Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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Indians escape with close win, get decisive victory

By Jerry Kendall Towns County Herald Staff Writer

Last week was a quite unique one for the Towns County High School Indians varsity basketball team when they took two region victories while having a third game scheduled at Greene County on Saturday postponed to Monday of this week due to a winter storm warning with risk that did materialize for a return trip home by the TCHS teams.

A further change is the rescheduling of this Friday's game at Lincoln County to Wednesday of this week with the scheduled home game against Rabun Gap on Wednesday being cancelled.

The Indians escaped with an 80-78 shootout victory over Commerce in the first game on their home court on Tuesday in surviving a late Commerce rally before traveling to Greensboro and shutting down the outmanned Lake Oconee Academy 58-21 with the first half being especially impressive as they held a 35-2 lead at intermission.

The Indians completed the week as the state's sixth ranked Atlanta Journal and Constitution Class A Public team with a 16-3 overall record and a 9-1 record and in first place in Region 8-A Public. The win at Lake Oconee Academy coupled with a 61-53 home court loss by Lincoln County to Social Circle the same night clinched a state tournament berth for the Indians as it was the fourth region loss for Lincoln with just two Indian games remaining and no chance for Lincoln or any team other than second place Social Circle to have as good a record as the Indians.

The two top teams in the region in regular season play will get byes in the region tournament with teams three through seven having to earn a trip to the region tournament semifinals and an accompanying trip to the Class A Public state tournament.

The sixth and seventh place teams will participate in a play in game with the winner of that game facing the third place team and the fourth and fifth place teams facing each other for the third and fourth spots in the region tournament.

The results of the tournament semifinals and championship and consolation games will determine seeding for the state tournament. With the Indians already



with lots of possibilities related to

Indians will be provided in next

region tournament games need to

be aware that they can only attend

their teams' games and if the Lady

Indians and Indians play on the

same dates there will be a charge

of \$7.00 for each game. Fans plan-

ning to attend the tournament will

need to check out info about avail-

ability and ticket purchases before

traveling to Commerce. The site

www.townscountyathletics.com

78 – After exploding out to a 15-1

lead in barely more than three

and a half minutes and coasting

to a 79-65 victory in Commerce

on January 12, the visiting Tigers

from Commerce turned the tables

a bit on the Indians last Tuesday by

building a 20-10 lead by the 1:54

quick 2-0 lead on a basket by junior

Jake McTaggart, a 4-4 tie on two

free throws by senior Kolby Moss,

goal by McTaggart. The Tigers fol-

lowed, however, with a 16-4 scor-

ing run interrupted only by a field

goal by senior Hayden McClure

and two additional free throws by

Moss for the aforementioned 20-

10 Commerce lead.

The Indians had gotten a

mark of the first quarter.

Indians 80, Commerce

website is a good source of info.

week's Herald.

Left: Senior Kolby Moss soars for two at LOA. Right: Junior Jake McTaggart goes up strong in the paint at LOA. Photos by Lowell Nicholson qualifying for the region semifinals

The Indians responded with and not playing their first game an 11-2 run of their own in barely until Thursday of next week along more than a minute between the 1:38 and 22-second marks for just seeding, up to date information a 22-21 deficit before the Tigers sank a trey as time expired for a about the schedule related to the 25-21 advantage after one quarter. This Indians scoring run was Fans planning to attend highlighted by five points by senior Aidan Berrong on an old fashioned three point play and another deuce with McTaggart and fellow juniors Collin Crowder and Kyle Oakes each contributing two points.

The Indians opened the second quarter with four more free throws by Moss and a deuce by senior Kabe Ellis for a 27-25 lead in just thirty one seconds and a Crowder putback following a Tiger trey gave the Indians a 29-28 lead at the 6:56 mark they would not relinquish but have challenged until literally the final buzzer.

Seven different Indians put points on the scoreboard in the second quarter as they outscored the Tigers 26-16 for a 47-41 lead at intermission with Commerce actually closing the gap from 45-35 with a 6-2 finish interrupted by a field goal by senior Colton Day. Scoring leaders during the quarter were Crowder with eight points and McClure, McTaggart, and and a 6-4 lead on a second field Moss with four each.

