

Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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Lady Indians hand Lakeview first Region loss of 2016

Towns girls go on the road to shutout Highlands and rout George Walton

By Todd Forrest
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The Lady Indians improved to 8-3 last week following a thrilling penalty kick victory over Region 8-A's first place Lakeview Lady Lions, who were undefeated in region play.

Lakeview held a 1-0 lead at the break but Brook Barrett delivered in the second half to send the game into overtime.

After two overtime sessions passed without a score, the game came down to penalty kicks, one of the most exciting spectacles in all of sports.

Barrett, Hannah Whitehead, and Taylor Underwood all connected and Towns edged Lakeview 3-2 in the PK segment of overtime.

The win put the Lady Indians into a do-or-die scenario on Monday, Apr. 18 night against Providence Christian at Frank McClure Stadium. However, the game was held after the Monday morning deadline.

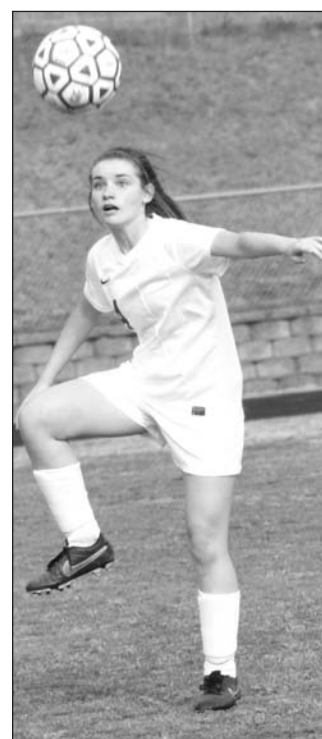
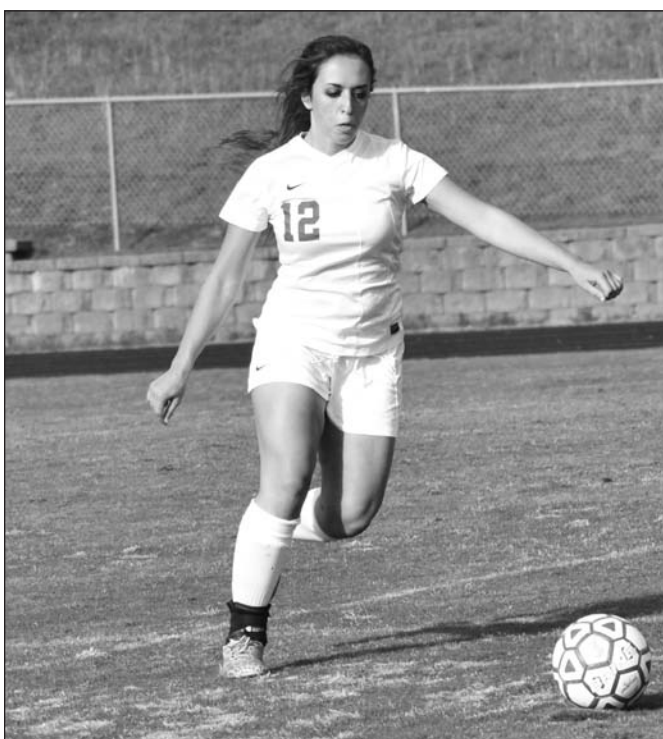
A win and Towns is in the State Tournament and could host the first round. A loss and they spend the postseason at home.

What would be even more remarkable should the Lady Indians defeat Providence, they could secure a first round home game via tiebreaker over defending State Champion Hebron Christian if Lakeview beats Hebron.

If Hebron defeats Lakeview, Hebron would own the tiebreaker and the Lady Indians would enter next week's state playoffs as a No. 3 seed. Towns split the two regular season meetings with Hebron.

Entering the Lakeview game, the Lady Indians were coming off wins at Highlands, NC, 3-0 and at George Walton Academy, 7-1.

