

# Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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## Indians pick up three decisive Region 8-A Public victories

By Jerry Kendall  
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The Towns County Indians varsity basketball team had a rewarding three games last week as they improved their overall record to 9-1 and their Region 8-A Public record to 4-0 and in first place in the region with impressive victories over region foes Commerce, Lake Oconee Academy, and Washington-Wilkes. And they are currently ranked third in the state in Class A Public by the *Atlanta Journal and Constitution*.

**Indians 79, Commerce 65** – To state that the Indians exploded to a dominate lead in the first quarter at Commerce can be considered an understatement. They sprang out to a 10-0 lead in just two minutes and ten seconds of playing time and extended that lead to 15-1 at the 4:25 mark of the first quarter on the way to a 28-11 lead by quarter's end.



Junior Collin Crowder (L) drives inside vs Washington Wilkes; senior Kolby Moss (R) releases a jumper at Commerce. Photos/Lowell Nicholson

Junior Jake McTaggart gave an indication of what was to come when he took a pass from mid court from senior Aidan Berrong on the opening inbounds play and sank a field goal on his way to 12-point quarter which included two treys and a dunk. Six different Indians put points on the scoreboard in the quarter with highlights being six points by senior Kolby Moss on three deuces and treys by seniors Kabe Ellis and Hayden McClure.

After a basket by Berrong got the Indians a 30-11 lead at the 7:43 mark of the second quarter, the Tigers went on a 10-2 run in closing to within 32-21 at the 4:16 mark but the Indians finished the quarter on a 10-5 scoring run for a 42-26 lead at intermission. Six Indians again entered the scoring column in the quarter with senior Colton Day leading the way with five points on a trey and a deuce.

The third quarter saw the Indians extend their lead to 60-40 with highlights including five points on a deuce and trey by Berrong, four points each by Ellis and Moss, and a trey by junior Collin Crowder with the Indians continuing an impressive scoring run until the mid point of the fourth quarter.

no lengthy scoring runs achieved by their opponents.

It did require more than six minutes at the start of the game for the Indians to claim a lead they would not relinquish but the Tigers never led by more than three points at 8-5 during that period of time. Senior Kabe Ellis got the Indians a 2-0 lead less than a minute into



the game and a three point play by junior Jake McTaggart got a 5-4 lead at the 4:41 mark before the Indians finished the quarter from the 3:40 mark on a 14-4 run for a 19-12 lead at quarter's end.

Senior Kolby Moss started the run with a pair of deuces forcing a 9-9 tie at 2:04 and adding a trey at 1:39 for a 12-9 lead they

would hold until the end of the game. A trey by senior Aidan Berrong and deuces by McTaggart and fellow junior Kyle Oakes more than offset a trey by the Tigers during the final 1:14 of the quarter.

The two teams played on even terms in the second quarter with the Indians holding a 39-32

lead at intermission and scoring leaders being Moss with six points and Berrong with 5.

The third quarter saw the Indians follow the lead of McTaggart with eight points, senior Kabe Ellis with seven, and Moss with six in extending their lead to 63-48 entering the fourth quarter. A highlight of the third quarter was five assists by junior Collin Crowder with two of them resulting in dunks by McTaggart.

The Indians had their biggest lead of 70-51 by the 5:43 mark of the fourth quarter with the Tigers reducing the advantage slightly to 77-60 by game's end. Scoring leaders for the Indians in the final quarter were Moss with six points and McTaggart with five.

The Indians were led in scoring for the game by Moss with 25 points, McTaggart with 21, Ellis with 14, and Berrong with 10 while leaders in assists were Crowder and Ellis with 6 each, Moss with 3, and Berrong with 2.

Leaders in rebounds were Crowder with 10, McTaggart with 9, Moss with 6, Ellis and junior Kyle Oakes with 4 each and Berrong with 3 while Ellis led in steals with 4 and McTaggart led in blocked shots with 3. Scoring leaders for Washington-Wilkes were junior Dalen Cobb with 24 points and sophomore Desmond Cofer with 9.

## Lady Indians defeat Wilkes, fall to LOA, Commerce

By Jerry Kendall  
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The Towns County Lady Indians varsity basketball team was in action three times against Region 8A Public foes last week and ended the week with a dominant home court victory over Washington-Wilkes after losing a close battle at Commerce on Tuesday and falling on their home court on Friday to Lake Oconee Academy, a charter school from Greensboro, Georgia, the state's top ranked Class A Public team by the *Atlanta Journal and Constitution* (AJC).

