

Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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Softball: Lady Indians continue to improve after 0-2 season start

By Jeremy Foster
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Towns County Lady Indians Softball kickstarted the 2022-23 season last week with their opening game against North Murray High on Lowell Nicholson Field at home on Tuesday, Aug. 9, followed by an away matchup versus Loganville Christian Academy on Thursday, Aug. 11.

And though the ladies may have started the season off with a 5-0 loss against North Murray, they quickly adjusted to demonstrate big improvements in their 6-4 loss to Loganville Christian.

Following the pair of games last week, Head Softball Coach Clay Livingston offered game rundowns and a few player stats highlighting the first two contests of the season and what to expect going forward.

"We started the season 0 and 2 this week but we really played pretty well," he said.

"We did a great job of making some adjustments from game one to game two, especially at the plate. Our defense was solid both games; unfortunately, the errors we did make really cost us.

"But overall, we are at a much better place early in the season compared to last year.



The Towns County Lady Indians hosted North Murray in the 2022 softball home opener on Tuesday, Aug. 9.

(Freshman) Jaycie Cross has been solid on the rubber, only walking three in the first two games and striking out six. You can see her and (junior) catcher Laura Mauldin developing some rhythm on the field.

"We were only able to muster up two hits in the 5-0

loss to North Murray on Tuesday. We did hit a few balls hard, but right at them."

Regarding the second game, however, Coach Livingston described the Lady Indians' approach at the plate as having been "much better."

"We were able to push

four across on five hits," he said. "(Freshman) Delaney Moses went 1-for-2 and scored 2 runs. Laura Mauldin went 2-for-4 with a run scored. (Junior) Elizabeth Edwards chipped in with a hit and an RBI.

"(Junior) Hope Chastain contributed an RBI, and (sophomore) Hailey Gibson scored a run. (Junior) Zoe Phillips is 2-for-5 through the first two games."

Added Coach Livingston, "We also had some nice at-bats that won't show up on the stat sheet, productive outs that pushed runners into scoring position. The final score



Photos by Lowell Nicholson

was 6-4, with us giving up a five-spot in the second inning that really hurt."

So far, Coach Livingston and his coaching staff – Assistant Coaches Chris Vardo and Zeke Gribble – are impressed with the dedication and work ethic exhibited by their Lady Indians, and they hope the public will come out to support the girls as the season progresses.

"I am excited to see us continue to work hard and improve," Livingston said. "The wins will come, there is no doubt in my mind."

The team's next game was set for after press time

on Monday, Aug. 15, away against Rabun County.

Lady Indians Fast-Pitch Softball will pick back up with another home game on Thursday, Aug. 18, once again versus Rabun, with varsity players hitting the field at 5 p.m. and JV at 7 p.m.

After that, the team will get some good rest and practice time in before the next game away at Cedar Shoals High School in Athens on Wednesday, Aug. 24.

Be sure to visit www.townscountyathletics.com for complete season scheduling and other team-related news and information.

Local Tropics Basketball Team more like a tropical storm for their opponents



Tropics Team (L-R): Gabe Clark, Coach Sam Hogsed, Ethan Hogsed, Jaxon Thoterow, Hayden Price, Coach Phillip Hardin, Isaac Milam, Charlie Wilson, Keaton Watkins, Tucker Engert, Easton Shumaker, Emory Hardin, Coach Greg Wilson – Dalton Championship

At first glance, the group of boys that make up our local Tropics travel basketball team look more like a traveling party of buddies. Don't let the laughs, pranks, and hotel pool belly flops fool you! This team of young men have become a force to be reckoned with on the court.

The Tropics have just completed their southeastern travel season with a 19-4 record in 7th grade tournament play. They have been in the gold bracket championship game in 5 of 6 of those tournaments and won 3 of them. Tournament wins include the Fannin County Christmas Clash, Dalton PSA May Mayhem, and the Athens Classic City Shootout.

