



Towns County Herald's Sporting News



Lady Mountain Lions squeeze past tennis Jaguars

JIM BRYANT

Sports Writer

Rains finally allow Lady Cats to get in net time.

With all the sports programs facing schedule changes due to inclement weather, the Lady Mountain Lions were no exception. After weeks of cancellations, they finally managed to get in some net time against the Jaguars from Georgia Perimeter College.

The cats led in the #1 doubles match but faltered late and dropped their match but the #2 position was secured and GP defaulted in the #3 position to give YHC a 2-1 lead after the doubles. Again in the singles matches the Mountain Lions struggled in the early matches but a late win at the #4 seed and two defaults gave the Lady Cats a slim 5-4 win in the match.

Doubles Results: (GPC)

Nam/Badnati (W) (YHC) Rodgers/Dixon 8-3; (YHC) Vaughters/Wheatley (W) (GPC) Truong/Milosoje 8-5; (YHC) (W) Default.

Singles Results: (GPC) Yoha Nam (W) (YHC) Sara Rodgers 6-3, 6-3; oung (W) (YHC) Carrie Dixon 6-0, 6-3; (GPC) Maria Bagnati (W)

(YHC) Sar Vaughters 6-0, 6-1; (YHC) Megan Wheatley (W) (GPC) Voyka Milosoje 6-0, 6-0; (YHC) (W) Default; (YHC) (W) Default.



Sara Vaughters returns an overhead shot in doubles actions against the Jaguars.



Megan Wheatley returns the ball in 5-4 win over Georgia Perimeter College. Photos by Jim and Lisa Bryant

Commerce Tigers comeback thwarts Indians in final innings

JIM BRYANT

Sports Writer

Tribe blow early 3-0 lead, falter in final two innings.

After winning 14-1 over Athens Christian the day before and leading 3-0 through five innings, it looked like the TCHS Indians were holding the winning hand. Fate is often cruel and Thursday the Commerce Tigers utilized one of those time to take a come-from-behind 6-4 win over the home team. Playing on the YHC Mountain Lions' field, the game settled in to a 0-0 stand-off through the first three innings.

Plate action in the first three innings for both team was quite, with only a single over the shortstop by James Mullins in the second and a shot over third by Alan Turpin in the third innings. The best action came in the third inning when catcher, Zeke Gribble rifled a throw to Matt Beni at second base to boink a sliding Tiger. The bats came out of the bag in the fourth when Commerce opened with three hits but failed to plate any runners due to the defense of the Indians. In the bottom of the stanza, Charles Corn (who signed with Bryan College following the game) opened with a single to right and was plated off an RBI

double by James Mullins for a 1-0 lead. Andy Page walked to load and Matt Beni hit a 2-out single when the Cat second baseman booted the ball and scored pinch-runner, Billy Meier, 2-0. Alan Turpin followed with a shot over third that also got Mullins home when the third baseman couldn't find the handle, 3-0.

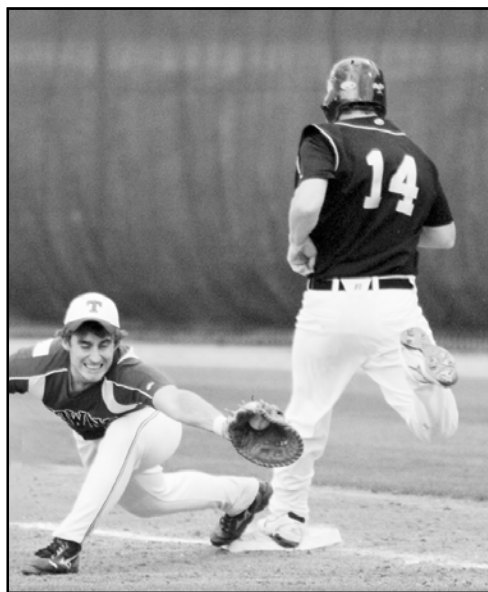
The Cats were just bidding their time and in the sixth they touched starting pitcher Tryston Drummond for two runs when two Indian outfielders let a ball drop between them, 3-2. A booming RBI shot to right made it 3-3 when the

runner bowled over the Indian catcher in route to the plate. Despite a protest by the Indian coach, the play stood and after six innings of play, it was a stand-off at 3-3. The Tigers picked up in the seventh where they left off with an RBI "stand-D" and a 4-3 lead. The final nail in the coffin came off a Tiger HR that plated two more runs, 6-3. In the bottom half the Tribe got one run back when Charles Corn cranked a double, stretched it into a triple and then was waved home by the umpire when the overthrow at third went into the dugout, 6-4. The Tigers held

on and took the 6-4 win back over the mountain.



Charles Corn watches the ball whiz by in action.



Cody Harkins makes the stretch for the out at first base in loss to Commerce.



Zeke Gribble chases down a foul ball for an out.



