

# Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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## NASCAR 2014

By Gerald Hodges/the Racing Reporter

### Can Keselowski rebound this year

Brad Keselowski won the 2012 Sprint Cup championship.

After starting out strong in 2013, with seven top-10 finishes in the first eight races, Keselowski's team made a multitude of mistakes. He and his team became immersed in suspensions, penalties that took away driver points, and parts failures.

They never regained their early season form, and failed to make the 12-driver Chase field.

Will he be able to turn things around and make a run for this year's title?

"Yeah, I mean, you've got to continue to work hard and strive to get better," Keselowski said. "For missing the Chase by what we did, yeah, we had a lot of technical problems, but I'm sure there were a few races where we could have finished better. So we've got to get better every opportunity that we can."

Keselowski had only one win and was more known for what he did off the track than on.

He stuck his foot in his mouth more than once by his comments. At one point he was told by NASCAR that he needed to "shut up and drive."

It's not to say that Keselowski's struggles in 2013 were entirely his fault. The team switched from Dodge to Ford, and was further hampered by Ford's continued issues with the lack of horsepower.

Keselowski had driver points taken away when it was discovered that Penske was using unapproved suspension pieces, and his crew chief and lead engineer were suspended for a couple of weeks.

"Some weeks last year we were pretty good," Keselowski continued. "We run well. We were fast. Sometimes we were probably a third to fifth to sixth place car. But at times, I felt like we were a winning car if we could have gotten out front. I think track position meant that much, which we'll work every week. It's just a matter of continuing to evolve and get better as a team and communicate because with the new Gen-6 car, it's all new for everybody. So we'll work on all of that stuff in 2014."

"It didn't feel good to not make the Chase or run better than we did, but there is a part of you that just feels like you're first in class."

"I'm confident that things will come back around, and when it does, we'll change these seconds and fifths or whatever into wins."

"I feel like that's bound to happen next year, and we have the team to pull it off. I also feel like the way the points are right now, we still control our own destiny, which is if we win the race, we get the points lead. So that's about all you can ask for."

"Certainly I would



Brad Keselowski at New Hampshire in 2013. Furnished by NASCAR

have liked to have won more than we did last year, but I feel like we're fighting the good fight and doing some great things as a team that I'm really, really proud of.

"Obviously, it's not going to come easy. But anything worth doing in life shouldn't come easy, and I appreciate the efforts of the people that I'm around to make it happen. I appreciate the fact that it's difficult, because it brings out the best in everybody. As a group, I feel like we've brought our best, and I'm really proud of everybody for that."

It would help Keselowski and his team if they could get an early win. Penske has excellent equipment, Keselowski has shown the ability to win on any kind of track and the team is capable of providing him a race car that can run upfront.

I'd say that if Keselowski can avoid some of last year's distractions and focus on racing, maybe some of the problems they experienced won't reappear, and they can find that positive image once again.

### NEW QUALIFYING FORMAT

NASCAR has announced a new group qualifying format for the Cup, Nationwide and truck series.

"We believe the timing is right for a new qualifying format across our three national series," said Robin Pemberton, vice president for competition and racing development. "This style of group qualifying has all the makings of being highly competitive and more engaging to our fans in the stands and those watching on television and online. For the drivers and teams, we believe this new qualifying will fuel even greater competition leading into the events. Additionally, it provides our tracks, broadcasters and other key partners with a greater opportunity to develop more entertaining content for our race weekends."

At tracks measuring 1.25 miles in length or larger, qualifying will consist of three rounds:

The first qualifying elimination round will be 25 minutes in duration and includes all cars/trucks. The 24 cars/trucks that post the fastest single lap from

the first qualifying round will advance to the second round.

The remaining cars/trucks will be sorted based on their times posted in the first round of qualifying in descending order.

The second qualifying elimination round will be 10 minutes in duration and the 12 cars/trucks that post the fastest single lap time will advance to the third and final round. The fastest remaining cars/trucks earn positions 13th through 24th based on their times posted in qualifying in descending order.

