

Towns County Sports

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Indians defeat Fannin and Providence at home, fall at Union County

By Jerry Kendall
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

The Towns County Indians Varsity Basketball Team came away with a hard fought home court victory over Class AAA Fannin County on Tuesday night of last week and blew Region 8A foe Providence Christian Academy out of the gym the last half on the Indians' home court on Friday before coming up short of victory for the second time this season at Class AAA Union County on Saturday in Blairsville.

The three games leave the Indians with an overall record of 3-2, which includes 1-0 in Region 8A. Fannin completed the week with a 1-4 record and Providence Christian with a 2-5 season record while Union County is off to a 4-0 start.

Indians 53, Fannin County 41 – Against Fannin County, the Indians struck for the first basket of the game on a power move by senior Logan Cowart just nineteen seconds into the game but it would be nearly four minutes until the Indians would score again as the Rebels responded with eleven straight points for an 11-2 lead at the 4:02 mark of the first quarter. It was then the Indians' turn for a scoring run as they went on an 11-2 surge the final 3:45 of the quarter for a 13-13 standoff after one quarter. Highlights of the run were the first five points by senior Zach Davenport, a trey by senior Caleb Clark, and two free throws at 7:2 seconds by senior Evan Berrong for the quarter ending tie.

Fannin opened the second quarter with a trey and a deuce for an 18-13 lead but a pull up jumper by freshman Colby Moss at 5:37 triggered a 12-1 run by the Indians for a 25-19 Indians lead at the 2:47 mark. The deuce by Moss was followed by an old fashioned



Logan Cowart fouled on a dunk attempt. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

three point play by Cowart for an 18-18 tie and a trey by Moss at 4:51 gave the Indians a 21-18 lead they would never relinquish although the Rebels would hang tough for most of the game. Junior Will Travis contributed three for four free throw shooting and Berrong closed out the quarter with a field goal, this time for a 28-23 Towns lead with Davenport assisting on three of the four Indian field goals in the quarter.

The Indians seemed to be taking control of the game with a 35-27 lead by the 3:44 mark of the third quarter with a field goal and two free throws by Davenport being highlights but the Rebels responded with a 6-0 run for just a 35-33 deficit with 1:59 on the clock. Davenport then got the Indians a bit of breathing room with a steal near mid court and field goal for a 37-33 Towns lead entering the fourth quarter.

Clark opened the fourth

quarter with his second trey of the game and Davenport again came up with a steal near mid court and field goal at the five minutes mark for a 42-33 Towns lead and baskets by Travis and Berrong gave the Indians a 46-35 lead at the 2:50 mark. Four for four free throw shooting by Moss the final 1:47 highlighted the remainder of the quarter as the Indians came away with a 53-41 victory.

Davenport led a balanced scoring attack with 15 points and he also led the team in assists with 5. He was followed in scoring by Cowart with 11 points, Moss with 9, and the trio of Berrong, Clark, and Travis with 6 each. Leading in rebounds were Cowart with 5 and Moss with 4. The Rebels were led in scoring by senior Payton Holt with 16 points and junior Chandler Kendall with 11. And for those who might wonder, Chandler Kendall is your reporter's fifth cousin once removed and is a very highly regarded

baseball player in Fannin County.

Indians 80, Providence Christian Academy 61 – The Indians opened the first quarter against Providence Christian with a 9-2 run in less than two minutes and finished it on a 13-0 run for a bulging 23-9 lead by quarter's end. Six different Indians put points on the scoreboard in first quarter action with senior Logan Cowart leading with seven points and senior Zach Davenport right behind with six with a trey by junior Trent Bradshaw at the 4:04 mark giving the Indians a 13-9 lead and triggering the thirteen points finish.

The Indians opened the second quarter with what would be their biggest lead of the first half at 25-9 on a steal and drive for the basket from near mid court by Davenport but the visiting Storm responded with a pair of treys for just a 25-15 deficit and the Indian leads ranged between nine and thirteen points until near the end of the second quarter. As at the start of the quarter, the Storm would follow a pull up jumper by freshman Kolby Moss at 1:25 for a 32-23 Towns lead at 1:25 with two more treys the final 1:08 for a slender Indians lead of 34-29 at intermission. Senior Evan Berrong provided two field goals for four points between the Davenport and Moss baskets.

If the success of the second quarter provided encouragement for Providence Christian, it was quickly doused as the third quarter would belong to the Indians who used a dominant 26-5 scoring charge for a 60-34 advantage entering the fourth quarter. Third quarter Indian highlights included two treys and a deuce for eight points and three assists by Bradshaw, six points by Davenport, and four points each by Berrong and Cowart.

