

Towns County Sports

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Lady Indians destroy Prince Avenue, second half rally at Rabun falls short

By Jerry Kendall
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The Towns County Lady Indians Varsity Basketball Team played just two of three scheduled games last week, hosting the Prince Avenue Lady Wolverines on Tuesday and traveling to Rabun County High School in Tiger on Saturday.

Their scheduled game for Friday at Providence Christian Academy in Lilburn was postponed due to icy weather.

The Lady Indians had their way in rolling past Region 8-A South foe Prince Avenue in taking a one sided victory and extending their overall record to 16-3, including 8-1 overall in the region and 4-0 in Sub-Region 8-A North. The Lady Wolverines entered the game with a 13-2 overall record, including 6-2 in the region but struggled mightily as they had against Region 8-A South leader George Walton Academy in a 46-21 loss just three days prior.

The Lady Indians then rallied from a difficult first half at Rabun County to within two points early in the fourth quarter but couldn't maintain their momentum and fell to defeat to the Class AA Lady Wildcats. The Lady Cats improved to an overall record of 12-8, including 3-2 in their Region 8-AA with the two region losses being by two points to Jefferson at home and by one at Union County.

**Lady Indians 64
Prince Avenue 20**

The game against Prince Avenue was a total mismatch almost from the beginning with the exception being back to back baskets by the Lady Wolverines for a 4-3 lead at the 6:32 mark of the first quarter following a game opening Lady Indians trey by Stephanie Patton.



Eryn Cochran



Dadrian Blythe and Misty Lindemuth battle for a board at Rabun. Photos by Lowell Nicholson.



Stephanie Patton

A field goal by Bailey Sutton just fourteen seconds later gave the Lady Indians a lead they would never relinquish, however, as they embarked on a 38-0 run for a 41-4 lead by the 2:10 mark of the second quarter.

Patton and Sutton provided most of the first quarter scoring punch as Patton included four treys among her sixteen points and Sutton one trey among her seven as the score was 26-4 at the quarter break. Eryn Cochran had a hand in eighteen points during the first quarter rampage as she scored just two points but dished out six assists with four being on 3-pointers.

Cochran then got in on the 3-point baskets binge barely a minute into the second quarter, giving the Lady Indians six treys in just eight minutes and one second of playing time. Cochran wound up with five points in the second quarter and was followed closely by Kelsie Cowart and Sutton with four each as the Lady Indians held a 43-8 lead at intermission. Patton added five points on a trey and a deuce and Misty Lindemuth four in third quarter action

as the Lady Indians led 58-14 by quarter's end and closed out a 64-20 victory.

Patton led the scoring parade for the Lady Indians with 23 points with other leaders being Sutton with 11 points, Cochran with 7, and Cowart and Lindemuth with 6 each as Cochran led in assists with 7 and Patton added 4. Leading in rebounds were Emily Anderson with 6, Cowart with 5, and Dadrian Blythe with 4 while Patton and Cochran led in steals with 10 and 9 respectively.

**Rabun County 52
Lady Indians 40**

The Lady Indians took a decisive home court 67-44 victory over Rabun County last month but the veteran Lady Wildcats team has regrouped since that date and had a key injured player return to their team as well.

In featuring five seniors playing a prominent role, the Lady Cats were certainly anxious to redeem themselves after their prior loss to the younger Lady Indians, and benefited from a difficult first half by the Lady Indians, who used the

services of two seniors along with three juniors and three sophomores in the game.

The Lady Cats pretty much controlled first half action as the Lady Indians were plagued by an unusually large number of turnovers in the first quarter and cold shooting throughout the half. The Lady Indians did draw first blood in taking a 4-0 lead by the 6:47 mark of the first quarter on field goals by Dadrian Blythe and Eryn Cochran but points were hard to come by for the remainder of the half. They managed just four points the rest of the first quarter on a put-back basket by Kelsie Cowart and two free throws by Cochran as the Lady Cats held a 14-8 lead by quarter's end.

The first half of the second quarter was a struggle for both teams as a field goal by Stephanie Patton at 5:31 and two free throws by Cochran had the Lady Indians within 16-12 by the four minutes mark but the Lady Cats scored the final seven points of the quarter for a 23-12 lead at intermission.

It could be said that the Lady Cats bent but didn't break the last half as they came up

with a number of big baskets each time the Lady Indians seriously threatened their lead. The trio of Cochran, Blythe, and Cowart rallied the Lady Indians to within 29-25 by the 2:09 mark of the third quarter with Blythe including a three point play in five points production and Cochran and Cowart scoring four points each.

