

CHESTER'S WILLIAMSON SPARKLES AS LADY CAVS FALL; EAGLE BOYS TRIUMPH TOO



Above: How physical was this game? Crockett trainer Carah-Beth Beck had to devise an above-the-eye bandage for post player Jayden Maddox early in the first half.

By Ron Barry

The first time the Crockett County and Chester County girls met this season, it was a one-possession game at the end and the Lady Cavaliers eked out a 48-46 win in Alamo.

The second time they met – last night – it was a one-possession game at the end and the Eaglettes escaped with a 60-57 victory in Henderson.

The difference the second time was that Crockett had no answer for Chester's energetic point guard Jariyah Williamson, a perpetual motion machine who spent the entire game running past whoever was attempting to guard her on the way to racking up 31 points, 11 of them from the foul line.

Still, the Lady Cavs had a last-second chance to send the contest into overtime, but Sarah Cherry's three-point attempt from the top of the key had to get over the long reach of Eaglette center Brooke Ketchum, whom Chester coach Lee Pipkin had smartly instructed to stay in that vicinity. Crockett only had 2.7 seconds to try to get a decent shot in order, but the hosts defended the play well and the necessary height of the launch caused the ball to miss its mark.

Until then, the game was a back-and-forth battle full of figurative punches and counter-punches. The hosts got off to a quick 7-1 lead and held a 17-12 edge at the end of the first quarter despite seven points by Crockett's Karlee Castellaw.

But the second period was Crockett 21, Williamson 10. The Eaglette guard netted all of her squad's points, but the Lady Cavs held everybody else scoreless while Amaria Walker was contributing eight of her team-leading 17 points to the Crockett offense. A Castellaw three-pointer – her third of the opening half – pushed the visitors ahead 19-17 with 6:27 to go, and a Hannah Johnson trey two minutes later moved the margin to five. By the intermission, Crockett was on top 33-27.

Williamson couldn't be stopped in the third stanza, however, blitzing the Lady Cavs for 12 more points and leading an 18-10 charge that put the Eaglettes back in front despite five third-quarter points from Crockett's Jordyn Maddox.

The Lady Cavs pulled even twice early in the final quarter, but back-to-back three-pointers by Daisy McManus and Jena Melton – combined with a slew of free throws by Williamson and Ally Campbell – gave Chester a six-point advantage.

Crockett didn't quit fighting. Castellaw drove in from the left wing and muscled a layup through two defenders and was fouled on the play. Her successful free throw, completing the three-point play the old-fashioned way, brought the Lady Cavs within three again at 58-55 with 2:33 remaining.

Two Williamson free throws and a basket by Crockett's Walker offset each other going into the final minute, when Williamson managed to dribble out much of the remaining time until she unintentionally stepped out of bounds with 16 seconds left.

Some controversy ensued when Crockett inbounded the ball and was quickly coming upcourt. One of the officials blew an inadvertent whistle. For some reason, they then made the Lady Cavs go back to the end line to put the ball back in play, but refused to add any time back on the clock, forcing Crockett to rush its next attempt. Johnson missed a long three-point attempt, but the Lady Cavs fouled Ketchum and she missed both free throws, keeping the score at 60-57.

Another missed three-pointer prompted a scramble for the ball, and the Lady Cavs got it out of bounds again with 2.7 seconds left. The last-ditch effort – again, defended well by the Eaglettes – sailed off the mark.

Chester County improve to 10-2 with the triumph, while Crockett fell to 8-3. Castellaw backed Walker's 17-point performance with 16 of her own, with Maddox adding 11 off the bench. Outside of those three, however, there wasn't much offense to be found in this one.

In the boys game that capped the evening, Chester County had trouble putting the feisty Cavaliers away until early in the fourth quarter, finally gaining a 20-point margin. But a furious Crockett rally, with Antuan Hobson scoring all 14 of his points down the stretch, made the Eagles nervous before they left with a 66-56 win, their tenth in 11 starts.

Chester rode the hot shooting of Aidan Welch, who drained 17 of his game-high 25 points in the opening half. Big man Chad Barham took over in the second, netting 11 of his 17 for the game.

