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Indians fall to undefeated region leaders Tallulah Falls and Lakeview Academy

By Jerry Kendall
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

No one expected the most recent three games in a period of just seven days for the Towns County Indians Varsity Basketball Team to be easy against the two undefeated region 8-A leaders.

They traveled to Lakeview Academy in Gainesville on Saturday, January 14, and then hosted Tallulah Falls on Tuesday, January 17, and Lakeview Academy on Friday, January 20, of last week, coming up short of victory in all three games which were more competitive than the final scores would indicate.

In last week's home court losses to Tallulah and Lakeview, mostly brief but decisive scoring runs by the Indians' opponents proved to be too much to overcome as they were forced to play catch-up against the veteran teams which both returned most of their fire power from last year's teams. Tallulah came out on top by a 68-55 score and Lakeview by a 72-48 score made deceptive by a 14-3 finish by the Lions during the final 2:29 of the game.

Tallulah Falls and Lakeview Academy finished the week's play tied for first place in Region 8A with 9-0 records with Tallulah also a perfect 19-0 overall and Lakeview with an overall record of 14-5 against a very challenging schedule with the losses coming against high classification Georgia teams and highly regarded out of state teams.

Either Lakeview or Tallulah is assured of a loss and dropping to second place in the region on Tuesday of this week when the two teams face each other for the first of two times in regular season at Tallulah Falls.

The Indians completed the week with an overall 12-7 record, including 5-4 and good for a tie for fourth place with Prince Avenue Christian in the region but third in Sub-Region 8-A North behind Lakeview and Tallulah and ahead of Hebron Christian, Riverside Military, and Commerce.

There are six games remaining on the regular season schedule. This week's sched-



Towns County senior Will DeVries throws it down vs Lakeview. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

ule includes a trip to Commerce on Tuesday, a home game with Athens Christian on Friday, and a road trip to Prince Avenue on Saturday.

Next week, the Indians will host Hebron Christian on Tuesday and George Walton Academy on Friday before closing out the season with a weather delayed game at Athens Academy on Saturday.

Tallulah Falls 68, Indians 55 – The Indians and Tallulah Falls had combined for a high scoring game at Tallulah Falls on Dec. 6 with the Indians coming out on the short end of an 84-73 game but the two teams got off to a slow start last Tuesday with senior Major Moss giving the Indians a 2-0 lead on a drive to the basket more than two and half minutes into the game at 5:22 of the first quarter.

Tallulah would include a pair of treys in pulling out to a 10-6 lead by quarter's end, however, with Moss finishing the quarter with a team leading four points for the Indians.

The Indians edged to within 10-8 on a basket by sophomore Will Travis, 13-10 on one by senior Will De Vries, and then to within 18-14 on back to back baskets by Travis and junior Logan Cowart by the 5:24 mark of

the second quarter.

The Indians would go stone cold after that but Tallulah not much better for just a 22-16 lead until the final forty eight seconds of the quarter when Tallulah struck for two treys and a free throw for a sudden lead of 29-16 at intermission.

It was the Indians turn for an impressive run at the start of the third quarter, however, as they followed an early Tallulah free throw with a 16-5 run for just a 35-32 deficit by the 4:03 mark.

Tallulah had six treys during the first half but the Indians used treys by Moss, De Vries, and Travis and a traditional three point play by De Vries for 12 of their points and Moss added a pair of deuces during the run which required just three minutes and nine seconds of playing time.

But once again Tallulah embarked on a potent scoring run, including two treys at the end of a 12-2 run interrupted only by two free throws by Zach Davenport for a 47-34 lead with fifty four seconds left in the third quarter.

De Vries nailed a trey at the buzzer, however, in reducing the Indians deficit to 47-37 entering the fourth quarter.

Tallulah managed just a deuce enabling a modest 6-2 Indian run which could have been better with better free throw shooting than the four for ten the Indians managed at the start of the fourth quarter to reduce the lead to 49-43.

But two treys at 5:10 and 4:22 triggered another run by Tallulah, this time to the tune of 10-1 for a 59-44 lead at 3:45 that would become a 68-55 Tallulah victory.

