

Different year, same result

WCHS extends winning streak to six, now 14-2

BY JEFFERY SIMMONS
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(McMinnville, Tennessee)

Not even the extreme cold can cool off the Pioneers.

Warren County extended its winning streak to six games Tuesday night, going on the road to down the Coffee County Red Raiders 62-53.

Sophomore Irving Espinoza scored 17 points and Chance Hobbs went for 15 as the Pioneers improved to 14-2 this season and started 2018 how they ended 2017.

"It was the first game after Christmas break, so we knew there could be some rust," said coach Chris Sullens. "We dug a double-digit hole, but I'm proud of the way we responded. It's always great to go on the road and get a win."

The victory was quite the reversal from the first time the two teams met at Charlie Dalton Gym in December. In the first meeting, Warren County

ran out to a 20-point lead in the first half, only to cling to a 67-63 victory after squandering the huge advantage.

On Tuesday, it was the Red Raiders and the Roziers who came out of the gate hot.

Darius Rozier, who finished with a game-high 21 points, scored 13 points in the first half. Da'Aaron Rozier was just as effective, piling up all nine of his points before the teams went to the locker room.

Coach Sullens knew his team needed a jumpstart before halftime, especially when the Pioneers fell behind 33-23 with less than two minutes to play in the second quarter. Sullens went to his bench, bringing in sharpshooter Eli Jones and forwards Austin Hodges and Raven Lewandowski in hopes to change the tide.

The moved paid off immediately.

In the only minutes all three would play, the super subs helped guide

the Pioneers on a 9-0 run to finish the half. Jones was able to free himself for a late 3-pointer, then followed with a jump shot that sent the teams to halftime with Coffee County leading 33-32.

Sullens believed getting close before the break did wonders for his team.

"Raven, Eli and Austin helping us on that 9-0 run really helped. We got to the break, caught our breath and made some slight adjustments," said Sullens. "The kids came out and played a great third quarter."

Catching fire from outside didn't hurt the cause.

The Pioneers gained a lead they wouldn't relinquish during a two-minute span where the team hit four 3-pointers. Two came from Tyree Ladet, while Hobbs and Espinoza added one each. By the time the third quarter closed, Warren County had surged ahead 52-41.

Continued on 2B



Jacob Dodd photos

Above, Tyree Ladet skies over Coffee County's Grey Riddle for a rebound. Ladet scored nine in Warren County's 62-53 victory in Manchester.

At left, Sloan Seymour fights for the ball against A.J. Rollman. Seymour and the Pioneers have now won six straight games, their longest winning streak of the season.



Lady Raiders top WCHS

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It's said revenge is a dish best served cold. It only was fitting Tuesday's freezing conditions served as the perfect setting for the Coffee County Lady Raiders to get retribution.

Warren County is the only team which holds a victory over the Lady Raiders this season, but Coffee County made sure it wasn't two wins Tuesday. Behind 13 points from Jenna Garretson, Coffee County topped the Lady Pioneers 49-31 in Manchester.

Warren County, coming off a third-place finish in the Marlin

Classic in Panama City last week, couldn't seem to rekindle the magic that led to a 62-54 victory when the teams met at Charlie Dalton Gym Dec. 5.

"We came out flat and dug ourselves a hole," said WCHS coach Shea Panter. "We played tired and uninspired. We had a good practice Wednesday to hopefully get that out of us as we prep for district play."

Coffee County learned a pivotal lesson from the first encounter - don't let Tyra Wright set up shop in the paint. The Lady Pioneer post, who scored 16 points in the previous meeting, was harrassed on every touch Tuesday.

Continued on 2B



Jacob Dodd photo

Megan Patch tries to get past Ellie Graham for a basket. Patch and the Lady Pioneers were dispatched 49-31 at Coffee County Tuesday.



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