

Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports



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Lady Indians record at 20-1 after three wins; set one school record, tie another



Makayla Underwood beats the pressure against Holy Innocents Photo by James Reese.

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The Towns County Lady Indians varsity basketball team took three wins last week in extending their magic season record to 20-1 with a home victory over Prince Avenue and road wins at Social Circle and Holy Innocents.

They have a perfect 9-0 record within Region 8-A with three games yet to play. The first two wins of the week came without much drama but the Saturday game came after a stiff challenge in Atlanta after many miles of travel for the Lady Indians. They had endured some three hundred miles in two days on a school bus with a round trip to Social Circle plus a game on Friday and the trip to Holy Innocents' on Saturday.

The win at Social Circle on Friday established what is believed to be a school record for the best start to a season for a Towns County High School Basketball Team. It appears that the best prior season opening record was established 59 years ago by the 1952 edition of the Lady Indians. If the recorded information is in chronological order and complete, the Lady Indians began that season on an 18-0 run before falling in consecutive games to Elijah and Hayesville.

The three wins for the week also give the Lady Indians 96 wins during the last four seasons and counting, tying the record for most wins in four consecutive seasons established last year. With at least three regular season games and post season play still to be completed, the Lady Indians have a chance to extend the four year record significantly.

For those who may wonder why the Indians did not play at Holy Innocents, this game and one with Lambert High School were scheduled for the Lady Indians in the absence of games with the boys only Riverside Military Academy now participating in Region 8-A. The home game with Lambert scheduled for December 13 was postponed due to bad weather and its not known at press time when or if the game will be rescheduled as the Lady Indians await word from Lambert as to whether they can or desire to reschedule.

PRINCE AVENUE – In their first confrontation since the Lady Wolverines pulled off an upset win over the Lady Indians in last year's Region 8A Tournament Championship Game in the Towns County Gym, the Lady Indians got some measure of revenge over their visitors from Bogart near Athens. A 54-40 Lady Indian win left the Lady Wolverines with an 11-5 record which became 12-6 overall and 6-3 in the region by week's end.

The Lady Indians sprang out to a 13-0 lead, highlighted by a pair of treys by Ali Bleckley and a field goal and three

point play by Jordan Moss with the score being 13-2 after one quarter. Gabby Arencibia then dominated the middle two quarters, including a trey in a six point second quarter and another trey in a nine point third as the Lady Indians led 26-10 at intermission and then 39-24 entering the fourth quarter.

After the Lady Wolverines rallied from a 48-31 deficit at 3:13 to within 48-38 at 1:44 of the fourth quarter, the Lady Indians responded with 2 for 2 free throw shooting each by Arencibia, Ben Pong, and Bleckley in finishing off a 54-40 victory. The Lady Indians overall were eleven for eleven at the foul line during the fourth quarter and a stunning twenty two for twenty six for the game.

Leading scorers for the game were Arencibia with 21 points, Moss and Bleckley with 12 each, and Lindsay Patton with 5. Leading in assists according to your reporter's tally were Arencibia and Eryn Cochran with 3 each and Makayla Underwood with 2.

SOCIAL CIRCLE – A Gabby Arencibia trey less than a minute into the game at Social Circle on Friday triggered a 7-0 Lady Indian lead which became 12-4 by the 2:46 mark of the first quarter but just 14-9 by quarter's end. Jordan Moss scored eight points in leading first quarter action for the Lady Indians who opened a 22-11 lead by the 5:50 mark of the second quarter.

With just a single digit lead of 24-15, Arencibia struck for a pair of treys in just twenty eight seconds, beginning at 2:38, and Ali Bleckley added her second field goal of the quarter at 1:34 for a suddenly prominent 32-15 Lady Indian lead which became 36-19 at the half. Moss scored six points and contributed two assists in the quarter while Eryn Cochran scored four points, including a field goal at the buzzer, and also contributed two assists.

Moss continued her fine work with the Lady Indians' first seven points of the third quarter and when Arencibia gave them a 46-23 lead with a trey at 4:26; the Lady Indians were well on their way to a 60-39 victory with most of the upper classmen taking the rest of the night off awaiting Holy Innocents on Saturday. Six different Lady Indians combined for fourteen points during the final quarter and a half with the mostly younger Lady Indians losing just two points of the lead.

Moss led the Lady Indians in scoring for the game with 21 points with other leaders being Arencibia with 12, Cochran with 8, and Bleckley with 6. Leading in assists were Moss and Arencibia with 3 each and Davilyn Blythe and Cochran with 2 each.

HOLY INNOCENTS – It was a rematch of last year's first round contest in the Class A State Tournament on Saturday



Eryn Cochran drives to the basket against Social Circle Photo by Lowell Nicholson.



Gabby Arencibia heads to the hoop for a deuce against Holy Innocents Photo by James Reese.

as the Lady Indians of Towns County and the Golden Bears of Holy Innocents came face to face, this time on the Lady Bears court in Atlanta. The Lady Indians took a thrilling 76-72 overtime home court win in the state tournament game and the game on Saturday turned out to be a real battle as well.

