

Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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Trout season is upon us in the Northeast Georgia Mountains

By Joe Collins
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

The air was chilly on the day before Easter in 2012.

The temperature had dropped the night before to just a few degrees above freezing. It was the second weekend of trout season and the sun had just started to warm the Choestoe Valley as I gathered my fishing gear and stepped into my waders to challenge the trout of the Nottely River; A stream where my dad had taught me to fish and where I grew up fishing. It is also a stream where my ancestors had fished nearly 200 years before. Believe me when I tell you that we have caught some really nice fish out of its waters, but this morning would be special and I was about to make my ancestors proud, I just didn't know it yet.

The Saturday before was a lesson in the faults of even a seasoned trout fisherman like myself as I lost one of the biggest trout I had ever hooked. It came from out of nowhere and hit my Rooster Tail spinner

with the force of a prizefighter. The yellow shine and the reflection of the blade was just too much for the hungry Brown and he just couldn't stand it on the third pass through his hole. I was using a lightweight Diawa rod and reel with 4-pound test line, which was not real smart when fishing in the big waters of the river. It is a good set-up on the smaller streams but not for the monsters you can find in the Nottely. Mistake number one for me.

The trout was huge and I had a fight on my hands as the dominate predator of that part of the river darted and flipped going from one side of the hole to another in an effort to get loose. My drag was singing Dixie as I slid my left thumb up to release more tension and was greeted with the sickening "twang" of a snapped Stren fishing line.

It's hard to describe the sick feeling I had in my stomach unless this has actually happened to you. A drag set too tight; mistake number two and the main one that cost me my fish. Man, I love trout fishing, even when things don't



go your way.

This Saturday morning would see me justified as I changed to a bigger pole, heavier Zebco Classic reel and 8-pound test line. A number 6 hook and an 8-inch night crawler completed my rigging.

I was sure things would be different if the trout, which my kids had nicknamed Walter from the movie On Golden Pond just to torment me, took my bait. But it was cold. I was hesitant to go because of the cold but how could I resist another shot at such a beautiful fish. I could not.

The third cast proved to be the lucky toss as my 6-foot Garcia Ambassador bent nearly

double and the trout started his fight for freedom. This time there would be no mistakes and his fight would be for naught. He moved into the rushing white cap rapids to try and help with his plight but everything held strong and the morning became mine as I landed the huge 25-inch, 7-pound 10 ounce, male brown trout. A blood-curdling scream from behind me on the bank sealed the morning as I turned to see my 11-year-old daughter, Emma, jumping for joy. The little dickens had heard me leave the house that morning and had snuck down to the river to watch the action. Life could not have been any better for this proud papa and

trout fisherman.

The North Georgia Mountains have some of the best trout fishing streams in the world thanks to the management practices of the Wildlife Resources Division of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. They keep the streams stocked with Rainbow, Brown and Brook trout. Over 4000 miles of streams and rapids are home to some really nice fish and provide the local residents and visitors to a fun filled time of family fellowship and enjoyment while fishing the cool mountain streams for the colorful swimming beauties.

Trout fishing is more than just a sport for the whole family; it is a viable resource for the local mountain economy as more than 100,000 trout anglers visit the Georgia Mountains each year in search of the elusive fish. The sport provides fun and enjoyment as a means to spend time in the great outdoors.

The rewards are also delicious as frying pans and grills are worked overtime each summer cooking the delicate meat of trout caught by beginners

and seasoned fisherman alike. This is one of the great things about trout fishing; almost anybody can enjoy the sport and savor its rewards. Eat them yourself or share them with friends just like the editor of this paper did last week as he and a friend brought me 16 fat trout for grilling. They were delicious.

Take time this summer and get involved in trout fishing.

Visit the GDNR website for regulations and license requirements for this wonderful sport. Parents and mentors can introduce children to the sport and watch their eyes light up as the first pull of a trout bends their pole and they start screaming from excitement. It is a joy to behold as a youngster learns a new way to enjoy life that doesn't require batteries or electricity or television.

Now, put some new line on that old rod and reel. Take your child or find a neighbors child and get into the water.

Maybe you too can bring home some delicious trout for supper. You will be glad you did. Man, I love trout fishing.

