

Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

www.townscountyherald.net • E-mail: tcherald@windstream.net

Lady Indians win at Tallulah, fall at region leader Lakeview, Class AAAA Stephens

By Jerry Kendall
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

The youthful Towns County Lady Indians varsity basketball team continued an impressive season last week when they faced the unusual situation of seeing action on three consecutive nights due to the postponement of their game at Tallulah Falls from Tuesday to Wednesday and then Thursday due to snow. The only time during a season for the Towns County teams with games scheduled for three consecutive days is during the Battle of the States Tournament but with all teams involved in the tournament facing the three straight days circumstances.

The three Lady Indian opponents had combined for a total of twenty eight wins as they entered their games against the Lady Indians so continued the pattern of formidable opponents for the Lady Indians. They knocked off Tallulah Falls in a hard fought battle on Thursday, struggled to put points on the scoreboard for three quarters before finishing on a high note in a loss at Lakeview Academy on Friday, and took Class AAAA Stephens County to the final seconds before losing a close encounter on Saturday on their home court.

The Lady Indians finished the week with an overall 5-14 record, including 3-5 in Region 8A with a chance to finish in second place within Sub-Region 8A North, depending upon how the Lady Indians and Tallulah Falls fare in their remaining games.

Lady Indians 45, Tallulah Falls 40 – The Lady Indians had their way the last half in an early season home court 67-37 victory but the absence of the injured freshman Kennedy Henson this time and uncommon difficulty at the foul line would result in a hard fought Region 8A victory on Tallulah's home court on Thursday.

The Lady Indians would not score for more than four minutes at the start of the game but come on like gangbusters when they did as they struck for a 10-0 run between the 3:53 and 2:18 mark for a 10-3 lead on a steal and basket by junior Erika Spano, two treys by junior Taylor Cornett, and a coast to coast run by senior Madison McClure. Field goals by Spano and junior Kristen Byers would complete the Lady Indians' first quarter scoring for just a 14-13 lead at quarter's end when Tallulah sank a trey at the buzzer.

The early minutes of the second quarter would be a see saw battle with one tie and four lead changes by the 4:20 mark. A field goal by Cornett gave the Lady Indians a 17-16 lead at 5:52 and a drive for two points by sophomore Sophia Shook at that 4:20 mark gave them a 20-19 advantage they would hold with the exception of a brief tie until the end of the game. Scoring leaders for the sec-



The Lady Indians traveled to Lakeview Academy on Friday for the second meeting in six days between the two. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

ond quarter were Shook with five points and Byers and Cornett with four each as the Lady Indians took a 26-22 lead to the dressing room at halftime.

McClure provided four points on a field goal and two for four free throw shooting in a low scoring third quarter with the Lady Indians leading by as much as 34-25 but just 34-28 at quarter's end following a late Tallulah trey.

A long standing lead by the Lady Indians quickly disappeared at the start of the fourth quarter when two Tallulah treys in just thirty nine seconds got them a 34-34 tie at 7:21. Although we who were watching the game didn't know it at the time, there was no reason for alarm as a free throw by McClure, a trey by Shook, a drive for two points by McClure, and a basket by freshman Vanessa Floyd between just the 6:40 and 4:31 marks had the Lady Indians leading 42-34.

Two free throws by McClure at 2:50 more than matched one by Tallulah for a 44-35 Towns lead at 2:50 and following a Tallulah trey at 2:37, the Lady Indians went into a stall with Tallulah finally sending McClure to the foul line at 42.1 seconds where she made the first of two free throws for a 45-38 Lady Indians lead which became a 45-40 victory after a late Tallulah field goal.

The Lady Indians were led in scoring for the game by McClure with 13 points, Cornett and Shook with 10 each, and Byers with 6 while Cornett led in assists with 4 and was followed by McClure and Shook with 2 each. Leaders in rebounds for the Lady Indians were Floyd with 6 and Spano with 4. Tallulah junior Nyah Williams included her 1,000th career point among her team leading 25 for the game. Tallulah did not play

on Saturday night and finished the week with an overall 8-11 record, including 4-4 in Region 8A.

Lakeview Academy 58, Lady Indians 38 – The Lady Indians had given the Lakeview Lady Lions quite a battle just six nights earlier in Hiawassee, trailing by just a 49-43 margin near the mid point of the fourth quarter before the Lady Lions sank four free throws and a field goal in a 6-1 finish the final 4:16 of the game for a 55-44 victory.