Local Racing Action

by Carl Vanzura

Shawn Chastain takes night two at Tri-County

Murphy hot-shoe Shawn Chastain cruised around Tri-County Race Track Saturday night to become the second different driver to win early in to 2009 season. Kevin Sutton was second, followed by Glenn Barnett, Jamie Oliver and Johnny Chastain who broke during qualifying.

Bobby Painter raced to the front of the Sportsman feature as he battle Devin Dilbeck who went out with a cut tire. Jamie Lunsford duelled it out with Panter and managed a strong second place finish. Preston Crisp, Robby Roxbury and Doug Sneed rounded out the top five.

Blairsville racer Brian Kinnersley drove to victory from the pole in the Nesmith Crate Late Model feature as he held off Jacob Anderson, Josh Morrow, Jason Deal and Terry Ledford.

Murphy driver Jim Twiggs and Brasstown's Greg Sudderth raced door-to-door just inches apart for eight laps until Twiggs spun when Sudderth went into turn four to strong and hit the rear of Twiggs car spinning him. Sudderth had to go to the rear on the restart. Sudderth, last weeks winner, worked his way back to a second place finish, followed by Jeffery Wood, Bo Eaton and Blairsville's Shannon Dockery.

Hiwassee driver Steven Sofield became the first two time winner in 2009 when he won the Street Stock feature again. He raced to victory over Charles Toomey, Jeremy Woody, Harold Garrett and Josh Roberts.

Justin Woodard also took his second win this year when he took the Mini Stock feature over Franklin Burk, Jamie Cross, Lynn Burchfield and Travis Robinson.

The Georgia Mini Sprint Series put on a crowd pleasing show when 20 cars blasted around the 3/10s clay oval at speeds nearing 100 miles-per-hour. Justin Lineman from Spencer, NC won the 20-lap feature over Rich Goss from Charlotte, NC.

Racing returns this Saturday with all six classes along with the Modified 4 Cylinder class making their first appearance. The points season also starts this week. For more information on Tri-County go to www.tricountyracetrack.com

Over at Sugar Creek Speedway in Blue Ridge, Randall Twiggs' driver Johnny Chastain won what will be one of many races this year in the Super Late Model features this year. Brian Kinnersley won the Crate Late Model show in his Blairsville based Chevy. Sugar Creek run each Friday night.

Blairsville's Jonathan Davenport raced in West Virginia over the weekend in a Worlds Of Outlaws Series event and had the fast time of the night, won his heat and led three time in the 50 lap race and finished fifth against the best drivers in the country.



Matt Beni slides into third ahead of the ball as coach Moss watches. Photos by Jim and Lisa Bryant

Winn to play basketball at Piedmont College

JERRY KENDALL

Sports Writer

Towns County Lady Indian basketball superstar Nikki Winn placed an exclamation point on a marvelous high school career last Friday when she signed a scholarship to play basketball at Piedmont College in Demorest, Georgia. In so doing, she followed the footsteps of a number of TCHS graduates involved in sports at the school.

Included among this list is Lady Indian Assistant Coach Candice Blythe (Thompson) who was a star basketball player at Piedmont during the 2003 and 2004 seasons following a standout four year career at TCHS and two top flight years at Truett McConnell College. Further, Indians Head Basketball Coach Chet Kendall is a member of the Piedmont Sports Hall of Fame in honor of two outstanding years as both a pitcher and hitter for the school's baseball program in the early 1990's.

A multi talented athlete, also starring on the softball field at TCHS, Winn put up stunning scoring numbers in appearing and scoring in all 118 varsity basketball games played during her four years with the Lady Indians. She finished with the verifiable career scoring record of 1,870 points for a four year average of 15.8 points per game. She also holds the single game school scoring record since Georgia began allowing girls to play full court back in the 1970's with thirty seven points against Athens Christian during her junior year. For her senior season, she accumulated 558 points in thirty one games for an 18.0 points per game average. Official additional statistics for this season repre-

senting some of her greatest talents such as assists, steals, and shooting percentages are not yet available but will be compiled in time for the sports banquet.

In a departure from her high school career, Winn will wear uniform number "1" at Piedmont as the familiar number "5" she wore at TCHS has been retired at Piedmont. No matter that her uniform will be different, however, as Winn is expected to contribute immediately to the fortunes of the Piedmont Lady Lions who have a rich history of success and show great promise for the future with several other top notch signees.

Winn continues an admirable pattern for this year's

TCHS Seniors as the fourth to come to agreement for continued sports activity in college with perhaps as many as three more to follow. Prior signees from this year's senior class include Chase Ellis for football at Pikeville College in Pikeville, Kentucky; Ezekiel Gribble for baseball at Young Harris College; and Charles Corn for baseball at Bryan College in Dayton, Tennessee.

Congratulations and best wishes are once again extended to Nikki Winn for reaching this latest chapter in a stellar career. She can be certain the roads between Towns County and Demorest will be quite busy with fans following her college career.



