

Towns County Sports

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Lady Indians impressive at home vs Commerce, overpowered at Hebron

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The Towns County Lady Indians varsity basketball team got a split decision in two Region 8-A contests last week as they were overpowered by Hebron Christian Academy in Dacula on Tuesday before returning home and taking an impressive victory over Commerce on Friday.

After compiling a very respectable 14-13 overall record a year ago, including 3-6 in regular season region play with a 57-36 loss to the Lady Indians included, it had become clear to observers long before the Lady Indians' trip to Hebron last week that the Lady Lions had this year joined the Atlanta area metro all stars club.

This turnaround came about with the hiring by Hebron of long time Wesleyan head coach Jan Azar who, not surprisingly based upon her tenure at Wesleyan with no less than thirteen state championship teams, attracted a significant number of new players to Hebron, including two standing 6'2" in joining a 6'3" player already at the school along with her prolific scoring 5'11" daughter.

Hebron entered the game against the Lady Indians with a 20-0 overall record, including five wins against out of state competition and several others against higher classification teams in Georgia.

In four prior games against Region 8A teams Hebron was averaging 84 points and allowing 27 points per game so it was not surprising that the Lady Lions took an 81-32 victory over the Lady Indians.

The Lady Indians had traveled to face region foe Commerce early in the season with the Lady Tigers having used a trey and an old fashioned 3-point play in the final 55 seconds of the game in overcoming a 34-33 deficit for a 39-34 victory. That Commerce win did not count in the region standings, however, as just one game against region opponents counts if two are played with last week's game being designated as such this year.

The Lady Indians completed the week with an overall 7-11 record, including 3-2 in Region 8A with four region contests still to be played. Hebron played just the one game against the Lady Indians last week and finished with an overall 21-0 record, including 5-0 in the region, while Commerce completed the week with a 12-9 overall record but just 1-5 in the region.

The Lady Indians are currently in fifth place in the region with a 3-2 record with Lakeview Academy holding a



The Towns County Lady Indians picked up a Region 8-A victory on Friday, defeating Commerce 52-37. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

slight advantage with a 6-0 record and Athens Academy and Hebron Christian at 5-0 but with all three of these teams to face each other as the season winds down. Tallulah Falls is currently in fourth place with a 3-1 record and five games remaining to be played. Prince Avenue is at 3-3 and in sixth place right behind the Lady Indians with Commerce and George Walton having just one win each and Athens Christian and Providence Christian currently winless in region play.

The Lady Indians complete their regular season play this week and next as they travel to Lakeview Academy in Gainesville on Tuesday of this week, return home for games against Prince Avenue Christian on Friday and non region foe Andrews on Saturday before traveling to Tallulah Falls next Tuesday, January 28, and ending regular season play at Athens Christian on Friday, Jan. 31.

The Region 8A Tournament will begin at Commerce on Monday, Feb. 3 with scheduling of games to be set up after regular season play is completed.

State tournament play will follow the region tournament with this being the final year of using a Power Points system based on full season team records and involving strength of schedules in determining who makes the Class A Public State Tournament and how the teams making the tournament are seeded.

Just twenty four Class A Public teams make the state tournament with the Lady Indians currently in the number thirty spot with still five regular season games along with region tournament games still to be played and an opportunity to elevate their status. It is rather mind boggling that the Power Points system has Commerce with a 1-5 region record in 19th place and with a place in the state tournament if qualifying were done now and the Lady Indians with a 3-2 region record left out.

It is unfortunate that teams showing improvement during the season cannot count on making the tournament through an outstanding performance in their region tournament as just the championship team in the tournament is assured of making the state event.

In reality, the presence of Hebron Christian of a near certainty eliminates any other region team from a chance of winning the tournament barring some unforeseen occurrence such as injury or illness.

Hebron Christian Academy 81, Lady Indians 32 – It required just eleven seconds for Hebron to enter the scoring column with a deuce and they added a trey and two free throws for a 7-0 lead before a trey from more than 25 feet by Lady Indian junior Kennedy Henson reduced the lead to 7-3 at the 6:56 mark. The Lady Lions then completed the quarter

on a 15-2 run interrupted only by a deuce by freshman Sarah Shook for a 22-5 Hebron lead after one quarter.

Four Lady Indians would put points on the scoreboard in the second quarter with senior Sophia Shook leading with four with Hebron holding a 49-14 lead at intermission. Of greater concern than the score, however, was Henson having to leave the game during the quarter with a hyper extended knee and sitting out the remainder of the game as a precaution.

The Lady Lions extended the lead to 76-18 at the end of the third quarter before the Lady Indians closed the gap by outscoring Hebron 14-5 in the fourth quarter with one of the 6'2" Lady Lion starters connecting with a trey at 5:07 and a deuce at 4:06 for the Lady Lion points. Sophia Shook included two treys and two free throws in scoring eight points and junior Vanessa Floyd sank two treys for six points during fourth quarter action.

Leading scorers for the Lady Indians were Sophia Shook with 15 points, Floyd with 8, and Henson and Sarah Shook with 4 each while Floyd led in assists with 3, in rebounds with 6, and in steals with 2 and Sarah Shook and junior Jayce Young had 2 rebounds each. Four of the newcomers to Hebron combined for 75 of their points scored in the game with two Lady Lions returning from last year providing the other

six points by their team.

