02/18/26 By Ron Barry

WHITBY, LADY CAVALIERS GAIN REGIONAL TOURNAMENT BERTH WITH WIN OVER OBION



Above: Audrey Whitby wears the look of a basketball assassin after killing Obion County's chances of advancing in the District 13-AAA Tournament. Whitby netted 19 in Crockett's 53-26 win. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Senior guard Audrey Whitby saved the best for last – except now it's not her last.

Playing in what could have been her final high school basketball game in the quarterfinal round of the District 13-AAA Tournament at Medina – in a win-or-go-home contest with Obion County Central – Whitby hammered home a career-high 19 points to pace Crockett County to a 53-26 pounding of the Lady Rebels.

The victory sends the Lady Cavaliers into the semifinals Friday night against second-seeded Dyersburg, but more importantly, it gained Coach Kayla Irvin's club a berth in next week's Region 7-AAA Tournament. Haywood, which defeated Dyer County 54-46 Wednesday night, will face top-seeded South Gibson in the other district semifinal.

Quarterfinal games in the boys division cranks up tonight (Thursday) in Medina when Crockett takes on Dyer County at 6:00. Obion and Haywood will tangle at 7:30.

The Crockett girls will face Dyersburg Friday night at 7:30 after the Lady Cavs stepped up the defense and held Obion to just seven first-half points Wednesday, running up a 28-7 lead at the intermission and cruising to the finish line from there.

Central to Crockett's success was the offensive aggressiveness of Whitby, who is usually content to launch the occasional three-pointer, but only when she's wide open.

Wednesday night, with point guard Wesley Thornton in early foul trouble, Whitby decided to drive it to the basket every time she saw an opening, a strategy that resulted in 15 free throws – 13 of which she successfully converted.

Whitby topped off Crockett's first-half dominance by getting fouled from the top of the key on a three-point attempt with 0.3 seconds on the clock. She promptly buried all three free throws, and Irvin's squad was never seriously challenged again in the second half.
Ellie Henderson and Whitby hit threes following two power lay-ins by Thornton to get Crockett off to an 11-2 start with 3:01 left in the opening period. A Keeton Holyfield triple pushed that margin to 25-7 with 50 seconds left in the half, and then Whitby was fouled right before the intermission buzzer to get the free throws that made it 28-7.

The senior guard actually made 12 consecutive free throws during the second and third quarters on her way to the 19-point night. Keeton Holyfield backed her up with eight and Thornton, Ruth Gourley, and Kira Bray added six apiece. Gourley, a freshman reserve point guard, knocked down two three-pointers in the contest.

Emeri Lee, playing her final game for Obion, led the Lady Rebels with 11 points. Natalie Daniel had six as Obion closed its season with an 8-19 record, while Crockett improved to 18-10.

Thursday's action switches to the boys matchups. Crockett, coming off an upset of the district's top seed Dyersburg, hopes to gain another shot at the Trojans in the semifinals if they can find a way past Triston Sebourn and the Dyer County Choctaws in the quarterfinals. Dyer County has won the two regular season games between the teams.

CCHS Girls GM 28: Feb 16 at Medina
District 13-AAA Quarterfinals
Obion Co 4 3 12 7 - 26
Crockett 16 12 15 10 - 53

Crockett – Audrey Whitby 19, Keeton Holyfield 8, Wesley Thornton 6, Ruth Gourley 6, Kira Bray 6, Ellie Henderson 5, Alice Luten 2, Halle Holyfield 1, Torey Savage 0, Tink Willis 0, Sydney Smith 0, Baylee Griggs 0, Callie Freeman 0. 2-Pt FG: 7. 3-Pt FG: 7 (K Holyfield 2, Whitby 2, Gourley 2, Henderson). FT: 18-24. Record: 18-10.

Obion Co – Emeri Lee 11, Natalie Daniel 6, HJ Cary 4, LK Johnson 4, Preslee Johnson 1, Harlee Johnson 0, Katy Frazier 0, Klicey Campbell 0, Kendall Clanton 0, Colee Forester 0. 2-Pt FG: 7. 3-Pt FG: 2 (Lee, Cary). FT: 6-10. Record: 8-19.



Above: Wesley Thornton tries to free herself up from Obion's Emeri Lee during Wednesday's District 13-AAA quarterfinal. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: If there's a loose ball on the floor, Halle Holyfield is going to find her way to it. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Right: Crockett's Lady Cav hoopers aren't the only ones with grit at the school. If you zoom out from this cheer team photo from the player introductions -- featuring Makayla Murphy (left) and Gabby Dobbelaire atop Gracie Farmer -- you'll see the definition of dedication ... (Photo by Ron Barry)



Below: Ruth Gourley knocked down a couple of three-pointers in Wednesday's Lady Cav victory. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Below: ... as Makayla Murphy has been in and out of a walking boot since the team's award-winning Orlando nationals performance. Murphy took it off for the halftime show Monday night -- still giving her best effort -- and was back in the boot for the district tournament. (Photo by Ron Barry)





Left: Ellie Henderson won this loose ball wrestling match and handed it off to Halle Holyfield. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Coach Kayla Irvin calmly studies the proceedings on the court. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Left: Crockett had so many fast breaks Wednesday night that even the post players were leading them, with Kira Bray doing the honors here ... (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: ... and Alice Luten heading the charge on this one. (Photo by Ron Barry)





Right: Wesley Thornton got in early foul trouble and sat much of the opening half, but scored Crockett's first two baskets to get the Lady Cavs off to a solid start. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: Crockett's easy victory brought a smile to the face of cheer team member Allyssa Ward. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Right: Ruth Gourley is in a footrace with a couple of Lady Rebels -- and the Crockett freshman usually wins those. (Photo by Ron Barry)







Above: Halle Holyfield tries to cut off this drive by Obion's Emeri Lee, who paced the Lady Rebels with 11 points in her final high school game. (Photo by Ron Barry)





Above: Audrey Whitby slips between Lady Rebel defenders Emeri Lee (2) and Harlee Johnson (3) before drawing a foul. Whitby went to the line 15 times in the contest, hitting 13 of them. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Obion's Klicey Campbell drives into the lane area as teammate Emeri Lee (2) sets a pick on Wesley Thornton. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Left: Baylee Griggs is double-teamed by Obion in the fading minutes and even gets a razzberry from one of the Lady Rebels. (Photo by Ron Barry)