

CROCKETT HOOPERS SPLIT TWIN BILL WITH HUMBOLDT; LADY CAVS NOW 6-0



Above: Crockett Cav point guard Zay Jones (25) tries to weave his way among the Humboldt trees in the lane during Saturday's duel with the Vikings, in which Jones scored 12 points.



Above: Lady Cav coach Kayla Irvin stresses the importance of staying in front of your girl defensively during a second-half timeout in Saturday's victory over Humboldt.

By Ron Barry

There was more pushing and shoving than at a Black Friday sale. There was more hacking than at a Dark Web convention. There were more whistles blown than a squad of Times Square traffic cops could have managed.

No, it wasn't a riot or a demonstration gone amuck. It was the Saturday night high school basketball doubleheader between Crockett County and Humboldt.

The trio of game officials - who are probably receiving oxygen assistance today - whistled a total of 93 fouls during the twin bill. A staggering 113 free throws were shot. Many fans were wondering if they would make it home in time to get to church Sunday morning.

But here's the worst part: The games weren't poorly officiated. All of the pushing, shoving, and hacking mentioned previously was actually going on. It's rumored the official scorers went through an entire pack of pencils.

And when all the pencil dust had settled, Crockett's girls captured a 54-39 victory while the boys - despite a spirited second-half effort - dropped a 70-59 decision.

Coach Kayla Irvin's Lady Cavs once again got in early foul trouble and had to piece-meal lineups just to make it to halftime - which they did, but only with a 23-21 lead. They wouldn't have had that edge if not for the gritty play of reserve Gabby Burse, who managed to drive into the lane several times and draw shooting fouls, scoring eight first-half points on a layup and six free throws.

Crockett came out for the third quarter more determined to force the athletic Lady Vikings to more off-hand directions, which increased their dribbling errors and made the Lady Cav press much more effective. The result was an 18-5 run during the period, with Karlee Castellaw netting five of the points to pace a balanced attack.

Entering the final stanza now leading 41-26, Crockett was able to keep the margin in double digits despite the large amount of fouls being assessed. Humboldt shot 30 free throws in the contest, but only made 17, which aided the Lady Cav cause. Crockett shot 29 charity tosses and made 21, with Hannah Johnson and Burse combining to make 16 of 18.

"It sure wasn't pretty," Irvin admitted after the game, "but it's good for us to play against teams that are this athletic and push the pace, because we have to learn how to better defend it. We have a lot of young players who don't have that much game experience yet, so it's a learning process. We have to learn how to stay in front of athletic girls rather than be running beside them and getting called for fouls. But the effort is there, and we'll keep getting better."

Despite the youthful inexperience, Irvin's club is now 6-0 and continues to get significant contributions from a variety of players. Johnson was the game's leading scorer with 19, while Sarah Cherry - who did most of the heavy lifting in the ballhandling department - added 10 points and had the game's lone three-pointer. Burse finished with nine points and Castellaw eight for the winners, who also received solid rebounding contributions from Jayden Maddox and Amaria Walker.

Crockett held Humboldt standout Tamyra Patterson to just four points in the contest. Only one Lady Viking - Kenlah McLemore - managed to reach double figures, using nine free throws and a basket to get to 11 points.

Coach Rick Rudesill's boys - also largely a young team with little varsity game experience - looked like it might be in for a lopsided mismatch early on as Humboldt raced to a 15-8 first-period edge and stretched the margin to 31-21 at the intermission.

But the scrappy Cavaliers - despite yielding a massive size advantage to their hosts - played the Vikings to a virtual standstill over the final two quarters, pulling to within seven points (40-33) with 1:28 left in the third after a Zay Jones free throw. Humboldt managed a spurt to get back to 48-37 lead entering the fourth stanza, in which both teams scored 22 points and the Cavs did a much better job competing.