The Tropics were formed 2 years ago and are comprised of boys from Union, Towns and Fannin Counties, and Andrews, North Carolina. Coach Greg Wilson explains, "Our goal was to create a team that met a few key requirements. First, the kids had to personally want to put in the work. Second, they had to like each other and third, they had to have a team mentality. Honestly, we weren't looking for a team full of ringers out of the gate. We were wanting to grow a basketball family. As we all know though, not all family gatherings are smooth sailing! We took our share of

losses early on in an effort to be where we are today. I couldn't be more grateful for the dedication and unwavering support by our coaches, the team and their families."

Aside from teaching basketball skills, the Tropics have provided an opportunity for athletes in neighboring counties to join together and create friendships. Coach Phillip Hardin of Towns County states, "aggressive, challenging and extreme fanatics sometimes describe rival sports teams from small towns. But what happens when basketball fanatics from rival counties, such as Union, Towns, Fannin and Cherokee, are placed on the same team? You get the Tropics. The Tropics may have started as rivals from neighboring counties but have developed into a family."

For anyone interested in forming travel teams for their children, there is a definite time and financial sacrifice needed. The Tropics were able to create local fundraising events to help buffer the costs of travel and uniforms. Coach Sam Hogsed praises our local community for their "giving nature and willingness to help."

As fall approaches and school basketball seasons start up, the Tropics will each go to be a part of their home teams and they will even face each

other in some instances. But no matter what happens on the court during this season, these boys will always be a Tropic. Coach Wilson emphasizes the importance of this team by stating "The end result of all this hard work and persistence was not to win at all cost. It was to create plenty of great memories that both the boys and their families can have for a lifetime."

In a sports world riddled with politics and prima donnas, it's important to peek into an old, hot and scream-filled gym and remember why we love the game. Kids and adults, both, need to hear the squeak of 20 sneakers during controlled chaos and know that a greater purpose is being served. They need to know that the gut punch feeling after a hard loss can be a springboard toward achieving sheer bliss as a gym erupts from a hard-fought victory. They need to learn that the sum is greater than it's parts. The Tropics embody that vital need for youth sports.

To the boys who participated with the team, we wish you the best of luck with your future endeavors and we thank you for being a positive example for our communities! As it has echoed throughout all kinds of arenas, in all kinds of towns, in the huddle: Tropics On Three! NT(Aug17,28)CA

Chatuge Shores Ladies Golf Weekly League Play

The Chatuge Shores Ladies Golf Association (CSLGA) held their weekly league play on Tuesday, August 9. The league saw another beautiful day and welcomed new members Betty Curtis and Barbara Delli-Veneri. The game this week was Three Blind Mice. This game has a secret drawing for three holes; one a par 3, one a par 4 and one a par 5. The three holes are kept secret until after the round and the net score on these three holes is subtracted from the total net score.

Results for the first flight were first place Charlotte Maddox, second place Martha Zimmer and third place Alison Taylor. Results for the second flight were first place Cathy Clement, second place Martha Barker and third place Linda Robinson.

Lowest putts went to Cathy Clements with 28 and Martha Zimmer with 29 putts. Chip ins were recorded by Sandy Snyder on holes 12 and 17, Martha Zimmer on hold 14 and Cathy Clement had a chip in birdie on hole 4. As these results prove, there were scores to be had on August 9!

CSLGA plays every Tuesday at Chatuge Shores Golf Course 260 Golf Course Rd, Hayesville, NC 28904.



Alison Taylor and Mary Mott

mer on hold 14 and Cathy Clement had a chip in birdie on hole 4. As these results prove, there were scores to be had on August 9!

CSLGA plays every Tuesday at Chatuge Shores Golf Course 260 Golf Course Rd, Hayesville, NC 28904.

Tee time is 9 AM. The league has 30 members from throughout the tri-county area and includes golfers of all skill levels. If you are not a member, but are interested in joining, please email our President, Vicky Healy at vhealy55@gmail.com. T(Aug17,M2)JH

Mountain Harbour Ladies Golf League

The Mountain Harbour Golf Course and its Ladies Golf Association played host to the Mountain Ladies Golf League (MLGL) on Monday, August 8. The MLGL is a joint project of several local ladies' golf leagues to supplement regular league play. The format on Monday was stableford where points are awarded for play results and the less strokes taken the more points awarded.