The third and final qualifying round will be five minutes in duration and the fastest single lap time will determine positions 1st through 12th in descending order. At tracks measuring less than 1.25 miles, qualifying will consist of two rounds:

The first qualifying elimination round will be 30 minutes in duration and includes all cars/trucks. The 12 cars/trucks that post the fastest single lap time from the first qualifying round will advance to the second and final round.

The remaining cars/trucks will be sorted based on their times posted in the first round of qualifying in descending order. There will be a 10-minute break between the two qualifying rounds.

The second and final qualifying round will be 10 minutes in duration and the fastest single lap time posted will determine positions 1st through 12th in descending order.

The new qualifying format does not apply to the Daytona 500. Additionally, it does not apply to non-points events or the Truck Series event at Eldora Speedway. NASCAR previewed the concept of group qualifying with its national series teams late last fall.

**Racing Trivia Question:** Who won last year's Daytona 500?

**Last Week's Question:** Which Nationwide team will Chase Elliott drive for in 2014? **Answer:** He will drive a full season for JR Motorsports, a Dale Earnhardt Jr. company.

You may e-mail any questions to the Racing Reporter at: hodges@race500.com.

## Down to the wire ...continued from Page 8A

with treys while the Indians countered with six points of their own in between, highlighted by a three point play by Trace Moss for a 62-55 score but both teams failed to score for just over two minutes after that. A Major Moss field goal at 4:58 was matched half a minute later by the Eagles for a 64-57 Eagle lead but baskets by Boone Moss at 4:15 and 2:39 had the Indians within 64-61.

A field goal and three point play by the Eagles wrapped around a long deuce by Trace Moss had the Eagles ahead 69-63 with 2:24 on the clock but here came the Indians again. Six straight Indian points on two free throws by Barrett and field goals by Major Moss and Barrett between the 2:11 and fifty six seconds marks gave the Indians a sudden 69-69 tie with Moss forcing a turnover leading to his bas-

ket and claiming a defensive rebound and running a fast break for the Barrett basket. At that point, the Indians completed an extended 60-45 run back to the 1:02 mark of the first quarter and a 20-10 run back to the 7:20 mark of the fourth.

The Eagles drove the lane for a 71-69 lead with twenty eight seconds left, however, and sank two free throws at the 16.1 and 7.8 seconds marks for a 75-69 lead which became 75-71 when Boone Moss tipped in a shot at the buzzer. A large crowd on Homecoming night and alumni game night could not have been more proud of the youthful Indians' performance if they had come away with a victory.

Scoring leaders for the game were Trace Moss with 19 points, Manus with 18, Barrett with 14, Boone Moss with 12, and Major Moss with 6 while Major Moss led

in assists with 7 and Manus contributed 4 according to your reporter's tally. Leaders in rebounds were Major Moss with 7 and Barrett and Boone Moss with 6 each.

The Indians were victimized by perhaps the best player they have faced this year in the Riverside game as 6'5" junior Avery Cagle poured in 40 points after sinking eight treys in scoring 30 in the earlier game in Gainesville against the Indians while sinking three treys along with 11 for 12 free throw shooting in the win on Saturday. In fact, it was accurate free throw shooting by the Eagles which gave them the victory on Saturday as they made 17 of 18 attempts while the Indians managed just 8 for 19 accuracy but held the overall field goal advantage by hitting 21 deuces and 7 treys while the Eagles sank 17 deuces and 8 treys.



Boone Moss and Adam Barrett battle for a rebound against Providence. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

### Bowling scores

Monday Night Men: Steve Brandt 200, 200, Barry Kives 209, John Stevens 223, Ray Everett 203, Jeb Plott 235, 211, 289 Series 735, Mike Brandenburg 204, Larry Cannan 217, 223, DeJay DeJoseph 223, Bill Smith 203, 226, Kevin Mohan 225, Austin Hedden 200, Joe Teague 257, 214, Derrick Rice 223, 280, 257 Series 760, Mike Davis 204, 206, 223, Jim McCreary 243, 212, 205, Dave Davis 231, 201, Gary Brown 215, 201, Johnathan Everett 235, Russ Southcott 226, Ranny Jones 204, Richard Tanner 217, Ken Sampson 246, 221, Michael Whitehead 251, 214, Taz Matetzschk 225, BJ Gilbert 267, 213.

