

## THE ART OF RACING

ART  
LARSON

## Bowyer snaps drought

For the first time in 25 years, a Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Race was postponed for snow. The Camping World NASCAR Truck race on Saturday was stopped 15 laps into the race when the snow arrived. Six inches of snow fell causing NASCAR to postpone Sunday's Cup race until Monday.

Qualifying was cancelled so the starting lineup was determined by points, giving Martin Truex Jr. the pole award. Three cars dominated most of the STP 500 race. Clint Bowyer led 215 laps (including the last 214) and won the race. Denny Hamlin was strong early, leading 111 laps and winning stage 1. Ryan Blaney led 145 laps and won stage 2.

Bowyer's victory ended a 190 Cup winless streak and was his first Martinsville win. The Martinsville trophy is a huge grandfather clock, one of the most desired trophies on the NASCAR circuit. "I wanted that clock," Bowyer said. "Something just felt right about today. To make sure it happened at this track, I tell you, it meant a lot to me to put it all together. It's one I felt I've lost way more than I've ever gained.

Martinsville Speedway is the shortest track the Cup cars race on and you can usually expect lots of banging, spins, and crashes during the 500 laps. Monday's race saw only four caution flags. The first was a competition caution, the next two were for the end of the two stages. The only caution for an on-track incident came on lap 385 when Austin Dillon and Jamie McMurray got together. Of the 38 cars entered in the race, only Landon Cassill dropped out of the race (gear problems). Another oddity for the race was that the 10 cars in the top 10 for stage 1 were the same 10 cars in the top 10 for stage 2, although not in the same order. Only 14 cars finished on the lead lap including all four Stewart-Haas Racing cars.

One of the changes NASCAR has made for 2018 is that all teams will use a NASCAR-issued air gun. Upper level teams were spending thousands of dollars more than the lower level teams for air guns, so NASCAR felt they had to even the playing field. So far this year, there has been a malfunction of some kind affecting one or more teams. Whether that's due to user error or product malfunction is up for debate. Joe Gibbs Racing driver Daniel Suarez had an air gun break in half causing him to lose valuable time on a pit stop.

NASCAR takes this week off. The next Cup race is scheduled for April 8 at the Texas Motor Speedway.

# Pioneers sweep Stone

BY JEFFERY SIMMONS  
Sports Editor for the Southern Standard  
(McMinnville, Tennessee)

Brooms came out Tuesday when the Pioneer baseball team made the trip to Crossville.

Warren County completed a sweep of Stone Memorial, winning 12-1 against the Panthers in District 6AAA play.

Jack Keele dominated on the mound, going six innings and striking out nine while allowing just one run on four hits. Braden Bottoms powered the offense with a 4-for-5 day, while Brooks Helton added four RBIs.

"We took care of business. Jack threw the ball really well," said Warren County coach Trice Powers. "I think we can still improve some things. I thought we had a chance to end it early.

"As we move along, I think we'll need to work on making sure we close out games when the opportunity arrives. Right now, we're hoping to carry our momentum forward."

Warren County (5-6) followed the same script in its first two wins over the Panthers, using big innings after slow starts to break open close games and win 10-0 and 12-2, both in five innings. On Tuesday, the Pioneers got off to a quick start.

The first five Pioneer batters reached base, with the first run coming on an error and the second scoring on an RBI single by Bottoms.



Jeffery Simmons photo

Jack Keele, pitching in a home game last week, threw six strong innings to get the win Tuesday in Crossville. The Pioneers completed a three-game sweep of Stone Memorial with a 12-2 victory.

Continued on 2B



Jeffery Simmons photos

Mary-Ella Lee was a bright spot for the WCHS tennis team Tuesday. Lee played a lengthy singles match, prevailing in a tiebreaker against Cookeville's Kat Livingston.

## WCHS tennis teams toppled

BY JEFFERY SIMMONS  
Sports Editor for the Southern Standard  
(McMinnville, Tennessee)

Mary-Ella Lee's singles match turned into a test of will against Cookeville's Kat Livingston.

Lee had to go to a tiebreaker to defend home court, winning 9-8 (7-2) after missing several times on potential match points.

Lee's win was a rare highlight for the Warren County High School tennis team, which lost 8-1 and 8-1 on the boys and girls side to the visiting Cavaliers and Lady Cavaliers.

"We're still working to grow our program," said coach John Upchurch. "We're really young. A lot of our top players are freshmen or sophomores. I think we have a lot of room to improve this year and beyond."

Lee and Livingston had already taken part in doubles matches, which only added to the fatigue when their singles match stretched into a tiebreaker. Lee used her strong serve to pepper her opponent and build leads, but Livingston was up to the challenge with perfect returns late to stave off a loss.

Service ended up being the difference in the tiebreaker. In a race to seven points, Livingston had two double faults, including the match-deciding point. Lee and Livingston both exited



Dalton Bates won his singles match against Cookeville.

the court exhausted, but the Lady Pioneer sophomore got to rest with a win.

Dalton Bates, the No. 1 singles player for the Pioneers, had the only other win for Warren County. Bates defeated Alex Groundland 8-6.

Serving was also vital to victory for Bates, who has an unorthodox serve that adds side spin. Bates had a handful of aces while taking down Cookeville's top singles player.

Continued on 2B

**McMINNVILLE CITY EASTER EGG HUNT**  
**March 31st at The Jungle Jym**

6:00pm: 3 yrs & under  
6:30pm: 4-6 yrs  
7:00pm: 7-10 yrs  
7:30pm: 11-14 yrs

\* Please Bring Your Own Bag or Basket  
\* Flashlights are encouraged

ADMISSION: \$3  
ADVANCE TICKETS : \$2

500 Garfield Street | McMinnville Civic Center | 931-473-1212