NASCAR 2013

By Gerald Hodges/the Racing Reporter

Rowdy Kyle Busch owns Texas

Kyle Busch is on a roll. He won both the Nationwide and Cup races at Texas Motor Speedway this past weekend.

Busch started from the pole position in Saturday night's Cup race and remained in the top-three for most of the race. As the laps wound down, Busch was in second place and steadily chasing down leader Martin Truex Jr., when the caution flag waved at lap 315 of the 334-lap race. With just 19 laps remaining, all the leaders decided to bring their cars down pit road. A quick, four-tire pit stop by his pit crew put Busch back in the top spot for the final restart of the night, and he never looked back, taking the checkered flag.

"It's good, really good," said Busch. "We've had a good start to the season. It feels amazing to keep this roll going. It's so much fun to race with this group. We had a talk over the winter, Dave (Rogers, crew chief) and I had a talk a few weeks ago, and things have kind of jelled - we've been doing really, really good."

Martin Truex Jr. finished .508 of a second behind Busch in the runner-up spot. His No. 14 Toyota failed the height-stick test and was deemed too low in the front. The car will be taken to NASCAR's research-and-development center in Concord, N.C. for further examination.

"We came in with the lead," Truex said. "I still feel like we should have been able to beat him out. I don't know what happened there, but it wasn't even close. I was three (car-lengths) behind, so it wasn't all pit position, it was other things on our end."

Carl Edwards, Greg Biffle and Joey Logano rounded out the top-five. Jimmie Johnson, Aric Almirola, Brian Vickers, Brad Keselowski and Newman comprised the remainder of the top-10.

Edwards looked like he was headed for a long night early in the race. First, his engine began sputtering and then his seat belts came unhooked

under caution and he couldn't get them re-attached until after the restart. Incredibly, Edwards managed to hook his belts into place after taking the green flag and while racing at about 200 mph. Despite all that, Edwards rallied for an impressive third-place finish.

Trouble started early for the Penske Racing Fords of reigning series champion Brad Keselowski and Joey Logano. NASCAR confiscated the rear-end housings of both cars, forcing the teams to make a change before the race.

Keselowski made it to the grid in time for the start, but Logano's car was late presenting itself on pit road and had to start from the rear.

"It is just something that is not in the spirit of the rules," NASCAR vice president of competition told the Sporting News in explaining the violation. If penalties are forthcoming, they will be announced next week."

Keselowski remains second in the Cup standings, but he may be in trouble again for lambasting NASCAR with his post-race comments.

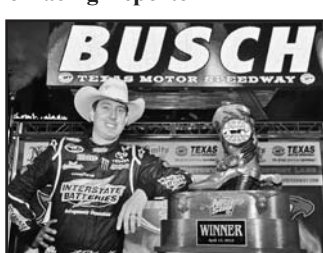
"I don't have a lot of good things to say right now," Keselowski said. "The things that I've seen over the last seven days have me questioning everything I believe in and I'm not happy about it. I don't have anything positive to say."

"There's so much stuff going on, you guys have no idea - you have no (expletive) idea what's going on. I can tell you there is no team in this garage with the integrity of the 2 team."

"The way we've been treated over the last seven days is absolute shameful. I feel like we've been targeted over the last seven days more than I've ever seen a team targeted in my life. My guys keep their heads on straight and they showcased why they're a winning team and a championship team."

"We're not going to take it. We're not going to be treated this way."

Good luck Brad. Just



"Rowdy" Kyle Busch wins both Texas races furnished by Toyota Motorsports

remember that Tony Stewart found out several years ago, that, "It's NASCAR's way or the highway."

Two weeks after leading the standings, Dale Earnhardt's team seems to have reversed direction. He was running third when his car lost power, Earnhardt went to pit road instead of switching to the backup battery. He was nabbed for speeding on the pit stop and had to serve a pass-thru penalty. Then, crew chief Steve Letarte had him stop for four tires during the penalty stop, which is against the rules and cost them another pass-thru penalty. Earnhardt wound up three laps down and finished 29th on a day when he had a car that seemed capable of challenging for the win.

Kurt Busch, who started on the outside pole, had fuel pressure problems. He was able to run with the leaders, but lost 17 laps in the pits due to repairs.

"We need to get these problems rectified sooner than later," stated Busch, who also saw a strong run stymied due to a parts failure last week in Martinsville. "I feel confident that we'll get this accomplished and have another fast Furniture Row Chevrolet SS in Kansas next week."