Pacing Crockett's offense was Rhett Butler with a 17-point effort that including three treys. Antuan Hobson and point guard Zay Jones added 12 apiece, while Dre Walker and Lane Simmons had nine each. Viking big man Steven Shivers topped all scorers with 18, while talented forward Fred Moore contributed 15. The Cavs fell to 1-5 on the season, while Humboldt improved to 3-3.

Both Crockett teams have games at Trenton Peabody Tuesday and at Haywood Saturday.

Saturday, Dec. 2 at Humboldt

CC Girls (54): Karlee Castellaw 3 2-4 8, Sarah Cherry 3 3-4 10, Gabby Bursley 1 7-8 9, Charity Greenhill 1 0-0 2, Jordyn Maddox 0 0-0 0, Hannah Johnson 5 9-10 19, Halle Holyfield 1 0-3 2, Jayden Maddox 0 0-0 0, Alice Luten 0 0-0 0, Amaria Walker 2 0-0 4, Ellie Henderson 0 0-0 0, **Team 16 21-29 54. 3-Ptrs:** Cherry 1. **Record: 6-0.**

Humboldt (39): Kenlah McLemore 1 9-11 11, Tamyra Patterson 2 0-0 4, Sabryna Day 3 4-10 10, Jailyn Dotson 2 1-5 5, Cynthnia Wedley 0 0-0 0, Kaniya Davis 3 3-4 9, Kelijah Brown 0 0-0 0, Tyleiagh Jestice 0 0-0 0, A'Liyah Price 0 0-0 0, **Team 11 17-30 39. 3-Ptrs:** None. **Record: 3-1.**

CC Boys (59): Grayson Lambert 0 0-0 0, Antuan Hobson 2 8-8 12, Rhett Butler 6 2-2 17, Lane Simmons 4 0-0 9, Amarion Hobson 0 0-0 0, Davian Green 0 0-0 0, Dre Walker 4 1-2 9, Kevin Pledge 0 0-0 0, Xavier Jones 2 8-12 12, **Team 18 19-24 59. 3-Ptrs:** Butler 3, Simmons 1. **Record: 1-5.**

Humboldt (76): K. Taylor 6 1-1 15, Eli Willoughby 0 0-0 0, J. Patterson 3 7-8 13, Zolyn Hobson 0 0-0 0, Kavein Taylor 1 1-2 3, K. Wedley 2 1-2 6, C. Allen 0 0-0 0, Fred Moore 7 1-2 15, T. Bell 0 0-2 0, Steve Shivers 9 0-3 18, **Team 28 11-20 70. 3-Ptrs:** K. Taylor 2, Wedley 1. **Record: 3-3.**



Left: Lane Simmons (11) goes high for this shot attempt as teammates Rhett Butler (3) and Grayson Lambert (far right) try to move in for rebounding assistance if needed.

Below: Rhett Butler lets fly one of his successful three-pointers on his way to a team-high 17-point performance against the Vikings.



Above: Senior Antuan Hobson, in front of the Cavalier bench on a fourth-quarter play, looks for an open teammate in Saturday's game at Humboldt.



Above: Jayden Maddox (22), here battling Humboldt's Kaniya Davis for rebounding position, has been a key contributor on the boards for the Lady Cavs thus far this season.



Above: Top Crockett scorer Hannah Johnson (14) goes up for two of her 19 points as teammates Amaria Walker (25) and Ellie Henderson (30) move into rebounding position



Above: Sarah Cherry did the majority of the point guard work Saturday night, but still scored 10 points and had the game's lone three-pointer.

Below: The game was extremely rough, shown here as Lady Cav guard Karlee Castellaw is about to be raked across the face on her way in for a layup.



Above: Senior guard Charity Greenhill looks like she's striking a football Heisman pose as she maneuvers around the Humboldt defense.



Left: Gabby Bursley may have had a size mismatch, but on this play the Humboldt defender actually slid backward into her while she was attempting a layup. Bursley hit 7-of-8 free throws and scored nine points off the bench.