The Indians got their biggest lead of 59-47 on a trey by McTaggart at the 4:24 mark of the third quarter for an extended 49-27 scoring run since the 20-10 deficit at the 1:38 mark of the first quarter and the appearance of being in control of the game. They then held a 61-51 lead at the 3:07 mark on a deuce by McTaggart but to their credit the Tigers closed the stanza with a 9-2 run for just a 63-60 Towns lead entering the fourth quarter. Ellis matched McTaggart's trey and deuce for five points in the quarter and Moss followed with McTaggart continued his

excellent game in the fourth quarter in scoring six of the Indian points in an 8-4 start for a 71-64 Indians lead at the 5:28 mark but the Tigers continued their commendable ability to respond by sinking a trey and two free throws for just a 71-69 deficit at 4:35. An inside basket by Crowder and an Ellis coast to coast run for another had the Indians ahead 75-69 at the 3:59 mark but the Tigers again sank a trey for just a 75-72 Indians lead just twenty three seconds later.

A McTaggart basket at 3:11 had the Indians leading 77-72 but the Tigers wrapped two field goals around a Crowder free throw for just a 78-76 deficit at thirty two seconds. Ellis sank two clutch free throws at twenty one seconds for an 80-76 Towns lead and a two possession game but the Tigers made a basket at seventeen seconds for an 80-78 score. The Tigers got off a pair of trey attempts for a one point win following an Indian turnover but the first was an air ball and the second hit the side of the backboard and the Indians escaped with the two point victory.

Eight Indians entered the

scoring column with leaders being McTaggart with 23 points, Moss with 14, Crowder with 13, Ellis with 11, Berrong with 7, McClure with 6, and Oakes with 4 while leaders in assists were Oakes with 5, Ellis and McTaggart with 4 each, and Moss with 3. Leaders in rebounds were McTaggart with 14, Crowder with 11, and Oakes with 4 while McClure and Oakes led in steals with 2 each and McTaggart led in blocked shots with 3. It was noteworthy that Moss sank ten

the game. Scoring leaders for Commerce were senior Ian McConnell with 25 points and senior Creed Dunbar and junior Shaquario Sherrod with 14 each with all of Dunbar's points coming in the last half and twelve of Sherrod's in the

free throws in ten attempts during

By week's end Commerce had an overall record of just 7-14 but 5-5 in region play with three of the region losses being by four points or less and with the advantage of hosting the region tournament. Indians 59, Lake Oconee

Academy 21 – It was a mismatch from beginning to end at Lake Oconee Academy although the homestanding Titans ran off quite a bit of clock in the first quarter with the appearance of not being able to penetrate the Indians' excellent defense instead of a stall attempt.

A basket by senior Aidan Berrong just 12 seconds into the to get this mention included. game got the Indians a 2-0 lead

Indians added just 10 points for a 12-0 lead at the 2:06 mark on baskets by junior Jake McTaggart. senior Kolby Moss, and repeat baskets by Berrong and McClure.
The Titans sank two free

throws at 52.8 seconds for a 12-2 Towns lead after one quarter but the Indians used a 23-0 run in the second quarter for the aforementioned 35-2 lead at intermission. Eight Indians put points on the scoreboard in the quarter with leaders being Moss with five on a trey and a deuce and Berrong and freshman Zane Floyd with two deuces for four points each.

Field goals by Moss and Berrong increased the Indians lead to 39-2 during the first minute of the third quarter before the Titans struck for eight straight points for a 39-10 score at the 4:37 mark. But a pair of treys by senior Kabe Ellis for six points and a deuce and two free throws by McClure for four highlighted a 12-4 Indians quarter closing run for a 51-14 score after three quarters. The Indians closed out the 59-21 victory with Floyd providing six of the Indians' eight points in the mercy rule shortened

Scoring leaders for the game for the Indians were Berrong with 12 points, Floyd and McClure with 10 each, Moss with 9, Ellis with 8, and McTaggart and junior Kyle Oakes with 4 each.

Additional stats are not available at press time but will be included as a footnote with the next game reports. The Titans were led in scoring by senior Charlie Hynes with 6 points. The Titans completed the week with a 1-19 overall record and 0-10 in region play, a striking contrast with the girls record of 17-0 and the top ranked Class A Public team in

Floyd's standout performance in this game gives your reporter the opportunity to rectify a failure when writing an article about his sister, Vanessa, reaching the Lady Indians 1,000 points club in last week's Herald.

