

Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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Both Union County teams pull away late; take two at Towns County

Towns County to open Battle of the States with Copper Basin, TN and Polk County, TN on Thursday

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Union County scored a pair of victories at Towns County on Monday, Dec. 17 before the Indians and Lady Indians bounced back Thursday with two wins at Hiwassee Dam, NC. (Both reports will be in next week's paper. This edition was printed early due to Christmas Holidays).

Up next for Towns County is the 25th Annual Battle of the States Christmas Tournament, which gets underway Thursday morning. Towns County will conclude the day one action with the Lady Indians taking on tournament newcomer Copper Basin, TN at 7 p.m. Meanwhile, the Indians will square off with tourney regular Polk County, TN at 8:30 p.m.

Towns County will face the winners/losers of the Lumpkin County vs Hayesville, NC match-up on day two.

The other side of the bracket features Union County, Murphy, NC, Walhalla, SC, Hokes Bluff, AL (girls) and Armuchee (boys).

Lady Indians 38, Union County 51 -- Lady Panther freshman Ava Hunter led the way with 19 points and 11 rebounds as Union County took control with an 11-0 run to close the first half.

The Lady Panthers jumped out front 7-2 and never trailed, leading 11-6 and 31-20 at the first half breaks. Union County would continue to pull away at 43-27 after three -- opening up its largest lead of the night at 48-27 with 5:25 to play.

Towns County was led by sophomore Kennedy Henson's 12 points. Demya Allen added eight and Vanessa Floyd scored six.

Hunter scored 11 in the first half -- seven coming in Union County's 20-point second quarter. Meanwhile, juniors Brooke Dockrey and Kait McCarter finished with 10 points each and junior Andelin Hill added nine.

After falling behind 7-2, consecutive buckets by Allen and Remington Parker allowed Towns to pull within a point but the Lady Panthers closed the quarter with field goals by Hunter and McCarter for an 11-6 lead.

Consecutive buckets by Hunter opened the second but the Lady Indians used a pair of threes by Taylor Cornett and Henson to keep it close at 17-14. Towns then answered a Riley Allison three with two Allen buckets in 21 seconds to pull within 20-18 at the 2:39



Left-right: Senior Will Travis goes up for two of his 14 first half points against Union County. The senior was in the zone before foul trouble limited his availability. Vanessa Floyd drops in a bucket during the first half vs Union County. Floyd would finish 6 points. Photos by Lowell Nicholson and Todd Forrest.



mark.

The next 11 points belonged to Union County, closing the half with a 31-20 advantage. McCarter contributed five points to the run while Brooke Dockrey scored four and Hunter had two during the 11-0 outburst over the final 2:11.

Offensive struggles and missed free throws hindered any Lady Indian comeback hopes in the third as they missed an and-one opportunity at 7:02 and split two free throws at 6:36.

On the other end, Hunter continued to work down low, scoring six points during the first five minutes as the Lady Panthers pulled in front 41-23 at the 3:17 mark. A Brooke Dockrey free throw at 2:54 stretched the lead to 42-23 before an Allen driving layup halted the run moments later.

In the final seconds of the period, Henson connected on 2-of-2 at the stripe to pull the Lady Indians within 43-27 after three.

A charge on Hill gave the Union junior four fouls early in the fourth but she stayed on the floor and proceeded to deliver the knockout blow with a basket at the 5:50 mark, followed by a transition three 25 seconds later, opening up the largest margin of the night at 48-27.

Towns County answered with a 7-0 run to trim the deficit to 48-34 with three minutes to go but it was too-little, too-late as Hunter pushed the lead back to 16 at 50-34. The Lady Indians cut the margin to a dozen at 50-38 as the clock ticked under a minute but a Hunter offensive board led to a Hill free throw with 37 seconds left -- the final point of the night.

Allison finished with 3 points to round out the scoring for Union County while Adeline Dockrey grabbed 6 boards and dished out 4 assists.

For Towns, Sophia Shook had 5 points, Cornett 3 scored points while Parker and Kristen Byers chipped in two apiece.

Union County shot 17-of-37 (46-percent) from the floor but struggled from distance, hitting only 3-of-21 from downtown. The Lady Panthers would connect on 14-of-24 (58-percent) at the line.

Towns County finished 15-for-46 (33-percent) from the floor, 3-for-12 (25-percent) from deep and 5-for-13 (38-percent) at the line.

The Lady Panthers won the rebound battle 37-23 overall and 8-4 on the offensive glass. Meanwhile, Towns would turn it over 17 times and force Union County into 22 turnovers.

Indians 52, Union

County 67 -- On Monday night, Union visited Towns County to finally complete the season series following a pair of cancellations.

Drake would pour in a career-high 30 points and Allison added 18 as the Panthers pulled away in front of a hostile crowd at the Bill P. Kendall gymnasium.

The Indians had a formidable duo of their own in senior Will Travis and sophomore Kolby Moss, who combined for 35 points, but it wasn't enough as Union outscored Towns 21-11 in the second quarter to take control after the Indians seized momentum to close the first.

The Panthers jumped out to a 7-2 lead but were unable to find an answer for Travis, who led the Indians on an 18-6 run for a 20-13 advantage after one.

Travis would score 14 of his team-high 19 in the first half before getting into foul trouble.

