

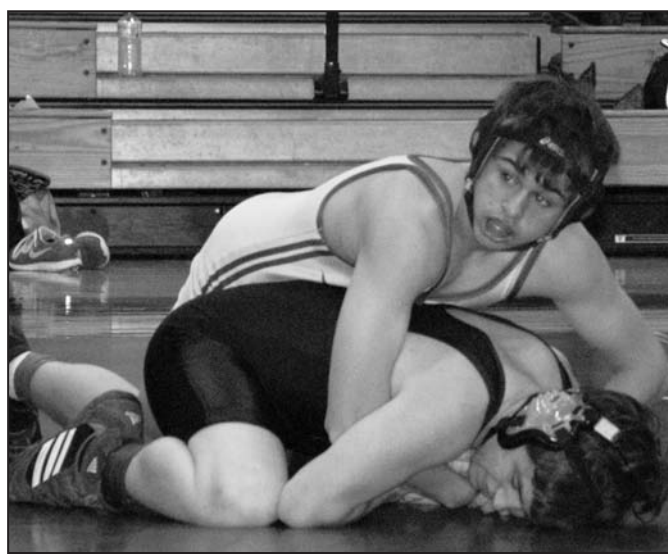
# Wrestling scores three wins at Towns Duals

By Todd Forrest  
North Georgia News  
sports@nganews.com

On Friday Union County was victorious over Franklin County, Hiwassee Dam, NC, and Hayesville, NC.

"It was the best we have ever wrestled," Union Coach Michael Smith-Foot said. "Our neutral looked very good, and we were pinning from top. We had wins from Tulsa Queen, Jon Floyd, Orlando Lara, Jaren Main, Payton Tumey, Cody Walters, Chase Stancil, Aaron Hill, Sam Whitmer, Dylan Byers, Justin Eigel, Zach Payton, and Bo Lynch, and Nick Bertuna.

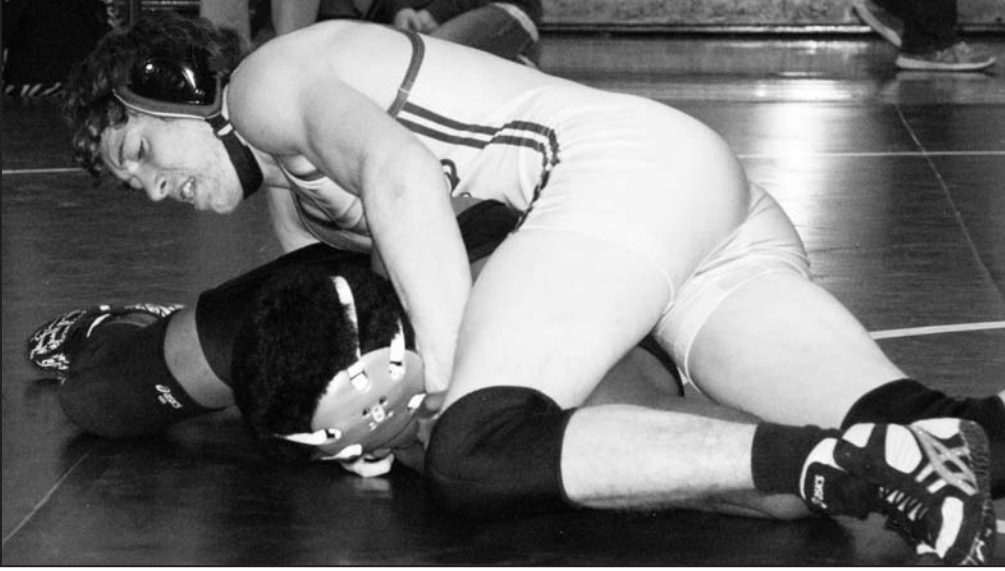
"One of the most exciting things for me was Bo Lynch and Zach Payton. Both



weigh 163 so wrestle in the 170 weight class. Lynch won three of his matches there and Payton won two. That is a very impres-

sive thing physically and from a team point as well."