The Commerce victory over the Lady Indians wasn't assured until the final shot of the game while undefeated Lake Oconee followed the lead of Destiny McClendon, a senior UT-Chattanooga recruit, in taking an impressive victory over the Lady Indians, and the Lady Indians took a surprisingly easy victory over Washington-Wilkes.



Lady Indians seniors on Senior Night. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

**Commerce 39, Lady Indians 37** – The game at Commerce on Tuesday was one that the Lady Indians and their followers can think of as what might have been just as the Lady Tigers and their followers would have thought the same thing if the Lady Indians had come out on top. Both teams missed many opportunities to take control of the game but with cold shooting, especially at the foul line where the Lady Indians were seven for sixteen and the Lady Tigers five for twelve, and several turnovers among decisive type issues.

The first quarter of the game was a near standoff with senior Kennedy Henson getting the Lady Indians a 3-0 lead with a trey at the 6:21 mark of the first quarter and a 5-5 tie with a drive to the basket at the 3:25 mark but with a pair of free throws getting the Lady Tigers a 7-5 lead by quarter's end.

The Lady Tigers used a pair of deuces and a free throw to claim a 12-5 advantage at the 6:53 mark of the second quarter but sophomore Sarah Shook contributed two deuces and a free throw as the Lady Indians outscored the Lady Tigers by a 7-5 margin for a 17-12 Commerce lead at intermission.

Shook and deuces by seniors Abby Mauldin, Vanessa Floyd, and Jayce Young coming in the earlier stages of the quarter.

The Lady Tigers opened the fourth quarter with a trey but a trey by Henson got the Lady Indians within 29-27 at the 6:25 mark and a pair of treys by Shook got them a 31-31 tie at 4:31 and then a 34-33 lead at 2:32, their first advantage since Henson's game opening trey.

After a Commerce field goal got the Lady Tigers a 35-34 lead at the 2:03 mark, Young sank two clutch free throws at 1:10 for a 36-35 Lady Indian lead only to have the Lady Tigers sink a trey for a 38-36 advantage they would not relinquish at the fifty one seconds mark. A free throw by Henson at 10.4 seconds got the Lady Indians within 38-37 but the Lady Tigers matched it at 5.0 seconds for a 39-37 lead which became the final score when a field goal attempt by Henson from mid court as time expired was just inches too long to win the game, bouncing off the backboard right in line with but just over the basket.

Indians to face a state top ten ranked team and the second against an AJC top ranked team with the prior team being Rabun County in the Class AA poll.

The Lady Titans sprang out to 7-0 and 11-2 leads by the mid point of the first quarter only to see the Lady Indians embark on a 16-10 scoring run between just the 3:34 and twenty nine seconds marks for just a 21-18 deficit. The rally was highlighted by four treys—by senior Macie Walls at the start and senior Vanessa Floyd at the end with two by senior Kennedy Henson in between—and deuces by sophomore Sarah Shook and Floyd between Henson's treys.

The Lady Titans used a pair of free throws at twenty seconds and a long trey at the buzzer, however, as a trigger for a 26-18 lead after one quarter and they extended this margin to 43-24 by intermission with a trey by Henson and two late free throws by senior Jayce Young the top offensive achievements by the Lady Indians.

Oconee then opened the third quarter with a 10-0 scoring run for a 53-24 lead with a deuce and a trey by Henson highlighting a 9-0 Towns finish for a 53-33 Lady Titans lead entering the fourth quarter.

And right on schedule it seemed, the Lady Titans opened the fourth quarter on a 12-2 run for a 66-35 lead at the five minutes mark with the Lady Indians responding with a 12-0 finish for a 66-47 Lake Oconee victory. Five different Lady Indians contributed to the late scoring run with Shook sinking her second deuce of the quarter, Young and Henson a trey

each, and Floyd and freshman Laura Mauldin a deuce each.

Scoring leaders for the Lady Indians for the game were Henson with 19 points, Floyd with 11, Shook with 6, and Young with 5 while leaders in assists were Henson with 4, Floyd with 3, and junior Emily Vargas with 2. Leading in rebounds were Henson with 11, Shook with 6, sophomore Tabitha Barnes with 4, and Floyd and senior Abby Mauldin with 3 each while leaders in steals were Henson with 3 and Floyd and Shook with 2 each.

**Lady Indians 53, Washington-Wilkes 11** – The Lady Indians game against Washington-Wilkes was a mismatch from the start with a field goal by senior Abby Mauldin at the 6:25 mark of the first quarter giving the Lady Indians a 2-0 lead and triggering an 11-0 run by the 2:12 mark and eventually a 34-2 Lady Indians lead at intermission with the score being 20-2 after one quarter.

