

Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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Baseball: Indians drop three on south Georgia road trip

By Todd Forrest
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The Indians (13-11, 8-7) dropped all three games during their annual south Georgia trek, falling 3-2 at Bryan County on April 9, before suffering a 9-6 loss at Liberty County on April 11 and a 10-0 defeat at No. 9 Crawford County on April 13.

The Indians enter next week's Class A D-II postseason as the No. 3 seed from Region 8 and will likely travel to second-seeded Glascock County (Region 5) in round one.

This week, Towns County visited Hayesville, North Carolina on Monday and will host Rabun County on Wednesday, April 17. The Indians conclude the regular season on Friday, April 19 at Rabun County.

Indians 2, Bryan County 3 - Towns County came up short in a 3-2 pitcher's duel after falling behind 3-1 after two innings.

The duo of Cale Kirby and Oliver Sarafin combined to limit Bryan to seven hits and no earned runs while only surrendering one walk.

Kirby, Connor Chastain and Kade McConnell all doubled in the loss.

Towns County grabbed a 1-0 edge in the first when Eli McNabb reached on an error by the shortstop, Stone Chauncey singled and McConnell laced an RBI double to left.

Two singles and a passed ball helped Bryan even the score in the bottom half before Sarafin escaped trouble via a 4-6-3 double play.

After a double play erased Kirby's leadoff single in the second, Bryan used a two-run error to grab the lead for good at 3-1 during its half of the frame.

Tanner Cunningham's two-out walk led to a run in the

fourth when he came around on Kirby's double.

Zane Floyd's one-out single in the Towns County fifth was negated by a 3-6-3 inning-ending double play. The Indians hit into another twin killing in the sixth after Chastain doubled and Chauncey walked. But bad fortune struck when McConnell lined into a double-play at first base.

Floyd, Chauncey and Sarafin also recorded hits for Towns County.

Indians 6, Liberty County 9 - The Panthers scored six in the second before Towns County rallied with two in the third and four in the fifth. However, Liberty County tacked on three in the sixth to escape with a 9-6 victory.

McConnell and Cunningham led the way with a pair of 3-for-4 performances at the dish. Floyd and Chastain each went 2 for 4.

McConnell earned the nod on the bump and went 5 innings, allowing 10 hits, 8 runs (6 earned) and 6 walks while punching out five. Floyd allowed a hit and an earned run over an inning of work.

After Towns County stranded its leadoff man in the first and second innings, Liberty County capitalized on four hits, three walks and a costly two-out error during its six-run second.

The Indians answered with two in the third when Braydon Barrett singled and Floyd doubled to begin the frame. McNabb brought home Barrett via an RBI ground-out and Chastain made it a 6-2 game with a run-scoring double.

Later, McConnell escaped a bases-loaded jam in the fourth courtesy of a timely double play, sparking Towns' four-run fifth. Floyd started the rally by reaching on an error, then Chastain put runners at the

corners with a base hit to right.

Chauncey bounced to third for the second out to plate Floyd. McConnell's two-run double made it a 6-4 game before Cunningham's 2-run homer knotted the score at 6-6.

Liberty put things away in the sixth when the first three runners reached courtesy of an infield single, a walk and a hit-by-pitch.

With Floyd taking over on the hill, the Panthers took the lead with one away via a wild pitch. Later in the inning, a one-out, 2-run single grew the margin to 9-6.

Towns County loaded the bases in the seventh when McConnell singled with two away, followed by a base hit from Cunningham and a Kirby hit by pitch until a strikeout ended the game.

Cunningham drove in two and scored once; McConnell finished with an RBI; Floyd scored twice and swiped two bags; Chastain knocked in a run.