Moss led the Indians in scoring for the game with 18 points and was followed by De Vries with 17, Travis with 9, Davenport with 4, and juniors Bradley Benson with 3 and Logan Cowart and Cole Ledford with 2 each.

Davenport led in assists with 6 and was followed by Moss with 3 and junior Evan Berrong and sophomore Trent Bradshaw with 1 each.

Moss took the lead in rebounds with 7 and was followed by Cowart with 6, Davenport and De Vries with 5 each, Ledford and Travis with 2 each, and senior Colton Shook with 1.

According to a Tallulah report to the MaxPreps Internet website, all of their points, assists, and rebounds were contributed by their seven seniors with Josey Keene

and Michael Van Hooser leading in scoring with 17 and 16 points, including sinking five and four, respectively, of Tallulah's twelve treys in the game.

Some long time followers of the Indians may have recognized Jackie Taylor as an assistant coach, with duties as JV head coach included, for Tallulah Falls.

Taylor is a 1962 TCHS graduate, one year prior to your reporter, who played some basketball at Piedmont College and served as head coach for the Indians during the 1968 and 1969 seasons and for the Lady Indians in 1968. He is the grandfather of Indians baseball senior Jackson Taylor.

Lakeview Academy 72, Indians 48 – After field goals by Logan Cowart got the Indians a 2-0 lead and a 4-4 tie, the Lakeview Lions embarked on a 13-1 run for a 17-5 lead by the fifty four seconds mark of the first quarter only to have a trey by Zach Davenport at thirty eight seconds and a drive for two points at the buzzer by Major Moss reduce the lead to 17-10 by quarter's end.

An early three point play and a late trey by Will De Vries and two field goals in between by Cowart high-

lighted second quarter action for the Indians as they closed to within 27-22 by intermission.

After the Indians had come out with red hot shooting in the third quarter against Tallulah Falls on Tuesday, they may have been distracted by the homecoming ceremonies in losing some focus in this game or maybe it was the defensive strategy of the visiting Lions.

But whatever the case, Lakeview took advantage of three Indian turnovers for six of their points in an 8-0 opening run for a sudden 35-22 lead in just a minute and a half at the 6:30 mark that they would pretty much hold until the previously referenced closing run.

The Indians got as close as nine points at 39-30 on a slam dunk by De Vries with 4:20 left in the third quarter and to within 54-43 on a three point play by Moss at the 4:12 mark of the fourth while the Lions got brief leads of sixteen points on treys at the 2:12 mark of the third quarter and 5:15 in the fourth.

The Indians were within 58-45 on a Davenport basket at 3:04 of the fourth quarter for the same thirteen points Lions lead they had held following their 8-0 run at the start of the third quarter before they included eight for eight free throw shooting in the aforementioned 14-3 finish in significantly exceeding their two biggest prior leads of sixteen points for the final margin of victory of 72-48.

The Indians were led in scoring by Moss with 16 points and he was followed by De Vries with 11, Cowart with 10, Davenport with 9, and Travis with 2 on a dunk while Moss also led in assists with 6 and was followed by Davenport with 3 and De Vries with 2.

Davenport and Moss tied for the lead in rebounds with 7 each and were followed by De Vries with 4, Cowart with 2, and Travis and Trent Bradshaw with 1 each.

The Lions were led in scoring by senior Josh Randolph with 22 points, junior Drew Cottrell with 16, and seniors Tre Gober with 10 and Ryan Lackey with 9.

Lady Indians come close against Tallulah; overpowered by 8-A leader Lakeview

By Jerry Kendall
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The Towns County Lady Indians Varsity Basketball Team was in action twice last week with home games against two of the top teams in Region 8-A, including a Friday night 75-43 loss to Lakeview Academy which is the undefeated top team in the region with an 8-0 record and 16-4 overall.

But first things first, the Lady Indians faced third place Tallulah Falls on Tuesday night and came very close to pulling an upset before falling 54-46 to the visiting band of Lady Indians who completed the week with an overall record of 10-8 and 6-1 and in third place in the region.

The Lady Indians completed the week with an overall record of 3-14 and 2-5 for a tie for seventh place in the region with Commerce.