The Storm opened the fourth quarter by using two more treys as highlights for an 11-0 run for a 60-

45 score but the Indians followed the lead of six points by Berrong and four each by senior Caleb Clark and Moss as they closed out an 80-61 victory.

Nine different Indians entered the scoring column for the game with leaders being Cowart with 17 points, Berrong and Davenport with 16 each, Bradshaw with 11, and Moss with 8 while seven different Indians combined for nineteen assists with leaders being Davenport with 6, Bradshaw with 4, senior Cole Ledford with 3, and Cowart and junior Brett Denton with 2 each. Leading in rebounds were Cowart with 10, Davenport with 7, and Berrong with 5.

Junior Dylan Shook made his regular season varsity debut in this game after having included five treys in a 19 points performance in the JV game against Fannin County on Tuesday. The Storm, whose record fell to 2-4 with the loss, were led in scoring by junior Aldain Dorsey with 20 points.

Union County 62, Indians 54 – There would be five ties and an incredible eighteen lead changes by the 2:27 mark of the third quarter at Union County before the home standing Panthers would use two treys the final 1:15 of the third quarter to open a 48-41 lead with the Union margin ranging between five and twelve points the remainder of the game as the Panthers came away with a 62-54 victory.

The biggest lead of the game for the Indians was five points at 23-18 early in the second quarter with the Panthers twice holding four points leads at 12-8 midway through the first quarter and 31-27 late in the third prior to what turned out to be the decisive third quarter finish by the Panthers.

Seniors Logan Cowart and Evan Berrong carried most of the scoring load for the Indians in first half action with Cowart scoring six points in the first quarter and four in the second while Berrong

contributed four in each quarter. Two Cowart baskets got the Indians leads and two free throws got them a tie in first half action with Berrong getting them one lead and junior Brett Denton another. The Panthers, however, took an 18-17 lead at quarter's end on a trey at the buzzer.

Both of Cowart's second quarter baskets got the Indians a lead and a trey by senior Bradley Benson at fifty eight seconds got them within 31-30 at intermission setting the stage for the first eight field goals of the third quarter by the two teams resulting in a lead change. Deuces by junior Trent Bradshaw and Berrong, a trey by freshman Kolby Moss, and a deuce by junior Will Travis got the four Indians leads of one point each time during the run up to the 2:27 mark when the Panthers began a 10-2 quarter ending run highlighted by an old fashioned three point play at the start and treys at the 1:15 mark and at the third quarter buzzer.

The Indians got three deuces for six points by Cowart and a trey and a deuce for five points by Bradshaw in the fourth quarter but it wasn't enough as the Panthers held leads of between five points following a Cowart basket at 7:10 of the quarter and twelve points in closing out the 62-54 victory. Bradshaw responded to the Panthers' one lead of twelve points achieved at 5:19 with his trey and deuce by the 4:05 mark for just a 55-48 Indians deficit but they could get no closer than that seven points margin in the final minutes.

Scoring leaders for the Indians for the game were Cowart with 18 points, Berrong with 10, and Bradshaw and senior Zach Davenport with 7 each while Davenport led in assists with 6 and was followed by Berrong and senior Cole Ledford with 2 each. Sophomore Sawyer Drake led Union in scoring with 17 points and was followed by senior Patrick Baggett with 12.

Lady Indians get first win vs Providence, impressive in losses to Fannin, Union

By Jerry Kendall
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The Towns County Lady Indians Varsity Basketball Team got their first win of the season and the first for new head coach Brian Hunnicutt when they took a resounding 50-24 home court Region 8A victory over Providence Christian Academy on Friday. They fell just short of victory in losses to Fannin County at home on Tuesday and to Union County in Blairsville on Saturday when the two Class AAA schools survived by pulling away from four and three point Lady Indian deficits during the final two minutes of those games.

Fannin County 42, Lady Indians 35 – The Lady Indians rallied from an early 7-1 deficit against Fannin on a deuce by freshman Vanessa Floyd, a trey by junior Erika Spano, and two free throws by Floyd during the final 2:31 of the first quarter to trail by just a 9-8 score at quarter's end. After the Lady Rebels opened the second quarter with a deuce, the remainder of the quarter pretty much belonged to the Lady Indians.

While Lady Indians full court pressure in especially the early minutes of the game forced numerous turnovers by the veteran Lady Rebels team which includes six seniors, the youthful Lady Indians also suffered from many turnovers with a lot of those being of the unforced variety and with experience it seems certain that a reduction in these difficulties can be achieved.