Monday Night Ladies: Amber Gilbert 186, 197, Nell Rice 186, Shae Roberts 202, 214, 237 Series 653

Young at Heart: Anne Sorrelle 202, 209, Bruce Burnett 279, 246, Del Neiffer 205, Paul Napolitano 229.

Thursday Night Fun Mixed: Taz Matetzschk 203, Shae Roberts 202, Jordan Moore 234, Mike Davis 288, 228, Bob Landis 224, 203, 201, DeJay DeJoseph 256, Dewey Allen 222, Tim McVay 203, Kiek Bass 216, Russ Southcott 223, 205, 245, Doug Mason 203, Tony Lynch 221, 201, Ken Clark, 220, 225, Ray Everett 266, 300, 201, Bonnell Thomas 220, Curtis Corn 236, 204, Bill Smith 200, Carl Reinhardt 181, 202, Denise Baldwin 214, Zach Moore 289, Tim Moore 226, 228, 207, Chuck Reeves 200, Denise Snyder 202. N(Jan29/21)CA

### MUSA Spring Registration

Mountain United Soccer Association is ready for spring soccer.

Registrations are currently being accepted for age groups U6-U14. This season we are offering online registration at www.mountainsoccer.org. Registration forms are also available on the website, to print and mail in. The deadline to register is Feb. 15th.

In Blairsville, Cott Beverage is our community host for the soccer fields. In Hiawassee, the fields at the Towns County Fairgrounds are utilized through the cooperation of the local recreation department. The league is grateful for their commitment and support.

The spring season will begin in early March. Anyone who is interested in playing needs to register promptly. In some cases



space is limited. MUSA is a volunteer run organization and is also a 501C3 nonprofit. Any and all donations are directed to the youth player. Field sponsors, sign sponsors and team sponsors are always needed. If you are interested in supporting the youth soccer players in our community through sponsorship and/or donation, please contact the association.

For additional info contact the league at 706-994-4351, musa.soccer@gmail.com or visit us on the web at www.mountainsoccer.org.

### Ray Everett bowls perfect game



The ultimate goal when bowling is to roll twelve strikes in a row. Only a small percentage within the sport achieve this. Ray Everett has not only reached this pinnacle once, but repeated it. On Thursday January 16th he rolled another perfect game. His second within six weeks. When asked how he's going to top it he said, "Next I want to get my 800 series!" Ray finished the night with a 767 just short of his next achievement... this time. N(Jan29/218)CA

### Let's walk for a great cause

Candace Renee Lopez, is raising money for the National Eating Disorder Association at a fundraising walk to be held at 490 Meeks Park Road, Blairsville, GA on Saturday, February 1, 2014. Check in time: 9 AM; Walk start time: 9:30 AM; Walk end time: 11 AM. Pray for sunshine, but if it does rain, the walk will be held in the MAC at the United Methodist Church of Union County, 938 Highway 51.5 Blairsville GA. The Walk Fundraising Goal is \$5,000, please contact Candace Renee Lopez for more information at candacelopez85@yahoo.com. Teeshirts will be available for \$10 on the Square on Saturday January 25, 2014. Contact Candace if you would like to pre-order.

able. Along with the attractions of the park, there will be different fun activities such as corn hole and a silent action for some great items.

