

Towns County Sports

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Late-scoring runs decisive in Lady Indians win, Indians loss at Hiwassee Dam

By Jerry Kendall
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Hiwassee Dam, NC - In very similar finishes, the Lady Indians used a 14-0 game ending scoring run in taking a thirteen points victory in last Friday's game at Hiwassee Dam, North Carolina, while the home standing Eagles used a stunning 18-2 finish leading to a seven points victory over the Indians.

The unexpected arrival of an upturn in the fortunes for one team and a downturn at the same time for the other simply can't be explained but was in full view on Friday evening with the TCHS teams getting a split decision as related to this actually not all that rare occurrence.

The TCHS teams are going through some occasional early season growing pains with three returning starters for each team but otherwise not too much prior varsity experience with the loss of three seniors for the Lady Indians and four for the Indians and other players for both teams deciding to not return to action this year.

The future does look bright, however, as both teams have very capable and promising but mostly very young team members being called upon for varsity action.

The report for the Hiwassee Dam games would not be complete without a mention of the officiating which proved to be quite different than in the earlier scrimmage games at Rabun Gap and the Tuesday games at Nantahala with lots of tough fouls, including on key players for both the Lady Indians and Indians, resulting in significant time on the bench.

The numerous number of fouls called, as in games at Fannin County last year, in your reporter's view took away from the focus of the players toward their duties and enjoyment of the games by both players and fans.

The officiating element was compounded for the Indians by the understandable absence of junior Aidan Berrong who was on a long planned school related trip to New York City after contributing a career high thirty five points in the Indians victory at Nantahala three days prior.

Lady Indians 52, Hiwassee Dam 39 - The Lady Indians got off to a hot start at Hiwassee Dam, striking for a 7-1 lead at exactly the six minutes mark of the first quarter on a quick trey by junior Jayce Young and four for four free throw shooting by junior Vanessa Floyd.

The Lady Indian lead



The Towns County Lady Indians pulled away 52-39 at Hiwassee Dam, NC thanks to a 14-0 run over the final 3:42 to improve to 2-0 on the season. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

then became 15-7 by the three minutes mark highlighted by a deuce each by Floyd and Young and a trey by senior Sophia Shook.

The Lady Eagles reduced the lead to 15-11 by quarter's end and after Floyd opened the second quarter with a trey for an 18-11 Towns lead, foul difficulty for the Lady Indians accounted significantly to their being outscored 8-1, including on four for ten free throw shooting, by the Lady Eagles for a 19-19 standoff at the 45.7 seconds mark.

Junior Kennedy Henson took the ball coast to coast for a deuce at thirty three seconds for a 21-19 Towns lead which became a 22-21 Hiwassee Dam advantage at intermission as a result of the Lady Eagles' only trey of the game at the three seconds mark.

The Lady Indians appeared to to regain some control of the game with a 7-0 run for a 28-22 lead by the 6:09 mark of the third quarter, this time on an early trey by Young and four points by Floyd as at the start of the first quarter with the exception that Floyd's points came this time on a pair of deuces instead of four free throws.

As in the second quarter, however, quite severe foul problems continued for the Lady Indians. After Young and Shook had been charged with their third fouls in the second quarter, Henson got her third less than half a minute into the third with a fourth coming during the first minute

of the fourth.

In between, Floyd was charged with her third and fourth fouls at the 4:43 and 3:08 marks of the third quarter. With significant time on the bench for vital Lady Indians, the Lady Eagles edged out to a 31-30 lead at the 2:19 mark of the third quarter only to see treys by Shook and Young at the 1:36 and forty five seconds marks give the Lady Indians a 36-31 lead which became 36-33 entering the fourth quarter.

The fourth quarter brought about a 6-2 start by the Lady Eagles for a 39-38 lead at 3:42 and the appearance of their possibly taking control of the game. To their credit, however, the Lady Indians avoided any fouls by the four leading scorers in the fourth quarter and put their game together for a stunning finish.

Henson sank the second of two free throws at 2:43 for a 39-39 tie and the Lady Indians were on the way to the aforementioned 14-0 finish. Shook did what seniors often do as she stepped up and drove into the lane for an old fashioned three points play at 2:22 and nailed a trey at 1:58 for a sudden 45-39 Towns lead.

