LADY CAV VOLLEYBALLERS WIN 5-SET THRILLER; SOCCER TEAM ROLLS PAST HAYWOOD

By Ron Barry

A five-set volleyball thriller inside the gymnasium and a lopsided rout out on the soccer pitch kept the attention of Crockett County sports fans Thursday evening.

VOLLEYBALL: "I have to admit," Coach Andrew Laman said, "Milan surprised me a bit. They have played some tight matches against teams that we have smoked. But everybody seems to play their best when they face us."

Buoyed by the play of seniors Lilly Autry and Mia Pearson, the visiting Lady Bulldogs gave Crockett all it could handle throughout the exciting match, taking the opening set 25-19 before the Lady Cavs rallied to win the next two, 25-16 and 26-14. But Milan clawed back from looking like it was over by edging the hosts 26-24 in Set #4, getting a huge break on a Crockett serve when the score was 24-all.

The serve hit the top of the tape across the net, rolled sideways a few inches, and then fell back onto the Lady Cav side to push Milan ahead by one, and the Lady Bulldogs won their serve on the next point to send the battle into Set #5.

Laman's club unleashed its athleticism in the final set, getting some thunderous kills from sophomore Wesley Thornton and senior Deonna Cole, along with hustling back line saves by Addie Davidson, Audrey Whitby, Darcy Puffer, and Lakyn Forsythe. Forsythe served out the final few points of the match to help Crockett improve its season record to 9-2.

Many of the points won in Set #2 and Set #3 – which righted the ship somewhat for the hosts – were provided by Keeton Holyfield, Madi Collins, and Katherine West. Whitby and Davidson were particularly effective returning Milan serves. But in Set #4, Lady Bulldogs Autry and Pearson delivered some devastating kills that kept their team in the match.



Left: Huge fifth-set kills were recorded for Crockett, first by Deonna Cole (15) from the left side of the court ... (Photo by Ron Barry)

Crockett returns to action Tuesday at Trinity Christian Academy.

SOCCER: Freshmen Caroline Scruggs and Ruth Gourley scored their first varsity goals, Rebecca Waddey netted her second consecutive hat trick, cross-country star Alivia Hale tallied twice, and another goal came off a Haywood defender's body on a deflection as Crockett rolled over the Lady Tomcats 8-0.

Scruggs got the party started early for the hosts when she took a long pass from Gourley, outran her defender, and poked it past the sliding goalkeeper for a 1-0 lead. Waddey, who also had three goals against North Side Monday, nailed the next two tallies for the Lady Cavs. The fourth score was an "own goal," which occurs when the defending team accidentally deflects the ball into its own net.

Not content with its 4-0 halftime edge, Coach Carli Branson's crew saw Hale get free for a couple of breakaways, Gourley nail a hard shot through traffic, and Waddey collect her third score to make it an 8-0 final. Hannah Wede made five saves to record the clean sheet, and Crockett's defense made sure she was rarely tested,

Waddey, Gourley, Cristal Martinez, and Braniya Green all had assists in the contest.

The Lady Cavs, now 2-0-1, travel to Westview in Martin next Thursday.

MIDDLE SCHOOL SOFTBALL: After a dramatic two-out double by Addison Ward tied the game in the bottom of the sixth inning 1-1, Huntingdon's Fillies drilled a solo home run in the top of the seventh and then stranded Crockett's tying run at third in the bottom of the extra frame to post a 2-1 victory in a pitchers' duel in Alamo Thursday.

In the bottom of the seventh, Anna McCoy smashed a one-out single, stole second, and took third on a fielder's choice when a third strike was dropped and required a catcher's throw to first for the second out. But Huntingdon induced a game-ending strikeout to claim the win, dropping Crockett's overall record to 6-3.

The loss spoiled an otherwise excellent pitching outing for Lady Cav Caroline Neal, who went all seven innings, scattering six hits and yielding just one walk and one earned run. Huntingdon was an out away from winning the contest 1-0 in the bottom of the sixth when Ward drove home Kyndall Savage with her double.



Above: ... and then from the middle by Wesley Thornton (20), whose athleticism was evident on this play. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: Addie Davidson -- reviewing a play with Katherine West here -- continues to provide successful outcomes from the libero position for Crockett. (Photo by Ron Barry)





Left: Darcy Puffer puts up a set for the Lady Cavalier front row during Crockett's Set #3 win Thursday. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Right: Keeton Holyfield congratulates Madi Collins on a big putaway in Crockett's comeback victory against the Lady Bulldogs. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Left: Lakyn Forsythe put some extra mustard on the match point serve in the fifth set of the Lady Cavs' volleyball win over upset-minded Milan. (Photo by Ron Barry)