Cochran's second field goal of the run, reducing the Rabun lead to 29-23 at the 3:09 mark, deserves mention as the second one of a kind shot by the junior point guard your reporter ever recalls seeing in more than fifty years of closely observing high school basketball.

Last year Cochran sank a field goal from her knees when coming up with a loose ball against Gordon Lee in the Battle of the States Tournament. This time, the natural right-hander switched the ball from her right to her left hand in the middle of a jump shot from some fifteen feet from the goal and swished the ball through the net when it appeared one of the tall Rabun post players would block the right handed shot.

A free throw and trey by

the Lady Cats had them back in front 33-25 with just twenty three seconds left in the third quarter but Cochran nailed a long trey at the buzzer and the Lady Indians were within 33-28 entering the fourth quarter. Another trey by Cochran just twenty two seconds into the fourth quarter had the Lady Indians knocking on the door with just a 33-31 deficit and a runner in the lane by Patton at the 6:01 mark nearly matched a Rabun trey for just a 36-33 Towns deficit.

The Lady Cats responded again, however, with two free throws, a trey, and a three point play in less than a minute of playing time, ending at the 4:52 mark, for a seemingly commanding 44-33 lead.

The Lady Indians weren't quite through themselves, however, as a basket by Cowart and two free throws by Cochran had them within 44-37 and they had the ball back with Cochran, who was six for six at the foul line, appearing from the stands at least to draw a foul on a drive for the basket at 2:57 with two free throws coming. The Lady Indians not only didn't get the foul call, however, but Rabun was given possession of the ball out of bounds and the Lady Cats used the break as a springboard for an 8-3 finish, with field goals at the 2:21 and 1:52 marks and four for six free throw shooting the final 52.3 seconds, for a 52-40 victory.

Cochran took scoring honors for the Lady Indians for the game with 18 points and led in assists with 2 with other scoring leaders being Cowart with 8 points, Blythe with 7, and Patton with 5.

Cowart led in rebounds with 11 with other leaders in that category being Misty Lindemuth with 7, Blythe and Cochran with 6 each, and Patton with 4. Leading in steals were Cochran, Cowart, Patton, and Bailey Sutton with 2 each while Cochran blocked 3 shots and Lindemuth 2.

Indians close against Prince, fall at Rabun

By Jerry Kendall
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The Towns County Indians Varsity Basketball Team came close to winning its third victory of the season last Tuesday when they hosted Prince Avenue Christian School of Bogart but ran out of time as the Wolverines used accurate free throw shooting in the closing minute of play in protecting their fifth victory of the season.

The Indians' scheduled game at Providence Christian Academy in Lilburn on Friday was postponed due to icy weather but they traveled to Rabun County on Friday and fell to the Class AA Wildcats in a game closer than the final thirty points margin would indicate.

**Prince Avenue 48
Indians 41**

The Indians found themselves in a deep hole against Prince Avenue for much of the first half on Tuesday as the Wolverines used four treys in the first quarter in springing out to a 16-5 lead which they extended to 26-12 by the 4:11 mark of the second quarter. The Indians closed the first half with a 6-2 run, however, on field goals by Joseph Gibson and Trace Moss and two free throws by Dallas Manus in reducing the deficit to 28-18 at intermission. Six different Indians put points on the board the first half with leaders being Slade Davenport and Boone Moss with four points each.

The Indians opened the third quarter with a 7-2 run on two field goals by Boone Moss and a trey by Dallas Manus for just a 30-25 deficit by the 4:24 mark but a 6-2 run by the Wolverines had them back in front by a 36-27 score before Aaron Dodson nailed a trey with four seconds left for a 36-30 Prince lead after three quarters.

The Indians edged to within 36-35 on a trey and a deuce by Manus by the 6:33 mark of the fourth quarter, to within 41-37 on two free throws by Davenport at 2:48, and to within 44-40 on a trey by Manus at the 45 seconds mark and still a chance for



Trace Moss is fouled hard on his way to the basket against Prince Avenue. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

the victory. The Wolverines responded with four for six free throw shooting between the 40.5 and 17.7 seconds marks, however, for a final victory margin of 48-41.

Manus led the Indians in scoring for the game with 13 points with other leaders being Boone Moss with 7 points and Davenport and Ryan Tallent with 6 each while Trace Moss led in assists with 3 and Manus followed with 2. Rebounding leaders were Boone Moss with 6 and Tallent with 4 while Garrett Bradshaw, Davenport, and Trace Moss tied for the lead in steals with 2 each.

**Rabun County 63
Towns County 33**

At Rabun County, the Wildcats used three treys in taking a 17-6 lead after one quarter and used several dunks in slightly increasing their lead to 30-16 by intermission.

