12/27/25 By Ron Barry

CROCKETT BASKETBALLERS SCORE VICTORIES IN SEPARATE HOLIDAY CLASSICS SATURDAY



Above: Crockett sophomore Wesley Thornton shreds the Liberty Tech defense with this power move to the basket for two of her 15 first-half points Saturday. (Photo by Ron Barry)

So much for needing to shake off their Christmas break "rust." Crockett County's Lady Cavaliers took just one quarter to build a 19-2 lead and Wesley Thornton netted 15 points in the first half as Coach Kayla Irvin's crew dominated their opening-round matchup with Liberty Tech in the HUB City Classic in Jackson Saturday evening, eventually winning 51-24.

Ninety minutes later in Ripley, the Cavalier boys were putting the finishing touches on a 71-57 triumph over Brighton, turning on the jets for a 26-13 blitz in the final period in the Rip-Town Holiday Classic.

The Lady Cavs' event is a tournament format, which sends Crockett into a winners bracket semifinal Monday afternoon against Covington at 4:30 at Liberty Tech. Humboldt and TCA will face each other in Monday's other semifinal.

Crockett's boys are simply playing different opponents for three nights in Ripley. Their final contest will be Monday at 6:00 against Millington.

Thornton and the Lady Cavs exploded right from the opening tip against Liberty Tech, which came into the game with an 8-3 record but was quickly bamboozled by Crockett's press. Not only did Irvin's starters get off to an impressive beginning, but freshman reserve guard Ruth Gourley came in and immediately netted a pair of three-pointers as the Lady Cavs steadily pulled away.

By the time Keeton Holyfield took a no-look pass from Tink Willis and laid it in with nine seconds showing on the clock, Crockett carried a 33-8 margin into the halftime intermission.

Irvin's club did come out completely flat for a third period in which it was outpointed 14-8, but the Lady Cavs righted the ship again in the fourth – even with mostly reserves playing – to improve their season record to 9-4.

All of Thornton's team-leading 15 points came in the first two quarters. Holyfield finished with 10 for the winners, while Gourley added eight, Audrey Whitby seven, and Torey Savage six. Rakeriah Clinton paced the sparse Liberty scoring with 11.

At Ripley Saturday night, Coach Spencer Bursey's Cavs took a 45-44 advantage into the fourth period but then ignited for 26 tallies as Jayden Frye, Andre Garduno, and Carter Wren scored six apiece. Crockett had kept the game close with a different player sparking the offense in each quarter: Max Woods netted 12 in the first; Frye drilled in a trio of three-pointers in the second; and Corey Savage produced nine points in the third.

Frye closed with a team-high 19 as Bursey's crew improved its season mark to 8-6 and bounced back from a horrendous Friday night defeat to East Nashville. Woods finished with 17 and Savage 14 for the Cavs, while Cayden Young topped Brighton (now 1-12) with 21 points.

CCHS Girls GM 13: Dec 27 at Jackson
Crockett 19 14 8 10 - 51
Liberty 2 6 14 2 - 24

Crockett – Wesley Thornton 15, Keeton Holyfield 10, Ruth Gourley 8, Audrey Whitby 7, Torey Savage 6, Tink Willis 2, Kira Bray 2, Halle Holyfield 1, Ellie Henderson 0, Sydney Smith 0, Callie Freeman 0, Alice Luten 0, Baylee Griggs 0. 2-Pt FG: 15. 3-Pt FG: 2 (Gourley 2). FT: 15-20. Record: 9-4.

Liberty – Rakeriah Clinton 11, Mariah Gillispie 7, Jamayla Harris 2, Jakaila Watkins 2, Paija Fizer 2, A'Mya Brooks 0, Mariah Johnson 0, Nyliah Minard 0, Kayden Swaitnick 0, Charliygle Office 0, Janiah Thaxton 0, McKenzie Swaitnick 0, Aubri Kinnie 0. 2-Pt FG: 10. 3-Pt FG: 1 (Clinton). FT: 1-7. Record: 8-4.

CCHS Boys GM 14: Dec 27 at Ripley
Crockett 16 12 17 26 - 71
Brighton 15 13 16 13 - 57

Crockett – Jayden Frye 19, Max Woods 17, Corey Savage 14, Andre Garduno 9, Squirt Pickens 6, Carter Wren 6, DK Woods 0, Ben Burgess 0, Karson Kail 0. 2-Pt FG: 20. 3-Pt FG: 7 (Frye 3, Wren 2, Savage 2). FT: 10-14. Record: 8-6.

Brighton – Cayden Young 21, JJ Link 15, Jonathan Mathews 8, Silas Clark 5, Caynan Taylor 5, Semaj Grey 3. 2-Pt FG: 15. 3-Pt FG: 4 (Link 2, Clark, Taylor). FT: 15-22. Record: 1-12.



Above: Lady Cavalier Coach Kayla Irvin shares a lighter moment with members of her reserves Saturday night as Crockett was in the process of blowing out host Liberty Tech 51-24. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: Keeton Holyfield looks for operating room against Lady Crusader defender Jamayla Harris (23) in Saturday's HUB Classic opener. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Right: Ellie Henderson swats this ball out of the hands of a Liberty player, surprising Crockett teammates Wesley Thornton and Keeton Holyfield, who were coming over to form a trap. (Photo by Ron Barry)





Above: Freshman Ruth Gourley came off the bench, hit two three-pointers, and applied this hawk-like defensive posture against the Liberty Tech backcourt. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: Wesley Thornton gathers the ball for another drive to the hoop as Halle Holyfield (right) seals off the last Liberty defender. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Audrey Whitby aggressively defends Liberty's Mariah Gillispie (10) as the Lady Cavs extend their press to the backcourt. (Photo by Ron Barry)





Above: On Crockett's final offensive possession of the first half, Tink Willis (3) dished this no-look pass to Keeton Holyfield, who laid it in for a 33-8 advantage at the intermission. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: Ruth Gourley -- with ponytail flying -- looks for a Crockett cutter beyond the defense of Liberty's Rakeriah Clinton (1). Gourley produced one of her better outings, netting eight points for the Lady Cavs. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Below: Jayden Frye scored 19 points to spark Crockett's boys to a win over Brighton in the Rip-Town Holiday Classic in Ripley Saturday. (Photo by Ron Barry)





Above: Corey Savage had a big nine-point third quarter and added a key trey in the fourth on his way to 14 points in Crockett's 71-57 conquest of Brighton. (Photo by Ron Barry)