

Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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TCMS Lady Indians soccer team reaches League Semi-Finals

By Joe Collins
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Cleveland - The Towns County Middle School girl's soccer team traveled to the White County Middle School soccer field last Wednesday and had a bittersweet time competing in the Region tournament being held there.

Winning the first of two games 3-0 over North Habersham and falling in the semi-final game to White 2-0.

The Indians took to the field just minutes after the White County team sent the Union County Panthers squad home and in less than a minute after kickoff, Brooke Barrett took an assist from Madison Stroud and scored on a 10-yard kick from the right side lane giving the Indians the lead 1-0.

The Tribe's offense was setting up good shots and Barrett and Zandra Churchill both had good goal attempts but just missed. Barrett was able to draw more blood at the 8:22 mark on an assist by Journey Waiters and hit a really nice 30-yard line drive that drew into the left side of the net. This was following some good ball control and it gave the Indians the lead 2-0 at the half.

The first half saw some solid defense by the Indians



Towns County Middle School Lady Indians soccer photos by Joe Collins

with keeper Jordan Hyatt only having to make one stop the whole period. Hannah Whitehead, Ashton Smith, Tori Bradshaw and Alyssa Hunter were like sharks in shallow water as they went after the ball with a thirst and caused several turnovers.

The second half saw North Habersham pick it up a little on offense and at the 22:43 mark Hyatt had some pressure in the box and made a really strong save on a diving play to stop a goal and then again at the 24:18 mark to keep the score in the Indians favor 2-0.

Stroud found Barrett

open at the 29:43 mark and she scored on a 10-yard kick giving the Indians the lead, Stroud another assist and herself a hat-trick for scoring all three goals in the game.

The North Habersham offense got busy again and Hyatt made another goal saving effort at the 42:11 mark as they were controlling the ball. Bradshaw made a good steal at this point and moved the ball to Stroud who had another good shot at goal but no score.

The Indians defense kept the ball in the midfield area for most of the final minutes of the second half and held on to

win 3-0. They would now be faced with the daunting task of playing the first place seed in the semi-final game on only 10 minutes rest.

The semi-final game was against White County and they were in first place going into the tournament, but the Indians had beaten them during the regular season so hopes were high. The girls were there to win and they appeared to be ready to play as the kickoff got things rolling.

White County took the ball early and they would not give it back. Their passing and ball control was sharp and our girls were a little sluggish from

just finishing the first game. Hyatt made a great stop at the 17:25 mark having to dive for the block and this seemed to give the team the pick up they needed.

The momentum carried until the 8:41 mark when Hyatt again made a great stop, but the recovery bounce hit a Warrior player and she scored to give White County the lead 1-0. Hyatt would be called on to make several other good blocks as the fatigue was catching up with the girl's defense and they found themselves trailing at the half.

The girls came out in the

second half with determination. The Warriors were double-teaming Barrett and the team caught on hitting Churchill and Stroud in the lanes but the Warrior keeper was alert and allowed no goals shutting the Tribe out while the offense added one more goal in the second half to beat the Indians in the semi-final game 2-0.

Head Coach Paula Whitehead said it best about the effort, "White County came ready to play and they played well. It was hard on the girls to have to turn around and play again like that. They left a lot on the field during that first game."

She also noted how she felt about the season, "We had a great season and the team improved as we played more games. It is really hard to pick out any one athlete to compliment for the season, but I think Madison Stroud has improved quite a bit. It is very difficult to choose because there has been so much all around improvement by the whole team. I am very proud of all of them."

The TCMS Lady Indian soccer team had a great season finishing 7-3-1. Many girls showed improvement during the season and they are looking forward to next year.

Congratulations Towns County Middle School Lady Indians soccer.

NASCAR 2013

By Gerald Hodges/the Racing Reporter

Larson is quite a surprise

Kyle Larson, the 20-year-old Japanese-American driver has turned out to be one of the biggest surprises in this year's Nationwide Series. After battling Kyle Busch to the finish line two weeks ago at Bristol, he is 7th in points.

That's quite an achievement for such a young driver.

In Larson's first four races of the 2013 season, also the first of his NASCAR Nationwide career, he opened the season with a pair of 13th-place finishes at Daytona and Phoenix followed by a 32nd-place finish at Las Vegas after an accident ended his day 18 laps shy of the scheduled 200.

His runner-up finish at Bristol moved Larson up five positions in the standings and has some considering him as a possible dark horse in the championship race. The way in which he raced Busch in the closing laps drew praise from the driver of the No. 54 Toyota and opened a lot of eyes throughout the garage.

"You know, you know, I just want go out there and win more races, really," said Larson. "I don't usually worry too much about points races, so this year was kind of a shocker to me that I was up there in the points just because it seems like my driving style is more of a go out there and try and win races. Just keep on winning races and running up front, and if I run for points again in something, it would be nice to win a championship."