Spano's second trey got the Lady Indians an 11-11 tie at 6:26 of the second quarter and Floyd's second deuce got them ahead 13-12 at 4:42 with the Lady Rebels managing to only bounce one field goal in the basket the remainder of the quarter at 2:11 for a 15-13 Towns lead which became 19-13 at intermission following a trey and free throw by junior Kristen Byers during the final 1:42 of the half.

If the final 6:40 of the second quarter belonged to the Lady Indians, one must report that the Lady Rebels owned the third quarter and more than half of the fourth as the Lady Indians managed just one field goal by Floyd at the 5:35 mark of the third with Fannin surging ahead by a 33-21 score. But just when all may have seemed lost for the Lady Indians, they struck with a vengeance with three points at a time on four occasions between the 3:44 and the 1:22 marks of the fourth quarter.

Freshman Kennedy Henson completed an old fashioned three point play at that 3:44 mark and was followed by Byers' second trey at 2:45 and a trey by senior Madison McClure at 2:29 for just a 34-30 Fannin lead. The Lady Rebels sank a deuce at exactly the two minutes mark for a 36-30 lead with the Lady Indians getting off a trey attempt near the 1:50 mark which



Kennedi Henson with a short jumper Photo/Lowell Nicholson

would have cut the lead to three. The shot wouldn't fall, however, and the Lady Rebels sank two free throws at 1:35 for a 38-31 lead.

But the Lady Indians still made it interesting when Byers was fouled on a trey attempt at 1:22 and calmly sank all three free throws in getting the Lady Indians within 38-33 with a glimmer of hope but the Lady Rebels sank two of four free throws and a field goal in a 4-2 finish in taking a hard fought 42-35 victory.

A balanced Lady Indians scoring attack was led by Byers with 10 points, Floyd with 8, McClure and Spano with 6 each, and Henson with 5 while McClure and sophomore Sophia Shook led in assists with 3 each. Leaders in rebounds for the Lady Indians were Floyd, Henson, McClure, and Shook with 3 each against the much taller Lady Rebels.

Lady Indians 50, Providence Christian Academy 24 – The Lady Indians used their increasingly successful full court pressure strategy to great advantage as they exploded out to a 14-0 lead by the 2:04 mark of the first quarter and never looked back in leading 18-4, 33-12, and 41-18 at the quarter breaks in taking a 50-24 Region 8A victory over Providence Christian Academy of Lilburn in metro Atlanta. Freshman Vanessa Floyd scored the first two baskets and the last one of the first quarter for six points and junior Taylor Cornett struck for a steal and field goal and two treys for eight points between the 4:03 and 2:04 marks as highlights of the decisive first quarter surge.

Five different Lady Indians put points on the scoreboard in the second quarter with freshman Kennedy Henson leading with a trey and two deuces for seven points, four different Lady Indians contributed two points each in a comparatively low scoring third quarter, and a

trey and deuce for five points by Henson led the way in a similarly low scoring fourth quarter.

Nine different Lady Indians got in the scoring column for the game for the Lady Indians with leaders being Henson with 16 points, Cornett with 12, and Floyd with 8. Leaders in assists were Henson with 5, Floyd with 3, and senior Madison McClure and sophomore Sophia Shook with 2 each while Floyd led in rebounds with 5 and was followed by Henson and McClure with 4 each.

Seven Lady Indian freshmen who, earlier in the day, celebrated their second straight JV win and added their third straight which was their second in a row over Union on Saturday, all got in the game with this being the first regular season varsity appearance for most of them with twins Shaleena and Shelby Morris both contributing a field goal. Regular varsity members not mentioned earlier in this game's coverage but contributing immensely to the increasing success of the Lady Indians are juniors Kristen Byers, Kenzie Denton, and Erica Spano and sophomore Sophia Shook. JV freshmen in addition to the Morris twins seeing action in the varsity game were Kenzie Livingston, Abby Mauldin, Remington Parker, Maci Walls, and Jayce Young.

Union County 54, Lady Indians 42 – After using a 26-4 run in not much more than ten minutes of playing time in forcing overtime before losing to Union County in Hiwassee eleven days prior, the Lady Indians would lead by small margins for most of the first eleven minutes of the game in Blairsville last Saturday night before a decisive scoring drought the final five and a half minutes of the second quarter allowed Union to build a 27-17 lead at intermission.