The Lady Indians actually would lead at Holy Innocents' from six seconds into the game on a Jordan Moss free throw until the final buzzer with the exception of three ultra brief Lady Bears leads totaling only fifty nine seconds. The Lady Indians appeared poised on several occasions to break the game open but each time Holy Innocents would find a way to issue a challenge. And each time, the Lady Indians managed a strong response with several different players stepping forward for solid play.

After the Lady Bears took brief 2-1 and 4-3 leads, the Lady Indians used a 7-0 run for a 10-4 lead and later a 5-0 run for a 15-8 lead which became 16-10 after one quarter. With the Lady Bears focusing their defense on Gabby Arencibia's outside shooting, the Lady Indians went inside for six points from Moss and four from Lindsay Patton in first quarter action.

The Lady Indians led by as much as 19-12 on a Ben Pong trey and 25-19 on an Arencibia trey by 2:18 of the second quarter but a late Holy Innocents trey set the halftime score at 25-22. An Ali Bleckley trey and a deuce by Moss had the Lady Indians ahead 30-26 by the 6:20 mark of the third quarter but the Lady Bears came up with easily their most serious challenge in the game. They struck for seven straight points and a 33-30 lead, ending with a trey at 2:52.

The sudden deficit seemingly aroused the Lady Indians with this Holy Innocents' lead lasting just 19 seconds until Moss tied the score with a three-point play and Bleckley sank three of four free throws for a 36-33 Towns lead entering the fourth quarter. The freshmen duo of Makayla Underwood and Eryn Cochran then rose to the occasion in the fourth quarter as the Lady Indians scored the first

9 points for a 12-0 overall run and a 42-33 lead with 5:21 on the clock.

Cochran started the quarter with a Sports Center style move and left handed layup with Underwood following with a putback after a missed Lady Indian free throw and a long deuce assisted by Cochran for the aforementioned 42-33 lead. A second putback by Underwood followed a Lady Bears basket and the lead was again nine by a 44-35 score at 3:37. The Lady Indians and their followers barely had time to enjoy the breathing room, however, as a Lady Bear trey and a three point play sandwiched around two free throws by Moss had the Lady Indians in jeopardy with the lead just 46-41 at 2:13.

A free throw by Moss at 41.2 seconds was matched by Holy Innocents at 30.2 seconds with the Lady Indian lead of 47-42 still in danger when Underwood went to the foul line at 25.8 seconds. The freshman sank two clutch free throws for a 49-42 lead before a final challenge by the Lady Bears who sank another trey with 6 seconds remaining for a 49-45 score. An Arencibia free throw at 5.1 seconds set the final score at 50-45 with the Lady Indians taking a hard fought and very rewarding victory.

The scoring parade for the Lady Indians was again led by Moss with 17 points with other leaders being Underwood with the 8 points in the fourth quarter, Arencibia with 7, Bleckley with 6 in the third quarter, and Cochran with 5. Leaders in assists were Cochran with 3 and Arencibia and Underwood with 2 each. The Lady Indians continued a pattern of excellent free throw shooting by sinking 20 of 28 attempts, including 6 for 9 in the final 2:22 of the game compared to also excellent 11 for 14 accuracy for the Lady Bears.

The Lady Bears entered the game with a 16-4 record, including 4-0 against Class AAA schools and ranked ninth in the state in the Georgia Prep Country Coaches Poll. The Lady Indians were ranked seventh in the most recent Coaches Poll and in the Atlanta Journal and Constitution rankings with Holy Innocents currently unranked in the AJC poll.

Lady Indians' JV breeze past Holy Innocents



Bailey Sutton drives the lane against Holy Innocents Photo by Lowell Nicholson.

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In their only game last week, the Towns County Lady Indian Junior Varsity took a convincing road victory over the Holy Innocents Golden Bears in Atlanta. The victory extended the Lady Indians' record to a fine 9-2 on the season.

A field goal by Stephanie Patton got the Lady Indians off and running just 9 seconds into the game with a deuce and a trey by Kellsie Cowart largely accounting for an 8-0 lead by the 4:41 mark of the first quarter. The Golden Bears then issued really their only significant challenge with a 7-0 run for just an 8-7 deficit at 3:31.

Elizabeth Turner's second field goal of the quarter and two more by Destiney Blythe

had the Lady Indians off and running with a 14-7 lead after one quarter and a 24-11 advantage at intermission. McKenzie Moss placed an exclamation mark on first half action with the natural lefthander taking a steal coast-to-coast for a right handed layup at the buzzer. Six different Lady Indians put points on the scoreboard the last half, highlighted by 6 by Cowart in the third quarter and 4 by Patton, who missed significant playing time in foul trouble, in the fourth.

All seven Lady Indians appearing in the game got on the scoreboard with leaders being Cowart with 13 points and Destiney Blythe and Patton with 9 each. All seven Lady Indians also handed out at least 1 assist with Cowart also leading in that category with 3.



Kellsie Cowart goes for a deuce against Holy Innocents Photo by Lowell Nicholson.



Elizabeth Turner heads to the hoop for two against Holy Innocents Photo by Lowell Nicholson.



Ali Bleckley drives inside against Prince Avenue Photo by Lowell Nicholson.



Coach Jim Melton pays close attention to the Lady Indians offense during their matchup with Prince Avenue Photo by James Reese.



Ben Pong drives for a layup against Prince Avenue Photo by James Reese.