

CAVS NOTCH WIN OVER MILAN; GIRLS CRUISE AFTER SLOW START



Above: Once the Lady Cavs got things cranking in the third quarter, Sarah Cherry found this snowbird opportunity for Hannah Johnson with a court-length pass for an easy bucket.

By Ron Barry

In basketball, they don't necessarily give you points for "pretty."

Fortunately, you can occasionally escape with a win despite plenty of "ugly."

Both Crockett County teams stand on that truth today after producing a sweep over host Milan Saturday with two game performances that likely won't be included in many highlight reels.

The Cavalier boys finally broke through with their third victory of the season, against 21 defeats, by hanging on narrowly to claim a 43-40 triumph over the Bulldogs in a contest that came down to the last possession.

The Lady Cavaliers – extremely heavy favorites going in – found themselves trailing after the opening quarter before regaining their footing and eventually closing out a 56-32 win, improving their season record to 17-7 in the process.

To say neither game was pretty would be an understatement. The boys claimed their victory despite missing seven free throws in the fourth quarter alone – but only because Milan missed five, as well as a last-second three-pointer that could have sent the duel into overtime.

As for the girls – playing after the boys for the first time during the regular season schedule – they needed all of the first 14 minutes to shake off the cobwebs after witnessing the boys contest played in one of the most lifeless settings in recent memory. Even most of the baskets made – which were few and far between – were greeted with something similar to a golf clap.

Coach Rick Rudesill's Cavaliers got five points from Antuan Hobson in taking a 10-6 first-quarter advantage, and widened the gap to 20-11 by the halftime break. You may have noticed that while a nine-point lead at the intermission is a pleasant thing to have, there weren't many points being scored in this encounter. It could only take one guy getting hot to turn the tide either way.

As it happens, it turned out that "guy" would be Milan's Carmelo Jones, who sank 13 of his 15 points in the second half and nearly rallied the Bulldogs to victory. The hosts actually pulled within a basket (32-30) with 5:36 left to play, but free throws from Hobson and a snowbird layup by Demo Pickens pushed Crockett back up 38-30 at the 3:05 mark.

But after some Cav free throw misses and an "and-one" three-point play by Jones, Milan was within 40-37 with 1:39 remaining. A Dre Walker free throw and a breakaway layup by Jayden Frye pushed Crockett ahead 43-37 with only 33.6 seconds left, but the Cavs allowed a three-point shot by the Bulldogs' Christian Carter 11 seconds later, so it was still anybody's game.

When Crockett missed two more free throws at the 11.8-second mark, Milan rebounded and eventually called timeout with 6.5 ticks remaining to set up its final play. The Bulldogs somehow freed guard Gabe Scott in the left corner for an open triple – he'd already made two in the game – but this one missed, and time ran out before Milan could get off another shot on the rebound.

Hobson led the Cav offense with 12 points, with Lane Simmons chipping in with nine and Walker with six. Crockett received solid play off the bench from Jayden Frye and Demo Pickens, who combined for seven points and dished out some much-needed assists in crunch time.

For the girls, it was once again the offense generated by senior Hannah Johnson that overcame another embarrassingly slow start by the team. Milan, which now has a record of 5-17, actually led 11-9 after the opening period and didn't surrender the edge until Johnson completed a three-point play at the 2:08 mark of the second quarter for an 18-16 Crockett advantage.

Johnson, who tallied 12 of her team-high 16 points in the second stanza, then hit two free throws before some inspired play off the bench from center Alice Luten spurred the Lady Cavs to a 29-19 lead at the break.

Amaria Walker rattled off three buckets early in the third quarter as Coach Kayla Irvin's squad went on a 19-7 run that essentially put the game away and allowed Irvin to substitute liberally the rest of the way.

Backing Johnson's 16 and Walker's 10 points for the contest were Luten, Karlee Castellaw, and Sarah Cherry with six apiece and Jayden Maddox and Gabby Bursey with four each.

Both Crockett teams return home Monday night for a doubleheader district rematch with Obion County, whom they just played Friday night. The girls game went to overtime, and the boys contest was much more competitive than the Rebels expected. The first game tips at 6:00. A Lady Cavalier win would put them in good position to move into second place in the district standings if they could also repeat it Friday night against Dyer County.

