



Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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Indians Fall to Hayesville and Union County

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It became a tough week for the Towns County Indians Varsity Basketball Team last week following a close battle the first half at Hayesville on Tuesday. The Yellow Jackets broke that game wide open the last half and the Indians fell victim to red hot 3-point shooting by Union County on Saturday in the TCHS gym, losing their fourth very difficult assignment of the season.

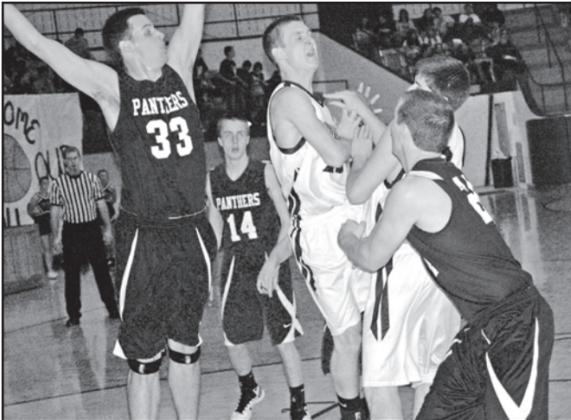
INDIANS FALL VICTIM IN GAME OF TWO DISTINCT HALVES – If the game at Hayesville could have somehow been limited to just the first half, the Indians would have come home with a tie and near victory. The last half turned out, however, to be their most difficult of this and most other seasons.

Field goals by Brett Bradshaw gave the Indians a 2-0 lead, reduced a 5-2 deficit to 5-4, and gave them a 6-5 lead in first quarter action but Hayesville held a 10-6 lead by quarter's end. The Indians tied the score at 10-10 less than a minute into the second quarter on baskets by Bradley Swanson and Devin Henderson, only to see the Yellow Jackets strike for seven straight points and a 17-10 lead by the mid point of the quarter.

The Indians rallied, themselves, however, for a 10-0 run and a 20-17 lead on baskets by Ryan

Tallent and DJ Rogers, a field goal and two free throws by Swanson, and a basket by Henderson in less than three minutes of playing time between the 3:42 and the fifty-one seconds mark of the second quarter. A Hayesville trey with just six seconds on the clock ended a long Yellow Jacket scoring drought of nearly four minutes for a 20-20 tie at intermission.

The unexplainable happened the last half for the Indians as they managed only a Corbin Gilfilian drive for two points early in the third quarter and a Rogers free throw in the fourth as the Jackets found numerous ways to score in breaking away for a 55-23 victory. As in the second quarter, the Jackets endured a long scoring drought between the 4:27 and 1:24 marks of the quarter with the score remaining at 35-22



Indians Bradley Swanson fights for a rebound against Union County.



Devin Henderson works the floor against Union County. Photo by Lowell Nicholson.

during that span of time but the Indians couldn't capitalize on their chances.

Scoring leaders for the game were Bradshaw and Swanson with 6 points each while Swanson led in assists with 2. Sophomore Indian JV Player Luke Parker made his varsity debut in the Hayesville game.

SHARP SHOOTING UNION TOO MUCH FOR INDIANS – The Towns County Indians Varsity Basketball Team faced its fourth straight formidable opponent last Saturday in the Towns County Gym in the Class AA Union County Panthers. The Panthers entered the game with a perfect 4-0 record with two wins over Class AAA White County, one over Class AAA Lumpkin County, and one over Class AA Jackson County.

They wasted little time in showing how they had achieved their earlier success by sinking five 3-point baskets with several from far behind the 3-point arc

in taking a 19-4 lead after one quarter. The two teams played on virtually even terms in the second quarter with Bradley Swanson scoring eight of eleven TCHS points as Union held a 31-15 lead at intermission.

The Indians continued to pretty much match the Panthers for the first two and a half minutes of the third quarter, trailing 38-21 before Union sank three straight treys in an 11-1 finish for a 49-21 lead at quarter's end. The Indians then outscored the Panthers 9-8 in the fourth quarter as Union finished a 59-31 victory. The Panthers sank 13 treys for 39 of their points with 9 deuces and 2 for 4 free throw shooting included in their other 20 points.

Swanson and Brett Bradshaw provided most of the point production for the Indians in the game with 17 and 10 points respectively while DJ Rogers led in assists with 2. Freshman Brett Barrett was promoted from the Indian JV's and made his varsity debut in this game.

