

AVERY THORNTON GOAL IGNITES SECOND-HALF RALLY AS LADY CAVS DOWN DYER COUNTY 5-2



Above: Nyah Cathey's improvement, with her determination and athleticism, is one of the reasons Crockett coaches are optimistic moving forward. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Dani Rios (15) came in from the corner where she began the play to join the celebration with Nyah Cathey, whose smile grew even wider with Stephanie Joyner and Rebecca Waddey. (Photo by Ron Barry)

By Ron Barry

Today (Tuesday) Avery Thornton will be representing Crockett County in the Huntingdon Invitational cross-country meet at the Huntingdon Soccer Complex.

It's appropriate that she'll be running around a soccer complex, because she also plays soccer for the Lady Cavs. And her biggest moment in that role came Monday evening in Alamo when she fielded a corner kick from teammate Dani Rios and punched it past the Dyer County goalkeeper with 30:25 left to break a 2-2 tie and ignite a rally that brought the Lady Cavaliers a huge 5-2 district win over the Lady Choctaws.

Three of Crockett's five goals came as a result of well-placed corner kicks by Rios as Coach Carli Branson's Lady Cavs played with poise and grit to survive a highly physical contest that nearly got out of hand after Thornton's tally.

For much of the remaining 30 minutes, Dyer County's defense appeared to concentrate on making contact with Crockett's attackers rather than going for the ball, a tactic which eventually backfired on the visitors when the Lady Cavs added two more scores on shots by Nyah Cathey and Stephanie Joyner.

The roughness of play in the final half was evidenced by the fact that the sizeable fan bases of both sides were loudly complaining to the officials, as were Branson and her usually mild-mannered assistant coach Joey Soriano, who was threatened with a red card by one official who kept staring at him long after he had ceased his protestations. While the two mediated their differences amicably after the game, it was evident that Branson was none too pleased with what was being allowed to take place on the field.

"I am extremely proud of our girls for the grit they showed and the class they showed, even when Dyer County was clearly not playing the ball much of the time," she said. "But if we can continue to combine that grit with the passion we played with tonight, we have good things on the horizon for this team. This program has often had to rely on grit; this year, we have the talent to build off it if we'll keep putting in the work."

Hannah Carter - another first-year player from another sport (softball) - put Crockett out front 1-0 barely six minutes into the game by scoring off Rios's first corner kick. Dyer County tied it with 13:40 before halftime when a defensive lapse allowed a middle dribbler too much space in the middle.

But eight minutes later, Kate Davis slipped a perfect pass from the right side to a crashing Rebecca Waddey, who hammered it into the Lady Choctaw net for a 2-1 Crockett edge with five minutes to go before the intermission.

Dyer County managed a breakaway just prior to the end of the half, but first-year goalie Amaria Walker - another player from another sport (basketball) still just learning the game - made an incredible stop of a point-blank shot, aided by a sliding Carter to slightly alter the attempt.

The 2-1 edge lasted barely four minutes into the second half when Dyer County deadlocked it again at 2-2. But at the 30:25 mark, Thornton received Rios's perfectly-placed corner kick and knocked it just past the diving goalkeeper to regain the lead for the hosts.

Walker made several saves over the final minutes to preserve the advantage, aided on another Lady Choctaw breakaway when Claire Nichols slid down to block a straight-on-goal Dyer shot. After that, most of the offense returned to the Crockett attack, which by then was dealing with the increased physicality.

But on another Rios corner kick, Cathey – yet another basketball player in her first season of soccer – headed the ball into the net, igniting one of the more joyous celebrations Cavalier Stadium has seen. Enormously popular with her teammates, Cathey’s smile was lighting up the field as dusk approached, jumping up and down accepting congratulations from the other Lady Cavs.

With just 3:32 to go – following the exchange between the official and Soriano – Joyner knocked in a pass from Cathey to make it 5-2 and put a seal on the district triumph.

Crockett will travel to Jackson Thursday for its next match, facing Madison Academic at 6 p.m.

CCHS GOLF: Crockett’s young golf team continued to impress by placing seventh out of 15 teams at the Hornet Invitational held at the Humboldt Golf & Country Club.

The Cavs of Coach Chris Eubanks posted a four-man score of 337 to edge Lexington by a single shot for a position in the upper half of the field. Jack Shaver, as he has been all season thus far, was low medalist for Crockett with an 18-hole score of 79, good for a tie for twelfth place overall in the 73-man tournament.

