

Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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Indians split with Bryan County; no-hit at Fannin County

By Todd Forrest
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Towns County baseball lost a shootout at home to Bryan County on Friday before getting revenge on Saturday in Blue Ridge to the tune of a 10-0 rout over the Redskins.

However, in the Indians' second game on Saturday, they ran into the arm of Fannin County's Will Shirah and fell 11-0 during a four-inning no-hitter.

During the first game on Saturday, Towns County junior Will DeVries fired a gem of his own, shutting out the 7-3 Bryan County Redskins from Class AA.

After DeVries struck out the side in the top of the third inning, the Indians (2-4) did most of their damage in the bottom half of the third when they sent 11 hitters to the plate and put up six runs - more than enough for DeVries.

Junior Major Moss, DeVries, and sophomore Zach Davenport all reached on walks to load the bases.

With one out, junior Adam Barrett singled to right-center to put the Indians on the board.

Sophomore Dalton Key made it a 2-0 game when he beat out a double-play ball to shortstop.

Davenport scored on a wild pitch with two strikes to junior Brody Graper, who was hit by a pitch on a 1-2 count.

With the bases full again, junior Kobe Denton delivered a 2-run single to center - making it a 5-0 game.

Moss came back up for the second time in the inning and reached on a pop fly to



Junior centerfielder Major Moss is safe at second base vs Bryan County on Friday. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

shallow left that drove in another run.

In the fourth, DeVries got out of a bases loaded jam by inducing a grounder to Key at third base.

Junior Jackson Taylor led off the bottom of the fourth with a base hit to right. With sophomore Andy Chambers entering as a courtesy runner, Davenport was hit by a pitch but Barrett lined out to right and Bryan County was able to record a pair of strikeouts to get out of the inning.

However, the Indians would put up four more runs and cruise to an easy 10-0 victory.

Later in the day, Towns

fell 11-0 to Fannin as Shirah struck out 13 Indians in four innings.

The Rebels (3-1) got five runs in the first inning, three in the second, and three in the third.

Towns gave up an RBI single, an RBI double, a 2-run single, and an RBI ground out in the first.

A three-run homer by Dawson Sparks in the second inning put the game away at 8-0.

On Friday night in Hiwassee vs Bryan County, the Indians struck first with a run in the bottom of the second but the Redskins got three in their half

of the third.

Towns got one run back in the bottom of the third before Bryan stretched its lead to 4-2 entering the bottom of the fourth.

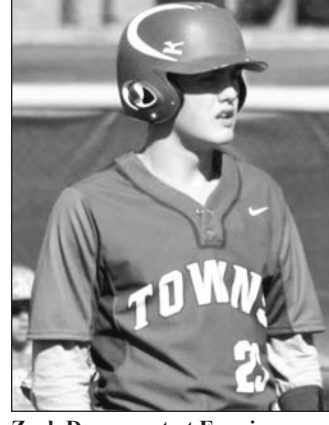
The Indians posted two in the fourth to knot the score at 4-4, however, Bryan scored one run in the next three innings to take a 7-4 advantage into Towns' final at bat.

The Indians went down swinging with a run in the seventh but couldn't muster anymore offense in the 7-5 loss.

Davenport got the start on the mound for Towns County on Friday.



Will DeVries winds vs Bryan Co. at Fannin. Photo/Todd Forrest



Zach Davenport at Fannin County. Photo/Todd Forrest

Up next for the Indians is the start of Region 8-A action when they travel to George Walton Academy on Friday for a doubleheader beginning at 4:30 p.m.

The Bulldogs are currently 4-1 and will be playing their first Region game, as well.

George Walton has wins over North Oconee 4-1, Walnut Grove 5-2, Eagles Landing Christian 8-7, and Monroe Area 4-0.

Their lone loss came to Eagles Landing by a score of

13-2. The Bulldogs are coming off a 13-12 season that saw them reach the first round of the Class A State Tournament, where they were swept by King's Ridge Christian.

In the two meetings with Towns County last season, the Bulldogs were victorious in both games by scores of 8-3 and 11-1.

George Walton graduated four of its top-nine hitters, including its top two power hitters - that accounted for 10 of the team's 13 homers in 2015.

Of the four hitters gone from the lineup are the three of their top four in batting average.

They do return junior Kale Ledford who led the team with a .408 average, 12 doubles, and was third with 3 homers and 20 RBIs.