It was intended to make mention, along with sports accomplishments of Vanessa's ancestors. of Zane's top notch play primarily on the Indians' outstanding and most enjoyable to watch JV team as a freshman this year with occasional admirable work in varsity games but a slip up occurred and apologies are extended for failing

Lady Indians lose close game, overwhelmed in another loss

Vanessa Floyd

By Jerry Kendall **Towns County Herald** Staff Writer

Last week proved to be a difficult one for the Towns County Lady Indians as a very admirable comeback came just short in a home court loss to Commerce on Tuesday and they were overwhelmed on the road on Friday by Lake Oconee Academy, the state's undefeated and top ranked Class A Public team by the Atlanta Journal -Constitution (AJC).

These two losses were at the hands of the first and second place teams in Region 8A with the Lady Indians in third place in the region as a result of missing a likely tie for second if victorious in this game. A third game scheduled at fifth place Greene County on Saturday was postponed due to a winter weather warning in our mountain area with a threat that materialized of icy roads and danger to those who would have been returning home on Saturday night.

With the Greene County game postponed to Monday of this week and a game at sixth place Lincoln County rescheduled for Wednesday of this week, the Lady Indians are in great position with a 6-4 region record to finish third in regular season region play with Social Circle, the fourth place team with a 5-5 record, having to face Lake Oconee and not likely to win on Tuesday of this week. The scheduled home game against Rabun Gap on Wednesday has been canceled due to the rescheduled game at Lincoln County

If the Lady Indians do finish in third place as seems likely, they will face the winner of a playin game between the sixth and seventh place teams in the first round of the Region 8-A Tournament to be played next week at 4 p.m. on Tuesday at Commerce High School. The winner of that game will qualify for the region semifinals at 4 p.m. Thursday and a trip to the Class A Public state tournament. Winners of the Thursday games advance to the Friday's region championship game, with losing teams playing a consolation game on Friday to establish State seeding. More complete scheduling info will be provided in next

week's Herald. Fans planning to attend region tournament games need to be aware that they can only attend their teams' games and if the Lady

Indians and Indians play on the same dates there will be a charge of \$7 for each game. Fans planning to attend the tournament will need to check out information about availability and ticket purchases before traveling to Commerce. The www. townscountyathletics.com website

is a good source of information. Commerce 36, Lady Indians 33 – In a very low scoring first quarter defensive battle against Commerce, the Lady Indians took an early 2-0 lead on a basket by senior Vanessa Floyd at the 7:08 mark of the first quarter and a 5-2 lead on a trey by junior Emily Vargas at the 1:43 mark. The Lady Tigers used a field goal at the 1:21 mark and two free throws at the 4.4 seconds mark, however, for a 6-5 lead at quarter's end.

The Lady Indians were then within 11-9 on a trey by Floyd at the 3:54 mark of the second quarter but Commerce struck for a pair of treys by the 2:13 mark and added two deuces and a free throw by 22-9 lead at intermission.

The Lady Indians' ultra successful defense on many occasions this year, including in a 39-37 loss at Commerce, was present the first half with eight of the Lady Tiger points coming as a result of turnovers and putback baskets but with ice cold shooting by the Lady Indians' preventing them from having a close first half result.

After the Lady Tigers opened the third quarter with an old fashioned three point play at the 6:37 mark and what seemed

Towns County senior Vanessa Floyd was recognized last week for reaching the 1,000-point mark for her career. Photo/Lowell Nicholson like an insurmountable 25-9 advantage, the Lady Indians' defense continued to dominate with the Lady Tigers scoring just three more field goals the remainder of the game with one of those being a putback basket.

And the Lady Indians' offense increasingly came to life as the last half progressed. A trey by senior Jayce Young and a deuce by Floyd got them within 25-14 at the 5:28 mark and deuces by senior Kennedy Henson and Young the final 1:26 of the quarter had them within 30-18 entering the fourth quarter as the two teams wound up on nearly even terms in the third.

A Commerce field goal just 21 seconds into the fourth quarter had them ahead 32-18 but here came the Lady Indians. Henson accounted for a 9-1 Towns scoring run on two treys sandwiched around three free throws when fouled on a trey attempt for just a 33-27 Lady Indians deficit.

And following the Lady quarter's end for a commanding Tigers' second field goal of the quarter and fourth and final one of the half, a free throw by Vargas, a two pointer by Floyd, and another trey by Henson between the 1:27 and 24-second marks had the Lady Indians within 35-33 but the Lady Indians couldn't put additional points on the scoreboard, and the Lady Tigers sank 1 of 3 free throw attempts during the final 19.7 seconds for a 36-33 victory.