As against Prince Avenue on Tuesday, six Indians dented the scoreboard the first half against the Wildcats with Aaron Dodson including a trey among five team leading points in the second quarter.

Ryan Tallent then included a trey among five points

in the third quarter as, again, the Wildcats increased their lead only slightly to 45-29 entering the fourth quarter. At this point, the Wildcats' biggest leads by quarter had been by 11 in the first, 16 in the second, and 18 in the third but the Wildcats put on a 3-point baskets scoring spree in the fourth as they closed out a 63-33 victory.

The Wildcats sank their first trey of the quarter between a runner for two points and a tip in basket by Dallas Manus for a fifteen points lead of 48-33 at the 5:58 mark and followed that up by sinking five treys during the final 5:42 of the game in doubling their lead to 63-33.

The Wildcats can be excused for what might otherwise have been considered running up the score as freshman Matthew Addis sank four of the six Wildcat treys in that fourth quarter.

Scoring leaders for the Indians for the game were Dodson and Tallent with 7 points each and Davenport and Manus with 5 each. Manus led in assists with 3 while Boone Moss led in rebounds with 8 with other leaders being Garrett Bradshaw and Davenport with 4 each.

TCMS basketball season ends on bitter note

By Joe Collins
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The Towns County Middle School boys' basketball team suffered a season ending loss Thursday by losing to Wilbanks Middle School in the first round of the league championship tournament 61-59.

The game ended in a 48-48 tie as the clock ran out in the fourth quarter. Two overtimes later the Indians season was over.

The tribe came out to start the game and fell into a slower pace than they were accustomed to. Wilbanks had done their homework and slowed the game down to try and take advantage of their ability to score from the outside. Their strategy worked well during the first quarter and the Indians trailed 9-5 as the first quarter ended.

The second quarter began the same as the first ended until the Indians started getting very aggressive and managed to tie the game 13-13 with 5:20 left in the first half. Their full court man-to-man defense was very affective until the fouls started to accumulate on the Indians, but not on Wilbanks. Adam Barrett, Kobe Denton and Major Moss all had trouble with the whistles with Barrett and Moss eventually fouling out of the game during the fourth quarter. This is not normal for these players.

The defense got skittish and allowed Wilbanks to score on many drives to the basket for fear of being called for contact fouls.

"We didn't protect the basket well and allowed too many points in the paint. The guys just didn't get it done on defense in the first half," declared Head Coach Duncan Weekley.

It was a different team that took the floor in the second half and the Indians fast pace play was back. Wilbanks was ready and answered the Indians with opposing scores making the tribe fight for every point.

With 5:56 left in the game, the Indians had pulled to within one point 40-39 but could never tie the game until the final 3 ticks on the clock found them trailing 48-46.



Towns County's Adam Barrett goes for two in the paint in last week's game with Wilbanks. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

The tribe called time-out and then brought the ball in from mid-court. Chayton McClure took the inbounds pass and hit Will DeVries on a give and go for the lay-up to end the game in a tie 48-48.

The first OT saw the Indians take a 5-point lead on some clutch play by McClure and DeVries. Wilbanks managed to pull to within 3 points 57-54 with .15 left in the first OT. The Indian missed a close one in the paint and Wilbanks recovered a defensive rebound and hurried the ball down court. A Wilbanks player threw up a 3-point goal attempt, along with a prayer, and it found the basket after an abstract bounce off the backboard, which tied the game 57-57.

The Indians moved the ball back down the court with three seconds on the board but an uncalled foul kept the Indians from scoring and the first OT ended in a tie.

The Indians fought hard all the way through the final OT but the officials had other thoughts in mind than making good calls on both ends of the court, and with two starters on the bench and a third in seri-

ous foul trouble, the odds were stacked against the tribe. The Indians made it exciting but couldn't pull it off as the clock ran out.

Their season ended in a thrilling fashion but a last minute Hail Mary missed left off the rim and the game ended in an Indians loss 61-59. It was a tremendous game of grit and staying power by Towns but the tribe was playing a seven-man team and no team can beat those odds.

"We didn't play well early but brought it back at the end," Weekley said. "I am very proud of the team for hanging in there but we had some bad breaks and couldn't get the calls late. It is a disappointing loss to a good season and that's about all I can say."

A good coach doesn't make excuses for his team but the fans let the officials know where they stood in their eyes. It is a shame that a game of this importance can't be officiated fairly but that was the case on Thursday night as the Georgia High School officials showed the crowd who they favored, this is not an excuse, it is a fact.