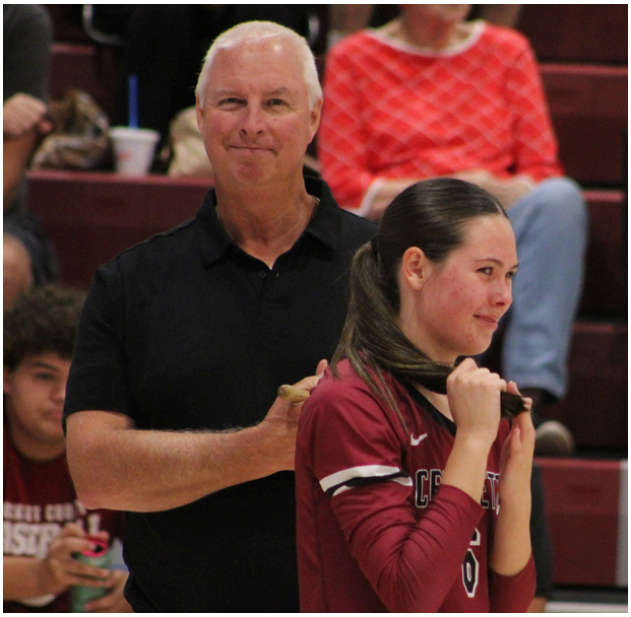


Above: Katherine West leaps high to power a kill in the five-set triumph over Milan Thursday. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Below: Audrey Whitby tries to keep the encouragement going as Crockett prepares to head into the fifth set Thursday against visiting Milan. (Photo by Ron Barry)





Above: During the late stages of a Milan timeout, Lady Cav Madi Collins jokes around with line judge Brad Laman before play resumes. (Photo by Ron Barry)

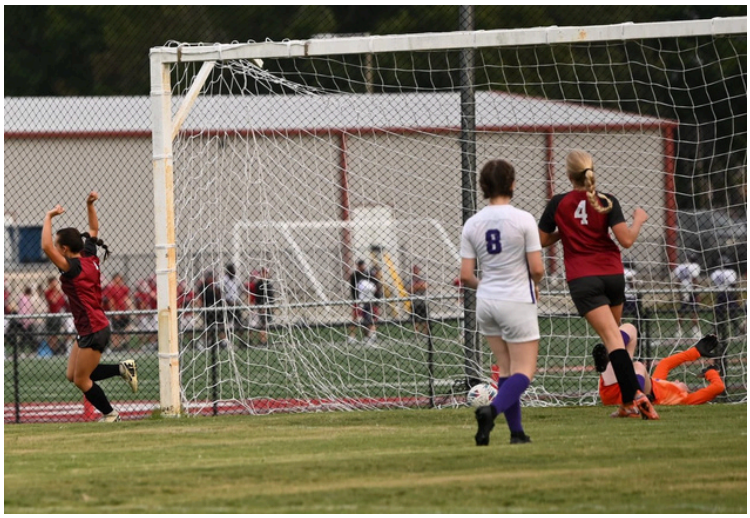


Above: Crockett had trouble overcoming the play of Milan senior Lilly Autry, who was outstanding throughout the match for the visiting Lady Bulldogs. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: The continued improvement of sophomore Wesley Thornton -- and the coaches' wise use of her athleticism -- are big reasons why Crockett is 9-2. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Right: Nobody was happier on the soccer pitch Thursday than Alivia Hale, who scored this goal (and another later) and celebrated accordingly. (Photo by Robin Waddey)



Below: And there is the second one, and Alivia Hale is no less happy as Crockett downed Haywood 8-0. (Photo by Robin Waddey)





Above: Freshman Caroline Scruggs netted her first varsity goal when Ruth Gourley fed her a long pass and she outran her Haywood defender, ... (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: ... then drilling her kick past the sliding Lady Tomcat goalkeeper ... (Photo by Ron Barry)





Above: ... before accepting congratulations from assister Gourley and Braniya Green (14). (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Defensive speedster Chloe Campbell uses her head to turn back a Haywood attack Thursday. (Photo by Robin Waddey)



Left: Coach Carli Branson got to use a lot of her newer players Thursday, such as Aime Aguilar (17). (Photo by Robin Waddey)

Below: And there is the second one, and Alivia Hale is no less happy as Crockett downed Haywood 8-0. (Photo by Robin Waddey)

Below: When Rebecca Waddey gets up a head of steam like this, the opponent is in trouble. And Haywood was -- three times' worth. Waddey now has six goals in her last two matches. (Photo by Ron Barry)





Above: Freshman Ruth Gourley (4) not only assisted on Crockett's first score, but drilled one herself on this missile through a lot of traffic. (Photo by Robin Waddey)

Below: Braniya Green (14) contributed an assist to the lopsided 8-0 victory. (Photo by Ron Barry)





Above: Cesia Sanchez (21) saw considerable action for the Lady Cavaliers, who improved their record to 2-0-1. (Photo by Robin Waddey)



Above: Crockett goalkeeper Hannah Wede wasn't tested often, but still made five saves to post her second clean sheet in three varsity starts. (Photo by Ron Barry)