Larson was signed for the 2012 racing season by Earnhardt Ganassi Racing (EGR) as part of the team's driver development program. In February 2012, at the Pete Orr Memorial Orange Blossom 100 at New Smyrna Speedway, Larson made his first start in a full-bodied stock car, and won the event, leading only the final lap of the race. He won again at the speedway a week later during the World Series of Asphalt.

Expect to see and hear more about this young driver.

HAMLIN OUT SIX WEEKS

Denny Hamlin will miss at least five races as he recovers from a compression fracture in his lower back suffered in a crash March 17 at California Speedway.

The Joe Gibbs Racing driver visited neurosurgeon Dr. Jerry Petty last week, and Petty determined that Hamlin would not need surgery but would need an "estimated around six weeks time" to heal, according to a JGR news release.

The main factors in determining when Hamlin can race will be his ability to work the pedals, the potential for a more serious injury if he is involved in another crash, and his pain threshold since NASCAR's substance-abuse policy restricts the amount of painkillers Hamlin can have in his system.

"This one is tough because it's your core, it's the

whole centerpiece of your body that really takes a lot of (G-forces) and things like that anyway," Hamlin told reporters when he left the hospital Monday.

"I just don't know how my body will react to being in a car, and obviously we've got some obstacles just as far as getting in the car with the bracing I need. There's no way at this point I could get in a car with no bracing. ... If we don't do surgery, you do have a fracture, so I don't want to make it worse. It's not worth that."

Hamlin is the second title contender in less than a year to have to miss races because of injury. Dale Earnhardt Jr. missed two races in the Chase last year after suffering two concussions within six weeks.

Missing at least five races will likely end Hamlin's Chase hopes because he does not have a victory in the first five races of this season and will fall out of the top-10 in the standings following Martinsville.

After 26 races, the top-10 drivers plus the two drivers in 11th to 20th place with the most wins make the Chase. That means a driver can miss races, but no more than three or four, and still make the Chase.

Hamlin has not missed a Cup race since he stepped into the seat of the No. 11 car with seven races left in the 2005 season, a streak of 264 races that will come to an end at Martinsville.

Mark Martin will fill in for Hamlin next weekend at Martinsville Speedway. Martin will return to the No. 55 Aaron's Dream Machine Toyota at Texas Motor Speedway on April 13 and resume his previously scheduled run of events with MWR for the remainder of the 2013 NASCAR Sprint cup season.

DOUBLE STANDARD FOR STEWART

Tony Stewart talks out of both sides of his mouth. Usually, his left hand doesn't know what the right one is doing.

Joey Logano did what just about any driver would have done Sunday when he blocked Tony Stewart on the final restart to keep Stewart from taking the lead. Stewart took exception and tried to start a fight after the race, even though he's done the same thing several times in the past.

I recall that Stewart intentionally crashed Brian Vickers in 2011 at Sonoma after Vickers blocked him earlier in the race.

Still, Stewart thought Logano's actions at California Speedway were completely unacceptable.

"That little &*\$#@ runs us clear down to the infield," Stewart said. "He wants to %^*! about everybody else; he's the one that drives like a little &?*#@!. I'm going to bust his a--."

Whether or not Stewart actually comes through on that threat is debatable, but



Kyle Larson at Phoenix in 2013
Furnished by NASCAR

NASCAR could've fined him for the language he used in the post-race interview. In this year alone, the sanctioning body has already suspended Nationwide Series driver Jeremy Clements for inappropriate comments he made in an off-the-record conversation, and it fined Denny Hamlin \$25,000 three weeks ago for saying the Generation-6 car didn't race well.

But this type of double standard is something Stewart has been known for throughout his career.

ART MALONE PASSES

Art Malone, a legendary driver in drag racing and other motorsports, died March 29 at the age of 76. Few racers have enjoyed a more varied and exciting career than Malone, who not only was a successful drag-strip owner and driver, but also gained fame as a driver at the legendary Indy 500 [running two Indy 500's].

Raised in Tampa, Fla., Malone got his first taste of drag racing when he and a group of teenage buddies made a trip to the West Coast to attend the first NHRA event in Pomona in 1953. Upon returning to Florida, he began staging races at Henson Airfield in Tampa, charging 25 cents a head to cover the cost of trophies for the winners.

After substituting as a driver for "Big Daddy" Don Garlits, who was recovering from burns suffered when a dragster engine exploded, Malone began racing on his own.

He soon ventured into the world of circle-track competition, where he became the first driver to exceed 180 mph on an oval course with a 181.561-mph lap at Daytona International Speedway in 1961.

Weekend Racing: The Truck and Cup teams will be at Martinsville Speedway. At .526-miles, it is the smallest NASCAR track on the circuit. The Nationwide Series does not race again until April 12.

Sat., Apr. 6, Camping World Truck Series, race 2 of 22; Starting time: 1:30 pm ET; TV: SPEED.

Sun., Apr. 7, Sprint Cup Series, race 6 of 36; Starting time: 1 pm ET; TV: Fox.

Racing Trivia Question: What was the first year Kasey Kahne ran the Sprint Cup series?

Last Week's Question: Who won the inaugural Cup race at Texas Motor Speedway? **Answer:** Jeff Burton was the winner of the 1997 inaugural race at TMS.