A trey by freshman Kennedy Henson for a 4-2 Towns lead at

6:28 of the first quarter and a deuce by junior Kenzie Denton at 5:45 had the Lady Indians ahead 6-2 but it required two free throws by sophomore Sophia Shook for an 8-7 Lady Indian lead at 3:30 and senior Madison McClure added a trey at 2:24 for an 11-7 lead which became 11-8 by quarter's end.

A 6-2 run at the start of the second quarter had Union leading 14-13 by the 6:20 mark before back to back deuces by Henson at the 5:53 and 5:32 marks had the Lady Indians leading 17-14 but they went stone cold in shooting for the remainder of the quarter and turnovers were costly as the Lady Panthers scored the final twelve points of the quarter for the aforementioned 27-17 lead. It would be easy to think the Lady Indians defense failed them during this run but actually four of the five field goals scored by Union back to the 6:20 mark of the second quarter resulted directly from turnovers by the Lady Indians and the fifth was on an offensive rebound and putback basket.

A trey by junior Taylor Cornett just thirty one seconds into the third quarter and a free throw by Henson got the Lady Indians within 27-21 at 6:26 but the Lady Panthers still held a 39-28 lead by the 1:35 mark despite two free

throws by junior Kristen Byers, a basket by freshman Vanessa Floyd, and a trey by Henson. But treys by Henson at 1:18 and junior Erika Spano at forty eight seconds suddenly had the Lady Indians within 39-34 before an inbounds turnover by the Lady Indians got the Lady Panthers a field goal at thirty eight seconds and a 41-34 lead entering the fourth quarter.

Two field goals by Henson more than matched two free throws by Union for just a 43-38 Union lead at 4:57 of the fourth quarter and a field goal by the Lady Panthers at 3:31 was more than matched by a steal and field goal by Henson and two free throws by Spano by the 2:06 mark as the Lady Indians were within 45-42. They would not dent

the scoreboard again, however, and the Lady Panthers used five for six free throw shooting and two inside field goals for a 9-0 finish and a 54-42 victory.

Eight Lady Indians put points on the scoreboard in this game with Henson taking the lead with 20 points and Floyd and Spano next in line with 5 each while five Lady Indians contributed at least one assist with Henson leading with 3 and Denton and Shook right behind with 2 each. The Lady Panthers were led in scoring by senior Bailey Daniel with 16 points and sophomore Brooke Dockery with 13. Junior Aubree Pack, the Lady Panthers' leading scorer in the earlier game, was sidelined by an injury for this game.

King of the Mountain Tourney

Here is a brief summary of Towns County's performance at King of the Mountain.

For results, photos, and full coverage of Towns County's King of the Mountain Wrestling tournament, check out next week's *Towns County Herald*.

The Indians, who placed 12th overall out of 26 teams, were led by a third place performance from Harold Cox at 220 pounds and a fourth place finish from

Blaine Rogers at 160 pounds.

Cox won his first two matches of the tournament but fell to Jasper's Dalton Brunner in the semifinals. He rebounded by defeating Bailey Brock of Washington-Wilkes to claim third.

Rogers also won his first two matches before falling in the semis to Conner Spence of Mt. Pisgah and Dacula's Anderson Bailey.

Towns County Coed U-10 soccer team has one loss



Towns County Co-ed U-10 soccer team, the Warhawks, had a great end to an amazing season of wins with only one loss.

Coach Jerilyn Oquendo stated that, "Working with the UFA for the first time was an amazing experience. The care, time, and dedication the leadership took in organizing, communicating, and planning all of our games, practices and events was incredible. I've never been involved in a program that was so invested in each child, their growth, and even each coach. We were always informed and had confidence any situation would

be well taken care of, which provided us with more time and effort to dedicate to our team.

"What I loved most about coaching this team was seeing the determination these kids had. It was so rewarding to teach them something, have them apply it, watching it click and then after that their confidence soared.

Assistant Coach Grace said, "I enjoyed watching them advance their skills. They continuously used what we taught them to be better. Witnessing the growth from the beginning of the season to the end was incredibly rewarding. My favorite

moments were when they would encourage one another."

The players and their specialties: Reed Adams - Most Determined; Gabriel Calhoun - Best throw-ins & Long kicks; Caden Coggins - Most Versatile; Tucker Engert - Most Valuable Offense; Judah Ford - Most Valuable Defender; Colten Gibson - Best Ball Control; Emory Hardin - Most Improved Offense; Greyson Tallent - Best Listener & Leadership; Jackson Davis - Most Improved Defense; Jaedyn Hancock - Most Improved Passing; Ty Hogsed - Most Dependable.