Union will be back in action at home on Friday.



Union County wrestling was in action last Friday at Towns County. Photos by Todd Forrest

# Foster, Wilkes, McCann place at Tallulah

By Todd Forrest  
North Georgia News  
sports@nganews.com

**Tallulah Falls** - Union County swimming was back in the pool last weekend at Tallulah Falls High School for the Winter Snow Swim Meet.

Three Union County swimmers brought home ribbons. Freshman Megan Foster took third in the 200M Individual Medley. Senior Lindsey McCann took third in the 100M freestyle. Junior Brennen Wilkes took third in the 50M free and second in the 100M free.

Seven swimmers also posted personal best times.

Sophomore Maggie Davis improved her 50M free by 0.42 seconds and established the school record for the girls 100M Butterfly.

Foster improved 0.76 in the 200M IM and 0.91 in the 100M breast. Junior Azaleigh Harkins reduced her 200M free by an impressive 7.98 seconds and her 50M free by an equally impressive 2.38.

Sophomore Jarrett Holbrook reduced his 50M free by



Megan Foster (left) placed third in the 200M Individual Medley. Junior Brennen Wilkes placed third in the 50M free and second in the 100M free. Not pictured is Lindsey McCann, who placed third in the 50M free. 1.39 and his 100M breast by a 1.38 seconds. Freshmen Katie Yaboni reduced her 50M free by an impressive 5.75 seconds

# NASCAR 2013

By Gerald Hodges/the Racing Reporter

## King of Outlaws to make final run

Indianapolis - Steve Kinser, the 20-time World of Outlaws Sprint Car Series champion, announced last week that the 2014 season will be his final season chasing the series championship.

"We're really excited to make one more run at a World of Outlaws championship," said Kinser, who will celebrate his 60th birthday June 2nd. "Racing with the Outlaws has been my life for almost 40 years. It's all I've known. My family has been around it. I've had the pleasure of running up and down the road racing all across this incredible country, and even in Canada, Mexico and Australia with this series. I knew it wasn't going to last forever. I feel like we have a great team here capable of winning a lot of races and challenging for the championship this year."

The Tony Stewart Racing (TSR) driver, who won the series' first championship during the WoO inaugural season in 1978, is looking to join a long list of greats who have closed their career hoisting a championship trophy.

Kinser, an icon in short-track racing, has dominated the series during his 35 seasons of competition. The Bloomington, Ind., native has earned 576 career A-Feature triumphs and has filled the record book with accomplishments that likely will not be matched. His goal for this 2014 season is to add to those records while battling for the title.

Throughout his remarkable career, Kinser has won WoO A-Features at 142 facilities, including 42 that will be part of this year's schedule. Kinser has experienced the enormous success at the most prestigious dirt tracks in the country. He has 34 career WoO A-Feature wins at both Eldora, Speedway in (Iowa), Ohio, and Knoxville in (Tennessee). Kinser has won 26 WoO A-Feature triumphs at historic Williams Grove Speedway in Mechanicsburg, Pa. Those three tracks will host multiple events in 2014, providing Kinser with more opportunities to add to his already lofty numbers.

Kinser won his first career WoO A-Feature at Eldora



Steve Kinser, King of the Outlaws

Speedway in May 1978 and, even though many things have changed since that first win, a number of constants remain. His competitive spirit has never wavered, and it's what drives him to keep competing for victories night after night. That drive to win was one of the things that motivated another young Hoosier to follow his dream of becoming a racecar driver. WoO races at Indiana dirt tracks in the 1980s were can't-miss attractions for a kid from Columbus, Ind., named Tony Stewart. "The King of the Outlaws" was Stewart's idol growing up and, for the past four seasons, Kinser has competed with the WoO in a car owned by Stewart. Having Kinser drive for TSR has fulfilled a dream for the three-time NASCAR Sprint Cup champion.

