

Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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Zach Davenport establishes a new verifiable career scoring total for Indians

By Jerry Kendall
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

GAINESVILLE - Towns County Indians senior Zach Davenport continued a very eventful final season for the Indians basketball team last Friday, Jan. 19 at Lakeview Academy in Gainesville. He made a driving layup at the 2:29 mark of the fourth quarter that propelled him ahead of 1975 TCHS graduate Eddie Rushton for the highest verifiable individual career scoring total for the Indians.

Davenport had become in his team's opening game for this season the earliest Indian to reach 1,000 career points since the legendary 6'4" Bob Bryson is considered certain to have reached the total as a junior during the 1955 season and he recently scored his own career single game high of 39 points in a home game against Hebron Christian Academy.

Although Davenport's current career points total of 1,368 surpass Rushton's 1,366 after forty three years, there can really be no doubt that Bryson would still hold the overall highest points total at TCHS if the scoring totals for



Zach Davenport will go down as one of the greatest scorers in Northeast Georgia history. Photos by Lowell Nicholson and Todd Forrest

all of his games were available.

Available score sheets for Bryson reveal 1,181 career points but with the scoreboard for his sophomore year being missing along with a few games at the end of his junior year when the scorebook

was filled and another book, which is not available, obviously used for the remaining games.

With Bryson scoring 199 points as a freshman and more than the 527 available for his junior year and his basketball accomplishments as



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a sophomore being legendary, there can be no doubt that he would have easily exceeded the 199 scored as a freshman and leaving little doubt that Davenport is destined to finish a still remarkable second in career scoring at TCHS to Bryson.

There is no shame in finishing second to Bob Bryson when considering the wealth of talented Indian basketball players at Towns County High School in close to 100 years of activity back to 1922.

It is interesting to make some quick comparisons of

the overall athletic abilities at TCHS of Davenport and Rushton who have not only excelled in basketball but in other sports as well.

Rushton was a prominent member, along with Davenport's grandfather Ricky Welch, of the Indians' first basketball state tournament team in 1974 while Davenport was a prominent member of the Indians' first state playoff football team this year.

Further, Rushton was the first TCHS tennis player to make the state tournament during, if memory serves your reporter correctly, his sophomore season with his entering tennis competition that year prompting the start of the tennis program for both the Lady Indians and Indians at TCHS. And of further significance, Davenport made it to both the state basketball tournament and the baseball state playoffs as prominent member as a junior last year.

As an added note, Davenport's grandmother, Doris Moss Welch, was a member as the top substitute as a fourteen year old sophomore of the Lady Indians' first basketball state tournament team in 1973.

Indians win two-of-three games during unique week of torrid scoring runs

By Jerry Kendall
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A season marked by torrid scoring runs by both the Towns County Indians varsity basketball team and many opponents and other teams was never in greater evidence than the Indians' three games of last week proved to be with the Indians both benefiting and being victimized by such runs.

The unique number of twenty four points was involved in some manner in each of three arousing comebacks involving the Indians when they took two victories under such circumstances while falling short of a win in the other.

On Tuesday, the Indians scored twenty four straight points on their home court in overcoming an eight points deficit in defeating Commerce, they came out on top in spite of being outscored by twenty four points in a late rally by George Walton Academy in Monroe on Friday, and they just missed overcoming a twenty four points home court deficit to Prince Avenue Christian School on Saturday.

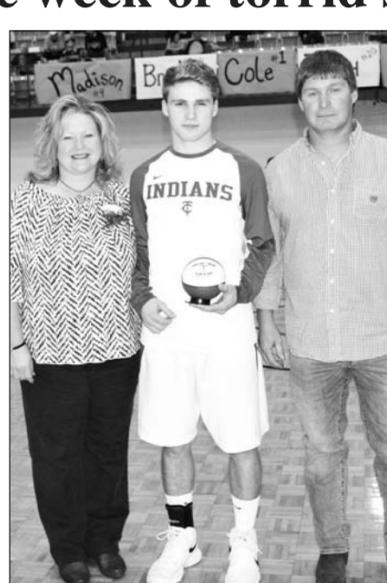
The week's work left the Indians with an 11-11 overall record, including 6-7 in Region 8A with a likelihood but not a certainty as of the newspaper deadline of facing Commerce in a play in game in Commerce this Saturday, February 3.