Undefeated Lady Indians rally past Hayesville and Union County

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Hayesville, NC – A search of the varsity schedules of the past would likely reveal only rare occasions when the Towns County teams have faced neighboring rivals Hayesville and Union County in the same week. That event came to pass last week, however, with the Lady Indians extending their undefeated streak by rallying to victory over both long time rivals. The Lady Indians completed last week's play with a 4-0 record for the season with Region 8A competition to begin this week.

BLECKLEY AND MOSS PROPEL LADY INDIANS PAST HAYESVILLE – The Hayesville Lady Yellow Jackets have a rich history in basketball with six straight North Carolina Class A State Championships under the direction of former Lady Jackets Head Coach and current Indians Assistant Coach Darryl McClure included. The Lady Jackets have struggled a bit in recent years but appear to be on an upswing under the direction of McClure's son, second year Head Coach Chad McClure, with their performance against the Lady Indians last Tuesday providing an example.

Especially cold shooting plagued the Lady Indians at the start of the game but a three point play by Jordan Moss just twenty seconds into the game got them a lead they would hold with the exception of a brief 5-5 tie for nearly a quarter and a half. With the Lady Indians holding a 10-9 lead, a second three point play by Moss and a late trey by Ben Pong had the Lady Indians ahead 17-9 after one quarter. Two early free throws by Gabby Arcencibia in the second extended the lead to 19-9 and the Lady Indians seemed to be off and running for an easy victory.

Here came the Lady Jackets, however, as they struck for eleven straight points and a 20-19 lead at the 4:49 mark of the second quarter. A free throw by Dadrion Blythe and a trey by Ali Bleckley got the Lady Indians back ahead 23-20 but an 8-0 run by the Lady Jackets had them ahead 28-23 by the three minute mark. Bleckley took virtual control of the game for the remainder of the quarter, however, outscoring Hayesville 12-4 on three for four free throw shooting and three treys, including a trey at the buzzer as the Lady Indians took a 37-32 lead to the dressing room at intermission.

The Lady Indians again seemed to be taking control of the game when a trey by Makayla Underwood and a put back basket by Moss gave them a 42-32 lead by the 6-minute mark of the third quarter but the Lady Jackets wouldn't go away. They reduced the Towns lead to five points on two occasions but another trey by Underwood and another put back by Moss wrapped around a Hayesville deuce the final 30 seconds of the quarter had the Lady Indians ahead 52-44 entering the fourth quarter.

The Lady Jackets opened the fourth quarter with a deuce for a 52-46 score but the Lady Indians broke the game open after that, stinging the Lady Jackets with 9, 4, and 7-point runs countered only by three widely spaced Hayesville free throws. When the smoke had cleared, the Lady Indians had a tougher than the final score 72-49 victory.

Leading scorers for the Lady Indians were Moss with 26 points, Bleckley with 20, Arcencibia with 10, Underwood with 6, and Dadrion Blythe with 5. Leading in assists were Arcencibia with 4 and the trio of Bleckley, Moss, and Underwood with 2 each.

CLUTCH BLECKLEY BASKET GIVES INDIANS VICTORY OVER UNION – It seems to have become an unintended tradition for the Towns County and Union County Girls Basketball Teams to have their games come down to the wire, especially on the Lady Indians' home court, and last Saturday's encounter proved to be no exception. In the last ten meetings between the two teams back to the 2007 season, the Lady Indians have won seven games by three, four, seventeen, five, three, one, and one points while Union has won three games by four, two, and sixteen points.

Both teams entered last week's game undefeated with Union being 4-0 and the Lady Indians 3-0 with all seven wins by the two teams being by pretty comfortable margins and both teams appearing a bit uncomfortable by the more formidable challenges each placed on the other. Class AA Union held three wins over Class AAA schools—two over White County and one



Gabby Arcencibia cuts loose with a 3 pointer against Union County. Photo by Lowell Nicholson.



Lady Indians Ali Bleckley and Union's Angie Hughes battle for the rebound. Photo by Lowell Nicholson.

over Lumpkin County—and another over Class AA Jackson County.

Turnovers were an early problem for both teams but especially for the Lady Indians with Union taking advantage and holding mostly small leads for actually most of the game. The Lady Panthers sank a trey just twenty one seconds into the game and led for the entire first half with the exception of a long deuce by Gabby Arcencibia and a trey by Ali Bleckley giving the Lady Indians short lived 7-7 and 10-10 ties in the first quarter. The Lady Panthers led 18-12 after one quarter and built what would be their biggest lead of the game at 29-20 on a trey at the 3:14 mark of the second quarter.