"I never missed an Outlaw show in the area when I was growing up," Stewart said. "We waited for those nights like they were holidays. It was incredible watching Steve race with Sammy (Swindell) and Doug (Wolfgang). He was our guy, being from Indiana, and when he won, it gave us all something to brag about. And he won a lot. A few years ago, when we had the chance to get him to drive for TSR, it was like a dream come true. When we got him on board, my goal was for him to drive for us for the remainder of his career. I'm really excited for him to go out and have a great season. He's the best ever and I couldn't be more proud."

In 1981, as 26-year-old rookie, Kinser failed to qualify for the Indianapolis 500 when he crashed during a practice. He returned in 1997, qualified 20th, and finished 14th as a 42-year-old

rookie. It was his only Indy Racing League start.

During his many tours of Australia racing Sprint cars, Kinser won many feature races. In 1986, he swapped his Sprinter for a VW-powered Midget (called a Speedcar in Australia) and won the 38th Australian Speedcar Grand Prix at Sydney's Liverpool Speedway.

In 1995 Kinser landed a NASCAR Winston Cup Series ride driving for drag racing legend Kenny Bernstein. He drove the No. 26 Quaker State Ford, but after only five starts his best finish was 27th, and that was the end of his NASCAR career.

## Mayfield's former mansion to be burned

NASCAR driver Jeremy Mayfield's former mansion was set to be burned to the ground this past Saturday in a controlled-burn by the Catawba County, North Carolina Fire Department, but due to high winds and rain, it was postponed.

Mayfield was evicted from the property in 2012 due to financial troubles after NASCAR banned him from racing for failing a drug test.

At one time the house was valued at nearly \$2-million, but the 12,000-square-foot, seven-bedroom; seven-bath structure was stripped down from the windows to the wiring. Mayfield tried to renovate the home, but when he was banned from racing and arrested for possession of meth and stolen property work on the home came to an abrupt halt.

The new owners no longer wanted the shell of a home that is worth considerably less than the original appraisal.

Mayfield is scheduled to go back before a judge early next month where he faces several felony charges.

**Racing Trivia Question:** Which Cup team will Clint Bowyer drive for in 2014?

**Last Week's Question:** Joe Gibbs has been successful as a NASCAR car owner. What other sport has he excelled in? Answer: The NFL, where he served as head coach for both the Washington Redskins and Atlanta Falcons. You may e-mail any questions to the Racing Reporter at: hodges@race500.com.

# Baenninger hits 7 treys; JV teams sweep Towns

By Todd Forrest  
North Georgia News  
sports@nganews.com

(Revised 12-16-13)

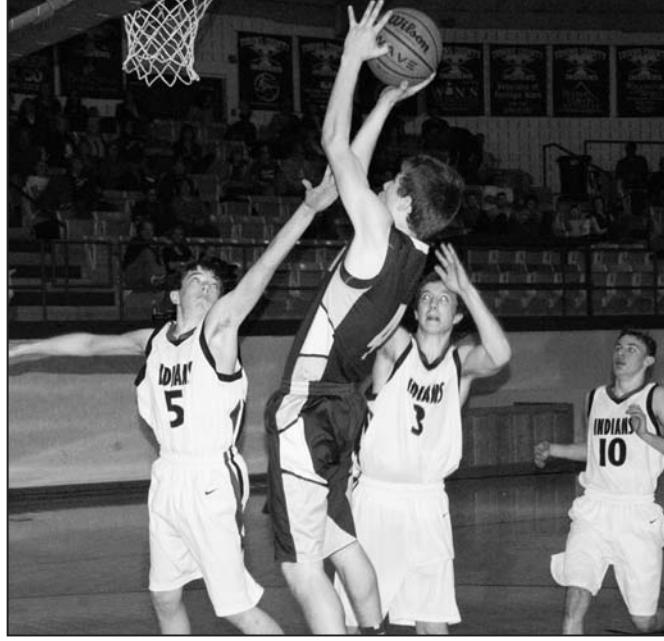
**Hiwassee** - Freshman Lawson Baenninger scored 31 points on 7 threes to lead Union to a 65-28 win over Towns County. His 7 treys are believed to possibly be a Union County boys JV record.

