

THE ART OF RACING

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Shining light on All-Stars

Once again aerodynamics was the key for success at a "cookie-cutter" track. Fords continued to show the way with Kevin Harvick winning for the fifth time in 12 races this year. The race was very uneventful as the cars just circled the track without incident for the first 237 laps. The first caution for an incident on the track came with only 30 laps remaining.

They say that cautions breed cautions and that was true in Kansas. Three cautions for incidents occurred in the last 30 laps. After the final caution, Truex Jr. jumped out to a big lead but Harvick eventually ran him down, passing Truex, as they raced to the white flag. Matt Kenseth's return to the Cup Series did not go as planned. He had difficulty getting through pre-qualifying inspection, preventing him from even attempting a qualifying run. Kenseth struggled with the car all night, getting lapped early, and then getting involved in the last crash of the race.

The Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series returns Saturday night to the Charlotte Motor Speedway to hold its version of an All-Star race. NASCAR tries to make the race interesting for the fans by making changes to the race. This year, the major change will be restrictor plates. Aero changes to be used were inspired by the package presented in the 2017 NASCAR Xfinity Series race at Indianapolis Motor Speedway, a race that brought a record number of lead changes and received much positive feedback from fans. The format will be no different than for a normal race. Hopefully, restrictor plates will work to make the race exciting.

The race is not a points-race, but the teams will compete for a \$1 million purse.

The race will be broken down into four stages. Stage One will be 30 laps, Stages Two and Three are both 20 laps, and the final stage will be a 10-lap dash. Only green-flag laps will be counted in the final stage. The most noteworthy change being that all stages will feature overtime rules if necessary to the finish.

There will be no mandatory pit stops, no inversions of the running order or eliminations, and there will be no choice of alternate tire compounds. The rules of All-Star race eligibility will remain unchanged. The race will include race winners from after the 2017 All-Star race, and in 2018 to date. Also included are previous All-Star race winners, series champions who are otherwise not eligible, three stage winners in the Monster Energy Open qualifying race and the winner of the fan vote.

Surging in the spring

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

Perfection on the gridiron is a constant pursuit. The Pioneers have been at work for the last three weeks in hopes of improving for the 2018 season.

Only time will tell if the hard work put in during this May heat will bear fruit this fall.

"We've had a good spring," said WCHS coach Tom Moore. "Every coach says they want to evaluate what they have and see who has improved over the offseason. We're no different from anybody else."

"We've had some fresh faces we wanted to look at. There's some players who will step into new roles."

The Pioneers were set to end the spring with a scrimmage against Grundy County Friday at Nunley Stadium, but the clash had to be cancelled.



Jeffery Simmons photo
Jonathon Duenas reaches out to catch a pass during spring practice for the Pioneers. Warren County will conclude its spring Friday, the final day of a 10-workout schedule over the last three weeks.

Continued on 2B



File photo
Over 200 runners will descend on downtown Viola Saturday for the seventh annual Viola Valley Half Marathon. Jimmy Carroll Martin Jr. is shown here doing the airplane during last year's event.

Ready, set, GO!!!

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

Runners can finally rejoice. The long wait is almost over.

The seventh annual Viola Valley Half Marathon, one of the most popular races in Warren County each year, is set for Saturday at 7 a.m. Over 200 runners are already registered, with race organizers encouraging late additions to the field.

"We're capable of having a field of over 350," said Kevin Deason, one of the race organizers. "We have plenty of spots still available."

The field already has registered runners from 11 states, some coming from as far as Hawaii, Colorado and Wyoming. It's not a shock to race organizers, who over the years have seen the allure of the scenic course warm the hearts of runners.

"We've pretty well marked

off all 50 states over the last seven years," said Deason. "People love the valley, love the course and love to run."

In a crowded field of competitive runners, last year's top female finisher came from McMinnville. Anne Myers, a recent Boston Marathon participant, finished the 13.1-mile course in 1:42:33. Winchester resident Eric Shull is the defending overall winner, blistering the route – which loops through parts of Warren, Coffee and Grundy Counties – in 1:21:39.

Registration links can be found on the event's Facebook page. The cost is \$50. Event organizers will register runners on site Saturday morning, but encourage any last-minute signups to arrive early.

"We'll be set up under the grandstands at 5:30 a.m. to take in any walk-ups for the race," said Deason.

The race is set to begin with a shotgun start at 7 a.m.

Teams look to restock talent

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

It's been a banner year for Warren County High School sports. Five trips to region, along with four more state qualifiers, have given Pioneer fans plenty to cheer.

Preparations for an encore are beginning in the next few weeks. Tryouts are being set in search of the next crop of talent.

Friday, May 25 will be a big day for prospective Lady Pioneers. The girls soccer team will hold tryouts from 10-11:30 a.m., while the Lady Pioneer basketball team will audition players from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at Char-

lie Dalton Gym. The volleyball team is also set to pick its roster the same day, with tryouts set for 1-2:30 p.m.

The boys basketball team will also hold freshman tryouts Friday, May 25 from noon to 1:30 p.m. in the auxiliary gym.

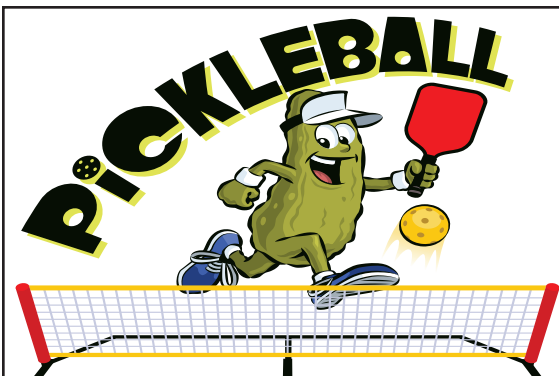
Fresh off a region trip, coach Gooby Martin will look to restock the softball team on Tuesday, June 5. The tryout will be open to current high school students from 5-6:30 p.m. Upcoming freshmen will take the field at WCHS from 6:30-8 p.m.

The baseball team will wait until the summer, with the tryout dates currently scheduled on July 23-25.

Hammering away



Jeffery Simmons photo
Kyle Fowler looks in a pitch during Wednesday's co-ed softball league at McMinnville Civic Center. Fowler powered Sheer Madness to a victory, finishing with three hits.



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