With the Riverside Military Academy boys team included in the region but with no girls team at the school, this leaves six boys teams in the region's north sub region with the fifth and sixth place teams required to face each other on Saturday prior to the tournament to qualify for first round play in the region tournament to be held in Commerce next week.

Fans planning to attend the possible play in game and region tournament should be in touch with other fans, coaches, or players as the results of games to be played this week occur to learn the finalized schedule. The Indians have the misfortune of the north side of the region having the more successful teams within the region as evidenced by the Indians' current record of 3-1 against teams from the south with a Friday game at Athens Christian still to be played but just a 3-6 record against teams from the north with a game at Hebron Christian this Tuesday remaining as of press time. It is a further disadvantage that the Indians must face each of the north sub region teams, which includes tough opponents in Lakeview Academy, Hebron, Tallulah Falls, and Riverside twice during regular season but the teams from the south just once each. And the teams from the south only face the tough teams from the north one time during regular season.

Indians 67, Commerce 52 - Cold first quarter shooting by the Indians would allow the visiting Commerce Tigers to hold a 13-6 lead by the 2:20 mark of the first quarter before a 6-2 finish by the Indians in just a minute and nine seconds got them within 15-12 at quarter's end. Senior Zach Davenport led the Indians in scoring during the quarter with seven points.

The Tigers opened the second quarter with an early field goal for a 17-12 lead but the Indians



Towns County seniors: (L-R) Evan Berrong, Caleb Clark, and Cole Ledford. Photos by Lowell Nicholson

struck for a 17-5 run between the 5:51 and 1:37 marks for a 29-22 advantage with six Indians putting points on the score board during the run. Davenport again led with six points this time with other highlights including a trey by senior Bradley Benson, a field goal by senior Caleb Clark for a 19-18 Towns advantage at 4:47, and a basket by Davenport at 3:44 getting them a 21-20 lead they would hold until the 5:21 mark of the third quarter.

The Tigers reduced the aforementioned 29-22 Indians lead to 29-26 on two field goals during the final 1:15 of the second quarter and they added an early basket at the start of the third for just a 29-28 Towns lead. Junior Trent Bradshaw's second trey of the game, three for four free throw shooting by junior Will Travis, and a field goal by Davenport had the Indians ahead 37-32 by the 6:10 mark of the third quarter.

The Tigers caught up at 37-37 on a deuce and three points play at 5:21, however, and they followed two free throws by Davenport for a 39-37 Towns lead at 4:14 with a 10-0 run for a 47-39 lead at the minute and a half mark. This turn of events appeared to have the Tigers taking control of the game but the best was yet to come for the Indians who would use their best scoring run of the season in seizing control of the game.

A drive for two points by Davenport at twenty five seconds and a trey by freshman Kolby Moss at the buzzer got the Indians within 47-44 entering the fourth quarter and triggered an Indians onslaught which would continue to the 3:12 mark of the quarter. A deuce by Moss at 7:40 and two free throws by Davenport at 6:36 got the Indians a 48-47 lead with Moss then wrapping two free throws and a deuce around a deuce by junior Will Travis and two free throws by Davenport for a 56-47 Towns lead at 5:36.

The Indians got some unexpected help from the Tigers at the 3:52 mark when a technical foul by one player and an ejection for another sent Davenport to the foul line where he sank three of four free throw attempts for a 59-47 Towns advantage. With the Indians getting possession of the ball as a result of the technical and ejection, Davenport was fouled just two seconds later at 3:50 and sank two more free throws with Bradshaw adding a tip in of a missed basket at 3:12 for an overall 24-0 Towns run

and a 63-47 lead which became a 67-52 Indians victory. Davenport scored thirteen points and Moss six for the Indians during fourth quarter action.