Although the weather for the day before was rainy, the day of the league play was absolutely awe inspiring. There were 26 players on hand and the League would

like to extend grateful thanks to everyone at the Mountain Harbour Golf Course for hosting the event and showing off yet another great course in our area.

Overall results for the first flight were first place Martha Zimmer, second place Julia Swift, third place Beth Poczynski and fourth place Patti MacDonald. Results for the second flight were first place Bonnie Shore, second place Annie McMullan, third place Alison Taylor and fourth place Karen Sandell. Results for the third flight were first place Kathy James, second place Retha Hart, third place

Martha Barker and fourth place Christine Harp.

The next playing of the MLGL is September 12 at Copper Basin Golf Club in Copperhill, Tennessee. Mountain Harbour Ladies Golf Association plays every Thursday at Mountain Harbour Golf Course 1665 Mountain Harbour Dr, Hayesville, NC 28904. Tee time is 9 AM. The league has members from throughout the tri-county area and includes golfers of all skill levels.

If you are not a member, but are interested in joining, please email Chairwoman, Martha Zimmer at macazi08@yahoo.com. T(Aug17,M2)JH

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Towns County Girls Softball Team at Chatuge Gun Club



(L-R) front: Drew Livingston, Laura Mauldin, Elizabeth Edwards, Maddy Lewis, Jamie McCarter, Taylor Mulkey; back: Coaches Clay Livingston, Chris Vardo, Zeke Gribble

For the past few years, the Chatuge Gun Club has partnered with the Towns County Girls Softball Team to support them with their competition entering a float in the Georgia Mountain Fair Parade.

To further partner with these athletes, an offer was made to join us at the range to enjoy a little bit of shooting. Six of the team members

along with three coaches, traveled to the range after the first day of school on Thursday, August 4, and were joined by twelve of the Gun Club members, to "give it the old try."

Following a refresher of basic gun and range safety, these girls took up positions at the firing line and enjoyed over an hour of target practice both at paper and metal swinging

targets as well as clay targets at the 100-yard line.

Only two of these shooters had ever fired a gun before but in the end, it appeared to be a successful experience since they were all smiling, and we had to take the rifles away from them.

We wish them success in this year's parade competition and on the ball field. NT(Aug17,A6)JH

Towns County High School 2022 VARSITY FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	SITE	TIME
8/5	Polk County, TN (Scrimmage)	Away	7:30pm
8/19	Hayesville	Away	7:30pm
8/26	Lake Oconee Academy	Home	7:30pm
9/2	Union County	Home	7:30pm
9/9	NON REGION BYE		
9/16	Coosa	Away	7:30pm
9/23	REGION BYE		
9/30	*Greene County (Homecoming)	Home	7:30pm
10/7	*Aquinas	Away	7:30pm
10/14	Johnson-Gainesville	Away	7:30pm
10/21	*Warren County (Park & Rec Night)	Home	7:30pm
10/28	*Washington-Wilkes (Senior Night)	Home	7:30pm
11/4	*Lincoln County	Away	7:30pm

Bold – Home Game		*Region Games	
Head Coach:	Jason Roquemore	Principal:	Roy Perren
Asst. Coaches:	Evan Woodard Ken Camp Chris Drury Wade Hodges	Asst. Principal/AD:	Jim Melton
Cheer Coach:	Christa Houser		
Band Director:	Allison Arnold		

NASCAR 2022

By Gerald Hodges/the Racing Reporter

"Happy" Harvick Wins Again

Kevin Harvick got his second Cup series victory in as many weeks this past Sunday at Richmond.

Harvick held off runner-up Christopher Bell and third-place finisher Chris Buescher over the closing laps, as he threaded his way through traffic to win Sunday's Cup Series race by .441 seconds.

The Cup Series victory was Harvick's fourth at the .75-mile short track—his first there since 2013—and the 60th of his career, tying him with Kyle Busch for most among active drivers and ninth all-time.

Harvick led twice for 55 laps, passing eventual sixth-place finisher Joey Logano for the lead on Lap 334 and regaining it from Denny Hamlin on Lap 353 at the end of a cycle of green-flag pit stops.