Freshmen George Randall and Max Woods recorded rounds of 81 and 83, respectively, and Tyler Rathbun closed the Cav scoring with a 94. Clarksville won the team title with an impressive 301 tally as all four of its scoring squad managed rounds in the 70s.

In the girls side of the tournament, Crockett’s Rachel Crossnoe carded a 96 to place in a tie for ninth overall. Clarksville’s girls also won the team championship with a 148 mark for the two-player score.

Team results:

BOYS: Clarksville 301, South Gibson 309, USJ 326, Dyer County 332, McKenzie 333, Dyersburg 334, Crockett County 337, Lexington 338, Gibson County 345, Jackson South Side 346, TCA 357, Madison Academic 358, JCS 410, Milan 417, Jackson North Side (only 3 players).

GIRLS: Clarksville 148, South Gibson 165, USJ 180, McKenzie 182, Dyer County 194, Madison Academic 207, Lexington 213, Milan 220, Dyersburg 234, Crockett County and Gibson County (only 1 player each).

Crockett’s teams will play again at Humboldt on Thursday against JCS.



Left: Crockett’s Avery Thornton (13) receives a perfect set-up from Dani Rios on a corner kick and prepares to fire it past the Dyer County goalkeeper. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: Avery Thornton wards off the final Lady Choctaw defender to line up her shot ... (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: ... and smacks it past the goal line to break a 2-2 tie and put the Lady Cavs ahead for good in their 5-2 win over Dyer County Monday evening. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Right: Avery Thornton displays her pleasure at putting Crockett ahead of its district rival 3-2 early in the second half Monday evening. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: Hannah Carter (6) scored Crockett’s first goal of the night and heads back to midfield with teammates Stephanie Joyner (left) and sisters Lydia and Rebecca Waddey. (Photo by Ron Barry)





Above: Rebecca Waddey (7) put the Lady Cavs back on top 2-1 by steering this shot past the Lady Choctaw defense ... (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: Crockett goaltender Amaria Walker -- who had 10 saves in the game -- preserved the 2-1 lead by stopping this point-blank Dyer County shot, aided by sliding defender Hannah Carter, who altered the attempt just enough to help out ... (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Chayse Lewis contributed solid defensive play for the Lady Cavs throughout the physical battle with Dyer County ... (Photo by Ron Barry)



Right: Avery Thornton displays her pleasure at putting Crockett ahead of its district rival 3-2 early in the second half Monday evening. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Above: Chayse Lewis contributed solid defensive play for the Lady Cavs throughout the physical battle with Dyer County ... (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: Hannah Carter (6) scored Crockett's first goal of the night and heads back to midfield with teammates Stephanie Joyner (left) and sisters Lydia and Rebecca Waddey. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: ... after taking a well-placed pass from Kate Davis (19) for the assist. Lydia Waddey (12) is there again to support her younger sister. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: ... and both Carter and the shooter catch their breath as Walker gets ready to punt the ball back upfield. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Left: ... and Claire Nichols made a tremendous sliding block of a Dyer County breakaway, sacrificing her body to thwart the attack. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: Avery Thornton wards off the final Lady Choctaw defender to line up her shot ... (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: And when Nyah Cathey (4) headed in a corner kick from Dani Rios, earning hugs from Stephanie Joyner and Rebecca Waddey, Cathey almost leaped out of the stadium with joy. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below:... as illustrated on this play as Lydia Waddey (12) bounces off a collision with a Dyer County defender to continue an attack with teammate Avery Thornton. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Below: While smiling here (along with Carley Lampley in the background), Crockett coaches Carli Branson and Joey Soriano became very concerned about the physical nature of the Lady Choctaws' play, ... (Photo by Ron Barry)



Below: Dani Rios assisted on three of the five Crockett goals with expertly-placed corner kicks. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Below: Cav sophomore Jack Shaver was again the golf team's low medalist Monday in the 15-team tournament at Humboldt Golf & Country Club, shooting an 18-hole score of 79 as Crockett placed seventh. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Stephanie Joyner was excited when she netted Crockett's final goal of the evening, sealing the district win for the Lady Cavs. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Right: Rachel Crossnoe, Crockett's lone female competitor Monday, finished in a tie for ninth in the 32-girl field in the Hornet Invitational. (Photo by Ron Barry)

