

Towns County Sports

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Lady Indians soar past Hayesville and Union County

By Jerry Kendall
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The Towns County Lady Indians Varsity Basketball Team faced its first major regular season challenges last week and came through with flying colors as they took the measure of neighborhood rivals Hayesville and Union County in extending their early season record to 3-0.

Each rival brought unique circumstances in creating much drama in anticipation of each tip off.

TC 65, Hayesville 58

HAYESVILLE, NC-When the Lady Indians traveled to Hayesville on Tuesday, there was much reason to believe on both sides of the state line that a lengthy winning streak by the Lady Indians over the Lady Jackets might be about to come to an end. After all, the Lady Indians had taken a tough 76-66 win in Hayesville a year ago in the only game played between the two teams with three Lady Indian seniors now playing college basketball combining for 47 of the Lady Indians' points and no longer available. By contrast, all of the fire power of the then very young Lady Jackets squad is still intact.

The Lady Jackets entered the game with just a 1-1 record but with the loss having come by just a 46-42 score at the hands of Class AAA Tuscola High School of Waynesville. The game proved to be an epic battle for almost three quarters until the Lady Indians gained the upper hand during the final minute of play of the third quarter and pretty much controlled the fourth in coming away with their ninth straight victory over the Lady Jackets extending all the way back to the 2006 season.

The first quarter saw the Lady Indians strike for 3



Junior guard Eryn Cochran goes up strong at Hayesville last week. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

points at a time, with the exception of two free throws, in the first quarter in taking a 20-15 advantage by quarter's end. The first of four first quarter 3-point baskets by Stephanie Patton gave the Lady Indians their first lead of 7-6 at the 5:22 mark after Hayesville took a quick 4-0 lead. Eryn Cochran had opened first quarter scoring for the Lady Indians with an old fashioned 3-point play and ended it with a trey as time expired with Patton's treys in between having enabled as much as 6-point Lady Indian leads on two occasions.

One of the few negatives found in the Lady Indians' performance for the entire game had begun near the end of the first quarter, however, as the Lady Jackets included eight straight points compliments of Lady Indian turnovers in a 15-5 run which rallied them from a 17-11 deficit to a 26-22 lead by the middle of the second quarter.

The Lady Indians responded with a 6-0 run for a 28-26 lead, however, and there

would be just one lead for either team of more than two points from that point until the closing seconds of the third quarter with the two teams in a 34-34 standoff at intermission.

After Patton and Cochran combined for 18 of 20 points scored by the Lady Indians in the first quarter, six different Lady Indians put points on the scoreboard in the second quarter but the final two quarters returned to Patton and Cochran scoring dominance. Patton completed a 12-point third quarter by sinking two treys in the final 56 seconds in giving the Lady Indians a 51-46 lead entering the fourth quarter.

Patton's first trey gave the Lady Indians a 48-46 lead they would never relinquish and represented the eighth lead change to go along with eight ties in just under 24 minutes of playing time. Two free throws by Cochran barely half a minute into the fourth quarter gave the Lady Indians a 53-46 lead which would eventually repre-



Sophomore Stephanie Patton fires away during Towns' blowout victory over Union County. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

sent the final margin of victory as they twice led by as much as 10 points but twice by just five.

A trey by Patton and a putback basket by Kellsie Cowart gave the Lady Indians breathing room with a 58-48 lead after the Lady Jackets closed to within 53-48 at 5:03 and two free throws each by Cochran and Patton at the 59.9 and 31.5 second marks gave the Lady Indians an insurmountable 64-55 advantage after Hayesville closed to within 60-55 on a trey at 1:08. The Lady Jackets sank another trey with 10 seconds left but it was too little too late as the Lady Indians closed out the hard fought 65-58 victory.

Patton poured in seven treys and sank six of nine free throw attempts among her career best 33 points while Cochran included 5 for 5 free throw shooting among her 16 points and Cowart added 7 points. Cochran led the Lady Indians in assists with 4 with Karlie Albach close behind

with 3 points on the evening.

TC 62, Union Co. 41

HAYESVILLE, NC-While the Hayesville girls presented a now veteran presence on Tuesday, Union County faced a similar loss of outstanding talent to graduation as the Lady Indians but entered the game with a sparkling 4-0 record, including an impressive home court 57-44 victory the night before over Class AAA Fannin County.

That win was the fourth in a row for the Lady Panthers over the traditionally powerful Lady Rebels who were elevated to Class AAA with reclassification this year after many years in the same Region 8-AA with Union County.

