

# Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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## Indians take two from Commerce; drop a pair to Hebron Christian

By Todd Forrest  
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Will de Vries and Harrison Hobbs limited Commerce to five hits and no earned runs in a 5-2 win at Commerce. The Indians (3-7) then took the second game in Hiawassee by a score of 3-2, behind the arm of Hobbs.

In the first meeting, played on March 15th, de Vries worked six innings, allowing 3 hits, no earned runs, while walking five in the win.

Hobbs recorded the save, yielding a pair of hits and striking out one in the seventh.

Jackson Taylor sparked the offense with a 1-for-3 day at the plate, including a 2-run single in the fifth that led to a five run inning for Towns.

Commerce got its two runs in the first after the Tigers leadoff hitter reached on an error and two singles followed.

de Vries did plenty of damage with his bat as well, going 2-for-4 with an RBI. Cruz Shook finished with a 3-for-4, one RBI performance, while Hobbs went 1-for-3 with an RBI and a walk.

Vonya Baldwin and Kobe



Cruz Shook (10) and the Indians celebrate their 3-2 win over Commerce. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

Denton finished 1-for-4 with a run each. Dylan Roberts walked and scored, and Dale Forrester walked twice and scored.

Last Thursday and Friday, the Indians met Hebron Christian Academy in a home-and-home series with the Lions taking both contests.

Hebron came to Hiawas-

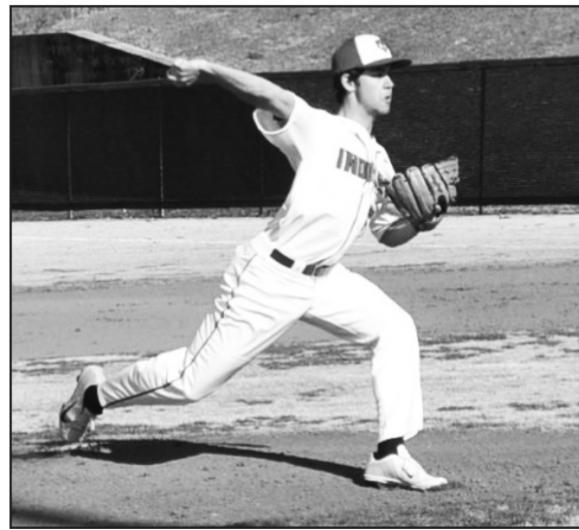
see on Thursday and took a 13-2 victory.

A 2-run homer by Jackson Noblet in the first gave Towns a 2-1 lead but it was short-lived as the Indians committed 4 errors, were held to 4 hits, and gave up 5 extra base hits.

In game two, the Lions came away with a 15-0 win in

three innings. Towns was unable to produce a base runner and Hebron put up seven runs in the first, five in the second and three in the third.

Towns will travel to Athens Academy on Tuesday at 5 p.m. before hosting the Spartans at 5 p.m. on Thursday. Pinecrest will come calling on Friday at 5 p.m.



Harrison Hobbs delivers against the Tigers. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

## JV Indians baseball turn back the Rebels

Towns County Herald  
Sports Special

On Saturday, March 15, the JV Baseball team from Fannin County rolled into town looking for a sweep.

The reverse happened when the JV Indians of TCHS sent them home winning game 1 by a score of 6-1 and game 2 by a score of 8-5.

The Indians were carried all day long by strong pitching, solid defense and timely hitting (the ABCs of baseball). Sophomore Dillon Ingram started game 1 and threw 2 scoreless innings giving up 1 hit. In relief of Ingram came freshman Brody Graper who continued throwing strikes and limiting the Rebels to 1 hit and 1 unearned run scoring on 1 of only 2 Towns County errors in the field for both games (according to the scorebook). Sophomore Dale Forrester finished game 1 pitching a scoreless inning eventually striking out the side to give the Indians a well played game 1 victory by a score of 6-1.