Lady Indians 52, Commerce 37 – Just ten days prior to the Lady Indians game against Commerce, they displayed just what teams strive to do during a season in showing great improvement by losing by just a 53-43 score to a quite accomplished Rabun Gap team after falling by a 70-36 score on the Lady Eagles home court in a preseason scrimmage game.

Such was the case in their second game against Commerce last Friday night following the previously mentioned 39-34 loss on the Lady Tigers home court on December 14 as they took control of the game during the final three quarters for a decisive victory on Friday night. With junior Kennedy Henson having included five treys among a team leading 16 points in Commerce, the Lady Indians were aided in this game by the Tigers employing an oft used box and one defense without knowledge of her having her mobility for scoring restricted as she recovers from a hyper extended knee suffered in the Hebron game.

While content to be a decoy against the Commerce defense with just one point with her offensive movement restricted, Henson was able to provide excellent support in areas other than scoring as her teammates stepped forward with outstanding shooting performances.

The first 11 minutes of the game would be a real

battle between the Lady Indians and the Lady Tigers with just one tie but eight lead changes through the eight minute first quarter and until exactly the five minutes mark of the second.

A trey by senior Sophia Shook and a deuce by freshman Sarah Shook got the Lady Indians a 5-0 lead at the 5:44 mark of the first quarter but it required a deuce at 4:47 and a trey at 3:14 by junior Vanessa Floyd to get the Lady Indians leads of 7-6 and 10-8. The Lady Tigers would respond with a 7-1 finish, however, for a 15-11 lead at quarter's end with the single tie of 11-11 included during the run.

The Lady Indians would own the second quarter although requiring three minutes at the start to regain a lead they would hold with the exception of a brief tie for the remainder of the game.

Two free throws by Floyd and a trey by Sophia Shook had the Lady Indians ahead 16-15 at the 5:30 mark and at exactly the five minutes mark, junior Jayce Young more than matched a Lady Tigers deuce when she nailed a trey for a 19-17 Lady Indians lead they would extend to 26-17 at the 2:36 mark on deuces by Floyd and Sophia Shook and a second trey by Young.

The Lady Tigers would not go quietly, however, as they wrapped treys around two free throws by Floyd for a just a 28-23 deficit at intermission and opened the third quarter with a deuce and a trey for a short lived 28-28 tie at the 5:40 mark. Young rose to the occasion at this point, however, as she sank a trey at 4:20 for a 31-28 Lady Indians lead and followed a Lady Tiger free throw with two more treys in accounting for all of the points in a 9-1 run for her team for a 37-29 lead entering the fourth quarter.

A long deuce by Sarah Shook got the Lady Indians a 39-29 lead less than half a minute into the fourth quarter and Floyd included a trey among seven points and Sophia Shook added six points as the Lady Indians closed out a 52-37 victory.

Scoring leaders for the Lady Indians for the game were Floyd with 18 points, Young with 15, Sophia Shook with 14, and Sarah Shook with 4 while Floyd also took the lead in assists with 4 and was followed by Henson and Sophia Shook with 3 each.

Henson led in rebounds with 8 and in steals with 6 while Floyd contributed 6 rebounds and Young 3 and Floyd had 5 steals and Sophia Shook 4. Scoring leaders for the Lady Tigers were sophomore Carson Hobbs with 10 point and juniors Bryanna Sanders with 9 and Maggie Mullis with 8.

Fishing: Indians Grimsley, Hooper take Top 20 finish on Lake Eufaula

By Chad Stack
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The Towns County High School Bass Fishing Team traveled to Georgetown earlier this month to compete in a one-day fishing tournament on Lake Eufaula.

Lake Eufaula, aka Walter F. George Lake, is a manmade reservoir that was formed on the Chattahoochee River and runs along the Alabama/Georgia state line.

The tournament was originally scheduled for Saturday, Jan. 11, but due to the recent winter storm, the competition was postponed to the following day on Sunday, Jan. 12.

After the bad weather passed, the Indian Anglers, along with their boat captains/fathers, took to the lake looking to bounce back from last year's outing at Lake Eufaula in which they didn't catch a single fish.

And bounce back they did, as the Indian Anglers returned to the boat ramps with five fish for a total weight of 9.40 pounds to put them in 19th Place.

The team was hoping for a better haul after a rough day on the lake just a year ago, but fishing an unfamiliar lake is always an added challenge. Still, the Indians' Top 20 finish helped them improve their overall state standings from 14th to 12th.

In their inaugural season last year, the Indians duo quali-



The Towns County High School fishing duo of Mitchell Grimsley and Adrian Hooper show off their catch following the Jan. 12 tournament on Lake Eufaula.

fied for the B.A.S.S. National Tournament, and as Mitchell Grimsley and Adrian Hooper head into the final part of their second season, they are look-

ing to make another run at nationals.

Each team is allowed to drop its worst tournament performance at the end of each

season, according to B.A.S.S. Rules, which would put the Indian Anglers comfortably in Fifth Place out of 211 high school teams in Georgia.

The Indians will take to the road again for a tournament on Lake Seminole in Bainbridge on Friday, Feb. 7.

As the boys prepare for

the Lake Seminole Tournament, they continue to be thankful for the support of their sponsors and the amazing people of Towns County.