The first quarter of the Union County game proved to be a tough defensive battle with no lead for either team of more than two points except a brief 7-4 advantage by the Lady Panthers near the mid point of the quarter. Four Lady Indians put points on the scoreboard in the

quarter with a trey by Stephanie Patton at the 2:28 mark giving them a 9-8 lead they would never relinquish.

The second quarter pretty much belonged to the Lady Indians who used a 7-0 start for a 16-8 lead and an overall 16-5 run for a 25-13 lead at the 2:13 mark which became 25-15 at intermission. Patton and Eryn Cochran each included a trey in providing seven points each during the quarter.

The Lady Indians opened the third quarter as they had the second, with a 7-0 run, for a 32-15 lead and they held a 41-27 advantage entering the fourth quarter. Kellsie Cowart scored 6 points and Cochran 5 in leading the Lady Indians in third quarter action.

With the Lady Panthers still within striking distance in the era of the 3-point shot, the Lady Indians broke the game wide open the first half of the fourth quarter as they opened the quarter on a 10-1 run for a 51-28 advantage and led 58-32 by the mid point of the quarter on the way to a 62-41 victory. Patton scored eight points and Cochran 8 before sitting out the final 3:55 of the game with seven different Lady Indians entering the scoring column in the quarter.

Scoring leaders for the game were Patton with 23 points, Cochran with 16, and Cowart with 12. Cochran led in assists with 4 while six other Lady Indians collected one assist, according to your reporter's unofficial tally. As reported following the Lady Indians' victory over Gilmer in the preseason scrimmage, basketball is a team sport and the Lady Indians would not have enjoyed the success of last week and many prior years without the dedicated rebounding, defensive, and ball handling skills on display by the additional members of the team not recognized in the more commonly available offensive oriented stats.

Indians fall to Hayesville and Union

By Jerry Kendall
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The Towns County Indians Varsity Basketball Team came face to face with potent neighborhood rivals Hayesville and Union County last week and took it on the chin in both games while showing admirable improvement as the second game progressed.

They fell by an 80-27 score at Hayesville on Tuesday but came away with some positive moments in just a 48-38 home court loss to Union County on Saturday.

Hayesville 80, TC 27

HAYESVILLE, NC-Not much of anything went well for the Indians at Hayesville as the Yellow Jackets sprang out to a 22-3 lead after one quarter and held leads of 46-10 and 68-20 at the second and third quarter breaks in taking the 80-27 victory.

The Jackets lost seven seniors from last year's 29-1 team with their only loss coming in the North Carolina Class A Final Eight round.

The Yellow Jackets showed no signs of a reduction in capability as a result of the graduation of players in this game although they have already lost a game this year but to Class AAA Tuscola of Waynesville. The only sustained run for the Indians in the game was a 10-8 advantage between the 3:11 mark of the third quarter and the 7:22 mark of the fourth with Dallas Manus contributing half of the points in the run on a trey and a deuce.

The Indians were led in scoring for the game by Manus with 11 points and Trace Moss with 5 while Manus and Cruz Shook led in assists with 2 each according to your reporter's unofficial tally.

Union 48 TC 38

While Hayesville absorbed drastic losses to graduation, Union County returned all varsity players from last year's team which finished with a 13-4 record in their tough Region 8AA and they entered the game against the Indians with a 4-0



Sophomore Cruz Shook takes it to the basket during Towns County's game with Union County. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

record including a dismantling of Class AAA Fannin County the night before.

Union held a 37-12 lead at intermission in that game against the Rebels who entered the contest with a 3-1 record themselves with their only prior loss being by a 50-40 decision to Class AAAA Gilmer.

It wasn't enough that the Indians faced a formidable opponent in Union County but they were without the services of point guard and last year's leading scorer Dallas Manus who had the flu. Early field goals by Stetson Hedden got 2-2 and 4-4 ties for the Indians but Union used a 16-5 run the final five minutes of the first quarter in pulling away from just a 7-6 lead for a 23-11 advantage by quarter's end.

Points would be harder to come by for the Panthers after that as they managed just 25 points the final three quarters of the game while still appearing on several occasion to be taking control of the game. The Indians, on the other hand, managed 27 points the final three quarters as they kept making runs at the Panthers right up to the end of the game.

Union opened the second quarter with a trey and a deuce for a 28-11 lead by the 6:07 mark but the Indians outscored the Panthers 6-4 the remainder of the quarter for a 32-17 Panthers lead at intermission. Cruz Shook contributed four of the points in the run on

his second trey of the game and a free throw.

The Panthers opened the third quarter with a pair of field goals for a 36-17 lead by the 6:13 mark but again the Indians controlled the remainder of the quarter.