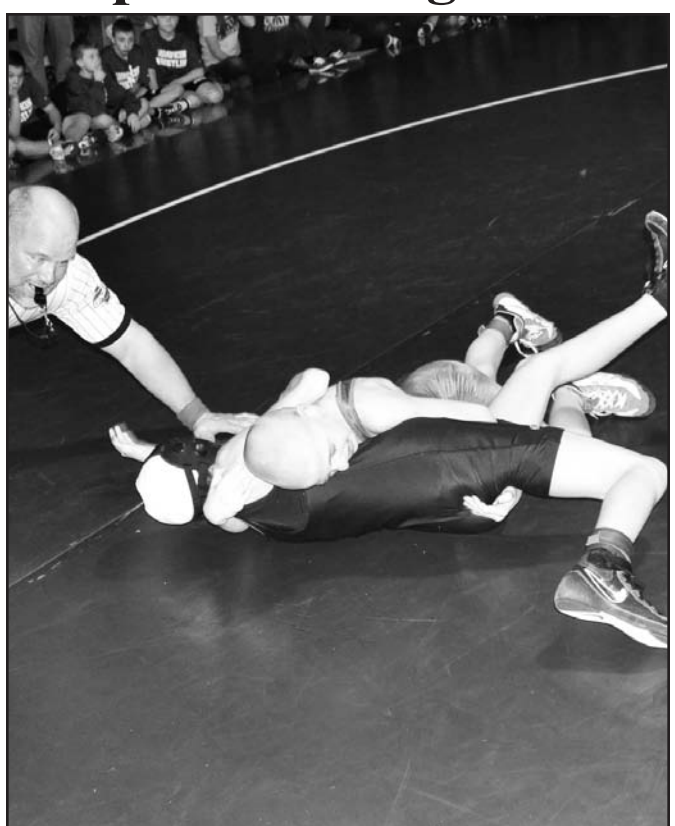
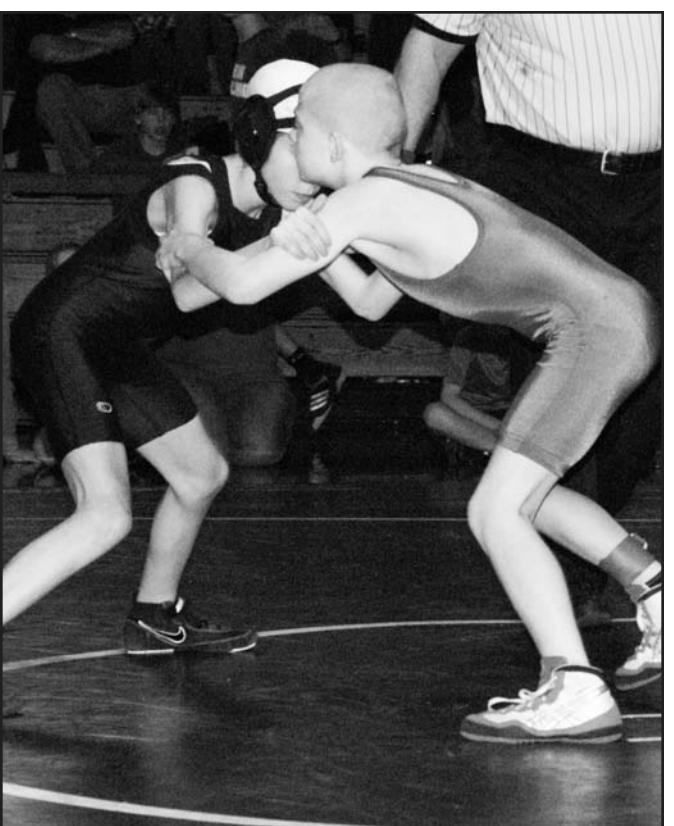
It's literally a walk in the park. Let's get together as a community, have fun, and help save a life.

Did you know... eating disorders have the highest mortality rate of any mental illness in America; up to 24 million people of all ages and genders suffer from an eating disorder (anorexia, bulimia and binge eating disorder) in the U.S.

"I, Candace Renee Lopez, have suffered this illness since the age of 10." Please come Walk to support this life altering cause.

Go to <http://candace85.wix.com/nedacandacelopez> for further information.

## Michael Moss dominates 72-pounds weight class



Correction: over the last two weeks the Towns County Herald listed Towns County Middle School's Michael Moss as the third place finisher in the 2013-14 King of the Mountain Tournament. Michael actually won the tournament in the 72-pound weight class. We apologize to Michael, his family, and the wrestling squad. Photos/Lowell Nicholson and Todd Forrest