12/15/25 By Ron Barry

PRESSING DEFENSE PRODUCE CROCKETT COUNTY BASKETBALL SWEEP OF CHESTER COUNTY



Right: Crockett's Ben Burgess is congratulated by teammate Jayden Frye after muscling in a basket and getting fouled at the halftime buzzer Monday night in Henderson. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Ben Burgess didn't play a single down of defense for Crockett County's football team this season, appearing only as the Cavaliers' starting quarterback.

But if the effort he showed defensively on the basketball court Monday night in Henderson was any indication of his potential on the other side of the ball, the gridiron coaching staff may want to reconsider.

Crockett played at Chester County, and the starting unit was piddling along late in the opening quarter when Cav coach Spencer Bursey decided to shake things up a bit. He inserted a completely different lineup – Burgess, Carter Wren, Squirt Pickens, Karson Kail, and DK Woods – and turned them loose in a full-court trap press against the Eagles.

Utilizing Pickens' quickness and Wren's length against the Chester guards in the backcourt, with Burgess kind of roaming the middle and playing off his instincts, the Cavaliers outscored the hosts by an astounding 23-2 margin in the second period, with many of the baskets coming off steals by Burgess. That blowout quarter led to a lopsided 67-32 victory for Crockett, boosting its season record to 5-4.

The Cav triumph followed an equally mismatched opening game in which Coach Kayla Irvin's Lady Cavaliers trounced the winless Eaglettes 51-21 as 10 different players scored points, paced by Wesley Thornton's 12. Crockett's girls are now 6-3 on the year as they held Chester County to single digits in all four periods of the contest.

The boys' game was plodding through a lackluster opening quarter – it ended 10-10 – when the insertion of Crockett's second unit completely turned up the juice. Wren was deflecting passes, Pickens was knocking balls loose, and Burgess was logging interceptions like an All-Pro safety as Bursey's crew created sudden chaos. Wren also started drilling threes, opening up the lane for baskets by the others.

From that point on, Bursey was able to mix and match lineups the rest of the way, and the defensive effort was maintained as the Cavs outscored the hosts in the second half 34-20.

Wren led Crockett's scoring with 15, with Burgess chipping in 12 – including a trey of his own – and Jayden Frye adding nine. Pickens and Kevin Pledge had six apiece and Kail and Cortland Reddick netted five each. Jaden Williams led the Eagles with 11.

For Crockett's girls, Keeton Holyfield and Audrey Whitby backed Thornton by scoring eight points apiece. Hall Holyfield added six, Ellie Henderson and Torey Savage four each, and Sydney Smith three.

Both Crockett squads are back in action Tuesday night, hosting Lexington. The girls tip things off at 6 p.m.

CCHS Girls GM 9: Dec 15 at Henderson
Crockett 14 19 10 8 - 51
Chester Co 8 4 5 4 - 21

Crockett – Wesley Thornton 12, Keeton Holyfield 8, Audrey Whitby 8, Halle Holyfield 6, Ellie Henderson 4, Torey Savage 4, Sydney Smith 3, Kira Bray 2, Tink Willis 2, Londyn Bray 2, Ruth Gourley 0, Lola Bailey 0, Braniya Green 0, Callie Freeman 0, Baylee Griggs 0, Addie Hoover 0, Alice Luten 0. 2-Pt FG: 12. 3-Pt FG: 5 (K Holyfield 2, Whitby 2, Smith). FT: 12-18. Record: 6-3.

Chester – Makayla Bridges 7, Alexis Rivers 4, Kloe Taylor 4, Savannah Williams 2, Ester Osburn 2, Kamara Clark 2, Laura Rowsey 0, Izzy Knipper 0, Carley Young 0, Alyssa Jenkins 0, Lyndsey Graves 0. 2-Pt FG: 8. 3-Pt FG: 0. FT: 5-9. Record: 0-9.

CCHS Boys GM 9: Dec 15 at Henderson
Crockett 10 23 17 17 - 67
Chester Co 10 2 8 12 - 32

Crockett – Carter Wren 15, Ben Burgess 12, Jayden Frye 9, Kevin Pledge 6, Squirt Pickens 6, Karson Kail 5, Cortland Reddick 5, Max Woods 4, Brilan Dunigan 2, Jeremiah Young 2, Corey Savage 1, DK Woods 0, Nolen Turner 0. 2-Pt FG: 19. 3-Pt FG: 7 (Wren 3, Burgess, Kail, Frye, Reddick). FT: 8-10. Record: 5-4.