They used an 11-4 run with four different players putting points on the scoreboard for just a 40-28 deficit by the 57 seconds mark but with a last second shot by the Panthers having them ahead 42-28 entering the fourth quarter.

Three Indian free throws had them within 42-31 by the 6 minute mark of the fourth quarter but the Panthers responded with a 6-0 run for a 48-31 lead by the three minute mark.

The Indians weren't done, however, as they spoiled stalling strategy by the Panthers by scoring the final 7 points of the game for the 48-38 final score. Once again the Indians had four players entering the scoring column in the quarter with Aaron Dodson leading with 4 points.

Eight different Indians put points on the scoreboard for the game with leaders being Shook with three treys included among his 10 points, Ryan Talient with 7 points, Dodson with 6, and Boone Moss with 5. Joseph Gibson led in assists with 3 with Garrett Bradshaw and Tallent right behind him with 2 each.

JV girls split with Jackets and Lady Panthers

By Jerry Kendall
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It was a split decision for the Towns County Lady Indians' Junior Varsity teams last week in their first contests of the young season.

They rallied in the final minutes for a 46-44 win at Hayesville, NC on Tuesday but took it on the chin in a 48-22 home court loss to the Union County Lady Panthers on Saturday.

TC 46, Hayesville 44

HAYESVILLE, NC - The Hayesville Lady Yellow Jackets had a bit of an advantage in already having played their first game, a 45-34 win over Class AAA Tuscola High School of Waynesville.

The Lady Indians took first quarter leads of 2-1 on a Jocelyn Byers basket and 4-3 on a field goal by Carly Gilfilian but the Lady Jackets held an 8-4 lead by quarter's end.

The Lady Indians included an early second quarter 10-1 run in overall 14-4 second quarter dominance for an 18-12 lead at intermission with four points each by Gilfilian and Byers leading the way.

The Lady Indians continued to lead the Lady Jackets throughout the third quarter by as much as nine points on two occasions, including by a 31-22 margin by the 1:43 mark. Misty Lindemuth and Taylor McCarter scored 6 points each for the Lady Indians during third quarter play.

The Lady Jackets struck for a trey and a deuce in the closing minute and a half of the quarter for just a 31-27 deficit, however, and then added a deuce and a trey in just under a minute at the start of the fourth quarter for a sudden 32-31 lead.

A McCarter free throw tied the score seconds later but the Lady Jackets retook the lead at 5:08 and led by as much as 39-34 and 41-36, despite a putback basket and a long deuce by Karlie Albach, by the 2 minute mark.



Taylor McCarter grabs a rebound during Towns County's JV win over Hayesville. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

The Lady Indians would not be denied, however, as they forced a 41-41 tie on a trey at 1:43 by Albach and a deuce by Gilfilian, enabled by a Brooke Smith steal, at 1:27. Two Lady Jacket free throws at 1:20 had Hayesville back in front 43-41 but McCarter tied it again with a basket at forty four seconds.

Another Lady Jacket free throw at 39.1 seconds gave Hayesville a 44-43 lead but good fortune smiled on the Lady Indians when Albach sank her second trey of the quarter, off the backboard in this case, at seventeen seconds for a 46-44 Towns County advantage.

Albach then sealed the deal by coming up with two steals in the closing seconds depriving the Lady Jackets of any attempt to tie the score with a deuce or a win with a trey.

All eight Lady Indians seeing action entered the scoring column with leaders being McCarter with 11 points, Albach with 10, Gilfilian with 8, and Byers and Lindemuth with 6 each.

Leaders in assists were Smith with 4 and the trio of Byers, Gilfilian, and Alyssa Pyle with 2 each.

Albach and Lindemuth were limited to just one quarter of play in the JV game and Alyssa Pyle to just two quarters in order for the three sophomores to be available for extensive varsity play.

Union 48, TC 22

Early turnovers were costly for the Lady Indians in the Union County game as the Lady Panthers raced out to a 13-1 lead after one quarter and a 25-6 lead at intermission which became 30-6 by the 5:42 mark of the third quarter.

The Lady Indians put together a 7-0 run, triggered by a trey by Brooke Smith, after that for a 30-13 score with 3:20 on the clock but Union matched the run for a 37-13 lead entering the fourth quarter. Smith included a second trey in a 7-point fourth quarter when the Lady Panthers managed just an 11-9 advantage on the scoreboard as they closed out the 48-22 victory.

All six Lady Indians seeing action in this game entered the scoring column with Smith leading with 10 points and Gilfilian taking second honors with 4 while Alyssa Pyle led in assists with 2.