

Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports

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Indians survive at Tallulah Falls, stumble late at Union Co.

By Daysha Pandolph
Staff Writer
Towns County Herald

The Towns County boys' basketball team had a tough start last week, finishing a road trip against Union County with a 57-48 loss on Tuesday, Nov. 28.

Two days later, the boys traveled to Tallulah Falls, bouncing back with a 47-44 victory.

The Union County game didn't favor the Indians from the start, with the Panthers taking an early 22-8 lead courtesy of a 19-4 run.

The Indians picked up the pace during the early moments of the second quarter and moved within 26-20, but they were unable to push ahead as a late Union 3 bumped the halftime edge to 29-20.

Despite the second-quarter setback, the Indians opened the third firing on all cylinders, utilizing a 10-1 run to even the score at 30-30. Two Kade McConnell treys in the opening minute ignited the surge before Floyd went to work inside for 2 points.

Union split two free throws, but Floyd's runner knotted the game at 30-30 near the quarter's 5:25 mark. Union's Houston Henry, who finished with a game-high 18 points, put Union back on top for good with a floater in the paint, then Jude Ellis' 3-point play completed a Panthers' fast break.

After Rogers and Henry traded buckets, the Panthers' Hayden Hughes sank two free throws and Henry scored off an inbounds play to close an 11-2 run, spotting Union a 41-32



Senior Gage Rogers ended the Union game with an 11-point, 10-rebound double-double. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

advantage entering the fourth.

But as was the case all night, Towns answered Union's run with one of its own when Rogers' trey, followed by Tanner Cunningham's turnaround jumper and corner-3, had Towns within a basket less than 2 minutes into the fourth.

The Indians had a chance to tie or take the lead moments later, but an errant pass led to a deuce on the other end, initiating Union's back-breaking 10-0 run.

Towns' next three possessions ended in turnovers as the Panthers began pulling away. Henry found Ellis inside for

a 45-39 lead, and then Jaxon Totherow cleaned up misses on consecutive trips, mounting a double-digit Panthers' advantage. Union County eventually opened up a 51-39 gap at the 3:30 mark when Hughes scored on Henry's inbounds feed.

Rogers' 12-footer halted the run on the ensuing possession, and Cunningham pulled down Floyd's miss and went back up for 2 points. Trailing 51-44, the Indians made it a two-possession game when Floyd converted an offensive board with 65 seconds left.

But that's as close as they'd get as Henry hit two



Kade McConnell hit two third-quarter treys that helped the Indians erase a 9-point halftime lead at Union. Photo/Todd Forrest

free throws and Floyd's pull-up trey caught the back iron. Four more Henry free throws extended the Union lead to 57-46 before Rogers' layup in the final seconds capped the scoring at 57-48.

While they did not leave victorious, Towns County played well and kept the scoreboard close thanks to the contributions of several players.

Floyd paced the Indians with 16 points, 7 boards and 2 assists.

Rogers finished with 11 points, 10 rebounds and 3 assists on 5-of-10 shooting.

Cunningham scored 9

points and collected 9 boards. McConnell had 8 points, 5 rebounds and a pair of assists. Barrett ended with 2 points and 5 boards; Walker Underwood had 2 points and 3 assists. Connor Chastain chipped in 2 rebounds and 2 assists; Cruz Kitchens grabbed one board and Connor Williams dished out one assist.

Union County shot 33% (20-61) from the floor, 5% (1-19) from deep and 70% (16-23) at the line. Towns County hit 38% (31-57) overall, 23% (6-26) from long distance and went 0-2 at the line.

The Indians out-rebound-

ed Union 42-32 but lost the turnover battle 22-9. The Panthers outscored Towns 38-22 in the paint.

On Thursday, Nov. 30, the Indians defeated their next opponent of the week, Tallulah Falls, by a score of 47-44.

With a great defense and some timely scoring by Connor Chastain and Floyd, the Indians started the game in the lead, and were ahead by 12 points at halftime.

Tallulah's response was strong, however, and the second half was played point by point. In the final moments of the fourth quarter, the Indians were able to pull out a three-point victory.

