

Old Town hosts Belfast in quest for playoff spot

There is likely to be playoff intensity on Friday night at Victory Field in Old Town as the Old Town Coyotes battle the Belfast Lions in the BDN Game of the Week.

BDN GAME OF THE WEEK

The Coyotes (2-2) and the Lions (1-3) are trying to stay in the hunt for one of six postseason spots up for grabs in the Class B

North football ranks. The Bangor Daily News and SportsNet Maine will be there to present their fourth live streamed game of the season.

The games, which are sponsored by Quirk Auto Group, can be watched at bangordailynews.com/gameoftheweek, starting with the pregame show at about 6:45 p.m.

Fans later can watch a 60-sec-

ond game recap with video highlights. The games are rebroadcast from 8 to 10 p.m. Tuesday on Time Warner Cable, Channel 9. Archived games also are available under "SNME" at driveshow-maine.com and via TWC/Charter local video on demand.

The most recent BDN Game of the Week was Brewer's 54-41 shoot-out win over Skowhegan.

The Sept. 9 game also featured Brewer, which registered a 33-2 victory over Mt. Blue of Farmington.

The Sept. 2 game featured two-time defending Class B regional champion Brunswick's 54-20 victory at Hampden Academy.

The rest of the 2016 football live streaming schedule is as follows:

— Sept. 30: Belfast at Old Town, 7 p.m.

— Oct. 7: Winslow at Foxcroft Academy, 7 p.m.

— Oct. 14: Orono at Maine Central Institute, 7 p.m.

— Oct. 21: Old Town at MDI, 7 p.m.

Games are subject to change. Follow the BDN on Facebook or Twitter, or check this page, for any updates.

BDN Football Forecast	Bob Cimbollek GUEST	Pete Warner STAFF	Joe McLaughlin STAFF	Ryan McLaughlin STAFF	Ernie Clark STAFF	Larry Mahoney STAFF	The Drive SEASON GUEST	John Holyoke STAFF	Your Picks READER
Belfast at Old Town	14-28	12-7	12-30	6-20	20-21	14-21	12-24	12-17	
Brewer at Cony	36-12	23-13	27-14	28-14	35-14	22-14	47-14	34-13	
Brunswick at Skowhegan	27-21	31-27	21-20	31-14	38-24	27-20	34-22	32-21	
Bucksport at Mount View	14-21	13-14	12-14	7-6	7-20	13-14	8-36	14-20	
Hermon at Foxcroft	6-35	13-20	14-28	13-14	6-24	12-20	14-27	21-24	
Houlton at MCI	12-35	8-29	10-30	6-30	12-32	20-31	0-48	8-30	
Lawrence at Hampden	21-14	12-15	24-12	7-6	28-27	18-14	24-8	24-21	
MDI at John Bapst	21-12	27-7	17-7	21-6	22-8	20-12	32-6	22-14	
Mt. Blue at Gardiner	13-27	7-8	14-16	14-6	7-6	22-16	18-12	13-14	
Old Orchard at Medomak	30-21	18-14	21-14	14-6	14-12	12-14	12-24	20-17	
Orono at Mattanawcook	28-21	27-6	17-16	14-7	28-14	19-12	36-14	27-14	
South Portland at Bangor	21-14	28-7	24-12	21-6	14-12	15-14	41-14	22-7	
Stearns/Lee at Washington Ad.	20-21	12-7	13-14	6-14	6-12	20-21	23-8	12-7	
Ellsworth/Sumner at Dexter	6-24	13-22	17-28	6-28	8-24	21-30	8-17	12-27	
Madison/Carrabec at Waterville	35-12	27-6	21-14	28-6	30-6	21-12	24-8	27-12	
Messalonskee at Nokomis	35-12	21-7	28-8	28-14	28-7	22-14	32-8	20-12	
Oceanside at Winslow	7-28	12-31	7-27	13-21	14-17	22-30	12-32	8-28	
Bryant at UMaine	14-42	17-24	12-28	14-24	35-42	24-31	14-27	14-27	
Husson at SUNY Maritime	28-14	23-14	27-12	31-17	27-20	24-14	32-12	34-24	
Maine Maritime at Coast Guard	27-7	51-50	21-14	28-27	33-16	27-28	32-16	28-21	
LAST WEEK	13-7*	13-7	14-6	15-5	14-6	12-8	12-8	12-8	
SEASON	60-20*	63-17	63-17	63-17	60-20	57-23	56-24	56-24	
PERCENTAGE (*combined guests)	.750*	.788	.788	.788	.750	.725	.700	.700	

Things are heating up in the competition among Bangor Daily News staffers as the 51st BDN Football Forecast reaches the halfway point of the 2016 football season.