After seven of 36 races, Busch is 24th in points.

Danica Patrick continues to struggle. She started 40th and finished 28th, three laps down.

Top-10 leaders after 7 of 36: 1. Johnson-269, 2. Keselowski-260, 3. Kyle Busch-251, 4. Biffle-239, 5. Edwards-234, 6. Earnhardt-234, 7. Kahne-232, 8. Bowyer-208, 9. Logano-207, 10. Menard-206.

Kyle Busch is on a win-

ning streak in the Nationwide series. He won last weekend's race at Texas for his fourth win in six races this season, becoming the first driver in series history to win four of the first six.

Brad Keselowski had a straightforward assessment of Busch's dominance at Texas.

"If you put an elite driver in an elite car, you should get elite results," Keselowski said.

The victory was Busch's record sixth at Texas and his record 55th in the Nationwide Series. Brad Keselowski ran second, 2.272 seconds behind the winner. Austin Dillon was third, followed by Dale Earnhardt Jr., Kevin Harvick, Matt Kenseth, Regan Smith, Kasey Kahne, Brian Vickers, and Justin Allgaier.

Top-10 points leaders after 6 of 33: 1. Hornish-221, 2. Smith-219, 3. A. Dillon-213, 4. Allgaier-212, 5. Scott-212, 6. Kligerman-186, 7. Sadler-185, 8. Bowman-183, 9. Vickers-182, 10. Bayne-181.

KYLE LARSON WINS AT THE "ROCK"

Kyle Larson held off a hard-charging Joey Logano to win Sunday's Truck race at Rockingham, NC. Brendan Gaughan was third, followed by Johnny Sauter, Chase Elliott, Matt Crafton, Jeb Burton, Ryan Blaney, Erik Jones, and Miguel Paludo.

Weekend Racing: The trucks and Sprint Cup teams are at the 1.5-mile Kansas Speedway. The Nationwide Series has an off weekend.

Sat., Apr. 20, Camping World Trucks, race 4 of 22; Starting time: 2 p.m. ET; TV:SPEED.

Sun., Apr. 21, Sprint Cup Series, race 8 of 36; Starting time: 1 p.m. ET; TV: FOX.

Racing Trivia Question: Where is the hometown of Kurt and Kyle Busch?

Last Week's Question: Bobby Isaac is a former Sprint Cup champion that raced from 1964-1977. What year did he win the championship? **Answer:** It was 1970.

You may contact the Racing Reporter at hodges@race500.com NT(Apr17,C)ac

Barrett wins MVP in soccer in Italy



MVP Brooke Barrett (far right) with the Alpharetta boys team.

Local soccer player, Brooke Barrett, recently traveled to Italy with her club soccer team, the Alpharetta Ambush.

The Ambush is a U-13 girls' club team that is currently ranked number one in the state of Georgia for their age group. They were in Italy for eight days and played five games.

The teams that they played in Italy were professional development teams that were U-16 to an adult women's team. Her team won four out of five games; their only loss coming to a U-19 team that used their size advantage to score on a corner kick.

While in Italy, Brooke scored five goals and had four assists. She was also the only girl invited to play on the U-12 Alpharetta boys team after the boys had been shut out by the Italian boys their first three games of a tournament they were playing. In

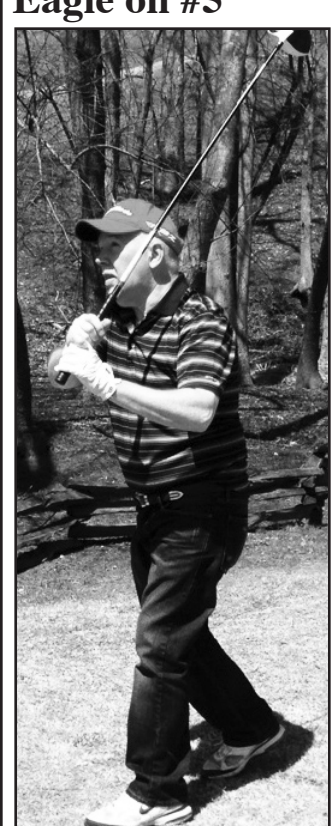
those remaining two boy's games, Brooke scored the only two goals recorded by the Alpharetta boys and was awarded the M.V.P. award of that tournament.