With 6:32 before half-time, Towns would open up its largest lead of the night at 24-15 on Travis' rim-rocking dunk over Drake.

Union County, however, would respond with 10-unanswered to knot things up at 24-24 with 4:44 left in the second period.

Buckets by Moss and Travis sandwiched around a Panther free throw allowed Towns County to go back up by three but two free throws from Allison trimmed the margin back to a point at 28-27.

A 1-for-2 trip to the line by Travis at the 2:53 mark made it 29-27 in favor of Towns but an Allison 3-point play gave the Panthers their first lead since the opening four minutes.

The Indians bounced back with a Trent Bradshaw steal-and-score but Allison struck again -- this time a pull-up jumper with 1:10 on the clock. After Towns missed a pair of free throws, Allison drove inside for two more, giving the Panthers a 34-31 halftime lead.

Drake opened the third with an and-one that gave Union its largest advantage of the night at 37-31 just eight seconds into the second half.

With 5:37 to play in the third, Towns County would pull within a basket at 39-37 before the Panthers tore off an 11-0 run to open up a 13-point lead with under two minutes left in the period. Trailing 50-37, the Indians momentarily slowed the bleeding with an Aidan Berrong free throw at the 1:39 mark, followed by two more from

the stripe by Moss when Towns was fouled on a put back off the missed foul shot. This time they hit them both and Towns was within 10.

Once again, Drake would answer by scoring on a base line drive and following a Collin Crowder deuce, Union County stretched the margin back to a dozen at quarter's end.

Allison and Berrong swapped 3-point shots to open the fourth but the Indians could never get within single digits the rest of the way. Leading 59-48, Drake took advantage of the foul trouble plaguing the Indians and continued to attack the rim as consecutive baskets from the junior stretched the lead back to 15.

Towns County made one last push to get within 11 at 63-52 at the 2:55 mark but the Panthers sank four straight free throws to keep the Indians at bay down the stretch.

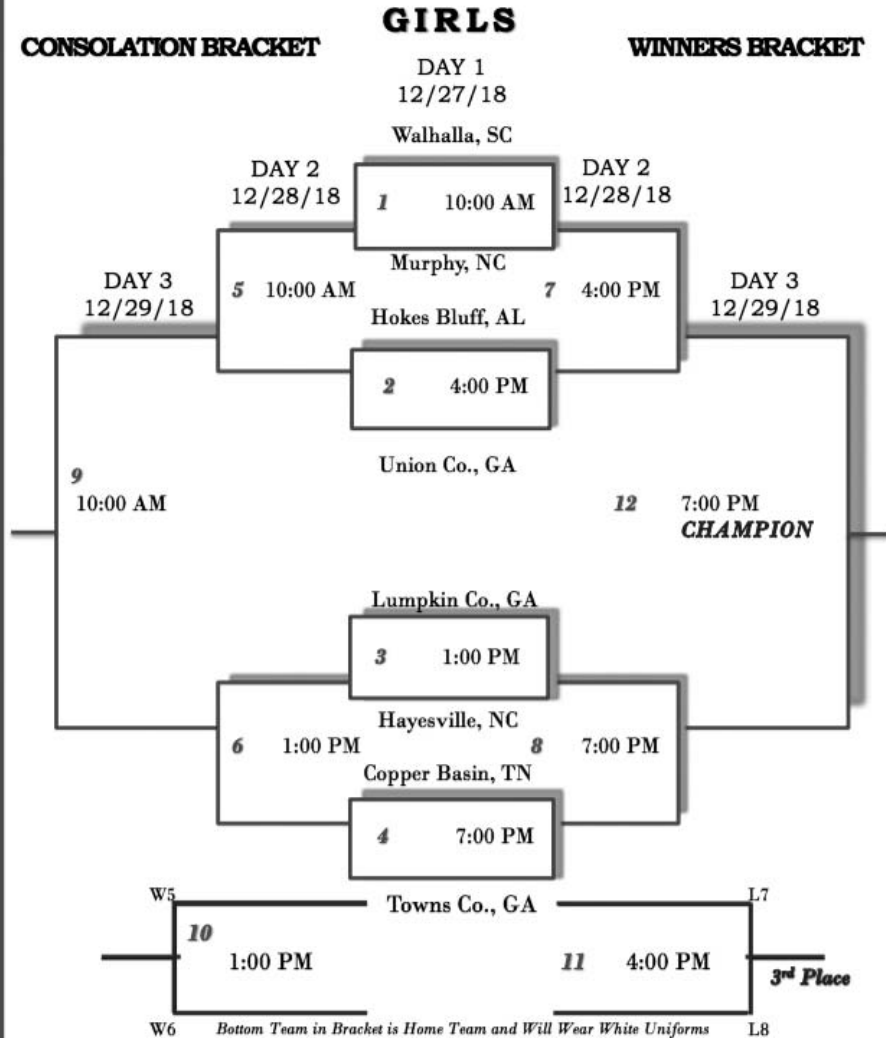
Travis turned in a 19-point performance to lead the Indians while Moss chipped in 16. Berrong added six, Crowder had five, Brett Denton scored four and Trent Bradshaw finished with two.

For the Panthers, Waller had six while Rich and Brey scored four apiece. Nelson finished with three and Day scored two.

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