Ryan McLaughlin made the best of a testy week with a 15-5 effort to pick up two games on leader Pete Warner (13-7) and pull into a three-way tie along with Joe

McLaughlin, who went 14-6.

Two-time defending staff champion Ernie Clark sits only three games out of the lead.

Week 4 guest Greg Hirsch of Bangor had a respectable 13-7 card.

This week's guest is retired high school basketball coach and athletic director Bob Cimbollek.

Cimbollek, a member of

the New England Basketball Hall of Fame, coached his high school basketball teams at Orono, Bangor and John Bapst to five state titles, six Eastern Maine crowns and a 446-161 record in 29 seasons.

He was a standout player at Bangor High School and went on to star at Husson University, which retired his No. 12 jersey last year.

Hartung

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campaign but the team never reached the College World Series.

"There was so many fond memories of those teams," Hartung said.

Hartung went on to get drafted by the Chicago Cubs and batted .331 with 11 home runs and 70 RBIs in his first season in the New York-Penn League. Hartung's 70 RBIs topped all New York-

Penn league players in 1990.

After splitting time between the Low-A Midwest League and the High-A Carolina League in 1991, Hartung belted 23 homers and knocked in 94 runs while hitting .278 in the Carolina League in 1992, playing the same league as former Boston Red Sox slugger and 2004 World Series MVP Manny Ramirez.

Injuries would plague Hartung after the 1992 season. He got as high as Double-A ball before spending some time in independent leagues.

Hartung's playing days ended after the 1995 season, and he is now a private hitting instructor in Massachusetts.

He admitted to playing through arm pain for most of his career.

"My injuries started in high school," Hartung said. "I had pain in my arm from high school on, and I didn't tell anybody. I thought everybody threw with excruciating pain in their arms."

Follow Ryan McLaughlin on Twitter at [rmclaughlin23](https://twitter.com/rmclaughlin23).

Eaton

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He also led UMaine to the first NCAA postseason victory in the program's history, a 14-10 victory over McNeese State in 2001, a game nobody expected the Black Bears to win, except themselves.

"That was the thing about our team, we were so tough mentally and physically," Eaton said. "We weren't intimidated by anybody."

That team also put UMaine's football program back in the national limelight.

"Just being with the guys, we really had a special group, and it was a special time," Eaton said. "We kind of just wanted to be that group to bring Maine back on the map."

UMaine also triumphed in the NCAA playoffs over Appalachian State Eaton's senior year, but he did not play because of an injury.

The 2001 Black Bears earned a share of the 2001 Atlantic 10 championship with Hofstra, Villanova and William and Mary en route to the program's first NCAA postseason berth since 1989.

Coach Jack Cosgrove's Black Bears subsequently trekked to Lake Charles, Louisiana, and upset McNeese State before falling in the following round to Northern Iowa in a game in which Eaton set six UMaine playoff passing records.

The following year, UMaine again shared the Atlantic 10 title, this time with Northeastern, and despite Eaton being out with an injury, the Black Bears went on the road and defeated Appalachian State in the NCAA playoffs.

The Black Bears fell to Georgia State in their following game.

In addition to his 28 victories, Eaton set a team record for completion percentage (65.9) as a sophomore.

The native of Rutland, Vermont, would finish his

career with 58 touchdown passes and 19 rushing touchdowns, success he attributes to longtime coach Cosgrove.

"He's the reason I went to Maine," Eaton said. "He led by example ... [and] our strengths were toughness, hard work, and that came from [Cosgrove]."

"He means the world to me," he added.

Eaton's 58 touchdown passes rank him fourth all-time in the history of the program, and his 7,145 passing yards have him fourth in Black Bear history.

Eaton's career completion percentage (59.5) has him third on the Black Bears' all-time list.

Eaton spent some time playing in Arena football, and he has returned to Rutland, where he coaches boys basketball and serves as an athletic administrator at nearby Proctor High School. His teams have won back-to-back state championships.

Follow Ryan McLaughlin on Twitter at [rmclaughlin23](https://twitter.com/rmclaughlin23).

Race

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on which the state championship meets will be contested on Oct. 29.

Mount Desert Island senior Tia Tardy will be one of the individual favorites in the girls race. She is coming off a dominating performance at the Sectional Invitational in Old Town on Saturday, besting her nearest competitor by nearly 50 seconds.

Tardy will have plenty of competition up front, including Abigail Hamilton of Yarmouth, Katherine Leg-

gat-Barr of Greely of Cumberland Center, Julia Dempsey and Ana O'Callaghan of Cumberland, Rhode Island, Malaika Pasch of Falmouth, Greely's Carolyn Todd, Yarmouth's Anneka Murrin, Tori Fitzpatrick of Colonel Gray (Nova Scotia) and Augusta Stockman of Camden Hills of Rockport.

