

Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

www.townscountyherald.net • E-mail: tcherald@windstream.net

Towns County Basketball continues to put in great effort

By Jeremy Foster
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

The Towns County Indians and Lady Indians competed in games over the weekend in preparation for region play and the upcoming Battle of the States three-day tournament at home on Dec. 28-30.

Indian Senior Collin Crowder hit an incredible personal milestone in the Dec. 18 away game against Social Circle, scoring his 1,000th career point in high school basketball.

"Collin has had a tremendous career and joins elite company in the Towns County Boys Basketball 1,000-Point Club," Head Coach Brian Hunnicutt said. "Collin will be honored for this accomplishment at halftime of the varsity girls game on the opening night of the Battle of the States Tournament on Dec. 28.

"I am so blessed to get to coach this kid. He is a tremendous young man. He does things the right way, and he is a great role model. I could not be happier with him. He deserves every accolade that he receives."

GIRLS VS. UNION

Friday, Dec. 17, saw Towns County hosting the Union County Panthers. The girls were up first, and Union gained first possession of the ball at the tipoff.

After a reversal, Lady Indian senior Emily Vargas hooped a 3-pointer to put the first points of the game on the scoreboard for Towns, followed shortly thereafter by 2 points from Union.

More scuffling ensued, and with points from junior Sarah Shook, the first period ended with a 17-9 score and Union in the lead.

Shooters freshman Natalie Barnes, sophomore Laura Mauldin and junior Tabitha Barnes put up points in the second period to enter the half 41-25 with Union still leading.

The third period ended in a 66-27 lead for Union after more back-and-forth battling, with points and free throws from the abovementioned players.



Sarah Shook with a breakaway layup during the win at Social Circle. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

Sophomore Maycee Garrison shot her first points of the game with some free throws, but the result came to 77-31 as the final score of the game and a win for the Lady Panthers.

"Coming into the night, we wanted to limit turnovers, and I felt like early on we did that," Head Coach Shea Taylor said. "We got a lot more shots compared to last week in the first and second quarters.

"We still did turn the ball over and made some passes that, with time, we have to fix, but overall, we broke the press better, we executed better offensively, and we played decent defense of the game. Tonight, our weakness was Union getting more second-chance opportunities on offense from rebounding, and that hurt us down the stretch.

"We had an unfortunate circumstance near the middle of the game when freshman Ansleigh Hardin rolled her ankle and was put out the rest of the game, but we are confident it is nothing detrimental than just a minor sprain, and she will be alright.

"In my mind, we start a new season tomorrow at Social Circle with region play, and the girls are becoming more determined and committed, and we are going to try hopefully for a spot in

the Top Four in the conference."

BOYS VS. UNION

The boys were up next, and Union County scored the first 2 points of the game, followed by sophomore Zane Floyd hitting Towns' first points with a beautiful 3-pointer.

Sophomore Connor Chastain scored for Towns, as did senior Collin Crowder and sophomore Tanner Cunningham, but the first period ended with a single digit margin of 15-14, Union leading.

The second period began with two successful free throws by senior Kyle Oakes, and after close action the whole way through, the score was tied 32-32 at halftime.

Third period saw a new scorer in junior Lane Rouse, but 48-43 was the score to end the third period, with Union still ahead.

The entire game was close and intense, but the score ended 67-60 for a Union County victory. Towns' boys lost by a smaller margin of points than they won by the previous week against Union, so it was certainly a valiant effort.

"Tip of the cap to Union County," Coach Hunnicutt said. "They played very well tonight, and our guys fought hard. We

did some things that we have not done that many times this season, which is be undisciplined in our assignments that we need to stay on.

"Union was able to expose some of our kinks in defense that happen when we do not follow what we normally do and show some vulnerability, so we just have keep doing what we do."

Crowder led the Indians with 23 points and 10 rebounds; Floyd finished with 12 points and seven boards. Oakes' night ended with 11 points, six rebounds and five assists. Cunningham had 8 points, Connor Chastain scored 4 points and Layne Rouse added 2 points.

GIRLS AT SOCIAL CIRCLE

The Indians and Lady Indians played away at Social Circle High School on Saturday, Dec. 18, with the girls up first to secure a tremendous success by winning in dominant fashion 50-33.

Junior Sarah Shook had 17 points, junior Tabitha Barnes scored 12, and sophomore Laura Mauldin made 12 points and 8 rebounds.

"The team did a great job with our press," Coach Taylor said. "We created a lot of turnovers and were able to manufacture points off of it. It was a

total team effort, and I am proud of these girls for getting the first region win."

BOYS AT SOCIAL CIRCLE

The Indians played last and ended the game in a close but sad loss of 65-54 to Social Circle.

Senior Collin Crowder led the team in scoring with 20 points that allowed him to reach 1,000 points for his career, and sophomore Zane Floyd had 17 points and Senior Kyle Oakes scored 14.

"We lost to the No. 2-ranked team in the state," Coach Hunnicutt said. "We fell behind early and trailed by 25 points in the first half but fought to trim the lead to 20 by halftime.

"The team came out fighting in the second half, and we began to shut down their offense a bit. We also began getting good ball movement and knocking down shots. We narrowed the lead to only 7 points with a minute to go, but Social was able to hold on for the victory.