Offensively in game one, the Indians took an early 1-0 lead with a single by sophomore Isaiah Shook helping move freshman Major Moss around the bases who led off the game with a walk. The Indians continued to get runners on, move them over, and get them in adding 1 run in the 2nd inning and pushing 4 more across in the third. The 5 runs scored in the two frames were a result of solid hitting with hits coming from sophomores Dillon Ingram and freshman Brody Graper in the 2nd. Consecutive hits in the third came from Dillon Ingram and sophomore Gavin Langelier, and freshman Adam Barrett. Dale Forrester also picked up an RBI on a single earlier in the inning.

Game two did not start as Coach Vardo had seen game one begin when freshman Kobe Denton took the mound and gave up two runs when four of the first five batters reached base; however Denton settled down, pitched out of a jam and then pitched a scoreless second. The Indians quickly tied up the game with two of their own in the bottom of the frame when freshman Jackson Taylor drove in leadoff Major Moss, who had reached first on a hard hit ball.

Adam Barrett tied the game with an RBI single driving in Brody Graper. The Indians took the lead in the 2nd with some good base running by sophomore Joseph Harbin and another hit by Jackson Taylor. Major Moss took the mound in the third and struggled early on to find the plate, but settled down and pitched out of a jam, but not before the Rebels took a 4-3 lead. Moss would settle down in the fourth giving up only one unearned run.

The Indians took command of the game scoring 4 runs and a taking an 8-5 lead in the bottom of the third with again consecutive hits from sophomore Dylan Roberts, Kobe Denton, and Dillon Ingram. Later in the inning, Brody Graper reached base for the fifth consecutive time on the day with 2 hits and 3 walks on the day. Getting into the action in the bottom of the fourth was freshman Willem de Vries breaking into the hit column. De Vries saw limited action, who had just the night before, pitched 6 strong innings to give the Varsity Indians a victory over region rival Commerce. Adam Barrett came on the fifth to shut down the rebels pitching a scoreless inning.

Overall, Coach Vardo was pleased with the young Indians' efforts. Coach Vardo, as most teams do, uses JV games to give players some experience to prepare them for the future and for the remainder of the current season. Coach Vardo, his staff, and his players, work hard every day and the present, as well as the future, appears on paper to be bright; however, the "bottom line" is that success does not come from just picking a ball up in February and laying it down in late April when the season is over, but comes from continual work during the season and the offseason.

All athletes at TCHS spend countless hours preparing for athletic events. The JV Indians take the field Saturday, March 29th, when rival Union County will travel to Towns and Towns is hoping to get better and send Union home the same way Fannin left, winless.

Come out and support our athletics and watch the coaches, Varsity and JV players alike, compete and give it their all.

## Towns soccer struggles with Hebron; will host three Region contests this week

By Todd Forrest  
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Towns County welcomed the high-powered Hebron Christian Academy to Frank McClure Stadium last week and the Lions and Lady Lions ended both games via mercy rule 10-0.

Both Hebron squads are two of the best in Class A. The boys own an 8-2 record with wins over Archer, Mountain View, and a 9-0 drubbing of Riverside. Their losses came 3-1 to Mill Creek and 1-0 to North Gwinnett.

The girls have wins against Buford in a scrimmage and Berkmar.

The Lady Indians (4-2-1) have now dropped two in-a-row after opening the season at 4-0-1.

The Indians, meanwhile, drop to 1-5 but both Towns County squads will get a chance to turn the second half of their



Both Towns Co. soccer teams will have an opportunity to get back on track this week following a pair of one sided losses to Hebron. Towns will host three home games this week. Photos/Lowell Nicholson

season around when they host three home games this week against 8-A competition.

Lakeview opens the three game home stand on Tuesday and will also come in off a pair

losses to Hebron. Lakeview's girls and boys both fell victim 8-0 at the hands of Hebron.

On Friday night, Providence comes to town with the girls sporting a 5-3 record and



the boys at 3-5.

On Saturday afternoon George Walton will round out the week when the girls kickoff at 1 p.m. both George Walton teams currently sit at 2-5.