Chase Shook chipped in 14 points for the Panthers.

The shooting performance even brought Union County Varsity Coach Casey Jones out of the locker rooms early to check out his future star.

The Lady Panthers' JV held off Towns County 38-33 in the early game.

Kim Coyne led the Lady Panthers with 15 points.



Double and triple teams couldn't slow Baenninger. Photo/Todd Forrest

# Three local businesses designated as AT Supporters



Mountain Crossings: L-R: Grady Garner, Lamar Paris (Union County Sole Commissioner), Jason Clemmons, Dayton Miller, Georganna Morton, Logan Seamon, Janet Hartman, Valencia Morris - USFS.



Bikes and Hikes: L-R: Dayton Miller, Janet Hartman, Randy Denniston, Grady Garner, Valencia Morris - USFS.



Sunrise Grocery L-R: Janet Hartman, Grady Garner, Jason Clemmons, Valencia Morris - USFS.

On Dec. 4, 2013, the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) and the Blairsville-Union County Appalachian Trail (A.T.) Community Advisory Committee celebrated and recognized three locally owned Union County businesses for their support of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail. The ATC, through the A.T. Community Program™, seeks to highlight businesses and other organizations that provide support to members of the hiking community by recognizing them as "A.T. Community Supporters". "We are especially proud of the fact that these Union County businesses represent the first A.T. Community Supporters recognized by the ATC through this exciting new program" said Janet Hartman, Chairperson of the Advisory Committee. The three businesses that received the designation are Sunrise Grocery, owned by Jason Clemmons; Blairsville Bikes & Hikes, owned by Randy Denniston; and Mountain Crossings at Walasi-Yi, owned by Georganna (George) Morton and Logan Seamon.

The three businesses each received a letter of recognition from the ATC, a framed certificate, and a special door decal. More important-

ly, the businesses get free publicity through the ATC website and publications with prominent hot-links to their business websites. The A.T. Supporters provide special services for hikers, information, advice, and in some cases, discounts on goods or services. For example, historic Sunrise Grocery offers information about the A.T. and other local trails, information about trail maintaining and hiking clubs, and trail maps, as well as groceries, fresh produce, and an assortment of unique gifts and clothing items. Blairsville Bikes & Hikes sells ATC branded products, backpacking and hiking gear, supplies, maps, books, bikes, information and friendly advice about local hiking and biking opportunities, and a 10% discount for ATC members and members of local hiking clubs. Mountain Crossings is a full service hiking and backpacking outfitter with a wide variety of quality products to meet the needs of all hikers, from the casual day hiker to the serious A.T. backpacker. Mountain Crossings is located in the beautiful Walasi-Yi Center, built of local stone by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s - it is the only place on the entire A.T. where the trail passes through

a building! They offer friendly advice, pack "shake downs" to help lighten pack loads, internet access, meals, hot showers, beds in a recently renovated hiker hostel, and a 10% discount to ATC members and members of local hiking clubs on hiking gear, food, clothing, books, and gift products.

Blairsville and Union County became an official Appalachian Trail Community™ in March 2011. The Appalachian Trail Community™ designation is a program of the ATC, the nonprofit organization responsible for management and protection of the estimated 2,180-mile Appalachian National Scenic Trail. The program recognizes communities for their part in promoting awareness of the Appalachian Trail as an important local and national asset. Organizations and businesses that help build public awareness about the significant resources and economic opportunities the A.T. brings to A.T. Communities, help leverage and strengthen ATC's ability to protect it.

"The Appalachian Trail Conservancy is excited about the new A.T. Supporter initiative. We are strengthening relationships with those giving back to the Trail, and thanking those businesses and organizations with certificates, decals and media attention," states Julie Judkins, ATC Community Program Manager.