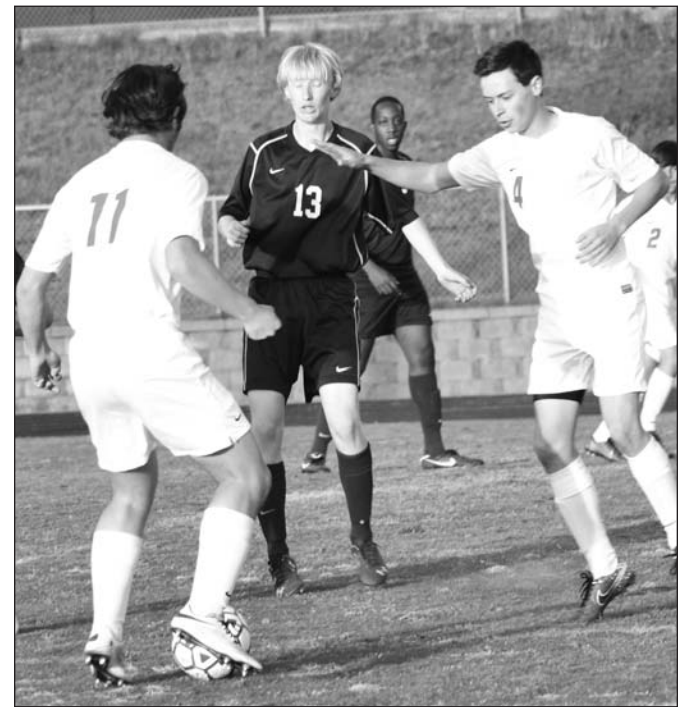
Towns' game at Rabun County scheduled for Tuesday has been canceled, leaving the recently crowned back-to-back Region 8-AA Champions Union



County awaiting the Lady Indians on Friday.

First year Head Coach John Cornett's squad easily handled Union 4-0 in Hiwassee earlier in the season, and

regardless of the Providence result, what better way to cap off a regular season, or season than with another win over a rival school who has hopes of reaching the Class AA Final Four.



The Towns County men just missed out on their second win of the season when they fell 2-1 at George Walton Academy. They dropped last Friday's home game with Lakeview 3-0. On Monday, Towns hosted Providence and will visit Union this Friday with a chance to avenge a narrow 2-1 loss to the Panthers, who will be playing without their leading scorer and a starting midfielder when the Indians travel to Blairsville, looking to end the season on a high note with a win over a rival school. Towns County Soccer photos by Lowell Nicholson

Indians look to regroup with Senior Night on deck

By Todd Forrest
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base running mishaps kept the Indians off the board.

Jackson Taylor was plunked by a 1-0 pitch in the fourth and Roberts singled in the fifth.

Athens Christian scored three runs each in the fourth and fifth inning to pull away for a 10-0 game one victory over the Indians last Friday.

Towns fell into an early 3-0 hole in game two before falling 7-0 despite matching Athens Christian with seven hits a piece.

Major Moss, Will DeVries, Adam Barrett, and Dillon Roberts recorded base hits for Towns County. Barrett got the start on the mound and tossed three innings of two-hit baseball but struggled with control issues - walking four and hitting a batter.

Dalton Key entered in the fourth and went 1 2/3 innings, allowing six hits and walking a pair.

Moss and DeVries singled to open the game but the Indians were unable to manufacture an early lead. In the bottom half of the inning, a walk and a two-out base hit put Athens Christian on top 1-0.

They would tack on two more in the second and one in the third before ending the game in the fifth with a 10-run advantage.

Key and Barrett reached to open the second but a pair of

Moss, Curtis Swanson, and Brody Graper each posted multi-hit games in the second contest while Kobe Denton finished 1-for-3.

DeVries struck out five in three innings but surrendered two earned runs and five hits. Swanson fanned four in three innings without giving up an earned run as the Indians pitching staff was victimized by seven Towns County fielding errors.

Moss was stranded after singling in the first inning before Swanson and Moss both singled in the third.

Graper and Denton recorded base hits in the fifth and Graper and Swanson each singled in the seventh.

Athens Christian extended its lead to 4-0 after three innings, then 6-0 after five, and 7-0 after six.

Towns will host Commerce for Senior Night when they face off with the Tigers in a Friday doubleheader beginning at 5 p.m.

Tuesday the Indians will host Athens Academy at 5:30 p.m. before traveling to Athens Academy on Thursday.

NASCAR 2016

By Gerald Hodges/the Racing Reporter

Carl Edwards Masters Bristol

Bristol, TN - Carl Edwards put on a masterful display of driving in Sunday's Sprint Cup race. While cars were wrecking left and right behind him, Edwards, who started on the pole led 276 laps of the 500-lap race, for his fourth career victory at Bristol.