Nikki Winn signs to play basketball for the Piedmont College Lady Lions. Winn is flanked by Asst. Coach Candice Thompson and Head Coach Jim Melton. Photo by Jim/Lisa Bryant

NASCAR 2009 By Gerald Hodges/the Racing Reporter

"OLD MAN" MARTIN IN VICTORY LANE

PHOENIX, Ariz.—With his win in the Subway Fresh Fit 500, Mark Martin became the fourth NASCAR Sprint Cup Series driver 50 or older to go to victory lane.

The other three were Harry Gant (52), Morgan Shepherd (50) and Bobby Allison (50).

Martin started from the pole and led 157 of 312 laps.

"I hoped it would happen," said Martin. "But I didn't expect it to happen. I only hoped. But Rick Hendrick, you know, I sat and watched him make Tim Richmond's dreams come true from being sick, and this may not be as dramatic, but it's big to me."

"But you know, the response from the competitors means much more than the trophy, and that was an incredible.. really, really incredible, from all of the crew guys to all of the guys, including Jack Roush, who seemed genuinely happy. And Jack and I are at tight as we have ever been and have been through all of this."

"It's just, like I said, I hoped it would happen, but you know, it's asking a lot, man. These things are hard to win. It's hard just to make a car good enough to win, and then it's like ten times harder to win one on top of that."

Tony Stewart finished a close second.

"It seemed like what we fought, we fought all night and it didn't really change for us. As it got a little bit cooler it got more grip but that's Phoenix," said Stewart. "I think for us, it's been refreshing. Just when you've never had a start like this to the season, it's nice to finally have one. It's amazing to think that with a new team we can go out and have this kind of a start to the year."

Kurt Busch ran up front for most of the race and finished third.

"I felt like we started the race on the tight side, and then we were having trouble putting the power down off turn four when the sun was out. I ignored how loose the car was on power down because I felt like that would go away with the sun setting, and it did, but we were a bit on the tight side, and so I had to loosen up the race car. When I did that, the crew got me out in front, we led some laps out in the lead and felt comfortable up there."

Jimmie Johnson, Greg Biffle, Denny Hamlin, Martin Truex, David Reutimann, Sam Hornish, and Carl Edwards rounded out the top-10 finishers. Top-12 Chase Contenders after 8 of 36: 1. J. Gordon-1242, 2. Johnson-1157, 3. Ku. Busch-1144, 4. Stewart-1138, 5. Hamlin-1088, 6. Bowyer-1052, 7. Ky. Busch-1026, 8. Edwards-1023, 9. Reutimann-992, 10. Kahne-975, 11. Burton-953, 12. Kenseth

BIFFLE TAKES PHOENIX NATIONWIDE RACE
Greg Biffle won the Bashas' Supermarket 200 at Phoenix. It was Biffle's first win of the season and it gave car owner Jack Roush, his 100th victory.

Kyle Busch took over the points lead from Carl Edwards, who dropped to second. Top-10 points leaders after 7 of 35: 1. Ky. Busch-1075, 2. Edwards-1028, Ragan-949, 4. Leffler-932, 5. Brad Keselowski-898, 6. Logano-893, 7. Gaughan-822, 8. Allgaier-818, 9. Bliss-789, 10. Bliss-789

Next Week: State of the Camping World Trucks

Weekend Racing: The Sprint Cup and Nationwide teams will be at the 2.66-mile

Talladega Superspeedway, while the Craftsman Trucks are at Kansas Speedway.

Sat., Apr. 25, Nationwide Series Aaron's 312, race 8 of 35; Starting time: 2:30 p.m. (EDT); TV: ESPN2.

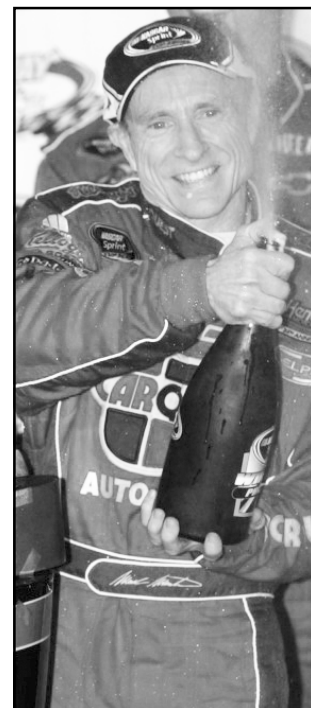
Sat., Apr. 25, Camping World Series O'Reilly Auto Parts 250, race 5 of 25; Starting time: 5:30 p.m. (EDT); TV: Speed Channel.

Sun., Apr. 26, Sprint Cup Aaron's 499, race 9 of 36; Starting time: 1 p.m. (EDT); TV: FOX.

Racing Trivia Question: Who will AJ Allmendinger be driving for in 2010?

Last Week's Question: Who does Clint Bowyer drive for? Answer: He drives the No. 33 Richard Childress Chevrolet in the Cup Series.

You may contact the Racing Reporter at: hodgesnews@earthlink.net.



Mark Martin wins at Phoenix