"It's like I said last week, the cars have been running good week-in and week-out," Harvick said, "and you see that we have a lot better understanding of what's going on with how we adjusted on the car after the first run and were able to get our car handling a lot better."

Less than two weeks ago, the talk about Kevin Harvick was that he was enduring a winless streak of nearly two full seasons, and that he didn't seem particularly close to winning with just 13 laps led the entire season. But it's only taken eight days for Harvick to completely reverse that narrative and perhaps position himself as one of the most dangerous drivers in NASCAR right now.

Bell seemed pleased with his runner-up finish.

On 12-lap fresher tires, Bell charged forward, slipped past Buescher on Lap 396 of 400 and closed on Harvick before running out of time.

"Well, I knew he was coming, but I forgot to shift down the front straightaway the last time," Harvick said. "I was not paying attention, and he got closer than he should have. I made a mistake there a couple laps doing the same thing. I wasn't shifting on the back, and I was shifting on the front. There was a lot going on, and made a couple mistakes, let him get too close."

Denny Hamlin was fourth, while Chase Elliott, Joey Logano, Martin Truex Jr., Aric Almirola, Kyle Busch, and Ryan Blaney were the remaining top 10 finishers.

After starting on the outside pole, Ross Chastain looked like the driver to beat early in the race, leading 80 laps in all and winning Stage 1. Once again, though, Chastain's day's day wasn't too good. He wound up finishing 18th.

Top 10 leaders after 24 of 36: 1. Elliott-882, 2. Blaney-766, 3. Larson-745, 4. Truex-740, 5. Chastain-739, 6. Logano-718, 7. Bell-703, 8. Harvick-665, 9. Kyle Busch-663, 10. Byron-649.

FIRST TRUCK PLAYOFF RACE GOES TO CHANDLER SMITH

Chandler Smith pretty much dominated Saturday's Truck Series race at Richmond.

Smith took charge of the second event in the NASCAR Camping World Truck Series Playoff when he won the race off pit road under caution on lap 75—during the break between the first and second stages.



"Happy" Harvick Wins Again

With his third victory of the year and fifth of his career, Smith earned automatic advancement to the second round of the Playoffs, joining Grant Enfinger, who won the Playoff opener at Lucas Oil Indianapolis Raceway Park.

"Hell of a job!" Smith shouted after crossing the finish line 2.790 seconds ahead of runner-up and Kyle Busch Motorsports teammate John Hunter Nemechek. "This truck was really good—I'm not going to lie."

Nemechek thought the final caution for the incident in Turn 1 cost him a chance to contend for the victory. During the long green-flag run before the yellow, he had cut into Smith's lead, and at one point pulled alongside his teammate before the front runners cleared traffic.

"I felt I had saved my stuff a little better on that run," Nemechek said. "I was running him down pretty quick."

The remaining top 10 finishers were: Ty Majeski, Grant Enfinger, Corey Heim, Taylor Gray, Matt Crafton, Christian Eckes, Zane Smith, and Carson Hocevar.

Top 10 leaders after 18 of 23: 1. C. Smith-2111, 2. Z. Smith-2109, 3. Nemechek-2106, 4. Enfinger-2104, 5. Majeski-2099, 6. Friesen-2094, 7. Rhodes-2084, 8. Crafton-2066, 9. Hocevar-2063, 10. Eckes-2060.

The Xfinity Series had an off week.

OTHER RACING NEWS: Noah Gragson, one of the young up-and-coming drivers is finally getting a full-time opportunity in the NASCAR Cup Series. It was announced Wednesday that he will fill the seat of the No. 42 Chevrolet at Petty GMS in 2023.

Gragson, 24, is currently fourth in the NASCAR Xfinity Series points and has three victories this season for JR Motorsports. He has eight wins and 52 top-five finishes in 123 career Xfinity Series starts.

Gragson will replace veteran Ty Dillon at Petty GMS. Dillon has managed just one top 10 finish and is 30th in the points standings for the team this season.

"To be able to finally announce my plans for next season and officially say I will be competing full time in the NASCAR Cup Series is a dream come true," said Gragson. "This is what we all dream of when we start racing at a young age, to be able to compete at the top level with the best in the world. I'm excited to join Petty GMS and drive a car that has so much history in our sport, the No. 42."