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

Middle School Baseball Team thanks the community for their support



The Towns County Middle School Baseball Team would like to say thank you to all sponsors who made their part in the 100-inning game a success.

The middle school played 20+ innings on February 21, 2013. Each player had multiple sponsors who made

donations in their name.

We thank each and every one of our sponsors who made this game possible.

All sponsorship donations were greatly appreciated.

The middle school team players are: Brody Graper, Jackson Taylor, Adam Barrett, Willem DeVries, Major

Moss, Russell Cox, Kobe Denton, Colten Shook, Owen Bouchard, Peyton Smith, Zachary Davenport, Andy Chambers, Trey Chastain, Daulton Key, Braden McFalls, Harold Cox, Tristan Dyer and Luke Woody.

Their coaches are Kyle Langford and Shea Taylor.

Fish for Food Fishing Tournament

Matthew 25 Food Ministries presents "Fish for Food Fishing Tournament" began March 9th at Lake Chatuge. 60% of tournament money goes to feed needy families in our area. The remaining 40% will go to tournament prize money. Prize money will be awarded for 1st Place, 2nd Place and 3rd

Place and biggest fish. Actual prize amount will depend on number of entries.

Entry fee is \$50 per boat, the tournaments begin in March and end in October, occurring the second Saturday of each month rotating between Lake Chatuge, Woods Grove Boat Ramp and Lake Not-

tely, Deaver Road Boat Ramp, from 7 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Tournament schedule: April 13 - Nottely; May 11 - Chatuge; June 8 - Nottely; July 13 - Chatuge; August 10 - Nottely; September 14 - Chatuge; and October 12 - Nottely. For contact information call David Crisp at 706-897-5347.

YHC, Flagler split double header

YOUNG HARRIS - Young Harris College and Flagler College split a Peach Belt Conference softball doubleheader Friday (March 29) afternoon at E.D. Rivers Field.

Flagler won the opener 7-3, but Young Harris rallied to take the second game 10-2 in a game shortened to five innings due to the mercy rule.

Young Harris, which snapped a seven-game losing streak, improved to 23-19 overall and to 5-9 in the Peach Belt while the Saints, who were a NCAA Division II Softball National Championship participant in 2012, fell to 23-13 and 5-7. Young Harris will entertain No. 4 Armstrong Atlantic State University in a 1 p.m. PBC doubleheader Saturday (March 30).

In the second game, Flagler jumped out to a 2-0 lead in the first inning on a pair of unearned runs. Christen Moon was hit by a pitch and Melanie Oliver followed with an RBI single, but Mallorie Escue was thrown out at the plate trying to score the third run.

Young Harris struck back in the second inning with three runs of its own. Amber Statham drew a bases loaded walk to get the rally started. Flagler starter Katie Enright (9-6) walked four of the first five batters in the inning. Weaver drove in another run on her grounder to shortstop. Stacia Williams was next and she singled home what would

prove to be the game-winning run and Young Harris took a 3-2 lead.

The Mountain Lions erupted for five more runs in the fourth to grab an 8-2 lead. Young Harris sent 10 batters to the plate and took advantage of two Saints errors.

Tori Dyer had the big hit of the inning, a two-run double to left-center. Weaver added a bases-loaded walk while Brittany Olsen had a RBI single and Williams added a sacrifice fly.

Statham and Weaver ended the game in the bottom of the fifth with back-to-back RBI singles.

That would be plenty for Katie Jo Gentry (7-9) who scattered four hits and allowed two unearned runs. She walked four and struck three.

In the opener, Flagler broke a scoreless tie with three runs in the third. Escue drew a bases loaded walk and then Oliver reached on an infield grounder that produced the Saints' second run. With the bases still loaded, Molly Whittington flew out to center field to drive in the third run.

The Mountain Lions scrapped for a pair of runs in the fifth with the help of three errors by the Saints. With runners at first and second, Weaver hit a grounder that the Flagler shortstop couldn't handle and a run scored. Kayla Jones, the next batter, singled to center which allowed the

second run to cross the plate.

Escue hit a one-out solo home run in the top of the sixth to give Flagler a 4-2 lead. The Saints added three more in the top of the seventh.

Tinsley Smith (4-1) tossed a complete game six-hitter for the Saints. She allowed three unearned runs, walked two and struck out four batters.

Darby Stanford (11-7) tossed 6 2/3 innings, allowed eight hits, five earned runs, walked two and fanned four to get the loss.

VFW Golf League news

It's that time again. We start on Thursday, April 4 at 9:30 AM. Be sure to be at the course by 9 AM so we can get organized for tee time.

We need some more players this year, especially some ladies, so be sure to ask your wife or some other lady friend to join us for some chuckles and laughs. The collection of the money will be the same as last year or you can pay the \$40 at one time which covers the cost of playing and the banquet.

We are planning on having a par 3 tournament again and a day of play at another course too.

Hope to have a good turnout on our first day, seeing as how it never rains on Thursdays on a golf course.