Orono, which finished second in the 2015 festival and is unbeaten this fall, is expected to be among the team favorites, along with Yarmouth, Falmouth, Greely and Cumberland, Rhode Island.

The boys race also fea-

tures a wide-open field, with Luke Laverdiere of Yarmouth and Hampden Academy's Wyatt Lord expected to be at the front of the pack.

Maine's challengers include Mt. Blue of Farmington's Tucker Barber, Jeremiah Sands of Falmouth, Westbrook's Josh Lombardo, Ben Breton of Windham, Nicholas Dall of Waterville, Demeke Geremew of the Hyde School of Bath and Gabe Coffey of Bangor.

Defending meet champion Scarborough will be among the team favorites again this fall, along with Cumberland, Rhode Island.

Sudbeck

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so we're going to have to really focus on being fundamental."

Among other Week 5 games:

South Portland Red Riots (1-3) at Bangor Rams (0-4), 7 p.m. Friday: Bangor scored an overtime victory over the Red Riots in last year's meeting, and each badly needs a win to retain any Class A playoff aspirations.

Brewer Witches (4-0) vs. Cony Rams (1-3), 7 p.m. Friday at Augusta: The unbeaten Witches, fresh from a wild 54-41 victory over Skowhegan, must be careful not to look past the Rams with a showdown at two-time defending Class B North champion Brunswick just a week away.

Hermon Hawks (2-2) vs.

Foxcroft Academy Ponies (2-2), 7 p.m. Friday at Dover-Foxcroft: A Class C North crossroads game finds Hermon seeking to rebound from two straight losses and Foxcroft looking to extend its winning streak to three games.

Belfast Lions (1-3) at Old Town Coyotes (2-2), 7 p.m. Friday: Similar playoff implications shadow this contest, with both teams needing a win to enhance their chances for a top-six finish in Class C North. This is the BDN Game of the Week sponsored by Quirk Auto Group, and may be watched at bangordailynews.com/gameoftheweek starting with the pregame show at about 6:45 p.m.

Orono Red Riots (4-0) vs. Mattanawcook Academy Lynx (1-3), 7 p.m. Friday at Lincoln: Orono has averaged more than 40 points a game but must continue to focus week to week with

back-to-back battles looming against fellow Class D North unbeaten Maine Central Institute of Pittsfield and Dexter in Weeks 7 and 8.

Ellsworth/Sumner Eagles (1-3) at Dexter Tigers (4-0), 1 p.m. Saturday: A Dexter defense that has yielded just one touchdown in each of its first four games tries to stay on track against an Ellsworth/Sumner team coming off its first victory. The Tigers must be careful not to think ahead to next Saturday's showdown with two-time defending LTC champion MCI.

Oceanside Mariners (3-1) at Winslow Black Raiders (3-1), 1 p.m. Saturday: Coach Wes Drinkwater's Oceanside club is riding high with three straight wins but must withstand what should be an emotional Winslow team coming off its first loss since the 2013 Class C state final.

Stewart

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on four tires during the spate of cautions at the end of the race, Stewart failed to advance. Now his season looks to be going numb.

Last year, four-time champion Jeff Gordon needed a miracle to advance to the championship finale at the Homestead-Miami Speedway before retiring from full-time participation in the Sprint Cup. He got one.

Matt Kenseth intentionally wrecked leader Joey Logano at the Martinsville Speedway late in the race, which enabled Gordon, running a distant second, to win and advance.

Gordon, who will race at Dover as a substitute for the concussed and sidelined Dale Earnhardt, Jr., had a much different swan song season than Stewart. Gordon was booed early in his career for breaking the good ol' mold of NASCAR drivers by favoring video games and running shoes over hunting, fishing and cowboy boots. But he eventually became a fan favorite due to an even-keeled personality and was recognized for having helped NASCAR grow by bringing in younger fans and female fans by the legions.

Three-time champion Stewart, by contrast, has been booed occasionally and still gets reamed in the online comments section.

The specter of a wrongful death civil suit over the incident on a New York short track where a young driver high on marijuana stepped in front of his car on a dark track remains, especially for the vast anti-Stewart segment of Sprint Cup fans.

At least Stewart's had an eventful season that has re-focused him on his stock car career. First, Stewart advanced his retirement plans by join-

ing several fellow retired racing drivers in an off-road excursion during the winter and suffered a burst fracture in his back while on an ATV.

Even before returning, Stewart stirred up a hornets' nest by declaring NASCAR's lug nut rules unsafe. He was fined \$35,000 for popping off, but NASCAR agreed the safety was out of whack and changed its rules.