The Lady Indians battled back behind two field goals and two free throws by Jordan Moss and a trey by Arcencibia for just a 32-29 deficit at intermission and rallied from a 36-31 deficit the final 5:18 of the third quarter for a 43-42 lead at quarter's end. Highlighting the 12-6 run were a pair of field goals by Bleckley, a trey by Arcencibia, and two free throws by Moss for the lead with 3.1 seconds on the clock.

A Bleckley field goal less than a minute into the fourth quarter gave the Lady Indians a 45-42 lead but Union responded with two treys in less than half a minute of playing time for a 48-45 lead at 5:13. Bleckley sank two free throws for a 48-47 Towns deficit at 3:52 but a Union field goal at 2:35 again gave them a three point lead of 50-47.

That field goal would be the last Union County points of the game with free throws by Eryn Cochran at 2:07 and Moss at 1:21 getting the Lady Indians within 50-49. Cochran then found Bleckley open for about a twelve foot shot from the left side with twenty six seconds remaining and she sank the clutch shot for a 51-50 Lady Indian lead which turned out to be the game winner. Bleckley claimed the defensive rebound following a missed Union County shot with the Lady Indians missing an in and out free throw attempt at 8.6 seconds.

Bleckley then retrieved the ball when the Lady Panthers made an errant pass and was fouled, sustaining a hopefully minor knee injury requiring her to leave the game at 3.3 seconds. The Lady Indians again missed the ensuing free throw attempt with Union following a quick time out with a desperation field goal attempt from near mid court at the buzzer well off

the mark and the Lady Indians had a heart stopping 51-50 victory.

The trio of Arcencibia, Bleckley, and Moss carried the bulk of the scoring duties for the Lady Indians in this game with 16, 14, and 14 points respectively while Dadrion Blythe added 5 points. Leading in assists according to your reporter's unofficial tally were Cochran and Moss with 4 each

King of the Mountain

On Saturday, something happened to Josh Barnes, a Towns County senior that had never happened before. He lost to Murphy's Alex Craze.

It couldn't have come at a worse time.

Barnes was wrestling Craze for the gold medal at the annual King of the Mountain Wrestling Tournament. No, Craze didn't pin the Towns County heavyweight. However, he did outpoint him in a 7-4 decision.

"I feel like I let everyone here today from Towns County down," an emotional Barnes said. "I let the fans down, I let my teammates down and most of all, I let my coach down.

"You just don't know how low I feel right now," he said.

Barnes and the 286-pound Craze stood toe-to-toe for three, two-minute rounds. Neither could gain the critical upper hand to result in a dramatic pin.

"Wow, it was like trying to turn a half-grown cow," Barnes said of his super-sized opponent. "I just couldn't get him where I wanted him. It's one of the lowest moments in my wrestling career.

Barnes will finish his high school wrestling career with two silver medals and one gold medal from the King of the Mountain tournaments.

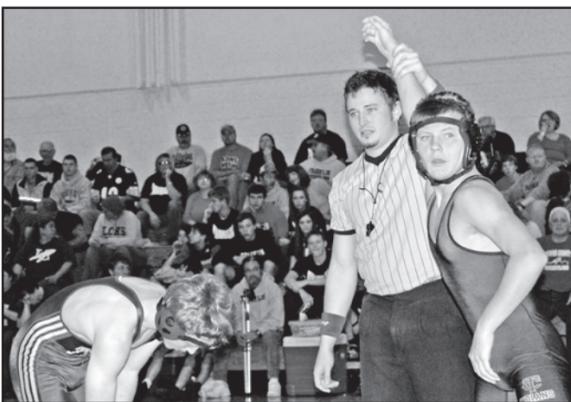
"Josh wins a lot of matches, he's a big, strong kid," Indians' Head Wrestling Coach Jeff Stowers said. "But, he's got to learn to wrestle. He's the best heavyweight in Class A, but at some point in time, he's got to depend on technique and not brute strength."

Barnes had faced Craze four times previously, including last year's heavyweight championship round at King of the Mountain. All four previous matches, Barnes took care of business against his heavyweight opponent.