Scoring leaders for the game for the Indians were Davenport with 32 points, Moss and Travis with 9 each, and Bradshaw with 8 while Davenport also led in assists with 4 and was followed by senior Cole Ledford and Moss with 2 each. Leaders in rebounds were Travis with 9 and senior Evan Berrong and Moss with 4 each. The Tigers were led in scoring by juniors Jalen Dorsey with 17 points and Chandler Martin with 12.

After showing improvement over the past several games, the Tigers ended a ten game losing streak with region wins over Athens Christian and Providence Christian on Friday and Saturday of last week in improving their overall record to 4-19 and their region record to 2-11.

Indians 69, George Walton Academy 68 - The Indians' game at George Walton Academy in Monroe on Friday night turned out to be the first of two games over the weekend with similar results as related to the unique twenty four points mention above. The home standing Bulldogs got what would prove to be their only lead of the game at 1-0 on a free throw half a minute into the game as the Indians overcame a slow offensive start when two free throws by senior Zach Davenport at 5:34 got them off on a quarter ending 15-4 run for a 15-5 lead after one quarter. Five different Indians put points on the scoreboard in the quarter with Davenport leading with five.

The Indians continued the dominance during the second quarter for a 39-24 lead at halftime on about a twenty five foot trey by Davenport at the buzzer and a 56-31 bulge on an old fashioned three points play by junior Will Travis at the 1:30 mark of the third quarter. Heroics were numerous for the Indians during the second and third quarter with Davenport providing eighteen points, Travis nine, junior Trent Bradshaw five, and senior Evan Berrong four as they appeared to be on their way to an easy victory.

But just as in the game against Commerce three nights earlier when the Indians embarked on a 24-0 run, the Bulldogs began a similarly dominant scoring run. It all began innocently enough when they finished the

third quarter with two field goals and opened the fourth with a trey for a still prominent 56-38 Towns advantage.

The Indians continued to put points on the scoreboard but at a much slower pace during the fourth quarter with two for two free throw shooting by freshman Kolby Moss, four for four success at the foul line for Davenport, and field goals by Berrong and Davenport still having the Indians in what seemed to be pretty good shape with a 66-55 lead at the 3:11 mark.

But eight straight points by the Bulldogs between the 3:03 and fifty six seconds marks had them knocking on the door with just a 66-63 deficit. A free throw by Davenport at 52.8 seconds gave the Indians a 67-63 lead but the Bulldogs completed a three points play on a field goal which appeared to be rolling off the rim found it's way into the basket for just a 67-66 Towns lead.

Davenport sank the second of two free throw attempts at 30.1 seconds for a 68-66 Towns lead at 30.1 seconds but a drive for two points at thirteen seconds gave the Bulldogs a 68-68 tie. Davenport sank the first of two free throw attempts at 4.3 seconds, however, for a 69-68 Indians lead which held up for the victory when a last second desperation shot by the Bulldogs bounced off the top of the backboard.

When all was said and done, the Bulldogs had overcome a twenty five points deficit of 56-31 with a 37-13 finish in eight minutes and fifty five seconds of playing time for the previously mentioned twenty four points advantage but a point short of a tie and potential overtime period at game's end.

The Indians were led in scoring by Davenport with 32 points, Travis with 12, and Berrong and Bradshaw with 8 each while Davenport also led in assists with 5 and was followed by Moss with 2. And Davenport also led in rebounds with 9 and was followed by Travis with 8 and Bradshaw with 4.

Leading scorers for the Bulldogs were seniors Brennan Holston with 27 and Grant McDonel and Torey Zanders with 11 each. The Bulldogs completed the week with an overall 5-15 record and 4-8 in Region 8A.

Prince Avenue Christian 78, Indians 68 - It's unlikely that anyone could have imagined at the start of the Indians home game

against Prince Avenue on Saturday night how similar it's progression would be to their game at George Walton on Friday night but this time to the advantage at the end of the visiting Wolverines just as for the visiting Indians the night prior.

