

# Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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## Indians get victory over Panthers; Lady Indians overwhelmed by Union

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The Towns County High School Lady Indians and Indians varsity basketball teams opened their 2019-20 home season last Tuesday and got a split decision against the Union County Panthers with the outstanding Lady Panthers taking a decisive victory and the Indians taking an impressive win over a shorthanded Panthers team.

The Lady Panthers not only return the four top scorers and five of their six leading rebounders from last year's team which compiled a 14-11 record but they have added a productive freshman as well.

This was their first regular season game but they took an also decisive victory over the quite impressive Rabun Gap ladies in a preseason scrimmage.

The Panthers, on the other hand, completed a 17-11 season last year, including a trip to the Class AA State Tournament, but lost five seniors from that team and had five top players—four seniors and a junior—from this year's team still involved in football and not playing against the Indians.

Included among the missing players for the Panthers were 2018-19 First Team All-Region selections in seniors Pierson Allison and Sawyer Drake.

The Indians can identify with the Panthers being shorthanded as they played without the services of junior standout Aidan Berrong, who was on a school related trip, in a close loss to Hiwassee Dam just four nights prior.

It is certainly early in the season but based upon the early performances by the Lady Panthers and the upcoming addition of the football players to the Panthers roster, it appears that Union County will be in the thick of the competition for championships in Region 8-AA this year.

The Lady Indians and Indians completed the week with 2-1 records when the scheduled games on Friday at Andrews were postponed due to the Wildcats being involved in the North Carolina Class A State Playoffs that evening.

These games have been rescheduled for Thursday, December 19, at Andrews.

**Indians 83, Union County 70** – It required just five seconds after the Panthers got what would be their only lead of the game at 2-0 at the 7:13 mark of the first quarter for an old fashioned three points play by junior Aidan Berrong to get the Indians a 3-2 lead they would never relinquish although facing several strong challenges by the Panthers during the game.

Junior Kolby Moss included three treys among 11 first quarter points for the Indians while sophomore Collin Crowder added seven points and Berrong totaled five as the Indians built a 25-16 lead by quarter's end.

Moss included a fourth trey among nine points in just over two minutes at the start of the second quarter as the Indians led 36-26.

A pair of baskets by the Panthers had them within 36-30 at the 4:14 mark but four Indians put points on the score board the rest of the quarter highlighted by three for four free throw shooting by junior Reace Hampton with the Indians lead back to ten points by a



Towns County junior Aidan Berrong goes up for two of his 14 points during the first half of the Indians' 83-70 victory over rival Union County. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

45-35 score at intermission.

Sophomore Kyle Oakes took center stage for the Indians at the start of the third quarter, scoring eight points in less than three minutes of playing time by the 5:17 mark with Moss adding a deuce and two free throws by the 3:15 mark and a basket by Crowder at 2:23 giving the Indians their first of two leads of twenty points at 61-41.

Junior Luis Quijada then matched a Union trey with one of his own for the second Indians lead of twenty points of 64-44 at 1:35 and Crowder's and Berrong's second field goals of the quarter set the score at 68-49 at quarter's end.

The Panthers came alive by including three treys in a 13-4 run by the 4:29 mark of the fourth quarter for just a 72-62 deficit but the Indians regained some control after that and closed out an 83-70 victory with highlights for the Indians during the quarter being six points on a pair of treys by Crowder and six by Moss on a pair of deuces and two free throws.

Moss led the Indians in scoring with 32 points in 33 minutes on 10-for-20 shooting and 4-of-10 from downtown. He was followed by Crowder with 19 on 7-for-11 and 2-of-3 from distance. Berrong had 14 on 5-of-12 from the floor.

Oakes scored 8 and led the Indians with a +15 in the plus-minus category. Quijada was a perfect 2-for-2 from the floor and 2-for-2 at the line for 7 points. Additionally, the Indians were +14 with Quijada on the floor.

Leaders in assists were Moss with 3 and the trio of Berrong, Crowder, and Oakes with 2 each according to your reporter's unofficial tally.

Overall, Towns County shot 28-for-51 from the floor for a red-hot 55%. The Indians hit 21-of-34 (62%) from two and 7-of-17 (45%) from long distance.