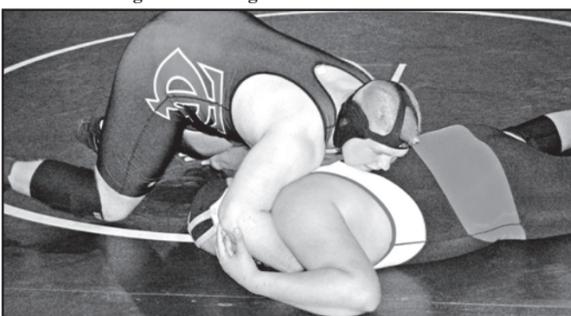
Something on Saturday was different.

"I tried everything I could, but he just stood there," Barnes said. "When I lost, I felt a lot of confusion and emotion inside. Everybody was yelling for me, everybody loved me. I just feel like I let everybody down."

To get to Craze, Barnes wrestled his way through William Parvin-Asher of Riverside Military Academy, Sam Wahmetah of Andrews, NC and then



Towns County's Vonya Baldwin gets his hand raised following his defeat of Ben Hodges of Washington-Wilkes.



Towns County heavyweight Josh Barnes dominates Sam Wahmetah of Andrews during the annual King of the Mountain photo by Lowell Nicholson.

finally had to face Craze.

"I tried my best, that's all I can say," Barnes said.

Overall, the Indians finished seventh, winning two silvers and two fourth-place finishes.

The team title went to North Hall, followed by Lumpkin and Dawson counties respectively.

Tim Collier took home the Indians' other silver medal, losing to Dawson County's David Wood in the 135-pound title match.

"It was a tough match," Collier said. "He had the strength advantage on me. He got ahead in points and kind of just finished the match out. We've got some young guys on our team, we've got our

strengths and I think by the time state rolls around, we'll be competitive."

Jake Cole finished fourth in the 140-pound weight class and Tyler Hoffman finished fourth in the 160-pound weight class.

"I'm just thankful I've got two more years to get that King of the Mountain gold," Hoffman said. "It's definitely a hard battle to wrestle your way back for a chance at the third place medal. It's a long road if you put yourself in that position.

"I took it one match at a time," he said. "Every opponent is different and has a chance. In the back of your mind, you know it's one and out in the consoles."

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INDIVIDUAL BASKETBALL SCORING

- HAYESVILLE**
Lady Indians (Grade)
Jordan Moss (12) 26
Ali Bleckley (11) 20
Gabby Arcencibia (11) 10
Makayla Underwood (9) 6
Dadrion Blythe (10) 5
Ben Pong (11) 3
Eryn Cochran (9) 2
Indians (Grade)
Brett Bradshaw (12) 6
Bradley Swanson (12) 6
Devin Henderson (12) 4
DJ Rogers (12) 3
Corbin Gilfilian (12) 2
Ryan Tallent (10) 2
Lady Indian JV's (Grade)
Stephanie Patton (8) 24
Kellsie Cowart (9) 13
Emily Anderson (10) 6
Eryn Cochran (9) 4
Indian JV's (Grade)
Grant Arcencibia (8) 11
Slade Davenport (9) 7
Austin Wood (10) 4
Dallas Manus (8) 4
Brett Barrett (9) 3
Luke Parker (10) 2
Garrett Bradshaw (9) 2
Aaron Dodson (9) 2
UNION COUNTY
Lady Indians (Grade)
Gabby Arcencibia (11) 16
Jordan Moss (12) 14
Ali Bleckley (11) 14
Dadrion Blythe (10) 5
Eryn Cochran (9) 2
Indians (Grade)
Bradley Swanson (12) 17
Brett Bradshaw (12) 10
Corbin Gilfilian (12) 3
DJ Rogers (12) 1
Lady Indian JV's (Grade)
Stephanie Patton (8) 9
McKenzi Moss (9) 8
Eryn Cochran (9) 4
Kellsie Cowart (9) 3
Emily Anderson (10) 2
Destiney Blythe (9) 1
Indian JV's (Grade)
Grant Arcencibia (8) 18
Dallas Manus (8) 12
Brett Barrett (9) 6
Austin Wood (10) 5
Ryan Tallent (10) 4
Slade Davenport (9) 4
Aaron Dodson (9) 3
Garrett Bradshaw (9) 2
Stetson Hedden (9) 2
Luke Parker (10) 1