Floyd once again led scoring with 22 points next to Chastain's 11.

"This was a good week for us," commented coach Brian Hunnicut. "We faced two rivals that are very good basketball teams.

"Our boys were able to step up in competition and see what will be needed to have a successful season. We did not perform as well against Union, but you tip your cap to them. I am so proud that we rebounded from that loss to travel to Tallulah Falls and get a hard earned victory.

"(Tallulah Falls) is a good basketball team and (a) tough place to play. The boys showed a lot of grit and resilience to come out of there with a victory," said Hunnicut.

Towns County will make their next appearance in a home rematch against Union County on Friday, Dec. 8.

Todd Forrest contributed to this article.

No. 8 Lady Indians hang on at Tallulah; done in by Union's hot start

By Daysha Pandolph
Staff Writer
Towns County Herald

The Towns County Lady Indians basketball team took home both a win and a loss last week. On Tuesday, Nov. 28, the girls traveled across the county line to Union County High School where they took home a loss of 59-46. The following Thursday, they traveled the opposite direction to Tallulah Falls and took home a 48-45 win.

At Union County, the girls got off to a rough start, but refused to stop fighting. By the fourth quarter, they had reduced the Panthers' lead to 11 points; however, they struggled to generate any more. The game concluded with Union County in the lead at 59-46.

"(I was) proud of our defensive effort, but we now see that we need to do a better job of rebounding and finishing at the goal," commented coach Shea Taylor.

Union County hit five first-quarter 3-pointers as they built leads of 23-7 after one and 36-18 at the break.

Following a low-scoring start by both squads during the third, a Union County bucket opened up a 39-18 lead at the quarter's halfway point until Brelan Sieveking's trey and assist to Emma Lallement sliced the difference to 41-23.

Union's Ariel McCarter answered with a trey on the other end, but Sieveking fired back with two triples, trimming the margin to 44-29. Union closed the third quarter on top 46-29 following a putback and a steal on the defensive end.

Two buckets by Lara Turner kept Union ahead 50-33 in the fourth, but the Lady



The Lady Indians will host Union County on Friday, Dec. 8 in a rematch of last Tuesday's contest in Blairsville. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

Indians closed within 12 until the Lady Panthers answered in the paint with 3:56 remaining.

Scotlyn Fain's trey resulted in the second half's narrowest margin at 52-41, but Union County's 7-0 run pushed the margin back to 59-41 with 90 seconds left.

While the team wasn't able to generate enough scores for a win, several key players made some notable plays. For instance, Fain contributed 13 points, seven rebounds, three steals, two assists and two blocks. n Sieveking also led in scoring with 11 points, four steals, three assists and three rebounds. Laura Mauldin

scored seven points, five rebounds and two assists alongside Ansleigh Hardin's six points scored and two steals. Lallement scored five points and 12 rebounds, while Kaleigh Beaver contributed four points and four rebounds.

Following the loss at Union, the Lady Indians made their best effort at the Tallulah Falls game on Thursday, Nov. 30. Subsequently, they left with a 48-45 victory.

Towns County built first-quarter leads of 5-0, 12-5 and 19-10. The Lady Indians led by double digits for much of the second frame before Tallulah made things interesting

after halftime, tying the game at 44-44.

Beaver led the way with 15 points, 17 rebounds and 2 blocks. Fain poured in 13 points and 10 boards; Sieveking added 9 points, 6 rebounds and 2 steals.

Mauldin had 6 points, 9 rebounds, 3 assists and 3 steals. Lallement chipped in 5 points and 13 boards.

The Lady Indians played Monday, Dec. 4 vs. Summit Charter. Towns County is back on their home court Friday, Dec. 8 when they host Union County.

Todd Forrest contributed to this article.



Kaleigh Beaver swats away a Union County shot attempt during the first half of Tuesday's meeting in Blairsville. On Thursday, the junior logged a 15-point, 17-rebound double-double in Towns County's victory at Tallulah Falls. Photo/Todd Forrest