Crockett received 11 points from new starting point guard Demo Pickens as Coach Rick Rudesill continued to juggle his lineup a bit for the third straight game. Jayden Frye added eight points – all in the second quarter – and Grayson Lambert contributed seven.

Both Crockett teams jump right back into the fray this afternoon in Somerville, playing a 2:00 twin bill with Fayette-Ware. After that, they'll be off until the first round of the Hub City Classic at Jackson's Oman Arena, which begins on December 28.

Thursday, Dec. 21 at Henderson

CC Girls (57): Karlee Castellaw 5 3-4 16, Sarah Cherry 1 2-2 4, Charity Greenhill 0 0-0 0, Jordyn Maddox 4 0-0 11, Hannah Johnson 3 2-2 9, Jayden Maddox 0 0-0 0, Amaria Walker 8 1-2 17, **Team 21 8-10 57. 3-Ptrs:** Castellaw 3, Jo. Maddox 3, Johnson 1. **Record: 8-3.**

Chester County (60): Jariyah Williamson 9 11-13 31, Brooke Ketchum 2 2-4 6, Jena Melton 2 0-0 6, Daisy McManus 1 0-0 3, JuJu Prather 2 0-0 4, Ally Campbell 2 5-6 10, **Team 18 18-23 60. 3-Ptrs:** Williamson 2, Melton 2, McManus 1, Campbell 1. **Record: 10-2.**

CC Boys (56): Grayson Lambert 2 2-6 7, Antuan Hobson 5 1-1 14, Jayden Frye 3 0-0 8, Preston Lambert 0 0-0 0, Lane Simmons 2 0-0 4, Amarion Hobson 1 3-4 5, Davian Green 1 0-0 2, Dre Walker 1 1-2 3, Zay Jones 1 0-0 2, Demo Pickens 4 3-4 11, **Team 20 10-17 56. 3-Ptrs:** An. Hobson 3, Frye 2, G. Lambert 1. **Record: 2-9.**

Chester County (66): Andre Joy 3 0-0 6, Aidan Welch 10 5-7 25, Jayden Williams 0 0-0 0, Payton Barham 1 0-0 2, Chance Thompson 1 0-0 2, Hunt Pipkin 2 0-0 4, Hunter McLemore 4 1-2 10, Armaria Massengill 0 0-0 0, Chad Barham 6 4-4 17, **Team 27 10-13 66. 3-Ptrs:** Barham 1, McLemore 1. **Record: 10-1.**



Above: There wasn't much open space allowed for Crockett's Amaria Walker (25), triple-teamed after this pass inside...



Right: ... but she still managed to notch a team-high 17 points, including this slick move with 1:28 left to get the Lady Cavs back within three points.



Below: It all came down to this last-second launch by Sarah Cherry, but Chester County's Brooke Ketchum got her long arm up and forced a higher arc, causing it to miss the target.



Above: Karlee Castellaw was hot early from long range, drilling a trio of three-pointers in the first half, including this one over the Eaglettes' Ally Campbell (45).

Right: In the fourth quarter, Castellaw drove into the lane for an "and-one" three-point play, here finishing it off with the free throw that kept Crockett within one possession of a tie. She scored 16 points in the game.



Above: Then it was time for reserve Jordyn Maddox, who added three more, one coming after her sister Jayden (22) set this pick to block out two defenders.





Above: Antuan Hobson went on a furious fourth-quarter spurt in the boys game, scoring all 14 of his points in a rally that at least made Chester County nervous. The Eagles held on for a 66-56 win.



Above: Davian Green lets a three-pointer fly from the corner as several Christmassy Chester County cheerleaders look on.



Above: Grayson Lambert gets this shot up for a basket in the opening half

Right: Jayden Frye (2) and Zay Jones (25) try to block out Eagle big man Chad Barham (23) from getting a rebound.



Above: Crockett cheerleader Sarah Breland tries to keep the fourth-period rally going for the Cavaliers.

Left: Demo Pickens got the start at the point guard position and scored 11 points for the Cavaliers.

Below: Preston Lambert dove on the floor to rescue this ball and fire it over toward his brother Grayson (out of the frame), but it was kicked by Chester's Chance Thompson for a violation.



Above: Jayden Frye (2) and Zay Jones (25) try to block out Eagle big man Chad Barham (23) from getting a rebound.