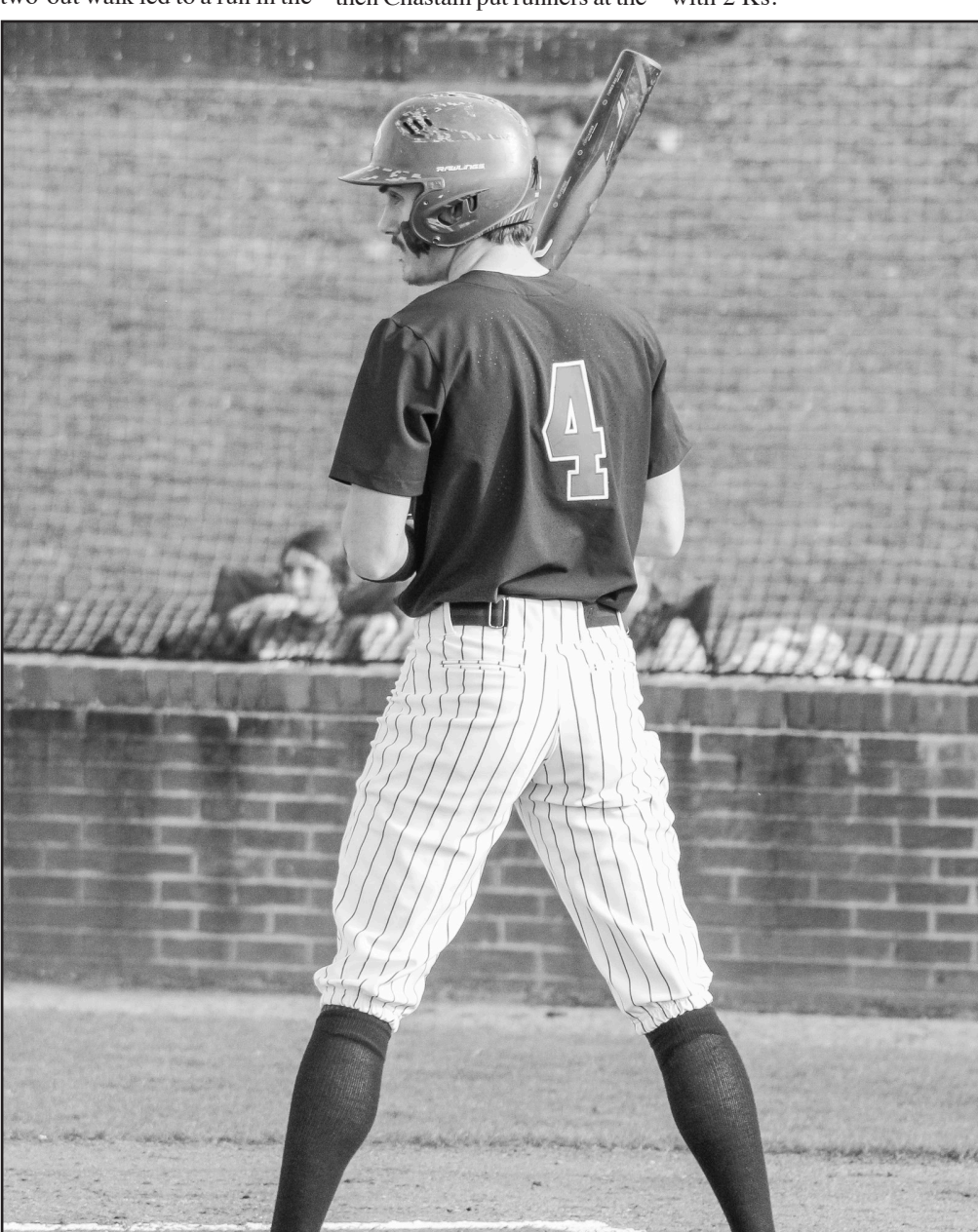
Kirby went 1 for 2 with a double; Barrett finished 1 for 3 with a run; Chauncey and McNabb plated one run apiece.

Indians 0, Crawford County 10 (5 innings) - The Indians faced an uphill climb at Class A D1's ninth-ranked Crawford County on Saturday, April 13.

Crawford County used two pitchers in a combined 5-inning no-hitter while racing ahead 6-0 after two innings. The Eagles added two in the fourth and fifth innings to end the game early at 10-0.

