

Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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Roquemore invites public to attend 'Midnight Madness' scrimmage Aug. 1

By Chad Stack
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Indians Football will be donning pads on Thursday, Aug. 1, at 12:01 a.m. for the team's first-ever "Midnight Madness" under the lights at Frank McClure Memorial Stadium.

The Boys in Blue have been practicing for two months under New Head Coach Jason Roquemore.

Roquemore comes to Towns County following a seven-year stint as the head coach for Johnson High School in Gainesville.

Twenty-two football players have been showing up regularly to summer workouts, Roquemore said.

"I feel very confident that our numbers are going to continue to grow once school starts," Roquemore said. "I think once the community and fans see that we have a great group of kids, more will start to come out."

Several schools all over the state get together to open pre-season play with a mid-



night scrimmage, and for the first time, the Indians will join in on the action late Wednesday night.

Roquemore has had two months to work with his team and really likes what he sees.

The Indians started off-season workouts meeting three days a week in June, with off-

season training ramping up in July as they started getting in the playbook.

On Thursday, July 25, the Indians began camp, practicing for five days with helmets on before being able to play in full pads.

The Georgia High School Association prohibits

full contact until Aug. 1, which is why the team is hosting its "Midnight Madness" scrimmage.

And they'll be scrimmaging in full pads for the first time ever on the school's brand-new \$1 million artificial turf field, with the scrimmage being open to the public.

The offense has a new signal-caller in sophomore Kyle Oakes, who was the back up to senior and three-year starter Trent Bradshaw.

Oakes has experience at the quarterback position, and with a year of tutelage from Bradshaw, Oakes said he feels confident commanding the huddle.

"I'm ready, I have been waiting for this chance," Oakes said. "We got to put helmets on Thursday, so I'm just counting down the days till we can start hitting."

Starting at running back this year is senior Dakota Edge, who has been impressing Roquemore with the way he carries the ball.

"Edge is going to do big things for us at the tailback position this year," Roquemore said. "He has great vision and runs hard."

"Offensively, we're going to throw the football. I feel like we have some kids on the perimeter that are going to be tough in space."

The Boys in Blue are moving to a 3-4 look on the defensive side of the ball, which is much different from the 6-2 scheme from last year.

With several secondary skill players returning, Roquemore said he feels this is the best package for the defensive side of the ball.

Senior and Defensive Captain Shane Sparks is looking to make some noise on the defensive line, with Roquemore expecting big things from Sparks this season.

Following this week's "Midnight Madness" game, the Indians will travel to Lumpkin County for a pre-season scrimmage on Friday, Aug. 16, starting at 7:30 p.m.

The Boys in Blue start their season against cross-state rivals from North Carolina when the Hayesville Yellowjackets travel to Towns County to face the Indians at home on Aug. 23.

Towns County's football team has won three in a row against the Yellowjackets under former coach John Cornett.

After their season opener, the Indians will travel away for the next two games to face Gilmer County on Friday, Aug. 30, and Union County on Friday, Sept. 6.

Girls BBall, Cheerleading do their part to raise money for teams

By Chad Stack
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer



spent most of the morning and afternoon working hard to raise money for the upcoming 2019-2020 season starting in November.

Also that Saturday, the Lady Indians Cheerleading Squad held a carwash fundraiser in the Clearview Center parking lot across from Chatuge Regional Hospital.

With just weeks remaining before the start of football season, the cheerleaders and Head Coach Rachel Pietz washed cars to raise funds for their upcoming season as well.

Lady Indians Cheerleading will soon make its first appearance of the season on the sidelines at Frank McClure Memorial Stadium, cheering for the Boys in Blue as they host their season opener on Friday, Aug. 23, against the Yellowjackets of Hayesville, North Carolina.

Lady Indians Basketball and the Towns County Varsity Cheerleaders held separate carwash fundraisers on Saturday, July 27.

McConnell Memorial Baptist Church opened its parking lot for the basketball players, and the girls, along with Head Coach Brian Hunnicutt,



Towns County basketball players at the car wash. Photo/Chad Stack



Towns County Cheerleaders at the car wash. Photo/Chad Stack

NASCAR 2019

By Gerald Hodges/the Racing Reporter

Joe Gibbs Toyotas Sweep Pocono



Denny Hamlin Leads A Toyota Sweep At Pocono

stop for tires he was never able to regain the lead.

Jimmie Johnson won Stage 2 after Kyle Busch pitted for fresh tires with three laps remaining, but he slipped back to a 15th place finish.

Chase Elliott had a right front tire blow out during lap 83. His car careened off the outside wall and his day ended with a DNF. "All of a sudden there was a pop," said Elliott. "Unfortunately, I was running too close to the outside to keep it from getting into the wall."