For region tournament seeding, the region is divided into north and south divisions with the Lady Indians tied with Commerce for third place in Sub-Region 8-A North behind Lakeview and Tallulah and ahead of Hebron Christian entering this week's play with an important game at Commerce scheduled for Tuesday of this week.

Tallulah Falls 54, Lady Indians 46 – The Lady Indians got a 1-0 lead less than a minute into the game with Tallulah Falls on a free throw by junior Madison McClure and added sophomore Taylor Cornett's first of two first quarter field goals for a 3-0 lead at 4:59 before the Tallulah Ladies finished the quarter on a 12-4 run for a 12-7 lead.

They seemed to be taking control of the game when they opened the second quarter with a three point play and a 15-7 advantage but here came the Lady Indians.

They struck for a 7-0 run, ending on a trey by sophomore Kristen Byers for just a



Towns County girls basketball photos by Lowell Nicholson

15-14 deficit and Cornett more than matched a Tallulah deuce with a trey for a 17-17 tie at the four minutes mark.

It was Tallulah's turn then for a strong run, however, as they finished the quarter on a 9-2 charge interrupted only by two free throws by senior Kirsten Ledford at 1:48 for a 26-19 Tallulah lead at intermission.

For the second time in the game, Tallulah appeared to be taking control of the game when sinking two field goals for a 30-19 advantage just under two minutes into the third quarter but senior Kristen Henson rose to the occasion with perhaps the most remarkable run by any Lady Indian or opposing player in any game this year and probably in a number of other seasons as well.

Henson used three treys and a long deuce for eleven points in just a minute and twenty seven seconds between the 5:39 and 4:12 marks compared to a single deuce for Tallulah in lifting the Lady Indians to just a 32-30 deficit.

Tallulah responded with two free throws and a trey for a 37-30 lead at 3:11 before Henson added two free throws at 2:42 for a 37-32 score.

A trey and free throw by McClure followed a Tallulah deuce for just a 39-36 Lady Indian deficit at 1:11 but Tallulah sank two field goals by quarter's end for a 43-36 lead entering the fourth quarter.

The Lady Indians still had some magic remaining, however, as they used a 6-2 start in the fourth quarter on deuces by Spano and Ledford

and two free throws by Byers for just a 45-42 deficit at 5:56.

Tallulah followed with two deuces for a 49-42 lead but Spano and Henson wrapped a deuce and two free throws around a Tallulah free throw in getting the Lady Indians to within 50-46 at 2:39.

Unfortunately, that would be the Lady Indians' final points and Tallulah added field goals at the 1:56 and 1:24 marks with each team missing a one and one free throw attempt in setting the final Tallulah margin of victory at 54-46.

Henson led the Lady Indians in scoring for the game with 15 points but she had lots of help from Byers and Cornett with 7 points each, McClure and Spano with 6 each, Led-



ford with 4, and sophomore Kenzlee Denton with 1.

Byers took the lead in assists with 4 and was followed by Henson with 2 and McClure and Spano with 1 each.

Lakeview Academy 75, Lady Indians 43 – Against Lakeview, the Lady Indians got a 2-2 tie on a field goal by Kirsten Ledford less than a minute into the first quarter and edged to within 7-6 on a long deuce by Taylor Cornett with 5:33 left in the first quarter but the visiting Lady Lions broke away for a 23-11 lead by quarter's end.

The Lady Lions held just a 17-13 scoring advantage in the second quarter for a 40-24 lead at halftime and outscored the Lady Indians 25-4 in the third for a 65-28 advantage before the Lady Indians out-

scored the Lady Lions 15-10 in the fourth for a final Lakeview advantage of 75-43. Leading point totals by quarter for the Lady Indians included six by Madison McClure in the second and four each in the fourth by McClure and Erika Spano.

McClure took scoring honors for the game for the Lady Indians with 14 points and was followed by Sophia Shook with 7, Kristen Henson and Spano with 6 each, Ledford with 5, Kristen Byers with 3, and Cornett with 2 while Henson and McClure contributed 2 assists each.

The Lady Lions were led in scoring by seniors Hanna Grogan with 27 and Ryann Moody with 15 and freshman Christen Copeland with 13.