

Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports



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Indians take it on the chin in losses at Rabun County and Dawson County

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The comparatively very young Class A Towns County Indians Varsity Basketball Team had tough assignments last Friday and Saturday in traveling to take on the Wildcats of Rabun County and the Tigers of Dawson County with both being members of Region 8AA and with significant recent success on the basketball court. Both of their opponents had their way with the Indians as Rabun took an 89-39 victory on Friday and Dawson followed with a 64-22 win on Saturday.

Indians at Rabun County Tiger - Three field goals by Brandon Henderson had the Indians within 13-6 by the 2:36 mark of the first quarter at Rabun County but the home standing Wildcats finished the quarter on a 10-0 run for a 23-6 lead and extended the margin to 38-8 by the 4:38 mark of the second quarter.

The Indians' most effective run of the game came during the final four and a half minutes of the second quarter. Grant Arenecibia sank treys at the 4:22 and 3:01 marks and assisted Stetson Hedden on a field goal at 1:24 with Aaron Dodson following with four for four free throw shooting as Rabun held just a 15-12 advantage during the run and holding a 53-20 lead at intermission.

Henderson contributed four points in each of the final two quarters but Rabun held a 74-31 lead after three quarters and sank four treys in the mercy rule shortened fourth quarter in taking the 89-39 victory.

Scoring leaders for the game for the Indians were Henderson with 14 points, Arenecibia with 9 and Brett Barrett with 6. Leading in assists were Rylan Albach with 3 and Dallas Manus with 2.

Indians at Dawson County

Dawsonville - At Dawson County on Saturday, the home standing Tigers broke out to an 18-5 first quarter lead and held a 25-6 advantage before Grant Arenecibia sank two treys in just forty seconds for a 28-12 score at the 3:51 mark of the second quarter. The Tigers continued their onslaught, however, for a 40-13 lead at intermission.

Ryan Tallent sank two field goals in less than a minute at the start of the third quarter for a 40-17 score but the Tigers spurted away for a 52-17 lead after three quarters and a 64-22 victory.

Arenecibia led the Indians in scoring for the game with 10 points and fellow freshman Dallas Manus led in assists with 2 according to your reporter's unofficial tally.

The Indians have just one game this week, at High-



Rylan Albach drives to the net against Dawson Photo by James Reese.



Dallas Manus fires a jumper against Dawson. Photo by James Reese.



Aaron Dodson fires away against the Tigers. Photo by James Reese.



Ryan Tallent fires a shot against Dawson. Photo by James Reese.

lands, North Carolina, on Tuesday and they return to action next Tuesday at Hayesville. Their first regular season home

games will follow on Friday and Saturday, December 2 and 3 against Rabun County and Union County.

Lady Indians fall in epic battle at Rabun



Eryn Cochran set a modern era record for successful freethrows on Saturday. Photo by James Reese.

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Tiger - The Class A Towns County Lady Indians Varsity Basketball Team hit the road last Friday and Saturday for tough season opening battles at Class AA Rabun County and Class AA Dawson County with Dawson expected to be elevated to at least Class AAA next year. The Lady Indians would see the powerful Rabun Ladies pull away from a classic battle the final two minutes of the game for a 76-64 victory but they broke open a tough battle themselves in the closing minutes the following night for a 76-66 triumph at Dawson County.

Lady Indians at Rabun County

Perhaps some space should be used to set the stage for the confrontation across the mountains in Tiger last Friday between the Lady Indians of Towns County and the Lady Wildcats of Rabun County, two of the top high school girls' basketball powers in Northeast Georgia for the last several years. As most close followers of the Lady Indians know, they have won at least twenty games in each of the last five years, including an overall 103-19 record the last four with two Region 8A Tournament Championships and a State Final Four appearance included. They were eliminated in state tournament play by the eventual Class A state champion in three of the last five years, by the defending state champion in another, and by the state runner-up last year.

The Rabun County Ladies have also been a force in Northeast Georgia for the last five years with the last three being truly standout seasons. They have compiled a 79-8 record the last three years and captured the last two Region 8AA Tournament Championships. They have been eliminated the last three years in postseason by eventual state champion Buford in the Elite Eight round of the state tournament.

As for this year, the Lady Wildcats would appear to have a distinct advantage over the Lady Indians as they returned

a trey at the thirty two second mark.

The Lady Indians would not be denied, however, as Arenecibia sank two free throws, Cowart a field goal on an alert long pass from out of bounds by Ali Bleckley, and Stephanie Patton two free throws for a 74-62 lead at 17.5 seconds. Cochran added two additional charity tosses following and prior to a pair of pretty much uncontested Dawson field goals the final ten seconds for a 76-66 Lady Indian triumph.

When the air had cleared, the Lady Indians had not only sunk the 21 of 24 fourth quarter free throw attempts but 43 of 51 for the game with Cochran sinking 19 of 20. She sank her first 15 attempts and then four more after the 16th attempt was just a bit short, bouncing off the front of the rim.

The 19 made free throws surpass the known single game school record under full court rules of 17 held by first cousins Amy Allen (Silvey) and John Allen with Amy having reached that total in 20 attempts as a freshman against Commerce during the 1983 season and John sinking a perfect 17 for 17 against Banks County during his senior 2000 season.