Mauldin included four four free throw shooting and three field goals in scoring ten first quarter points with seniors Vanessa Floyd adding five on a trey and a deuce and Kennedy Henson three points on a trey. Second quarter highlights included senior Jayce Young taking the scoring lead with a pair of treys and a free throw for seven points.

The Lady Indians and Lady Tigers played to a 5-5 standoff in the third quarter for a 39-7 score while Floyd scored seven points on three deuces and a free throw in leading the scoring in the fourth as the Lady Indians closed out a 53-11 victory.

The final two quarters were reduced from eight to six minutes under the mercy rule applied when one team leads by thirty or more points entering the quarter with the coach of the team behind having the option of a six minutes third quarter but the decision being mandatory for fourth quarter play.

Floyd took the scoring lead for the game with 17 points while other leaders were Abby Mauldin and Young with 10 each and Henson with 9. Leaders in assists were Henson with 6, Floyd and Abby Mauldin with 4 each, and Young with 3.

Rebounding leaders were Floyd with 6, Henson and Abby Mauldin with 5 each, and freshman Laura Mauldin, sophomore Sarah Shook, and junior Emily Vargas with 3 each.

An opening fourth quarter 15-10 Towns run got the Indians a 75-50 lead by that mid point of the fourth quarter before the Tigers finished on a 15-4 run of their own the final 3:50 of the game for a final margin of victory for the Indians of 79-65. Ellis used a pair of treys and a deuce in providing eight points during the early run and Moss added seven on a trey and two deuces.

Seven Indians put points on the scoreboard for the game with each sinking at least one 3-point basket with Moss leading with 19 and followed by Ellis with 17, McTaggart with 13, Berrong with 11, Day with 9, and Crowder and McClure with 5 each. Seven Indians also contributed at least one assist with leaders being Ellis with 7, Crowder with 4, Berrong with 3, and Day and Moss with 2 each.

Ten different Indians contributed at least one rebound with leaders being McTaggart with 7; Berrong and Crowder with 5 each; Day with 4; and Ellis, McClure, and Moss with 3 each. Leaders in steals were Moss with 3 and Ellis with 2 while Berrong, McClure, and McTaggart each blocked one shot. Scoring leaders for the Tigers were Ian McConnell with 24 and Creed Dunbar with 11.

**Indians 90, Lake Oconee Academy 44** – There was a stark contrast in the first quarter of the Indians Tuesday game at Commerce when they broke out to a huge first quarter lead as described above and the Friday home game against Lake Oconee Academy, a charter school from Greensboro.

The visiting Titans hung close for most of the first quarter, trailing by just an 18-17 score before the Indians went on an 18-0 rampage between the 1:23 mark

Eleven of 14 Indians seeing action in the game put points on the scoreboard, including nine who sank at least one three point basket, during the game. Some of the top quarterly scoring totals included five points by Berrong and four by Crowder in the first; eight by senior Kolby Moss in the second; seven by junior Jake McTaggart, five by Moss, and four each by Berrong, Crowder, and Ellis in the third; and six by freshman Zane Floyd in the fourth.

It is noteworthy that the points by Floyd were his first official varsity high school points although some will recall that he included four treys among eighteen points in a 67-66 win in a preseason scrimmage game at Tallulah Falls prior to the arrival of the Indian football players on the team. And senior Liam King sank a trey in the fourth quarter for his first varsity points.

Scoring leaders for the Indians in the game were Moss with 19 points, Berrong with 12, Crowder and McTaggart with 11 each, Ellis with 9, Floyd and junior Kyle Oakes with 6 each, and Day and senior Luis Quijada with 5 each. Leaders in assists were Ellis with 6, McTaggart with 4, Berrong and Day with 3 each, and Moss with 2.

Twelve Indians collected at least one rebound with leaders being Ellis, McTaggart, and Moss with 5 each; Day and senior Hayden McClure with 4 each; and Berrong, Floyd, senior Jordan Lovelace, and junior Cabe Poston with 2 each. Leaders in steals were Crowder with 5 and Berrong and McTaggart with 2 each while McTaggart blocked 3 shots.

**Indians 77, Washington-Wilkes 60** – After having several Indians games highlighted by lengthy scoring runs not only by the Indians but by their opponents, their 77-60 home court victory over Washington-Wilkes last Friday was noteworthy for consistency by the Indians with

Five different Lady Indians put points on the scoreboard in the third quarter as they edged to within 25-24 on a trey by Henson at the 2:25 mark with a trey by

**Lake Oconee Academy 66, Lady Indians 47** – The Lady Indians game against Lake Oconee Academy was the fourth time in eight games for the Lady