"I could not be prouder of our kids. We lost a tough game on Friday to Union. A lot of the team is fighting an illness, and we had to travel to the No. 2-ranked

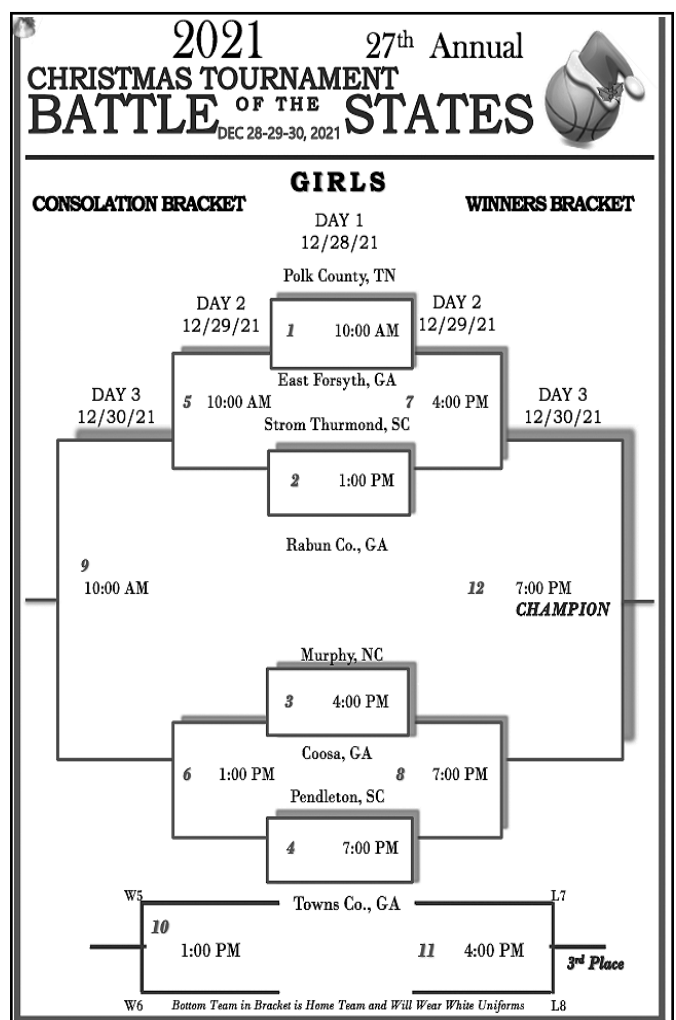
team today. That would have been an easy game to have laid down, but I am blessed to coach a group that fights.

"Kyle and Collin played great as they always do. Zane stepped up and hopefully had his breakout game. He played poised and displayed why he could be a star. Lane Rouse gave us huge minutes; Connor Chastain, Tanner Cunningham and Grant Ingram gave great defensive efforts.

"This team excites me because they play together and never quit. Now, we have got to put our head down and go to work, because they do not give out trophies for tough losses. We have got to get ready to go play Banks County."

The Indians and Lady Indians played on Tuesday, Dec. 21, in games that occurred after press time at Banks County High School. Next week, Towns County will host the ever-popular Battle of the States Christmas Tournament.

Visit www.townscountyathletics.com for complete scheduling information.



Senior Collin Crowder enters 1,000 Points Club

By Jerry Kendall
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Social Circle - Towns County High School senior Collin Crowder became just the 15th Indian known to reach the 1,000 career points club in TCHS basketball during last Saturday night's game at Social Circle when he sank a field goal with just 1:07 left in the fourth quarter, lifting the Indians to within 61-54 against the undefeated Redskins.

He scored 198 points as a freshman, 360 as a sophomore, and 252 as a junior on a well-balanced state championship team. This gave him a total of 810 points entering this season, with 190 points needed to reach the magic 1,000 points total.

Crowder had scored 147 points in just six games this season prior to a home game against Union County on Friday and the Saturday night contest at Social Circle, leaving him 43 points short of the magic number.

He contributed 23 points in the Union County game, with the abovementioned field goal giving him 20 against Social Circle and exactly 1,000 career points entering his team's final game prior to the Battle of the States Tournament at Banks County on Tuesday of this week.

The 190 points in just eight games to this point gives Crowder a stunning 23.8 scoring average at this point in the season.

Reaching 1,000 points requires not only a distinct talent



Senior Collin Crowder surpassed 1,000 career points on Saturday at Social Circle. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

to consistently put the ball in the basket but having the opportunity to play on a regular basis for at least three full years in most cases as well as remaining relatively free of injury and illness. Often, a player capable of successful play as a freshman and sophomore may fall short of the opportunity due to a veteran presence on their team.

Congratulations upon reaching such a noteworthy milestone and best wishes in the future are extended to Collin Crowder from the Towns County Herald. Much appreciation is also extended for the countless hours of dedication and hard work he and his teammates have provided in reaching most formidable individual and team successes, and

to his family for the time and expense provided in making these accomplishments possible.

Followers of the Indians still have lots of time to view the exploits of Crowder and his teammates on both the basketball court and later on the baseball field.

A few notes related to the Social Circle game:

- Social Circle extended a 9-8 lead midway through the first quarter to 22-11 after one quarter and 39-18 at halftime with senior Collin Crowder scoring 11 of the Indians' first-half points.

- Towns County opened the second half with an 18-4 scoring run for just a 43-36 deficit on a Crowder field goal at the 1:31 mark of the third quarter.

- Social Circle turned the tables on the Indians with an 8-1 third quarter finish for a 51-37 lead entering the fourth quarter.

- Social Circle extended their lead to 54-37 at the 6:41 mark of the fourth quarter and led 55-39 near the midpoint of the fourth quarter.

- But two 3-point baskets by sophomore Zane Floyd and a pair of 2-pointers by Crowder wrapped around a 3-pointer by senior Kyle Oakes between the 4:17 and 1:07 marks highlighted a 15-6 Indians scoring run for just a 61-54 Social Circle lead before the Redskins sank four free throws during the final minute of play for a final score of 65-54.