Chester – Jaden Williams 11, Lane Estes 10, Elam Murphy 6, Jaden Weaver 3, Timothy Goodman 1, Jay Brown 1, Jasce Alexander 0, Braylin Robinson 0, Braeden Umstead 0, Landon Langford 0. 2-Pt FG: 5. 3-Pt FG: 5 (Williams 2, Estes 2, Weaver). FT: 7-14. Record: 1-8.

MIDDLE SCHOOL BASKETBALL: Kamden Lewis scored a season-high 16 points to lead Coach Tyler Gadlen's CCMS Cavaliers to a 41-39 victory over host South Gibson Monday night, Crockett's second consecutive upset win in the last five days.

The Cavs built a double-digit halftime lead (22-11) and then fought off a furious Hornet comeback in the final quarter, in which South Gibson netted 16 points. But Crockett's Jaylen Frye scored five of his seven points – including a huge three – to help the visitors escape with the triumph.

South Gibson prevailed in the girls' game 44-28, riding a 17-point performance by Millie Prince. Addie Whitby tallied 10 for the Lady Cavs, who fell to 8-9 on the season. Both Crockett teams play at home Thursday night against Trenton.

South Gibson 44, Crockett Girls 28 (Dec 15)
Crockett – Addie Whitby 10, Khylee Cobb 8, Addison Ward 5, Madison Cathey 2, Bradlee Dodd 2, Till Holyfield 1. 2-Pt FG: 10. 3-Pt FG: 0. FT: 8-12. Record: 8-9.

SG – Millie Prince 17, Keegan Embrey 6, Kate Driggers 6, Dani Grace Daniel 5, SK Morris 4, Atella Sanford 4, Thalia Shivers 2. 2-Pt FG: 10. 3-Pt FG: 3 (Embrey 2, Prince). FT: 15-18.

Crockett Boys 41, South Gibson 39 (Dec 15)
Crockett – Kamden Lewis 16, Messiah McCurry 7, Jaylen Frye 7, Jordan Young 6, Theo Lawrence 2, Jayce Cobb 2, Easten Stephens 1. 2-Pt FG: 12. 3-Pt FG: 5 (Lewis 3, McCurry, Frye). FT: 2-6. Record: 7-10.

SG – Paxson Embrey 18, Tavion Shaw 9, Eli Easton 5, Pyke Davidson 4, Tristen Taylor 3. 2-Pt FG: 13. 3-Pt FG: 2 (Embrey, Taylor). FT: 7-15.



Above: Carter Wren was raining threes against Chester County, as signaled from the bench area by Max Woods and the mystery hand of manager Jack Shaver. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Lady Cav Wesley Thornton goes all out to knock this ball away from Chester County's Alexis Rivers in Monday night's 51-21 Crockett win. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Left: Keeton Holyfield's sharp-shooting from long range helped the Lady Cavs open up a big first-quarter lead that they would not relinquish. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: Squirt Pickens zooms in for a layup after Ben Burgess (33) set a pick on his defender. Crockett's DK Woods (32) works the right side in case Pickens misses -- which he didn't. (Photo by Ron Barry)





Above: Tink Willis lofts a long fast-break pass to teammate Alice Luten as the Lady Cavaliers kept Chester County in pursuit of their racehorses all night long. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: Jayden Frye added nine points to the Cavalier cause and kept the offense running smoothly from his point guard position. (Photo by Ron Barry)





Left: Audrey Whitby drains one of her two first-half three-pointers as Crockett steadily pulls away from the host Eaglettes Monday night. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: Karson Kail was another one of the effective members of the quintet inserted late in the first quarter by Coach Spencer Bursey. (Photo by Ron Barry)





Above: Sydney Smith made her first varsity three-pointer in Crockett's win over Chester County. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Kevin Pledge works his way past an Eagle double-team for this layup in Monday night's rout of Chester County. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: Wesley Thornton prepares to make a move past Eaglette defender Savannah Williams on her way to a team-leading 12 points in Monday's victory. (Photo by Ron Barry)





Left: Carter Wren's wingspan was a key factor in creating havoc against Chester County, as he was positioned to hound the point guards in the backcourt. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: Kira Bray has been providing solid minutes in the post position off the bench for Coach Kayla Irvin. (Photo by Ron Barry)





Right: The inspired defensive play of Ben Burgess was a key cog in Monday night's Crockett win -- and it didn't hurt that he added 12 points to the offense. (Photo by Ron Barry)