Designation as an Appalachian Trail Community™ and participation in the program is aimed to: engage community residents, trail visitors, and stewards. Thank communities for their decades of service to hikers. Act as a catalyst for sustainable economic development. Aid municipalities and regional areas with conservation planning initiatives. Promote the Trail as a community resource and asset.

The ATC was founded in 1925 by volunteers and federal officials working to build a continuous footpath along the Appalachian Mountains. The A.T. is a unit of the National Park System, stretching from Georgia to Maine, at approximately 2,180 miles in length. It is the longest hiking-only footpath in the world. Volunteers typically donate more than 220,000 hours of their time doing trail-related work each year, and between 2 and 3 million visitors walk a portion of the A.T. each year.

To find out more about Blairsville or the Blairsville-Union County A.T. Community, visit: [www.appalachiantrail.org/what-we-do/community-engagement/appalachian-trail-communities/blairsville---union-county-ga](http://www.appalachiantrail.org/what-we-do/community-engagement/appalachian-trail-communities/blairsville---union-county-ga).

# Bowling Scores

Monday Night Ladies: Shae Roberts 232, 211, 191 Series 634; Amber Gilbert 228.

Monday Night Mens: Bob Brown 202, Ranny Jones 203, 233, Richard Tanner 202, 210, Mike Davis 257, Dave Davis 203, 247, 220 Series 670, Jim McCreary 202, 223, 235 Series 660, Gary Brown 215, Ken Sampson 200, Taz Matezschk 222, BJ Gilbert 247, 234, 180 Series

661, Russ Southcott 248, John Stevens 193, 246, 222 Series 661, Ryan Deaton 226, 240, 223, Series 689, Bill Smith 202, Ron Wingate 211, Larry Canaan 221, Delaj DeJoseph 203, 235, Austin Hedden 212, 212, Joe Teague 240, 215, 196, Series 651, Derrick Rice 192, 227, 200 Series 619.

Young @ Heart: Helen Mack 193, Max Puett 211, Ron Weppelman 205.

Thursday Night Fun Mixed:

Ray Everett 235, 300, 226 Series 761, Russ Southcott 205, 259, Ken Clark 228, 200, Daniel Brown 202, Jeb Plott 226, 269, 216 Series 711, Curtis Com 244, Bill Smith 227, Mike Davis 214, Larry Canaan 245, Bob Landis 205, Denise Baldwin 221, Zach Moore 238, Tim Moore 205, 236, 224, Dewey Allen 205, 200, Tony Lynch 255, Sarah Chumbley 204, Johnathan Everett 234, Michael Whitehead 203, Taz Matezschk 234, 200, 204.

## Union County Recreation's Christmas CLASH

**December 20/21, 2013**

**Friday night**

Rec Gym - 302 School Cir Rd

5:30 10UB White Co VS Heat

6:30 10UB White Co VS Runnin' Wild

7:30 10UB White Co VS Gremlins

**Friday night**

Rubber Gym - 310 Wellborn St

5:30 10UG White Co VS Heat

6:30 10UG White Co VS Lady Dawgs

7:30 12UG White Co VS Rising Stars

**Saturday**

Rec Gym - 302 School Cir Rd

10:00 10UB Towns VS Yetis

11:00 10UB Towns VS Tar Heels

12:00 10UG Towns VS Panthers

1:00 10UG Towns VS Shooting Stars

**Saturday**

Rubber Gym - 310 Wellborn St

10:00 12UB Towns VS Tar Heels

11:00 12UB Fannin Co. VS Trotters

12:00 12UB Fannin Co. VS Dawgs

1:00 12UB Fannin Co VS Heat

2:00 12UB Fannin Co VS Panthers

3:00 12UG Towns Co VS Heat

4:00 12UG Towns Co VS Fast Break

Entrance into any of the games is a non-perishable food item or a cash donation. All food and money collected will go to assist the Union County Food Bank.