## NASCAR 2014

By Gerald Hodges/the Racing Reporter

### Kyle and Kyle sweep Fontana

Kyle Busch and rookie Kyle Larson finished 1-2 in Sunday's Sprint Cup race at California Speedway.

The race ended under a green-white-checker finish, and for a while it looked like Larson might pull off a big upset, but Busch rallied back to win by .21-seconds.

"What do you expect when there's a green-white-checkered finish and everyone has to come in for fresh tires," said Busch. "Holy cow, the fans really got to see a show today."

The race's g-w-c ending was set up on lap 198 of the 200-lap race. With Jeff Gordon leading, Clint Bowyer had a flat tire and spun down onto the infield grass. All the cars on the lead lap pitted except Landon Cassill.

On the restart, the leaders were: Cassill, Kurt Busch, Tony Stewart, Paul Menard, and Matt Kenseth.

Cassill lost the lead early. Kurt Busch and Tony Stewart raced each other almost side-by-side for most of that lap. About the time the white flag was given, signifying the final lap, Kyle Busch and Kyle Larson had gotten by all the other drivers and stormed to the front.

At one point, young Larson pulled even with Busch, but could not get around him.

"I don't know how I did it," said Larson. "I just worked my way through the other cars. Whenever I found a hole, I went through it. We almost did it."

Kurt Busch was able to stay ahead of his boss and teammate Tony Stewart for third.

"Our emotions were running high today," said Busch. "The guys in the pits did a great job, but we were racing for first. We will get it. We'll make it."

Matt Kenseth, the polesitter finished fourth, followed by Tony Stewart, Jamie McMurray, Brian Vickers, A. J. Allmendinger, Paul Menard, and Carl Edwards.

Dale Earnhardt Jr.'s crew missed the setup on his car. He was unable to lead a lap and was lucky to finish 12th.

Jeff Gordon led 4 times for 23 laps, but got shuffled back on the last restart and wound up 13th.

Jimmie Johnson appeared to have the fastest car. He had a 2.5-second lead over Jeff Gordon

when a tire blew out on lap 193. He finished 24th.

The race included 35 lead changes, the most since 2008.

Top-10 leaders after 5 of 33: 1. Edwards-186, 2. Earnhardt-185, 3. Gordon-184, 4. Keselowski-182, 5. Kenseth-179, 6. Johnson-165, 7. Kyle Busch-158, 8. Newman-150, 9. A. Dillon-150, 10. Logano-146.

### LARSON GETS FIRST NATIONWIDE WIN

Kyle Larson won his first Nationwide Series race in his 37th attempt. He took the lead in Saturday's Fontana, CA race after a restart on Lap 135 of the 150-lap race and out lasted Kevin Harvick and Kyle Busch.

Overall, it was a great win for the young driver, as he did a terrific job of holding off two veterans.

"I'm shaking still; this is awesome," said Larson. "I thought maybe we could get away after the last restart, but the 54 (Busch) and 5 (Harvick) were really good behind us, and I had to race with those guys."

"Man, it was amazing. Those last 11 or 12 laps were the longest laps of my life. It was pretty cool to beat those guys. The 54 and the 22 (Joey Logano) have dominated the series for a while now, and Harvick's with a good team. It was a blast."

Kevin Harvick finished second, followed by Kyle Busch, Joey Logano, Elliott Sadler, Chase Elliott, Matt Kenseth, Ty Dillon, Trevor Bayne, and Regan Smith.

Top-10 leaders after 5 of 33: 1. Smith-185, 2. Bayne-185, 3. T. Dillon-179, 4. Elliott-177, 5. Sadler-174, 6. Gaughan-160, 7. Scott-160, 8. Kwasniewski-149, 9. Buescher-145, 10. Bliss-125.

When Chip Ganassi announced last season that 21-year-old Kyle Larson would be moved up to his No. 42 Sprint Cup car, replacing Juan Montoya, many folks wondered if that was a good decision.