Floyd, McConnell, Cunningham and Braydon Baldwin all reached on walks. Mason Barrett was hit by a pitch.

Floyd went 2 1/3 in the start, allowing 6 earned runs and 4 hits with 4 strikeouts. Kirby tossed 2 innings, giving up 6 hits and 4 earned runs with 2 Ks.



Towns County senior Tanner Cunningham went 3 for 4 with a homer, a double and 2 RBIs during the Indians 9-6 loss at Liberty County on April 9. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

NASCAR 2024

By Gerald Hodges/the Racing Reporter

ELLIOTT IS BACK ON TRACK

Chase Elliott won Sunday's Cup Series race at Texas the old fashioned way.

By racing hard and not giving up.

Elliott lost the lead on lap 245 of the scheduled 267-lap race to Denny Hamlin.

It didn't look good for him, because Hamlin had pulled away by several car lengths.

But then Ricky Stenhouse spun on lap 253 bringing out a caution.

Elliott was lined up on the outside of the front row as the cars took the green flag. When the field entered the backstretch, Kyle Larson, the polesitter spun, bringing out another caution.

Elliott had passed Hamlin on the restart, just before the caution, and this time he was lined up on the inside of the front row for the restart. When the race was restarted, Elliott was able to move ahead of Hamlin.

As the two leaders entered turn-3, Hamlin slipped up and spun, bringing out another caution.

This sent the race into a green-white-checkered overtime finish.

Elliott pulled away on the restart from Ross Chastain, Brad Keselowski, and his teammate William Byron, but before one lap could be completed, there was another caution.

On the second g-w-c restart, Elliott was able to get the lead, before another wreck behind him brought out the last caution and ended the race.

Elliott was back in Victory Lane after 42 winless races.

"Oh, man, couldn't feel any better," said Elliott. Hooter's has been a partner of ours for a number of years now. It's been a dream of mine to pay respect to the late Alan Kulwicki. Driving this car to a victory and do a Polish victory lap, just really crazy how things came full circle there in that moment. It was pretty emotional for me. He beat dad back in the day. Here we are sharing his sponsor and having an opportunity to win today.

"It was just crazy. This place is so sketchy. I haven't seen a replay of Denny and us. I didn't feel like I did anything super crazy there any more than anybody's ever done to me. Just had to run forward. I want to look at it. I didn't feel like I did anything to crash him. I think just the circumstances. But nonetheless, apologies to him if so."

Brad Keselowski finished as runner-up.

"We didn't have a ton of speed," said Keselowski. "Honestly, I'm more frustrated than anything because I feel like we have a great team and we don't have the speed to go with it. We're doing all we can do to overcome that."

"The driver in me is frustrated because I feel like these are races I'm good enough to win, and we don't have the speed to do it. Only reason I am mad as hell is it's my fault for not making the cars faster."

Elliott's teammate William Byron was third, while the remaining top 10 finishers were: Tyler Reddick, Daniel Suarez, Chase Briscoe, Bubba Wallace, Austin Dillon, Kyle Busch, and Carson Hocevar.

MAYER WINS A CLOSE ONE

Sam Mayer pulled off a last lap pass of Ryan Sieg to claim his first victory of the



Elliott Gets Hard Fought Victory

season by just .002-seconds in Saturday's Xfinity Series race.

The outcome was so close officials had to review the tape before naming Mayer the official winner.

"That's absolutely unreal," the 20-year old Mayer said. "This team, the amount of adversity we've had to fight this entire year so far and to come to a mile-and-a-half that I want to say I'm good at, but it took a lot."

Sieg led 17 of the final 18 laps and raced off to the front in a pair of late race restarts. With nine laps remaining Sieg held a 1.2-second advantage over Mayer. But Mayer cut into that margin with each lap, trailing by only .25-second with two laps remaining and then catching Sieg's car on the back stretch on the final lap. They exchanged the lead briefly, racing door-to-door and then Sieg pulled alongside as they took the checkered flag in a photo finish, the closest ever for an Xfinity Series race at Texas.