Then came the Sonoma victory, which included a brilliant closing stint to beat Denny Hamlin, who suffered sheet metal damage in the process. Alas, the last race in the regular season also saw Stewart trade sheet metal with Ryan Newman in a fit of pique that wrecked quite a few other team owners' cars. This was the Tony Stewart that fans love or loathe. And to think, he and Newman considered themselves friends.

As a team co-owner, Stewart also continues to stir the drink.

His drivers Kevin Harvick and Kurt Busch, have been two of the most consistent on the circuit and have won four races between them. By winning at New Hampshire, Harvick has automatically advanced to the Round of 12. Busch, meanwhile, is 26 points ahead of Stewart and two positions above the cutline in 11th place. Only Danica Patrick has been a disappointment behind the wheel of an SHR Chevy.

Stewart and co-owner Gene Haas are already winners in 2017, having been awarded factory team status by Ford, which means a great leap forward in technical support. The team will no longer rely on Hendrick Motorsports to build its chassis and instead will develop its own technology in-house from the ground up, a process already under way this very successful last season with Chevy.

Which Tony will show up at Dover?

Ryan

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"The rushing attack, let's just say there's going to be more options and all that. The main thing is just stopping what they do," he said.

Ryan is willing to deal with that uncertainty because the bottom line is that Brady will be watching from his living room couch.

"They're going to game plan specific for the quarterback, so we understand that, and we'll be prepared," Ryan said. "It might take a little more time than normally what it would, but I'd rather do that than face Tom Brady, so I'm OK with it."

The Bills know who their quarterback is going to be, and if they are going to pull off the upset, Tyrod Taylor has to be more effective than he has been the first three weeks of the season.

Last week in the win over Arizona, Taylor passed for only 119 yards, and the Bills have to get more from their

passing game, especially against an opponent such as New England.

One thing coach Bill Belichick of the Patriots specializes in is taking away a team's primary strength, and there's no doubt that with wide receiver Sammy Watkins possibly out again, the Bills will have to rely on LeSean McCoy and their running game.

If the Patriots shut that down, Taylor has to have a big game.

"Our passing attack, we haven't had a whole lot of success," Ryan said. "We've thrown some deep balls which is good, but we need to be more consistent in the passing game."

SERIES HISTORY: 113th regular-season meeting. Patriots lead, 69-42-1. New England has beaten up on the Bills like no team ever has, winning 23 of the last 25. The Patriots are 14-1 all-time at Gillette Stadium against the Bills. The only Buffalo victory came in 2014 when Tom Brady played only the first quarter and was replaced by Jimmy Garoppolo.

One of the keys to the Bills'

The one who sulks and walks away from a poor race with no comment — or the extraordinary wheelman who has made political incorrectness popular long before Donald Trump's current campaign — but with occasional bouts of real grace and humor?

Harvick suggests that you should never count Stewart out.

"Everybody bet against Tony to even make the Chase," said Harvick. "I think you look at Dover, it's a race track that — he can go to any race track and win."

Harvick has pounded on the door of victory lane all season and been admitted three times. Stewart needed a break to get into the lead at Sonoma, a road course where the lower downforce package is less a problem than on ovals due to the different corner entries required for left and right turns. On the ovals, he hasn't performed nearly as well or consistently as Harvick and Busch, who has one victory.

The good news is that Stewart will continue in the sport and very likely be involved in more championships and certainly more victories. He may even have a few more run-ins with NASCAR Chairman and CEO Brian France when he speaks his mind instead of following the unwritten rules of the new Charter system. Stewart-Haas Racing will undoubtedly heat up the Ford versus Chevrolet wars and maybe even cool off the dominance of the Toyotas.

But will he advance past Dover and crash the Chase? Even if a driver above the cutline hits some dire straits, Stewart will have to raise his game on a high-banked mile oval while finessing speed out of the current low downforce package.

Those are long odds, but not the kind that have ever intimidated Stewart.

sterling defensive performance against the Arizona Cardinals was the use of seven defensive backs in several packages which had Arizona quarterback Carson Palmer confused. The Bills sacked Palmer five times and intercepted four of his passes — two by Stephon Gilmore and one each by Corey White and Corey Graham.

Ryan said he has used seven defensive backs in the past, but what made this different is that he had four safeties on the field — Aaron Williams, Corey Graham, Duke Williams and Robert Blanton. "I don't think we have ever used the four safeties, though," Ryan said. "That was something I thought would give us a better opportunity to free someone up, maybe change the count up a little bit. So it worked out pretty good."

"A lot of pressure on the back end to learn those spots and quite honestly, we were going to have Colt Anderson back up a bunch of things, but then he couldn't go later in the week. Our guys did a really good job mentally in preparing for that system," he said.