Also returning is senior Blake Heard (.306 BA), senior Trey Johnson (.284 BA, 14 RBIs, and 4 stolen bases), and junior Cason Brown (.275 BA).

Leading base stealer, senior Denzel Coley returns after swiping 13 bases in 2015.

Senior JD Buice is currently hitting .556 with a homer, while fellow senior Brooks Barrineau is hitting .455.

The pitching staff graduated its No. 2, No. 3, and No. 5 pitchers but returns senior ace Christian Shiver who finished 3-1 with 55 strikeouts in 45 innings while compiling a 3.11 ERA.

Barrineau finished with a microscopic 0.36 ERA in 19 innings with 17 strikeouts. Brown was fifth on the team with 6.2 innings pitched last year.

Those three are the team's leaders in innings, five games into 2016.

TCHS Soccer at home on Wednesday and Monday

By Todd Forrest
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Towns County soccer will be on full display in the coming days as new head coaches John Cornett (girls) and Jonny Eyrich (boys) prepare for a brutal Region 8-A schedule with a pair of non-region games.

On Wednesday, the Lady Indians will host Highlands, NC before both squads visit Hebron Christian Academy on Friday to open Region-play.

On Monday, Towns will host rival-Union County where the Lady Indians will look to continue their recent-run of success over the Lady Panthers.

Last season, Towns was the only team to defeat, and score upon, the Union girls during the regular season.

The Lady Panthers would go on to win Region 8-AA and reach the Class AA Elite 8 where they fell to private school powerhouse Lovett. Union made its postseason run without leading scorer and Region Player of the Year Maddy Morlock, who was

injured in the regular season finale.

The Lady Indians finished 2015 with a 3-7 record with wins over Union and Class AAA's Fannin. However, Region 8-A was a different story as Towns finished just 1-6, with its lone win coming over George Walton.

But with plenty of young talent returning, the Lady Indians have nowhere to go but up in 2016.

Meanwhile, the boys were winless in 2015 with one tie vs Union County, who was the Region 8-AA Co-Champion and reached the Class AA Sweet 16.

But once again, the Indians fell victim to a loaded Region schedule.

Hebron's girls are currently 2-3 with wins over Archer, 2-0 and George Walton, 9-0. The guys are 2-2-1 with wins over Pinecrest, 3-1 and George Walton, 7-0. They tied Buford.

Union's girls are currently 2-0 with a 2-0 win over Fannin County and a 10-0 win at Greene County.

The Union boys tied Fannin, 1-1 and beat Greene 10-0.



Towns County will host Union County on Monday. Last year, the Lady Indians handed their only regular season loss of the season before the Lady Panthers reached the Class AA Elite 8. Photo/Todd Forrest

T-ball and Coaches Pitch registration

The Towns County Recreation Dept. is having registration for T-ball and coaches pitch for boys and girls ages 4 thru 8 beginning March 14, 2016 thru March 26, 2016. Late registration will be held the week of March 28, 2016 through April 2, 2016. The fee for registration is \$45. Sign-

ups are held at the new Towns County Recreation Center. Our hours of operation are Monday thru Friday 9 a.m. till 8 p.m. and Saturday from 9 a.m. till 4 p.m.

If you have any questions please call the Recreation Department at 706-896-2600.

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NASCAR 2016

By Gerald Hodges/the Racing Reporter

Penske Teams Double Down At Vegas



Teammates Brad Keselowski and Joey Logano

LAS VEGAS, Nev.-Penske Racers Brad Keselowski and Joey Logano finished 1-2 in Sunday's 267-lap Sprint Cup race.

Keselowski was running third on the race's last restart, with 35 laps to go, behind the leader Kyle Busch and teammate Logano. The three leaders maintained their position until Keselowski was able to move ahead of Logano on lap 254. Five laps later, Keselowski was able to slip by Busch for the lead, and went on to victory lane.

"I really liked the way the car handled," said Keselowski. "You know we got that pit road speeding penalty and it put us behind, but the way the car was handling I knew we could make it back to the front."

"It's been a long time since we had a win, and this really feels good."

Logano led 70 laps, but he was no match for Keselowski as the race neared its end.

"It was a great race," said Logano. "I wasn't sure I had enough to catch Kyle, so there was no use in me trying to race Brad and hold him back, because he was faster than me. The team gave me a great car, and even though a win would have made me feel better, I'm happy that Brad could win."

Jimmie Johnson, last week's Atlanta winner edged ahead of Busch's car just before the two crossed the finish line for third.