The game of last Friday would prove to be a struggle for the Lady Indians for three quarters, however, as cold shooting resulted in deficits such as 9-0 at the start and 15-5 at the end of the first quarter with things not improving much through the second and third quarters. A 5-0 Lady Indians run between 5:20 and 4:23 of the second quarter on a field goal by senior Madison McClure and a free throw and field goal by freshman Vanessa Floyd reduced a 20-5 Lakeview advantage to 20-10 but the Lady Lions led 24-11 at intermission.

Junior Taylor Cornett provided five points for the Lady Indians on two deuces and a free throw in the third quarter but the Lady Lions led 38-18 entering the fourth quarter when the Lady Indians came alive, never mounting a true threat for a victory but gaining something to build on from the game against a top flight opponent.

After the Lady Lions opened the fourth quarter with a trey for a 41-18 advantage, the Lady Indians struck for treys by Cornett and McClure, two free throws each by junior Erika Spano and McClure, and treys by Spano and Floyd in this order for a 16-7 Towns run between just the 5:31 and 2:40 marks for a much less imposing 48-34 Lakeview lead.

Junior Kristen Byers then matched two Lakeview free throws with a deuce at 1:29 for a 50-36 score but the Lady Lions finished on an 8-2 run for a final margin of victory of 58-38. For readers who suspect that the Lady Lions cleared their bench in the fourth quarter in making it easier for the Lady Indians to go on their strong run, this was not the case as the Lady Lions not only used for the most part just six players throughout the game but used full court pressure during the final 8-2 run.

McClure led the Lady Indians in scoring with 12 points with other leaders being Cornett and Spano with 8 each and Floyd with 6. Byers, Cornett, junior Kenzlee Denton, and McClure each contributed 1 assist while Spano led in rebounds with 8 and was followed by Cornett with 5. Scoring leaders for the Lady Lions were sophomore Maddy Towles with 14 points, senior Tori Taylor with 13, and junior Savannah Kinsey with 10.

The Lady Lions completed the week with a 13-8 overall record, including 9-1 in the region with this placing them in first place by half a game over the Prince Avenue Christian School Lady Wolverines who were upset by Athens Academy on Friday night by a 51-44 score. The loss left Prince with an 8-1 region record included in a 17-2 overall record at week's end. Lady Indians fans will recall that Athens Academy, with a current 17-3 overall record and 7-2 in Region 8A prevailed by just a 46-43 score over the Lady Indians in Hiawassee back on January 6.

Stephens County 50, Lady Indians 45 – The Lady Indians opened regular season play at Class AAAA Stephens County in Toccoa back in November with each team including two very promising

freshmen in their starting lineups with Kennedy Henson and Vanessa Floyd being the Lady Indian representatives in this category. The Lady Indians gave Stephens quite a battle in that season opening game, trailing by as much as 48-30 late in the third quarter but behind by just a 50-43 score by the 2:46 mark of the fourth until Stephens extended the margin to 59-45 on a 9-2 finish the final 2:18 of the game.

Fast forwarding to last Saturday night's game may give some insight into how far the Lady Indians as a team have advanced during the year as they battled Stephens County this time to the final seconds of the game while playing without the presence of the injured Henson, who had what is believed to be very successful knee surgery in Athens on Friday. Henson is not only the tallest Lady Indian but was their leading scorer in eleven games up to the time of her injury with a 13.0 points per game average and a strong ball handler, defender, and rebounder as well.

The Stephens County ladies entered the game with a 9-10 record against, like the Lady Indians, a quite challenging schedule but destined for a tough battle from start to finish against the Towns ladies. Stephens would lead throughout the first quarter with the exception of a game tying Lady Indian runner by senior Madison McClure for a 2-2 score at 7:27. Two free throws by sophomore Sophia Shook had the Lady Indians within 10-7 with 58.8 seconds left but a free throw and putback basket by Stephens had them ahead 13-7 after one quarter.

Stephens led by as much as 21-13 midway through the second quarter and 27-16 at 2:01 but two free throws and a field goal during the last minute of play by McClure had the Lady Indians within 27-

20 at intermission. Stephens then wrapped a trey and a deuce around a McClure basket for a 32-22 lead at 6:52 of the third quarter but here came the Lady Indians.