The Lady Indians completed their stunning finish at the foul line. After sinking eight of ten free throw attempts compared with ten for twenty three by the Lady Eagles during the first three quarters, the Lady Indians rallied from a stretch of just two

for seven accuracy at the start of the fourth quarter.

Henson sank four of five free throw attempts and Floyd and sophomore Emily Vargas two of two attempts each beginning with Henson's tying free throw for a 52-39 Lady Indians victory.

The Lady Eagles sent the Lady Indians to the foul line in the final minutes of play in the futile hope that they would miss enough for their team to reduce the lead but the Lady Indians proved to be up to the task during crunch time.

Scoring leaders for the Lady Indians were Floyd with 17 points, Young with 13, Shook with 12, and Henson with 8 while leaders in assists were Henson with 5 and Floyd and Shook with 2 each.

Leading rebounders were Henson with 12 and Floyd with 8 while Henson also led in steals with 9 and was followed by Shook with 3. The Lady Eagles compiled an excellent 18-11 record last year in spite of losing their first four games, including one to the Lady Indians.

Roster information for last season and this year is not available but scoring leaders in this game for the Lady Eagles were Chloe Roe with 10 points and Katie Gibson with 8.

Hiwassee Dam 56, Indians 49 - The first quarter was quite a battle between the Indians and Hiwassee Dam with junior Kolby Moss using a trey, a deuce, and two for two free throw shooting for

seven points with the Indians holding a 9-8 lead after a tie and two lead changes during the quarter.

The second quarter would pretty much belong to the Indians with sophomore Collin Crowder including a trey, two deuces, and four for five free throw shooting for eleven points and Moss adding six points on two deuces and two for two free throw shooting as they pulled out to a 28-16 halftime advantage.

Three Indians had accumulated three fouls the first half, however, and the third quarter would bring additional foul difficulty with Moss being the second to pick up his fourth foul at the 4:04 mark.

Junior Luis Quijada gave the Indians a strong pick up with treys at the 2:53 and 1:53 marks getting 33-29 and 38-32 leads but he was charged with his third foul less than two minutes before his first trey, his fourth between the treys, and his fifth just eight seconds after the second with the fourth being perhaps the most disputable call of the game and the fifth fitting perfectly the definition of a picky call.

The Indians still managed to hold a 41-36 lead at the start of the fourth quarter in spite of the foul difficulties and Moss returned to sink a pair of deuces in the first minute of play and junior Drew Hodge added a third at 5:19 for a 47-38 Indians lead.

Unfortunately for the Indians, however, the previ-

ously referenced unexpected misfortune appeared at this point in the form of stone cold shooting the remainder of the game as they sank just two of four free throw attempts the rest of the way with the Eagles taking full advantage in the game ending 18-2 run for a 56-49 victory.

The Eagles' only trey of the game got them a 48-47 lead at the 3:49 mark and they added two field goals and four for ten at the foul line in finishing off the victory.

Crowder led the Indians in all categories listed for this game. Leaders in scoring were Crowder with 21 points, Moss with 18, and Quijada with 6 while leaders in assists were Crowder with 3 and sophomore Kyle Oakes with 2.

Crowder also led in rebounds with 8 as other leaders included Moss with 6 and junior Reace Hampton and Oakes with 4 each and leaders in steals were Crowder with 3 and Quijada with 2.

The Eagles compiled a 14-13 record last year with roster information for that season and this not available but scoring leaders in this game being Connor Davis with 21 points and Radford Cheek with 18.

It is interesting to note that the Eagles were 15 for 35, compared to 13 for 23 for the Indians, at the foul line after Nantahala attempted just ten free throws on Tuesday and Rabun Gap just seven in a preseason scrimmage.

Wrestling: Indians grapplers place three in Rabun Gap tournament

By Chad Stack
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Dillard - Towns County Wrestling got to see its first action on the mat at Rabun Gap on Saturday, Nov. 16.

In the leadup to the season opening matches, the varsity squad hadn't had many grapplers at practice due to football and cross country, with that previous week serving as the first time the team was able to get everyone together for a full week of practice.

And three Indians finished in the Top Five in the Rabun Gap tournament on Saturday: juniors Garrett Oakes, Austin Edrington and Matthew Ledford.