Towns outscored Union County 19-8 on transition points and 13-11 in points off turnovers. Points in the paint were even at 36-36 but the Indians won the rebounding battle 31-24.

Turnovers were all square at 18 apiece but Towns County came up with 10 steals to Union's six.

The Panthers were led in scoring by sophomore Lake

Hughes with 19 points, sophomore Landon Cox with 15, and sophomore Landon Kight and senior Bryson Lariscy with 12 each.

A brief followup to the mention in last week's newspaper of free throw shooting at Hiwassee Dam might be of interest.

The Eagles attempted thirty five free throws in a 56-49 victory in that game with the Indians but a trend of many fewer trips to the foul line by their opponents in two TCHS games prior to the Hiwassee Dam game resumed in the Union County game.

After Rabun Gap attempted seven free throws in a preseason scrimmage and Nantahala ten in the regular season opener prior to the Hiwassee Dam game, Union County attempted twelve in last week's game.

So, 35 free throws were attempted by Hiwassee Dam in one game while a total of 29 have been attempted by the Indians' opponents in three other games to this date.

**Union County 70, Lady Indians 34** – The first quarter proved to be very difficult for the Lady Indians as the Lady Panthers followed a game tying field goal by senior Sophia Shook for a 2-2 score at the 6:13 mark with 16 straight points and an 18-2 lead before a trey by Lady Indians junior Kennedi Henson at the eight seconds mark set the first quarter score at 18-5.

Following an 8-0 run by the Union for a 26-5 lead by the six minutes mark of the second quarter, the Lady Indians embarked on a strong run themselves by using a 13-8 advantage between the 4:24 and 1:21 marks in reducing the deficit to 34-18.

Lady Indian freshman Sarah Shook started and ended the run with field goals while Henson sank a trey and two free throws in between for five points.

The Lady Panthers used a trey and a deuce during the final minute of the second quarter for a 39-18 halftime advantage and they extended their lead to 62-29 entering the fourth quarter.

Lady Indian third quarter highlights were an old fashioned 3-point play by Sophia Shook and treys by Henson and junior Vanessa Floyd.

Four for four free throw



Junior Kennedi Henson (10) and freshman Sarah Shook double team a Union County post player during the second half of last week's home opener. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

shooting by Floyd highlighted a 5-4 fourth quarter start for the Lady Indians for a 66-34 score at the 1:57 mark but the Lady Panthers closed out the victory with a pair of deuces for a final margin of victory of 70-34.

Scoring leaders for the Lady Indians were Henson with 11 points, Floyd with 9, Sophia Shook with 7, and Sarah Shook with 5 while Sophia Shook led in assists with 4 and junior Jayce Young led in rebounds with 4. The Lady Panthers were led in scoring by sophomore Ava Hunter with 15 points, senior Andelin Hill with 14, freshman Ellie Cook with 12, and senior Kait McCarter with 11.

Both teams were outstanding at the foul line with the Lady Indians sinking 12-of-13 attempts and the Lady Panthers 11-of-15.

## T.U.F. Athletes Fundraising Events

T.U.F. stand for Towns, Union, & Fannin Counties and are a group of special needs individuals who have to face and overcome challenges every day, challenges that you and I don't have to face. Thus why they are called "T.U.F. ATHLETES".

Saturday, December 7th we will be at the Kris Kringle Market located at the Union County Farmers Market from 10-3, selling handcrafted items the athletes have been working on, so stop by and see us; meet the T.U.F. Athletes and let them tell you what Dream Ride means to them. You will get a better picture of why we work so hard to reach our fundraising goal.

We have other fundraising events coming up in the Spring of 2020. We will be announcing the event, time, and

place; so stay tuned.

As of now we have 14 athletes and their chaperones going on this trip. Although we are doing fundraising we need our community's help to reach our goal of approximately \$18,000, which includes airfare, 4-day hotel stay, transportation & fuel to/from the airport, meals; etc.

If you would like to sponsor an athlete to help them make this absolutely amazing trip, please contact us; Paulette (706) 897- 9938; Terri (706)-400-9839; or Carla (770)-596-3397. Donation can be tax deductible.

Help us let them know they are an important part of our community, by showing them your support.

Thank You,  
T.U.F. Athletes,  
Dream Ride Bound