Field goals by McClure, Shook, and Floyd and two free throws by Shook between just the 5:52 and 4:32 marks for an 8-0 run had the Lady Indians suddenly within 32-30. A Stephens field goal gave them a 34-30 lead at 3:36 but a trey by McClure at 1:45 and two free throws by junior Erica Spano at 1:15 had the Lady Indians leading 35-34.

The Stephens ladies would sink two free throws of their own at 37.8 seconds, however, for a 36-35 lead entering the fourth quarter they would not relinquish. It is not out of the question to believe that a fatigue factor may have been present for the Lady Indians in the fourth quarter after two road trips plus two games and three quarters of playing time in three days compared to two road trips for Stephens but just one game and three quarters of playing time in two days.

At any rate, cold shooting and uncommon turnovers by the Lady Indians would allow Stephens to open the quarter with a 13-4 run interrupted only by four free throw shooting by McClure at the 1:25 mark. The never say die Lady Indians were still not through, however, as a deuce by Floyd at 1:10, two free throws by McClure at 46.3 seconds, and a basket by Spano at twenty one seconds gave the Lady Indians a 6-1 run and just a 50-45 deficit.

The Lady Indians then came up with a steal and got off a quick trey attempt for a potential two points deficit around the sixteen seconds mark but the shot was partially blocked by Stephens, leaving them the final victory margin of 50-45 when they missed two free throws at 11.6 but with the Lady Indians not able to dent the scoreboard in the final seconds.

Scoring leaders for the game for the Lady Indians were McClure with 19 points, Shook with 9, Floyd with 7, and Spano with 6 while junior Taylor Cornett led in assists with 3. Rebounding leaders were Floyd with 6, McClure with 5, and junior Kristen Byers and Spano with 3 each. Senior Tykia Thompson led Stephens with 15 points.

The Lady Indians must be given credit for a return to free throw shooting excellence in this game. After sinking just nine of twenty five attempts but escaping with a win at Tallulah and an improvement at Lakeview to fourteen for twenty four accuracy, they missed their first attempt against Stephens but sank their last fifteen in a row after that. The Stephens Ladies are surely impressed by the Lady Indians usually very accurate free throw shooting as they had sunk twenty two of thirty six attempts in the season opening game between the two teams.

Indians overwhelmed at Tallulah Falls, play well but fall at Lakeview Academy

By Jerry Kendall
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

The Towns County Indians varsity basketball team got discouraging news last week when they learned after x-rays and a medical exam that senior inside power player Logan Cowart is not yet ready for a return to basketball action with his next evaluation scheduled for three weeks later which will be during the week of the Region 8-A tournament in Commerce.

The continued absence of Cowart was to be compounded by uncommon first half foul trouble for senior scoring leader Zach Davenport in both games played by the Indians on Thursday and Friday of last week. The Thursday game was necessitated by snow delays at first from Tuesday to Wednesday and then to Thursday when the very cold weather kept the snow around for an extra day.

The Indians did not play on Saturday when the Lady Indians hosted Stephens County as this was a game played to balance the schedule for the Lady Indians and Indians in view of Region 8-A foe Riverside Military Academy not having a girls team.

Tallulah Falls 81, Indians 47 – The Indians got a 5-0 lead less than a minute into the first quarter at Tallulah Falls on Thursday on a trey by junior Trent Bradshaw and a deuce by Davenport and they were within 13-11 on a basket by freshman Kolby Moss at 3:05 of the quarter not long before Davenport's being charged with his second foul and coming out of the game for the remainder of the quarter at the 2:30 mark.

Davenport had scored six of the Indians' eleven points to that point and Tallulah quickly took advantage of his absence



Coach Benson during a timeout at Lakeview Academy on Friday night. Zach Davenport led the way with 22. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

Coach Benson during a timeout at Lakeview Academy on Friday night. Zach Davenport led the way with 22. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

They used five treys on a 19-2 run, interrupted only by a late first quarter basket by senior Cole Ledford, between 2:19 of the first quarter and 6:37 of the second for a 32-13 lead.

Tallulah would continue the onslaught for a 44-21 lead at intermission and a 68-33 advantage after three quarters on the way to an 81-47 victory.

