

# Stone cold stunner

BY **JEFFERY SIMMONS**  
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(McMinnville, Tennessee)

If the Pioneers are going to reach their preseason goals, coach Chris Sullens wants to see more grit.

Following a 67-57 loss to Stone Memorial Friday night, Sullens pondered if his approach to this season has left his team vulnerable to tough teams.

"We're a finesse team. By finesse, I mean we rely on our skill and our shooting," said Sullens, who saw his team drop to 17-5 overall and 3-2 in District 6-AAA play. "Stone Memorial won the races to the ball. They searched for contact. They got into us physically."

Two examples of the Panthers exerting their will were the play of post Justin Headrick and all-district guard Brett Newcome. Headrick used his height advantage to dominate the paint, oftentimes scoring over or through multiple Pioneer defenders on his way to a 19-point night. Newcome played bigger than his 5-foot-9 frame in frustrating the Warren County defense. Newcome added 16 points, many

coming at point-blank range after shouldering by defenders.

Newcome took over at the end of the third quarter. The Panther guard buried a 3-pointer from the wing, then muscled into the paint for an and-one layup to push Stone Memorial ahead 52-39.

Warren County had chances to slice into the lead in the fourth quarter, but failed to convert on several open looks. Irving Espinoza missed a break-away layup with 2:31 to play that would've cut the lead to eight. The Pioneers got another point-blank shot moments later, only to see Chance Hobbs come up short. Warren County got the board, but Espinoza saw his wide-open 3-pointer from the wing spin out.

Even with Isaiah Grayson drilling two 3-pointers in the final two minutes, the Pioneers never could threaten.

Grayson was in the middle of the Pioneers taking an early lead Friday. Grayson had two run-out layups and a three-point play during a 17-4 run which pushed Warren County ahead 19-14 after



Jeffery Simmons photo

**The Pioneers did all they could to try to stop Brett Newcome Friday. Isaiah Grayson, left, Chance Hobbs and Tyree Ladet work on a trap against the Panther guard. Newcome still scored 16 points to help Stone Memorial beat Warren County 67-57.**

one quarter. Stone Memorial swung the tide by holding the Pioneers to six points in the second quarter, half coming on a 3-point play by Grayson in the period.

Grayson finished with 26 points just three days after dropping 31 points against White County. In five district games, the senior forward is averaging 19.2 points per game.

Espinoza added 11 points against the Panthers, while Hobbs and Sloan Seymour scored 8. Tyree Ladet and Bunker Brock chipped in 2 points apiece.

Warren County played

Saturday at home against Shelbyville, but the game wasn't completed at press time. The Pioneers are set to visit Moore County Monday. Tip-off is scheduled for 7:30 p.m.

# They've got spirit



Jacob Dodd photo

**Paula's Dance Academy members performed at MTSU Thursday night. Pictured are members Mollie McGinnis, left, and Kataen Shockley.**



Jeffery Simmons photo

**Bri Young scored 11 points in Friday's loss.**

# Down and out

BY **JEFFERY SIMMONS**  
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A valiant effort to knock off one of the top teams in District 6-AAA came up short Friday night.

The Lady Pioneers came close many times in the second half, but never got over the hump in a 76-60 loss to Stone Memorial.

"The girls played hard. They made the right passes offensively and we

switched up things defensively," said coach Shea Panter. "We were right there in the third quarter, but they pulled away."

After trailing at halftime 36-26, Warren County opened the second half with an 8-0 run. By the time Emily Mikkola drilled a 3-pointer from the right wing, Stone Memorial had a fight on its hands.

Continued on **3B**

# Student section needs to be heard

Twice last week, the Pioneers were in district dogfights on their home-court. A shot at hanging a banner in the rafters of Charlie Dalton Gym was in the balance, and both times Warren County needed fourth-quarter boosts.

Perched on the baseline during the pressure-packed moments of both games (the Pioneers came back to defeat White County, but lost to Stone Memorial Friday), I didn't find myself wondering what play coach Chris



SIMMONS SAYS

JEFFERY  
SIMMONS

Sullens would draw up. I wasn't already working up the headline for what hero would possibly emerge.

All I could think was, it's really quiet. Too quiet.

Let me get on my high

horse real quick here. I'm about to tell you about back in my day.

The last time the Pioneers were playing at the pace they are now, and rolling up wins at the rate this bunch is currently, Doug Keil and his suspenders were roaming the sidelines and the "Front Row Bros" were creating one of the best home-court advantages in the Midstate. That run-and-gun team, led by Matt Cotten, Jeff Chisam, Scott Dunham and Randal Harrell, was much like the

one gracing Charlie Dalton Gym right now. And I was in the front row cheering them on.

Those crowds were crazy. They were loud. They were impactful from the time the teams took the court for warm-ups until the final buzzer. When it was time to hit the road, buses would shuttle the Front Row Bros to games to cheer on Warren County.

This current squad deserves that same kind of passionate following, but during two pivotal district

games last week, people could've carried on a conversation across the court.

That kind of silence makes a home team tight. Every missed shot met with silence makes the rim seem smaller. Every time the deficit swells larger, the silence can become suffocating.

Before I become public enemy No. 1 for the Warren County administration, let me make it clear I'm not asking students be profane. They don't even have to yell, "sucks" really loud in pre-

game. Chanting "De-fense" \*clap, clap\*, "Defense" just once would be refreshing. If the students want to get adventurous, there's hundreds of clean, concise and impactful chants that are a Google search away.

I urge our student section to step up to the challenge and make senior night against Cookeville – a game that could impact the winner of the district – deafening. Show up early and make yourself heard.

Just don't yell at me.



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