Meanwhile Kurt Busch was out for the fourth consecutive week.

Busch, 44, who won earlier this year at Kansas, remains locked into the playoffs via a medical waiver.

He released the following statement on Wednesday, updating his recovery: "Brain injury recovery doesn't always take a linear path. I've been feeling well in my recovery, but this week I pushed to get my heart rate and body in a race simulation type environment, and it's clear I'm not ready to be back in the race car."

"This was by far the hardest week emotionally because I do feel the progression of recovery, but racing requires an extreme physical and mental effort, and my body is not 100 per cent able to sustain the intense race conditions. I am making progress and pushing hard each day. I am encouraged by my team of doctors, and we will continue to do everything it takes to get me to 100 per cent to return to competition."

"Thanks to everyone for the continued support and best of luck to the 45 team and Ty (Gibbs) this weekend in Richmond."

Racing Joke: A ninety-year-old retired racer went to the doctor for a physical. A few days later the doctor saw the man walking down the street in downtown Charlotte with a gorgeous young lady on his arm. He smiled at his patient and walked on. The old man smiled back and went on around the block.

A couple days later, the doctor talked to the old racer and said, "You're really doing great, aren't you?"

The old man replied, "Just doing what you said, 'get a hot mama and be cheerful.'"

The doctor paused and answered, "I didn't say that! I said, you've got a heart murmur. Be careful."

Weekend Racing: The Cup and Xfinity teams will be at the 2.45-mile road course at Watkins Glen, New York. The Trucks do not race again until Sept. 9.

Sat., Aug 20; Xfinity Series race 22 of 33; Starting time: 3:00 pm ET; TV: USA.

Sun., Aug. 21; Cup Series race 25 of 36; Starting time: 3:00 pm ET; TV: USA

Racing Trivia Question: How many races will this year's Cup Series Playoffs consist of?

Last Week's Question: How many Cup Series teams does Joe Gibbs Racing field? Answer: Four, they are driven by Denny Hamlin, Kyle Busch, Martin Truex Jr., and Christopher Bell.

Gerald Hodges/the Racing Reporter is a syndicated NASCAR writer and author. You may e-mail him at hodges@race500.com.

Guardian of our forests, Smokey Bear is 78

Created in 1944, the Smokey Bear Wildfire Prevention campaign is the longest-running public service advertising campaign in U.S. history, educating generations of Americans about their role in preventing wildfires. The guardian of our forest dressed in a ranger's hat, belted blue jeans, and carrying a shovel, has been the recognized wildfire prevention symbol since 1944.

To understand how Smokey Bear became associated with wildfire prevention, we must go back to World War II. On December 7, 1941, Japanese planes attacked Pearl Harbor. The following spring, in 1942, a Japanese submarine surfaced near the coast of Southern California and fired a salvo of shells that exploded on an oil field near Santa Barbara, very close to the Los Padres National Forest. Americans throughout the country were shocked by the news the war had now been brought directly to the American mainland. There was also fear that enemy incendiary shells exploding in the timber stands along the Pacific Coast could easily set off numerous raging forest fires in addition to those already being caused by people.

Protection of these forests from uncontrolled fire became a matter of national importance, and a new idea was born. If people could be urged to be more careful, perhaps some of the fires could be prevented. Forest fires caused by people were nothing new.

For many years, the nation had known that forest fires presented a serious threat. In 1939, a poster showing a forest ranger who looked like Uncle Sam pointing to a raging forest fire stated, "Your Forest-Your Fault-Your Loss." Statistics showed that nine out of ten of the fires were person-caused and, thus, preventable. With this in mind, in 1942 the Forest Service organized the Cooperative Forest Fire Prevention Program with the help of the Wartime Advertising Council. The Wartime Advertising Council was composed of people experienced in the business of advertising who donated their talent to the U.S. Government to get important

messages to the people. Posters and slogans were created through the Wartime Advertising Council, including "Forest Fires Aid the Enemy," and "Our Carelessness, Their Secret Weapon." By using catchy phrases, colorful posters, and other fire prevention messages, the CFFP Program encouraged people to prevent accidental fires and help with the War.

