. He reached down, scooped up a big piece, put it in his mouth, and shouted, "How sweet it is."

It was also the first win for his team, Trackhouse Racing.

"It's never tasted sweeter, I gotta tell you," Chastain continued. "AJ is so good. I've learned so much from him. I had to go beat the guy. He taught me so much. I know AJ is going to be upset with me and he's got a right. But we were going for a win. We were so close that I couldn't settle for anything less."

"Now, I know I owe him one, but I couldn't let this one get away."

Bowman finished as runner-up, while Allmendinger was unable to continue, finishing 33rd.

"Hate that we can't come away with a win, but happy for Ross getting his first win," said Bowman. "It's been a crap weekend, so I'm ready to get home and see the dogs and move on to next weekend. Glad to come away with a second-place finish."

Christopher Bell, Chase Elliott and Tyler Reddick completed the top five, followed by Ryan Blaney, Martin Truex Jr., Austin Cindric, Erik Jones and Austin Dillon.

In an interview after the race, Allmendinger didn't seem too upset with Chastain's actions.

"At the end of the day each person has to make the move that they're comfortable with, and that's fine," said Allmendinger. "We know we had a shot to win the race. It's tough to win a Cup race, so when you put yourself in a position to legitimately run up front all day and have a shot to win it, it's a pretty great day. Unfortunately, we just needed about two more corners."

Daniel Suarez won Stage One, while Denny Hamlin took Stage Two.

Top 10 leaders after 6 of 36: 1. Elliott-200, 2. Blaney-195, 3. Logano-185, 4. Bowman-183, 5. Chastain-180, 6. Byron-175, 7. Truex Jr.-172, 8. Almirola-168, 9. Briscoe-166, 10. Reddick-158.



The "Watermelon Man" Gets First Win

#### AJ DOMINATES COTA XFINTY RACE

AJ Allmendinger took the checkered flag by 2.039-seconds over Austin Hill in the first road course race of the year. It was the 40-year-old veteran's first Xfinity Series win of the 2022 season and 11th of his career. He has seven road course wins on six different road course tracks (series-most).

He led early and he led late, just when he needed to, holding off the field on two late, and dicey race restarts and controlling the race the final 14 laps en route to the checkered flag.

"I told myself yesterday, I was not happy with where I put ourselves," said Allmendinger, who qualified fourth.

"Honestly, all these men and women here at Kaulig Racing between the Cup side of it and the Xfinity side of it, they don't sleep during the week, they're busting their tails and that's why I'm so freaking hard on myself sometimes because they deserve to win more than anybody here. And I just want to do it for them. Thankfully, we got it done today."

Austin Hill was second, followed by Cole Custer, Noah Gragson, Sam Mayer, Myatt Snider, Brett Moffitt, Jade Buford, Miguel Pablo, and Sheldon Creed.

With their finishes, Allmendinger, Hill, Gragson and Mayer are now eligible to win a \$100,000 bonus next week in the Dash 4 Cash sweepstakes opener at Richmond (Va.) Raceway. The top finishing driver among them in the ToyotaCare 250 will take the big check.

Top 10 leaders after 6 of 33: 1. Gragson-258, 2. Allmendinger-257, 3. Gibbs-227, 4. Allgaier-190, 5. Berry-181, 6. Hill-172, 7. B. Jones-172, 8. Hemric-166, 9. Mayer-162, 10. Sieg-151.

#### ZANE SMITH GETS SECOND TRUCK WIN

Zane Smith was out front when it counted Saturday afternoon at the Circuit of The Americas road course. He led only 11 of the 46 laps - winning Stage 1, Stage 2 and then took the race lead with two laps remaining in the second overtime period to earn the victory in the Truck Series race.

It marked Smith's second win of the 2022 season - fifth of his career - and the second consecutive win at the 3.41-mile, 20-turn COTA circuit for his Front Row Motorsports team, who celebrated in Victory Lane last year with driver Todd Gilliland.

Veteran Kyle Busch - who led a race best 31 laps - led the vast majority of the race and held the point on the start of the final overtime. But his closest challengers Stewart Friesen and Alex Bowman went in hard to the Turn 11 hairpin turn making it a three-wide door-to-door-to-door trying

to wrestle the lead from Busch, the series all-time winningest driver.

John Nemechek was second, followed by Kyle Busch, Ben Rhodes, Chandler Smith, Christian Eckes, Tyler Ankrum, Carson Hocevar, Stewart Friesen, and Grant Enfinger.

Top 10 leaders after 4 of 23: 1. C. Smith-170, 2. Rhodes-155, 3. Friesen-147, 4. Z. Smith-139, 5. Gray-139, 6. Eckes-122, 7. Majeski-122, 8. Nemechek-115, 9. Ankrum-104, 10. Kraus-104.

#### KESELOWSKI HIT WITH SEVERE PENALTIES

NASCAR issued severe penalties to Brad Keselowski and his No. 6 RFK Racing team for a modification to a single source supplied part discovered after last weekend's race at Atlanta Motor Speedway.

They docked Keselowski 100 driver points, deducted 100 points from RFK Racing in the owner standings, penalized the team 10 playoff points, and fined crew chief Matt McCall \$100,000 and suspended him for the next four Cup points events.

RFK issued the following statement: In connection to the penalties announced yesterday by NASCAR, we have filed a notice of appeal and look forward to the opportunity to work through the process.

Those are the largest fines issued this season.

Meanwhile, the Atlanta race earned Fox a 2.36 rating with 4.003 million viewers, according to Sports Business Journal.

Compared to the fifth race of the 2021 season, viewership was up, as that race was listed at a 2.3 rating with 3.857 million viewers.

**Racing Joke:** Kurt's young daughter had been chatting on the phone for about an hour before she hung up. Her father, impressed said, "That was a quick call for you. You're usually on that thing for at least two hours."

His daughter smiled and said, "Oh, it was a wrong number."

**Weekend Racing:** The Cup and Xfinity teams will be at the 0.75-mile Richmond, Vir. Track.

Sat., Apr. 2; Xfinity Series race 7 of 33; Starting time: 1:30 pm ET; TV: FoxSports1.

Sun., Apr. 3; Cup Series race 7 of 36; Starting time: 3:30 pm ET; TV: Fox.

**Racing Trivia Question:** Which Cup series team does Tyler Reddick drive for?

**Last Week's Question:** How many times has NASCAR raced at COTA? Answer: This was the second time.

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