"Man, all those restarts were something," said Edwards. "At no point did I feel like I had the race under control. I at no point felt comfortable. Even the last lap I felt pretty good, but it's just so easy to mess up here. I guess I was on edge the entire time. For me it was a really tough race in the car. I felt like I had to go really hard. But now that we've got a win and our Chase ticket has been punched, we can go out and have some fun racing."

Dale Earnhardt Jr. did not lead any laps but gained his third runner up finish.

"We had a lot of luck on the track to be able to finish where we did," said Earnhardt. "A lot of things happened. We had about a 10th-place car. We weren't really that good all day. We tried a setup that we've never really ran here before, just trying to learn a little something going forward, and we'll go home and science it out a little bit."

"We got real lucky the last three restarts to be on the outside line. We restarted 10th, 6th and 4th, and when you restart 4th you're typically going to come out in second place after that. I was hoping we didn't have any more cautions after that. So it was good. We'll take it."

Kurt Busch finished third, while Chase Elliott ran fourth.

"We didn't start off like we wanted to, but we were able to kind of work through some things, lean on our teammates a lot," said Elliott. "Friday night, kind of looked at some notes and what our teammates were doing that we felt like they were doing really well, and I feel like that saved us a lot this weekend, just to try to get in the ballpark and then start fine tuning what we needed personally."

Trevor Bayne was fifth, while Matt DiBenedetto, Kevin Harvick, Clint Bowyer, Ryan Newman, and Joey Logano rounded out the top-10 finishers.

Matt Kenseth started on the outside pole and led 142 laps but hit the wall twice and did not finish the race.

Kyle Busch also had problems. He was caught speeding on pit road twice, and was involved in two wrecks. The last one occurred during lap 462 and he finished 35th.

1. Harvick-287, 2. Edwards-286, 3. Johnson-271, 4. Logano-266, 5. Kyle Busch-262, 6. Earnhardt-250, 7. Kurt Busch-247, 8. Keselowski-224, 9. Hamlin-222, 10. Truex-214.

There were 15 caution periods for 102 laps, involving 29 cars.

IT'S ERIK JONES AT BRISTOL

Erik Jones beat out his teammate and boss, Kyle Busch to win Saturday's Xfinity Series race at Bristol. Jones led 62 laps of the 200 lap race, and crossed the finish line .418-seconds ahead of Busch.

"I'm just so excited and you can tell - I'm out of breath," said Jones. "I wasn't working that hard. Just so excited about the win and to be here in Victory Lane and beat those guys. This is a really big day for us."

It was quite a role reversal since Jones has been runner up twice to Busch this season. Jones victory automatically qualifies him for the Xfinity Series Chase. He is the first regular Xfinity Series driver to win a race this season.

Jones took the lead from Kyle Larson on a green-white-checked restart with two laps to go, and held off Kyle Busch for his third career Xfinity win.

Kyle Larson was third, followed by Austin Dillon, Justin Algaier, Daniel Suarez, Ty Dillon, Kevin Harvick, Joey Logano, and Aric Almirola.

Top-10 leaders after 7 of 33: 1. Suarez-242, 2. E. Jones-236, 3. Allgaier-234, 4. Sadler-232, 5. B. Jones-223, 6. T. Dillon-221, 7. Gaughan-208, 8. Poole-180, 9. Reed-180, 10. Wallace-176.

LARRY MCCLURE AND THE GOOD OLD DAYS

For nearly 30 years, the No. 4 Morgan McClure Motorsports Chevrolet was one of the top teams in NASCAR.

My first encounter with MMM team members came in November, 1996. We were all in line waiting to clear customs in Tokyo, Japan for the first-ever NASCAR race held in that country.

Very quietly, I mentioned to one of their guys that I had brought some southern grits for breakfast.

He smiled back at me, and unzipped his suitcase. Inside was a large smoked Virginia ham.

"Got three more just like it," he said.

Even though NASCAR furnished acceptable meals each day, I chose to dine with the MMM team each morning. Their smoked ham and my grits made for some



Carl Edwards fine eating.

From then on, me and those Virginia boys were buddies. I spent four days in their Abingdon, Virginia shop and wrote a magazine article on the team.