Top-10 leaders with six races remaining before this year's Chase For The Championship begins: 1. Logano-824, 2. Kyle Busch-818, 3. Harvick-739, 4. Hamlin-722, 5. Truex-701, 6. Keselowski-695, 7. Kurt Busch-650, 8. Elliott-616, 9. Almirola-614, 10. Blaney-599.

BRISCOE RALLIES FOR XFINITY VICTORY

Chase Briscoe passed Christopher Bell with seven laps to go and won the Xfinity Series race at Iowa Speedway on Saturday night for his second career victory.

Bell led a race-high 235 out of 250 laps, but old tires allowed Briscoe to take over with five laps left and clinch a playoff berth.

Remaining top-10 finishers: 2. Christopher Bell, 3. John Nemechek, 4. Noah Gragson, 5. Tyler Reddick, 6. Justin Allgaier, 7. Shane Lee, 8. Justin Haley, 9. Zane Smith, 10. Michael Annett.

Top-10 leaders after 19 of 33: 1. Reddick-857, 2. Bell-811, 3. Custer-760, 4. Allgaier-704, 5. Cindric-650, 6. Gragson-629, 7. Briscoe-625, 8. Annett-600, 9. Haley-594, 10. Nemechek-573.

CHASTAIN GETS POCONO TRUCK WIN

Ross Chastain earned his third Truck Series win of the season on Saturday afternoon at Po-

cono Raceway, leading 54 of 60 laps.

"We stomped them in the dirt," said Chastain. "We pressed the attack. I'm so dang excited."

Tyler Ankrum, Harrison Burton, Christian Eckes, Brett Moffitt, Matt Crafton, Todd Gilliland, Johnny Sauter, Ben Rhodes, and Grant Enfinger were the remaining top-10 finishers.

Top-10 leaders after 14 of 23: 1. Enfinger-582, 2. Moffitt-548, 3. Crafton-529, 4. Friesen-513, 5. H. Burton-500, 6. Rhodes-479, 7. Gilliland-428, 8. Hill-426, 9. Creed-408, 10. Sauter-402.

GRALA HOPING TO MOVE UP

Richard Childress Racing is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year. It is one of the oldest and most successful teams in racing, fielding cars for many drivers, including Dale Earnhart Sr.

Currently there are two Xfinity drivers, Tyler Reddick of Coming, Calif. and Kaz Grala of Westboro, Mass., that hope to move up to one of RCR's Cup cars.

Reddick is in first place in the Xfinity driver standings that includes three wins, 12 finishes in the top five and 14 in the top 10. Sharing the garage with an ambitious and seasoned driver such as Reddick has been crucial to Grala's development.

"I've gotten to know Tyler quite well over this season," Grala told the Boston Herald. "We work out together every day at the shop and he's been great to lean on in my first three races this year."

Grala, 20, secured a part-time gig with Richard Childress Racing after competing as an independent last year with Fury Race Cars.

"We figured, let's take this to the best team out there in terms of sponsor relations and that is

Richard Childress Racing," Grala said. "It turned out they have got some pretty good equipment on the race track so it was a match made in heaven."

Grala caught a huge break when Childress management paired him with veteran crew chief Justin Alexander, a nurturing and knowledgeable pit boss who specializes in young drivers. Grala is hoping their collaboration will result in a meaningful relationship on the track.

"I think we work together excellently," Grala said. "He is very good at what he does and he has a lot of experience so it's perfect for me as a rookie to have a veteran crew chief at the top of the box."

"I would say that our chemistry is pretty good and we've gotten to know each other quite a bit. By our third race at Dover I felt we were pretty much on the same page. I am really confident we will have a strong showing as long as we have clean race and having nothing go wrong that is out of our control. We need to maximize our own performance and hope that luck will be on our side."

Racing Joke: Ryan goes to his doctor for a yearly checkup.

"Doctor, how can I live longer than 100 years?" he asks.

Do you smoke? No.

Do you eat too much? No.

Do you go to bed late? No.

Do you think you will still be able to win races? No.

Do you have affairs with loose women? No.

Then why would you want to live more than 100 years?

Weekend Racing: The Cup and Xfinity teams are at the Watkins Glen road course, while the Trucks make their annual stop at the Eldora, Ohio dirt track.

Trucks, Aug. 1; Truck Series race 15 of 23; Starting time: 9 PM ET; TV: FoxSports1.

Sat. Aug. 3; Xfinity Series race 20 of 33; Starting time: 3:30 PM ET; TV: NBC.

Sun. Aug. 4; Cup Series race 22 of 36; Starting time: 3 PM ET; TV: NBCSN.

Racing Trivia Question: Which Cup team does Ryan Blaney drive for?

Where do the Busch brothers call home? Kurt and Kyle are from Las Vegas.

Last Week's Question:

Gerald Hodges is a syndicated NASCAR writer and author. His books may be viewed online and ordered at Amazon.com. You may contact him by e-mail at: hodes@race500.com