"It was a fantastic race for us," said Johnson. "We had a fast car, not the fastest, but these kind of races keep you in the game."

Kyle Busch led 38 laps, but the handling went away on his No. 18 Joe Gibbs Toyota with about 10 laps remaining, and he had to settle for fourth.

"I don't know what happened," said Busch. "There was something about those last right side tires we put on, and I just couldn't get the job done."

Austin Dillon finished a strong fifth, followed by Ryan Blaney, Kevin Harvick, Dale Earnhardt Jr., Kurt Busch, and Kasey Kahne.

There were five caution periods, but only two wrecks despite the high winds. The first wreck happened during lap 213 and involved Regan Smith and Kyle Larson. Both were able to continue.

A major pileup occurred on lap 224 after Matt Kenseth slipped up, causing a chain reaction behind him.

The other cars involved were Chase Elliott, Carl Edwards, and Kurt Busch. Elliott and Kenseth were done for the day, while the others came back on the track after repairs were made.

Denny Hamlin, winner of the Daytona 500 finished 19th. Danica Patrick was 21st.

Top-10 leaders after 3 of 36: 1. Kyle Busch-116, 2. Johnson-110, 3. Harvick-109, 4. Logano-104, 5. Kurt Busch-102, 6. Keselowski-98, 7. Edwards-96, 8. Hamlin-93, 9. Truex-90, 10. A. Dillon-90.

"Rowdy" Kyle Dominates Vegas Xfinity Race

Kyle Busch led 199 laps of Saturday's 200-lap Xfinity Series race at Las Vegas Motor Speedway. He started on the pole and the only lap he did not lead was lap 55 when he pitted for fuel.

His two teammates, Daniel Suarez and Erik Jones finished second and third, respectively.

Chase Elliott, Austin Dillon, Brandon Jones, Ty Dillon, Elliott Sadler, Justin Allgaier, and Brendan Gaughan rounded out the top-10.

Top-10 leaders after 3 of 33: 1. Suarez-106, 2. Sadler-103, 3. T. Dillon-99, 4. B. Jones-99, 5. Allgaier-95, 6. Gaughan-91, 7. E. Jones-86, 8. Reed-79, 9. Sieg-73, 10. Burton-72.

Who Is Landon Cassill

Landon Cassill is the driver of the No 38 Front Row Motorsports Ford in the Sprint Cup Series.

Like most of the lesser known drivers, Cassill is hardly a household name, but he has been involved in racing for over 13 years.

Cassill was born in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and began racing when he was three years old. He finished second in the Pro Kart Tour at Atlanta at age 10. The following year, he earned his first of two Kart Series national championships.

Dover Gets \$15-Million In Tv Revenue Per Race

Fans shouldn't feel sorry for those tracks that do not fill all of their seats at NASCAR races. If no one showed up, the amount of money received from television revenue would still allow them to turn a profit.

Dover Downs race track filed financial information with the Securities and Exchange Commission last week. The money Dover will get from the NASCAR television package will increase from 3.37 percent to 4.25 percent annually over the next five years. Dover will receive \$30.7 million in television money for its two Sprint Cup weekends this season, and it will increase anywhere from \$1.1 million to \$1.4 million a year through 2020.

Now you might better understand why tracks and NASCAR don't panic when the stadiums are not filled. NBC and Fox are taking care of them.

While the tracks might be taking money to the bank, television viewership is another story.

The 2016 Daytona and Atlanta races had less fans watching at home than in 2015, 2014, or 2013.

The Atlanta race scored its lowest rating since Fox acquired the television rights. Sunday's Sprint Cup race from Atlanta earned a 3.7 percent overnight rating; down 27 percent from last year and the lowest overnight for the second race of the season since Fox began airing races in 2001.

Ratings for the Daytona 500 neared a record-low despite the closest finish in race history. This year's 500 was down 14 percent from a year ago.

Weekend Racing: The Cup and Xfinity series' are at the 1-mile Phoenix International Raceway. Sat., Mar. 12; Xfinity Series race 4 of 33; Starting time: 2:30 p.m. ET; TV: Fox. Sun., Mar. 13; Sprint Cup Series race 1:30 p.m. ET; TV: Fox.

Racing Trivia Question: How many crew chiefs has Jimmie Johnson had in his Sprint Cup career at Hendrick Motorsports?

Last Week's Question: What year did the Las Vegas Motor Speedway open? Answer: The first race was held March 1, 1998.

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