Saturday, Feb. 3 at Milan

CC Girls (56): Chloe Adkisson 0 0-0 0, Karlee Castellaw 2 2-7 6, Sarah Cherry 2 2-2 6, Gabby Bursey 1 2-3 4, Lanyah Cathey 0 0-0 0, Audrey Whitby 0 0-0 0, Charity Greenhill 0 0-0 0, Jordyn Maddox 0 0-0 0, Hannah Johnson 6 4-5 16, Keeton Holyfield 1 0-0 2, Halle Holyfield 0 0-0 0, Deonna Cole 0 2-2 2, Jayden Maddox 1 2-2 4, Alice Luten 2 2-5 6, Torey Savage 0 0-0 0, Amaria Walker 5 0-0 10, Ellie Henderson 0 0-2 0, **Team 20 16-28 56. 3-Ptrs: None. Record: 17-7 (3-3 district).**

Milan (32): Ashley Williamson 0 7-10 7, Reese Redmond 0 0-0 0, Kenadi Adkisson 0 1-4 1, Allie Grant 1 0-0 2, Shylah Phinnessee 0 0-2 0, Ava Reed 5 0-2 13, Tienna Adkisson 0 0-0 0, Grace Webb 0 0-0 0, Raela Curry 1 2-4 4, Tara Neely 0 0-0 0, Jaliyah Hale 0 2-2 2, CoCo Thomas 1 1-2 3, Mia McAdams 0 0-0 0, **Team 8 13-26 32. 3-Ptrs: Reed 3. Record: 5-17.**

CC Boys (43): Antuan Hobson 3 6-7 12, Jayden Frye 1 1-2 3, Rhett Butler 1 1-2 3, Lane Simmons 4 1-2 9, Amarion Hobson 1 1-1 3, Dre Walker 1 3-6 6, Kevin Pledge 0 1-2 1, Zay Jones 0 2-4 2, Demo Pickens 2 0-0 4, Team 13 16-26 43. 3-Ptrs: Walker 1. **Record: 3-21 (0-6 district).**

Milan (40): Carmelo Jones 5 4-6 15, Adrian Spain 0 0-0 0, Gabe Scott 2 2-2 8, Devan Sherwood 1 0-0 2, Kaleb Moore 0 0-0 0, Jayden Williams 0 0-0 0, Christian Carter 2 0-1 5, Jayden Brown 2 2-4 6, J'Vione Johnson 2 0-4 4, **Team 14 8-17 40. 3-Ptrs: Scott 2, Jones 1, Carter 1. Record: 9-13.**



Left: Alice Luten gave Crockett a big lift at the end of the second period when the Lady Cavs finally began to put some distance between themselves and the Lady Dawgs.

Below: Crockett senior Jayden Maddox pronounces a blessing over this Milan driver before then blocking her shot as she tried to complete the play.

Below: Gabby Bursey contributed some solid minutes and four points as the Lady Cavs moved to 17-7 for the season.



Above: ... and Chloe Adkisson (1) and Torey Savage (far right)...

Left: ... and Ellie Henderson (30)

Right: ... and Lanyah Cathey (5) ...

Below: ... and Audrey Whitby...

Above: Crockett's second-half lead gave Coach Kayla Irvin to get some game experience in for several reserves, such as Keeton Holyfield (15)...

Right: ... and Deonna Cole (21), who scored her first varsity points in the contest.





Above: Crockett's Dre Walker goes high to block this shot attempt by Milan's Jayden Brown (25) in the first half of the Cavaliers' 43-40 win Saturday.



Left: Rhett Butler's hustle is always a given. Here he disrupts a play by the Bulldogs' Jayden Williams, diving to knock the ball loose...

Below: ... although it unfortunately rolled out of bounds after Butler came crashing chest-first on the floor.



Above: Antuan Hobson, Crockett's leading scorer in the game with 12 points, looks for an opening to drive past Milan's Carmelo Jones.

Below: Crockett's Kevin Pledge (24) and Dre Walker (right) have Milan's Jayden Brown (25) cornered near the baseline.



Left: Cav senior Lane Simmons pulls in a rebound in first-half action Saturday. Simmons scored nine points for the victorious Crockett club.

Right: Jayden Frye puts on the stops before trying to split the Milan defense in Saturday's Crockett victory.