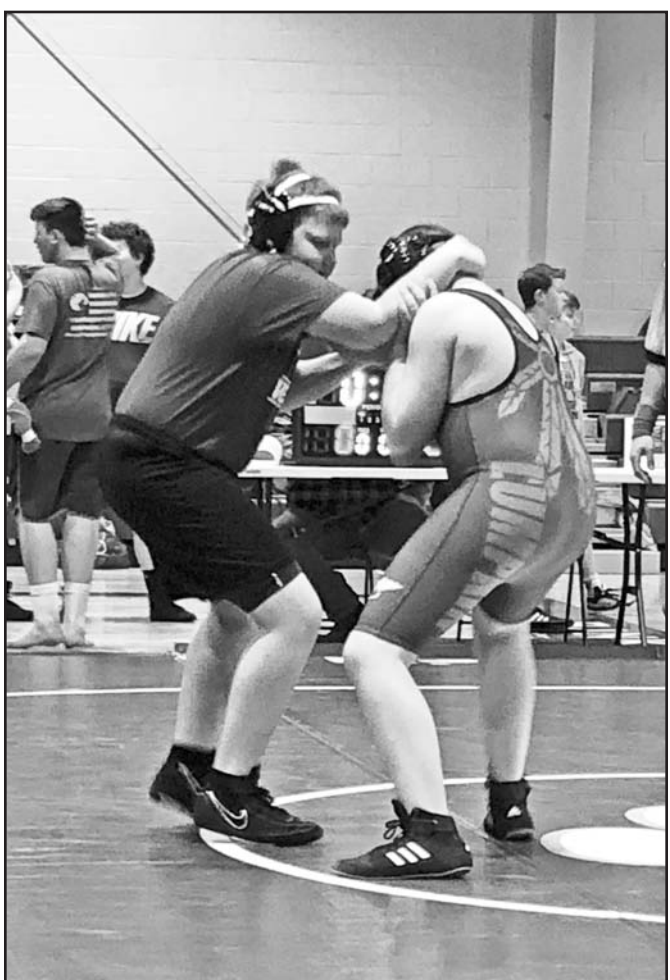
Oakes went 3-and-1 and finished Third Place for the tournament.

"Garrett was probably the first or second-best kid there, but because the way they did the pools, he didn't get a chance to wrestle for second," Stowers said.

Edrington also went 3-and-1 and ended the tournament with a Third Place finish for his weight class, while Ledford ended the day 2-and-2 and placed fifth.

"We did some really good things today," Stowers said Saturday. "Today was more like a glorified practice for us. It was a chance for us to wrestle some other people outside of our practice room."

The Indians are a young squad in 2019, and Stowers said it was important for the new



TCMS Wrestling is under the direction of new head coach Evan Woodard.

grapplers to see what wrestling was all about in Rabun Gap.

"We won some matches, and we lost some matches we should've won," Stowers said. "It was a good day. Everybody learned a lot, and that was really the main thing for us."

The Indians picked things back up this week with a trip to Union County on Tuesday, Nov.

19, for a match that occurred after press time. They will finish the week in White County on Friday, Nov. 22, when wrestlers hit the mats against the Warriors starting at 5:30 p.m.

At the middle school level, for the first time in five years, the middle school has a wrestling head coach in Evan Woodard.



Garrett Oakes competes in the 132-pound weight division at Rabun Gap, finishing as one of three Indian wrestlers in the Top Five.

Woodard came to Towns from Lumpkin County, where he served as a football coach. He also serves as the offensive coordinator for the Indians Varsity Football Team.

Varsity Head Wrestling Coach Jeff Stowers is excited about the addition of Woodard at the middle school.

"The kids really like

him, and he's supper positive," Stowers said. "He's been a great addition to the staff. He's just really a great guy, and the kids are really drawn to him. We're looking to the middle school wrestling team growing exponentially over the next few years."

On Tuesday, Nov. 12, the middle school wrestlers trav-

eled to West Hall to wrestle in a preseason scramble.

Following the match at West Hall, the middle school grapplers hit the mats at Union County for their last preseason match before the start of the regular season at Union County on Tuesday, Nov. 19, after press time.