Larry McClure served as general manager for MMM and was a co-owner along with his three brothers and businessman Tim Morgan.

In an interview with Allen Gregory of the Bristol Herald Courier, McClure talked about the ups and downs in his NASCAR adventure and personal life.

"We were a one-car team and part of the time we were under-budget, but we had good people," said McClure. "At that time in the sport, you didn't have to have all the money. If you had good people, you could be more innovative, work hard and have success."

The long list of innovators who worked magic for the Abingdon team included crew chief Tony Glover and engine wizard Runt Pittman.

"In his time, Tony was as good of a crew chief as there was in the sport," McClure continued. "We had basic setups and good race cars. When you add in a good driver, that makes for success."

Ernie Irvan earned the first Cup victory in his career and the first win for MMM in 1990 at Bristol.

"I'll never forget that race," McClure said. "I don't think we got to bed until after 4 that morning."

Perhaps the highpoint of the team's career was in 1994 and 1995, when Sterling Marlin won back-to-back Daytona 500s. After losing Kodak as their major sponsor, wins became fewer and fewer. The team failed to qualify for the 2010 Cup race at Bristol, and the MMM shop was closed in 2012.

But it wasn't just racing problems that brought about the

team's demise.

In 2009, McClure pleaded guilty to five counts of filing false income tax returns, obstructing the federal investigation and lying to IRS investigators. He served 18 months in prison.

"Our racing was already at the end by then," McClure said. "I certainly wish that it hadn't happened. I don't know for sure how it happened or why it happened, but I made a couple of bad decisions after it happened because we hadn't done anything wrong. It's water over the dam now."

McClure, 72, said his religious faith helped to carry him through the ordeal.

"My faith was pretty good before, but during that whole time I didn't worry about one thing. I was at peace," said McClure. "The good Lord will take care if you ask him. Every episode in your life will make you stronger."

While he admits that it would be harder to field a competitive Sprint Cup team in Abingdon now, McClure hasn't ruled out a return to the sport.

"We're looking at some things," McClure said. "If everything happened right, we may help somebody. We've got a person trying to put something together."

The Morgan-McClure banner is now carried by Larry's nephew, Eric McClure in the Xfinity Series.

Weekend Racing: The Cup and Xfinity teams are at the .75-mile Richmond International Raceway.

Sat., Apr. 23; Xfinity Series race 8 of 33; Starting time: 12:30 p.m. ET; TV: Foxsports1.

Sun., Apr. 24; Sprint Cup Series race 9 of 36; Starting time: 1 p.m. ET; TV: Fox.

Racing Trivia Question: Which former NASCAR champion was part owner in the Richmond track?

Last Week's Question. What is the maximum number of cars that NASCAR allows to start a Sprint Cup race? Answer: 40 cars is the maximum starting field.

You may contact the Racing Reporter by e-mail at: hodges@race500.com. NT(Apr20,22)CA

VFW Golf League

The Hiwassee VFW Golf League plays every Thursday at Chatuge Shores Golf Course. Last week's event was won by Ray Ide, Frank Geddings, Darryl Boltz and Steve Sutherland. T(Apr20,G1)SH



Junior Jackson Taylor at the dish. Photo/Todd Forrest

Indians Baseball holds Pickleball/ Softball Round Robin

Towns County Indians Baseball is holding a Pickleball/ Softball Round Robin at the Towns County Pickleball Complex and recreation softball fields on April 23. Beginner instruction will begin at 8:30 AM, with the Round Robin beginning at 10 AM and Softball at 2 PM. Donation: Adults \$15, kids \$5. Proceeds to benefit Towns County Indians Baseball program.

Relay for Life Glow Run 5K Race/Walk



Where: Brasstown Valley Golf Course Young Harris, Georgia When: May 21st at 8:30 PM. Registration will begin at 7:30 PM. Register at active.com. T-shirt size guaranteed if you register before May 11th. \$30 per person includes a t-shirt. Af-

ter the race, there will be a party at Brassies Grill. Each runner will receive a voucher for 1 free drink available only on the evening of May 21st. Parking will be available at Equani Spa and adjacent parking areas.

E-mail: townscountyrelayforlife@gmail.com for additional information and/or a registration form.

Questions: contact Martha Cunningham at 706-896-5916 or Cameron Lopez at 706-768-1357. T(Apr13,F6)SH