Seven different Indians would put points on the scoreboard in last half action with highlights being four by junior Will Travis in the third quarter and four by Davenport in the fourth.

The Indians were led in scoring by Davenport with 15 points, Travis with 8, Bradshaw with 6, and senior Bradley Benson and junior Brett Denton with 5 each while leaders in assists were Davenport with 3 and freshman Kolby Moss with 2. Davenport and Travis took the lead in rebounds with 6 each and were followed by Moss with 4. Tallulah was led in scoring by sophomores Reeves Cody with 17, Winston Davis and Matthew

Weidner with 14 each, and senior Tahj Moss with 10. The different band of Indians from Tallulah Falls finished the week with an 89-84 overtime win over Riverside Military on Friday for an overall record of 11-9, including 6-4 in Region 8A.

Lakeview Academy 72, Indians 65 – The first four and a half minutes of the first quarter at Lakeview Academy on Friday proved to be a real battle with two ties and four lead changes and the Indians holding a 9-7 lead at 3:32 with Davenport having scored seven of the Indian points. They extended the lead to 19-10 after one quarter on a deuce by freshman Kolby Moss, a trey and two free throws by Davenport, and a trey by senior Bradley Benson.

A deuce by senior Caleb Clark and a trey by Davenport more than offset two free throws by the Lions for a 24-12 Towns lead at 6:15 of the second quarter with Davenport having provided fifteen of the Indians' points. When Davenport left the

game with his third foul at 5:39, however, the game began to turn toward Lakeview with the Lions using three deuces, a trey, and nine for twelve free throw shooting for an 18-6 run between 4:40 and their second putback basket of the run at the buzzer for a 30-30 tie at intermission. Moss had sunk two free throws at 29.5 seconds in breaking a 28-28 tie for what would turn out to be the Indians' last lead.

It was felt by many Indians followers during the Lakeview run that excellent execution by the Lions and solid free throw shooting was enhanced by some light touch fouls on the Indians with heavier impact actions by the Lions going uncalled. For what it's worth in fact, your reporter wrote "sad officiating" on the play by play notes just moments before Indians head coach Rob Benson was charged with a very infrequent technical foul.

At any rate, the Lions used their success of the final 4:40 of the second quarter as a springboard for a 17-4 run for a 47-34

lead by the 4:18 mark of the third quarter. The Indians rallied after that on a free throw by Davenport at 3:56 and three straight treys by Moss between the 3:21 and 1:12 marks for a 10-4 run and just a 51-44 Lions advantage.

The Lions would sink two treys during the final forty seven seconds, however, for a 57-44 lead entering the fourth quarter. The Indians would edge to within 64-53 at 2:07 on a free throw by senior Evan Berrong and a field goal and free throw by Davenport but the Lions would include six for six free throw shooting in an 8-2 finish for a 72-65 win. Davenport and Moss contributed four points each for the Indians in fourth quarter action.

The Indians were led in scoring for the game by Davenport with 22 points, Moss with a career high 17, and junior Will Travis with 6 while Davenport led in assists with 3 and was followed by junior Brett Denton with 2. Leaders in rebounds for the Indians were Travis with 6 and Davenport and Denton with

4 each. Lakeview lost three top notch senior starters from last year's private schools state final four team but they have benefited greatly this year by the transfer of junior point guard Blake McIntyre from Mill Creek, the state's largest high school, in Gwinnett County. McIntyre led the Lions in scoring with 19 points and was followed by senior Drew Cottrell with 17.

Lakeview completed the week with an overall 14-6 record against an ultra challenging schedule and they are in first place in Region 8A with an 11-0 record. The Indians completed the week with an overall 9-10 record, including 4-6 in region play.

Baseball/softball registration

Recreation baseball/softball: We will offer the following age groups: Co-ed T-ball ages 5 - 6, Coach's Pitch ages 7 - 8, 10 and under, 12 and under, 14 and under. Registration will run through February 16th. Visit townscountyrec.com to sign up. tu@jan17.f11.sh

SPRING SOCCER REGISTRATION

Age Groups U6-U16

Register online at: www.mountainsoccer.org. Registration forms are also available to print from the website. Forms can be mailed to PO Box 1862, Blairsville, GA 30514.

Deadline to register is January 31, 2018. For additional information please check out our website at: www.mountainsoccer.org or email us at: musa.soccer@gmail.com.