Did the 21-year-old Larson have enough experience to run in the Cup Series?

Larson, a Japanese American driver who was born in California, July 31, 1992, started his racing career in sprint cars, because he could drive those at an earlier age than he could NA-



Kyle Busch winner of California Sprint race.

SCAR stock cars. He switched to the NASCAR K&N Pro Series in 2012 and won the championship. In 2013, he moved up to the Nationwide Series and won Rookie of the Year.

During an interview session last week, Larson answered questions about his switch to the Cup series.

"I think the biggest change between everything versus Cup is just the competition level," he said. "You've grown up racing winged Sprint cars, I used to think the best drivers in the world were in the World of Outlaws Series. I still think they are very good, but the depth of the really good drivers in the Cup Series is really amazing. That's what makes it really tough, there's 25 to 30 drivers out there each week that are extremely good and fast. You go to the World of Outlaws race, there might be seven or eight guys you have to beat."

"The biggest adjustment I've had is getting my feedback right to the crew chief from Happy Hour to the race," he continued. "That's something we've struggled with at Phoenix and Vegas,

making the right adjustments on the car to start out the race good. We got behind a little bit in the beginning of both races and it's hard to come back from those."

"I've been competitive each week, maybe not at Daytona, but every week since then I feel like I've been pretty competitive. I hope they see that."

Larson is currently behind Austin Dillon in points and for Rookie of the Year Honors, but ahead of the other rookies, Justin Allgaier, Michael Annett, and Parker Kligerman. In addition he is ahead of veteran drivers, Tony Stewart, Clint Bowyer, Martin Truex, and Kurt Busch in overall points.

There are folks in the NASCAR garage that think this young star might burn out before reaching his full potential, but after his runner-up finish in the Cup race at California, I think he has what it takes to make it in NASCAR's premier circuit.

**Weekend Racing:** The Sprint Cup cars and Camping World trucks are at Martinsville Speedway, the smallest track (.52-miles) on the circuit. The Nationwide teams have an off week.

Sat., Mar. 29 Camping World trucks race 2 of 22; Starting time: 2 pm ET; TV: FoxSports1.

Sun., Mar. 30, Sprint Cup race 6 of 36; Starting time: 12:30 pm ET; TV: Fox.

**Racing Trivia Question:** Who was the first Canadian to drive in NASCAR?

**Last Week's Question:** Who is Ryan Newman driving for this season? He is driving the No. 31 Richard Childress Chevrolet.

You may contact the Racing Reporter at hodges@race500.com.

## Youth Football Headed to Smoky Mountain Conference

Director of Towns County Youth Football, Jimmy Smith has been considering joining the Smoky Conference for a several years. Towns County Youth Football has been in the North Georgia Youth Football League for 17 years and the conference is growing and getting bigger with the competition is getting tougher. Towns County is the only single A school in the league. Therefore this is the reasoning for the transition to the

Smoky Mountain Conference. The Director believes that our boys will be able to compete better in this conference and have a chance to advance further in the playoffs. In the Smoky Mountain Conference the teams will all play in the same county on Saturdays making easier on the parents who have children on different teams. Jimmy Smith believes this is the right decision for the football program.



The Towns County JV lineup pounded out 14 runs in its two-game sweep of the Fannin County Rebels earlier this month.

## Register now for T-Ball and Farm League at Rec Center

The Towns County Recreation Department will be holding registration for T-Ball and Farm League thru March 29th. Co-Ed T-Ball is for boys and girls ages 4 and 5. Co-Ed Farm League is for boys & girls ages 6, 7 and 8. The age control date will be prior to May 1st for boys and girls. Boys and girls ages 6 may play in either the T-Ball or the Farm

League programs. Cost for these programs will be \$35 per participant. All registration will be held at the new Recreation Department. Our hours of operation are: Monday thru Friday 9 a.m. til 8 p.m. and Saturday from 9 a.m. til 4 p.m. For more information please call the Recreation Department at 706-896-2600.

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