Walt Disney's motion picture "Bambi" was produced in 1944, and Disney authorized the CFFP Program to use his creation on a poster. The Bambi poster was a success and proved that using an animal as a fire prevention symbol would work. The Forest Service needed to find an animal that would be long exclusively to the CFFP Program. It was finally decided that the Nation's fire prevention symbol should be a bear.

On August 9, 1944, the new fire prevention symbol was agreed upon by the Forest Service and the Wartime Advertising Council. The first poster of Smokey Bear showed a bear pouring a bucket of water on a campfire. Smokey Bear soon became extremely popular, and his image began appearing on fire prevention materials. "Only YOU Can Prevent Forest Fires" was first used as a slogan in 1947.

One spring day in 1950 in the Capitan Mountains of New Mexico, an observer in one of the fire towers spotted smoke and called the location into the nearest Ranger Station. The first crew to arrive discovered a major fire being swept along by strong winds. Word spread rapidly and more crews were called to help. Forest rangers, Army soldiers, New Mexico State Game and Fish Department employees and civilian volunteers worked together to control the raging fire.

During one of the lulls in the firefighting, there was a report of a lonely cub seen wandering near the fire line. The little cub had been caught in the path of the fire. He had taken refuge in a tree that was now nothing but a charred, smoking snag. His climb had saved his life but left his paws and hind legs badly burned. The fire-



fighters removed the little bear cub from the burned tree, and a rancher, who had been helping the firefighters, agreed to take the cub home. The cub needed veterinary aid and was flown to Santa Fe where the burns were treated and bandaged.

The news about the little bear spread swiftly throughout New Mexico. Soon the United Press and Associated Press picked up the story and broadcast it nationwide. The State Game Warden wrote an official letter to the Chief of the Forest Service, offering to present the cub to the agency with the understanding that the small bear would be dedicated to a publicity program for fire prevention and wildlife conservation. The go-ahead was given to send the bear cub to Washington, D.C. Once there, he found a home at the National Zoo and became the living symbol of Smokey Bear.

Smokey died in 1976 and was returned to Capitan, New Mexico, where he is buried in the State Historical Park. Smokey will be 78 years old on August 9, 2022. Smokey's new slogan is "Only you can prevent Wildfires!"

Smokey did too good of a job for years by encouraging every fire to be put out which has led to the high fuel loads we have in our forests today. For more information check out: Smokeybear.com

Veterans Golf League

The veterans golf league plays every thursday at the beautiful Chatuge Shores Golf Course.

This week's competition was won by the team lead by Scott Smith. Teammates contributing to the 9 strokes under par victory were Scott Heggi, Mark LaMore and Harry Steiner. Congratulations!

Isaiah 117 House to host annual golf tournament to benefit the Union County house September 23rd

12:00 provided by Chick-fil-A Blairsville and a shotgun start at 1 PM.

The event also has 5 sponsorship levels available – Title, Advocate, Partner, Team, and Hole sponsorships. Each sponsorship level includes marketing benefits, and some include the benefit of multiple teams in the event.

To register a team, or to become a sponsor, visit www.isaiah117house.com/golf and choose Union county. For more information, please visit Isaiah 117 House Union County GA on Facebook or contact Wes Cook at 706-400-8600 or uniongolf@isaiah117house.com

Isaiah 117 House is a 501(c) 3 nonprofit organization that provides physical and emotional support in a safe

and loving home for children awaiting foster care placement. Currently, when a child is removed in a county without an Isaiah 117 House, the child must wait in the child welfare services office. The child is often dirty, hungry, tired, scared, and unable to bring any personal possessions. Isaiah 117 House allows for that same child to never go to that office, but rather a home with loving volunteers to care for them.

Isaiah 117 House provides for that child's needs, whatever they may be, in these critical moments between removal and placement. Isaiah 117 House has locations in Tennessee, Indiana, Arizona, Georgia, Florida, Ohio, Texas, and Virginia. To learn more about Isaiah 117 House, visit www.isaiah117house.com.