A field goal by Indians senior Caleb Clark at the 7:10 mark of the first quarter would get his team what would turn out to be their only tie of the game in matching a Prince Avenue field goal of thirteen seconds prior as the Wolverines would embark on what appeared until starting at the 6:03 mark of the third quarter a dominant victory very similar to the Indians' dominance until near the end of the third quarter the night prior.

The Wolverines would hold a 10-4 lead by the 4:46 mark of the first quarter, a 20-12 advantage after one quarter, and a 46-26 bulge by intermission despite ten first half points by senior Zach Davenport and seven by freshman Kolby Moss. The Wolverines would then use two treys and a deuce to more than match deuces by junior Will Travis and Moss in bringing us to another mention of twenty four points which was the amount of the advantage in a 54-30 Prince lead at the 6:12 mark of the third quarter.

As for the Indians the night prior with a very similar 56-31 lead near the end of the third quarter, the big leads may have brought about a bit of a loss of focus for the leading squads both nights but whatever the circumstances, here came the Indians in much the same manner as had George Walton some twenty four hours prior against the Indians.

By quarter's end, the Indians had outscored the Wolverines 14-1 in 6:03 of playing time for just a 55-46 deficit but they weren't done yet as they completed a 20-1 run on two free throws and a field goal by Travis by the 7:07 mark of the fourth quarter for just a 55-50 Prince lead. The third quarter portion of the run had been highlighted by a trey, a three points play, and two free throws by Davenport for eight points and back to back field goals by Moss for four points.

The Wolverines used a free throw and field goal for a 58-50 lead at 5:56 but two free throws by Moss and a Travis basket had the Indians within 58-54 at 5:40. Davenport matched two field goals by Prince for 60-56 and 62-58 Wolverines leads by 3:42 and Tra-

vis added a deuce at 3:23 for just a 62-60 Indians deficit, completing a 30-8 run by the Indians between the 6:03 mark of the third quarter and 3:23 of the fourth.

The Wolverines sank the first of two free throw attempts at 3:01 for a 63-60 lead and got the rebound when missing the second with a key moment, perhaps the turning point in the game, occurring at that time. With a Wolverine player trapped in a corner, they called a time out just an instant prior to the Indians coming up with a steal and just a three points deficit with the steal being negated by the Wolverines' fortunate for them time out, and Prince scored on an inbounds play at 2:56 for a 65-60 lead. The time out was a routine event but of great advantage to the Wolverines as it provided a five points lead instead of three when the Indians got the ball again.

The Indians would not be able to put points on the scoreboard for awhile after that with the Wolverines increasing their lead to 70-60 by the 2:06 mark. The two teams would match points the remainder of the game with field goals by junior Brett Denton and Davenport, two free throws by Moss, and another deuce by Davenport accounting for the Indians points as Prince closed out a 78-68 victory.

Davenport again led the Indians in scoring with 26 points and was followed by Moss with 17 and Travis with 14. Assists leaders were senior Bradley Benson, junior Trent Bradshaw, and Davenport with 3 each and Denton with 2 while Travis led in rebounds with 13 and was followed by Davenport with 5. The Wolverines were led in scoring by junior Mack Simmons with 29 points, 6'6" senior Dalton Meeler with 22, and junior Will Todd with 12.

The Wolverines improved their overall record to 14-8 and their region record to 9-3 with the victory. It doesn't require much prompting for Towns followers to wonder how much difference the presence of the Indians' 6'4" inside power player Logan Cowart might have made if available for this and other Indians losses since his injury on December 16.

Baseball/softball registration

Recreation baseball/softball: We will offer the following age groups: Co-ed T-ball ages 5 - 6, Coach's Pitch ages 7 - 8, 10 and under, 12 and under, 14 and under. Registration will run through February 16th. Visit townscountyrec.com to sign up. T:Jan17.F1:SH

SPRING SOCCER REGISTRATION

Age Groups U6-U16

Register online at: www.mountainsoccer.org. Registration forms are also available to print from the website. Forms can be mailed to PO Box 1862, Blairsville, GA 30514.

Deadline to register is January 31, 2018. For additional information please check out our website at: www.mountainsoccer.org or email us at: musa.soccer@gmail.com.