Her team also trained two days at two Italian Premier League Professional Clubs, Siena and Empoli. The coaches at Empoli offered Brooke the opportunity to move to Italy and play for that professional club that feeds into the Italian National Soccer Team. That is a move that Brooke respectfully declined.

Brooke is currently a second year member of the Georgia Olympic Development team and recently played middle school soccer for the Towns County Indians.

Her goal is to follow in the footsteps of her favorite players Mia Hamm and Alex Morgan and play for the U.S. National Team in the World Cup and Olympics.

Eagle on #5



Eddie Alexander

Eddie Alexander hit two great shots on number five hole (Par 5 Hole) at Butternut Golf Course then proceeded to putt for an Eagle and made the shot! This tremendous effort was witnessed by Jack Reis of Towns County. Hats off to Eddie!



It's time to saddle up for the first horse show of the season on Saturday, April 20, at the Union County Saddle Club.

Prior to the regular show will be the Annual Spring Special Invitational Show. Beginning at 10 a.m., the invitational show will include horseback riding, wagon rides, a family lunch, and a special awards ceremony.

The first regular season show will start at noon with sign-ups beginning at 11:30. The schedule for the day will include something for everyone: racking events, western pleasure, speed events, and the ever-popular ball toss. Changes to the schedule this year include speed events moving to the beginning of the show and English classes being added at the end. The complete show sheet is available at www.unioncountysaddleclub.org.

As always, there is no charge for spectators at the Saddle Club shows, so come on out and enjoy the day. Concessions will be available all day long thanks to the Union County 4-H Horse Club.

North Georgia Gun Show returns

The North Georgia Gun Show is rolling into Blairsville this Friday, April 19th and Saturday, April 20th!

This show will have over one hundred plus tables of ammo, rifles, pistols and related gun accessories and merchandise. Two show dealers will be selling "assault rifles" exclusively. These are the guns that are causing most of the political rhetoric across the nation. In the near future, if the politicians have their way, gun shows could become an extinct American past time.

The 2nd Amendment "controversy" is headlining on all the news channels and is on top of everyone's mind these days. On Saturday, at 2PM, Dr. Dan Eichenbaum will be doing a visual and audio presentation on this God given Amendment.

The North Georgia Gun Show is a buy, sell and trade style show. You may bring

your unloaded weapons for vendors to consider for trade or sale.

In typical North Georgia Gun Show fashion, political trivia questions will be asked to the show goers with prizes given away every hour. By bringing two (2) cans of food for the Union County Food Bank, you will be entered into an exclusive grand prize drawing of one one hundred dollar gift certificate to Cherokee Discount Guns and More in Murphy, NC. (Winner does not need to be present to win.) This can drive helps hungry families in Union County.

Gun Show hours are; Friday 2 PM - 8 PM and Saturday 9 AM - 5 PM. Food and beverage will be available and tickets will be only available at the door for \$7 with kids ten and under free.

For more information, please go to the website... www.ngagunshow.com.

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Boating Safety course being offered

On Saturday, April 27th from 8 AM to 5 PM the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Law Enforcement Section and the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary will be conducting a Boater Education course.

This course will cover topics such as basic boat nomenclature, rules of the road, required safety equipment and maritime navigation.

A new law that is intended to bring a safer boating experience for all Georgia residents and visitors to our waterways will become effective on July 1, 2014. This law requires that all persons born on or after January 1, 1998 to successfully complete a boater education course.

The Boater Education course will be held at the Haralson Memorial Civic Center at 185 Welborn Street in Blairsville. To sign up for

this course or for any boating related questions, please call the Georgia Department of Natural Resources Office in Gainesville at 770-535-5499. Anyone interested must sign up by April 22, 2013.

The Boater Education Course may also be taken as a home study program. There is a one-time fee for this option. You can find out about this method by contacting:

BOAT ED - 1-800-460-9698. U.S. Power Squadron - www.americas-boatingcourse.com. Online versions are also available for a one-time fee. Information can be obtained about this method by contacting: Boat U.S. Foundation - 800-336-2628. BOAT ED - 800-830-2268. PWC Safety School - www.pwcsafety-school.com. Boater Exam - www.boaterexam.com/usa/georgia.