"Awe, it sucks," said an obviously disappointed Sieg, who has two other career runner-up finishes.

"We had a really good car. I just got tight, so tried to change my lines, do everything. I saw him coming and I did all I could do and at the end I was just trying to run him up into the wall to try to win the race. We were so close."

Justin Allgaier, AJ Allmendinger, Cole Custer, Austin Hill, Ryan Truex, Sammy Smith, Jesse Love, and Anthony Alfredo were the remaining top 10 finishers.

Top 10 leaders after 8 of 33: 1. C. Smith-333, 2. Custer-314, 3. Hill-300, 4. Allgaier-277, 5. Love-257, 6. Herbst-232, 7. Allmendinger-229, 8. S. Smith-225, 9. Kligerman-215, 10. Creed-200.

"ROWDY" KYLE TAKES TEXAS TRUCK RACE

It was Kyle Busch's sixth win in a Texas Motor Speedway truck race, and ties him with Todd Bodine for most ever. Busch has won the last four truck races he's entered at the track. It is his 20th overall win at TMS, including four NASCAR Cup Series victories and 10 Xfinity Series race wins.

He led a race best 112 of the 167 lap race and won both stages.

Top 10 finishers of Friday's Truck Series race: 1. Kyle Busch, 2. Corey Heim, 3. Nick Sanchez, 4. Christian Eckes, 5. Zane Smith, 6. Daniel Dye, 7. Taylor Gray, 8. Tanner Gray, 9. Stefan Parson, 10. Ty Majeski.

Top 10 leaders after 7 of 23: 1. Eckes-287, 2. Heim-285, 3. Majeski-275, 4. Sanchez-260, 5. Taylor Gray-249, 6. Ankrum-244, 7. Caruth-233, 8. Crafton-195, 9.

Tanner Gray-171, 10. Enfinger-167.

TRUEX NEEDS TO STEP UP THE PACE

Martin Truex Jr. has had some good moments, but overall, his team is operating on a sub par level.

He's led laps in all but two of nine races so far and led the third most laps (352) among series drivers, but has yet to win a race.

In fact, his 18th place finish two weeks ago at Martinsville is his worst finish of the 2024 season and the only time he's not been running on the lead lap at the end of the race.

The good news about Truex is, he believes his team is more than capable of making the transition from running well to winning.

"I feel good about where we are at," said Truex. "We've had a top-three to top-five car every week, every race, with the exception of Martinsville. We haven't quite capitalized on that over the course of some of these races, some of it in our control, and other stuff that just hasn't worked out."

"We've been really consistent. We've been working on cleaning up some mistakes in several areas. I know the guys have been busting their tails working on pit stops. If we can clean that up a bit and we can get some confidence and get consistently fast, our cars are great, and the team is doing a great job on clicking and working hard."

"Hopefully, we can get our first win of the season really soon."

Racing Joke: Ross was taking care of some business one afternoon in Charlotte. He had just entered the elevator when a girl stepped in with a telephone pressed to her ear. "I have to go," she told the person on the other end. "There's a cute guy standing here."

Before Ross could react, she turned to him and said, "Sorry for lying, I just wanted to end that conversation."

Weekend Racing: The Cup and Xfinity teams will be at the 2.66-mile Talladega Superspeedway, the fastest track on the NASCAR circuit. The Trucks do not race again until May 4.

Sat., Apr. 20: Xfinity Series race 9 of 33; Starting time: 4:00 pm ET; TV: Fox.

Sun., Apr. 21: Cup Series race 10 of 36; Starting time: 3:00 pm ET; TV: Fox.

Racing Trivia Question: What is the length of the Dover track?

Last Week's Question: How many Cup Series teams does Hendrick Motorsports have? Answer: They field four teams: The No. 5 driven by Kyle Larson, No. 9 (Chase Elliott), No. 24 (William Byron), No. 48 (Alex Bowman).

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