Margie Gibson (Hooper) continues to hold the overall known school record of 24 free throws made in 29 attempts against Toccoa Falls under the old stationery half court rules in effect for girls through the 1970 season. Cochran's record setting performance will be addressed briefly in a separate article next week and be accompanied by a reprinting of an in depth study of free throw shooting at TCHS at the time of



Kellsie Cowart drives for a layup against Rabun County. Photo by James Reese.

every player from last year's squad which finished with a 27-4 record. The Lady Indians, on the other hand, lost not only two seniors, including four year standout Jordan Moss, to graduation but are missing four other productive players from last year's 27-2 Region 8A Championship Team. Included in this group is senior Kindle Moss, Jordan's first cousin, who missed the closing games of last season due to a shoulder injury and is currently rehabbing from surgery back in July. She hopes to receive clearance from her doctor to return to action in early December. Apologies are extended to Kindle from your reporter who did not realize she had the surgery when writing last week's newspaper article.

At any rate, the Lady Wildcats may have had a decided edge "on paper", in being the significantly larger school, having all players back from last year, and in playing on their home court but games are decided on the court and the Lady Indians quickly showed they had come to play.

The Lady Indians drew first blood, taking a 3-0 lead on a trey by Gabby Arenecibia just twenty five seconds into the game, for what turned out to be their biggest lead of the quarter, and the race was on. The biggest first quarter Rabun lead was 8-5 with just two first quarter ties at 10-10 and 14-14 but an incredible fourteen lead changes with the Lady Indians leading 21-20 at quarter's end on a pull up jumper by Eryn Cochran with five seconds on the clock. Arenecibia and Dadrion Blythe led the Lady Indians in first quarter scoring with nine and five points respectively.

There would be two more ties and seven additional lead changes in the second quarter but with the Lady Indians leading this time by as much as five at 27-22 and the Lady Wildcats by as much as six at 33-27. Each team battled back from those deficits and with the Lady Wildcats scoring six points in the final minute of the half for a 41-36 lead at intermission. Cochran and Stephanie Patton, a freshman playing in her first official varsity game, contributed five points each during the quarter.

The Lady Indians struck for the first eight points of the third quarter for a 44-41 lead by

John Allen's 17 for 17 performance.

In the Dawson County game, the Lady Indians were led in scoring by Arenecibia with 22 points, Cochran with 21, Cowart with 12, Stephanie Patton with 11, and Lindsay Patton with 6. Leading in assists were Cochran with 3 and Bleckley with 2. Other Lady Indians contributing heavily to the red hot free throw shooting were Arenecibia and Stephanie Patton with 7 for 8 accuracy and Lindsay Patton who was a perfect 6 for 6. In fact, kudos are extended to Stephanie

Patton for 11 for 12 accuracy at the foul line in her first two varsity games when including the Rabun County contest. It's unlikely that many freshmen begin their careers with 91.7 percent accuracy in as many as 12 attempts at the foul line.

The Lady Indians have just one game scheduled for this week, at Highlands on Tuesday night. They then return to action at Hayesville next Tuesday and open their home season on Friday and Saturday, December 2 and 3 when they host Rabun and Union counties respectively.



Eryn Cochran runs the floor against the Lady Tigers. Photo by James Reese.

Lady Indians at Dawson County

In a game marked by astounding Lady Indian free throw shooting highlighted by a record setting performance at the charity stripe by Eryn Cochran, the Lady Indians overcame a very competent effort by a much improved Dawson County team in rallying during the last half for a 76-66 victory. Perhaps victimized by both a mental and physical letdown after the hard fought loss at Rabun County just one night earlier, the Lady Indians found themselves trailing by early scores of 6-0 and 10-2.

They rallied, largely as a result of 11 for 12 free throw shooting, including six for six by Cochran, to what would be their only tie of the first half at 18-18 on a trey by Gabby Arenecibia at the thirty five seconds mark of the first quarter. The Lady Tigers quickly regained the lead, however, for an 18-16 lead at quarter's end and included second quarter leads of 25-19, 26-25, and 34-27 before an Arenecibia trey reduced that latter margin to 34-30 at intermission. Arenecibia included a trey in providing five points in each of the first two quarters.

The third quarter brought about five ties and seven lead changes reminiscent of the



Gabby Arenecibia fires a trey against Dawson. Photo by James Reese.

first half at Rabun County with a last second trey giving the Lady Tigers a 50-49 lead entering the fourth quarter. Five different Lady Indians forced a tie or gave their team the lead in the third quarter with Stephanie Patton involved in three such occurrences and Arenecibia and Cochran two each. Arenecibia

included a trey among her team leading seven points in the quarter.

Two free throws by Cochran at the 7:18 mark of the fourth quarter not only gave the Lady Indians a lead they would not relinquish but a preview of an incredible fourth quarter for the Lady Indians. They would manage just three field goals by Kellsie Cowart but sink an unprecedented twenty one of twenty four free throw attempts as the Lady Tigers kept sending them to the foul line in what turned out to be a futile hope for enough misses for them to overtake the Lady Indians.

Although the Lady Indians got the quick fourth quarter lead they would not relinquish, most of their fourth quarter free throws were pressure packed as they never got more than a four point lead until by a 60-54 score at the 2:29 mark and the Lady Tigers were still knocking on the door by a 68-62 score on



Stephanie Patton Shoots a free throw against Dawson. Photo by James Reese.

Upward basketball is back!

Upward Basketball is back! Registration forms are available at the church office and at evaluations Tuesday, December 6th, 5:30-7:30 p.m., and Saturday, December 10th, 9-11 a.m. Evaluations will be held in the McConnell gym. Everyone must attend one basketball evaluation. The registration cost per child is \$65. Deadline for registration is December 10th. After December 10th, the cost is \$75. T(Nov23,H3)SH