So the Lady Indians outscored the Lady Tigers 23-11 following the early third quarter 25-9 deficit and 15-4 following the early fourth quarter 32-18 deficit with a search for more consistent offense, particularly in the first half, a goal for the Lady Indians during the final days of regular season and into the

Towns County Lady Indians

Rabun County

region tournament. Henson led the Lady Indians in scoring for the game with 14 points and was followed by Floyd with 10, Young with 5, and Vargas with 4 while Henson led in assists with 3 and Floyd followed with 2. Leaders in rebounds were Henson with 8, Floyd with 6, and senior Abby Mauldin and Young with 4 each while leaders in steals were Henson with 4 and Floyd and sophomore Sarah Shook with 2 each. The Lady Tigers were led in scoring by juniors Lauren Massey and Sarah Webb with 8 points each and senior Maggie Mullis with 7. The Lady Tigers completed the week with a 13-8 overall record and 8-1 in Region 8A but with a game on Saturday night against Lake Oconee Academy likely giving them their second region loss.

Lake Oconee Academy 68, Lady Indians 38 - A very competitive schedule for the Lady Indians continued with their appearance against Lake Oconee Academy as this was the second time to face the Lady Titans who were then and still are the top ranked Class A Public school in the state with a current 17-0 record by the AJC along with an earlier game against Rabun County, then the top-ranked team in Class 2A, now ranked fourth.

And this was the sixth time in 17 games played that the Lady Indians faced a team ranked in the

top 10 in the state by the AJC at the time of the game. Further, Rockmart is now the 9th ranked team in by MaxPreps in Class 3A after losing on a last second shot in the Class 2A State tournament semifinals last year, and lost to graduation just eight points from that game. And finally, Athens Academy just misses the top 10 with a 15-4 record as the 11th ranked Class A Private team by MaxPreps.

The Lady Indians were trailing by just a 21-18 score until the final twenty seconds of the first quarter in their home game against the Lady Titans but early ice cold shooting prevented their staying close in the first quarter of their Friday game. Lake Oconee built a 16-5 lead by quarter's end in spite 2,000 points career total.

of a trey by senior Kennedi Henson getting the Lady Indians within 7-3 and a deuce by senior Vanessa rioya naving them within 11-5 at the 46-second mark before a late deuce and trey got the big lead.

The Lady Indians had three portions of unusual success in the second quarter with Floyd wrapping two deuces around two Lady Titan free throws for an 18-9 score early in the quarter and then repeating this event late in the quarter for a 34-17 score at the 1:48 mark. In between, sophomore Tabitha Barnes in a similar manner wrapped two deuces around a Lady Titan field goal for a 27-13 score.

The Lady Titans finished the quarter with two field goals and a free throw, however, for a 37-17 lead at intermission and led 53-27 after three quarters on the way to a 67-38 victory with Henson contributing four points in the third quarter and six in the fourth.

Floyd led the scoring for the Lady Indians with 15 points, followed by Henson with 13, Barnes with 4, and freshman Laura Mauldin and sophomore Sarah Shook with 3 each, while senior Jayce Young led in assists with 3. Leading in rebounds were Henson with 12, Floyd with 10, freshman Laura Mauldin with 7, and sophomore Sarah Shook with 5 while leaders in steals were Henson with 3 and Floyd and Barnes with 2 each. Scoring leaders for the Lady Titans were seniors Destiny McClendon with 36 points and Piper Bosart with 14. The crowd erupted at the 5:38 mark of the fourth quarter in awareness that a field goal by Mc-Clendon allowed her to reach the

Register now for Baseball, Softball and T-ball

Baseball, Softball, T-Ball registration is now open at townscountyrec.com or come by and register! \$60 registration fee includes, hat, jersey and pants. Some age groups also receive a belt and socks. Registration will run

through the end of February!

Baseball 14U, 12U, 10U, 8U. Softball 14U, 12U, 10U, 8U. T-Ball Co-ed 5 and 6 year old.

Player control date is September 1st of current year (2021): 14U Birthdate range September 2, 2006 to September 1, 2008. 12U Birthdate range September 2, 2008 to September 1, 2010.



2, 2010 to September 1, 2012. 8U Birthdate range September 2, 2012 to September 1, 2014. T-Ball Birthdate range September 2, 2014 to September 1, 2016.