

UPDATED: Indians Edge WHS In Eight Overtimes

Written by Mike Kelly

Wednesday, 23 January 2013 07:08

It wasn't a state record, but it was certainly entertaining. A fan's delight, and a coach's nightmare might be the best way to describe Tuesday night's Northwestern 3A/4A Conference showdown

between the Watauga High boys basketball team and St. Stephens at Lentz-Eggers Gym. The Indians (13-5 overall; 4-2 NW3A/4A) rallied from a 13-point first half deficit and beat the Pioneers 103-98 in eight overtimes. The contest fell five periods short of tying the state record of 13 overtimes set between Mamers-Boone Trail and Angier in 1964.

"Between this game and last Friday night's sellout against Hickory, I don't know what will come next," said St. Stephens coach and Watauga County native Murphy Post. "It was absolutely bizarre, but it was fun to be a part of it."

The Indians finally pulled it out thanks to some nifty free throw shooting in the final overtime stanza. St. Stephens outscored WHS (8-5; 2-2) 7-2 with five of those points coming at the foul line. A free throw by James McGill with 1:44 left put the Indians on top to stay, 99-98; James Ijames stretched the lead to three points with a pair of free throws with 26 seconds left, and Kerigan Farley finally put the contest out of reach with two free throws with seven seconds remaining.

"We had so many opportunities to seal the deal, and put it away," said WHS coach Rob Sanders. "Every time I looked up at the scoreboard, we were up two points, or four points, and they found a way to tie it up. It was just a great game between two very good teams."

The win moves St. Stephens into sole possession of third place in the NW3A/4A standings, and with Hickory defeating Fred T. Foard 93-90 in overtime Tuesday night, the win leaves the Indians just one game out of first place.

In turn, the loss leaves WHS in fourth place, 2 1/2 games off the pace. The loss also snapped WHS' three-game winning streak, and the Pioneers, who have lost five straight to the Indians, also lost their third overtime game in four tries.

Ben Howser paced WHS with 29 points before he fouled out with 26 seconds left in the final overtime period; Cameron Baker had 26 points, 18 rebounds and six assists. The Pioneers had four players in double figures. They also had four players foul out.

"Coach is always preaching mental toughness in practice," Baker said. "We definitely had to have it tonight playing eight overtimes. It felt like we played three games in two days. It didn't end like we wanted it to, but we have to bounce back tomorrow."

The Pioneers travel to Hibriten to play the Panthers Wednesday night in a make up game that was snowed out last Friday night. The Panthers snapped a three-game slide by knocking off Alexander Central 43-41 in Taylorsville Tuesday night.

"We have to approach every game like its a championship game," Sanders said. "The conference champion could have two or three losses this season. Hickory has a great team, but the league is so balanced this season. So many team just match up so well against each other. We have to do our best to stay at two losses and get through the rest of this unscathed."

Farley, who applied the dagger with seven seconds left, led all scorers with 37 points; Logan Starkey, who had five three pointers, finished with 20 points; Zach Houston had 15. The Indians had five players in double figures.

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The game ended in a 57-57 tie at the end of regulation time. It was 61-all after the first overtime, 67-67 after the second overtime, it was tied at 75 apiece after three overtimes; 81-81 after the fourth overtime, 89-all after the fifth overtime, 94-94 after the sixth OT, and 96-all after the seventh overtime period.

"It was a great game," Sanders said. "It's unfortunate someone had to lose tonight. We had a lot of people step up, and they did a lot of good things tonight. But it's frustrating to play that long and not come away with a victory."

NOTES: Tuesday night's eight overtime game is a school record; the WHS girls played a five overtime affair against Hibriten in the 1998-99 season. Athletics Director Tom Wright was the girls coach at the time; Bobby Jones, who played at WHS and coached the boys team for two years (2002-04) was the coach at Hibriten....The Pioneers gave up 100 points in a game for the first time since the 2005-06 season. A.C. Reynolds broke the century mark against WHS that season at the old Lentz-Eggers Gym.... The state record for Most overtimes: 13, Mamers Boone Trail 56, Angier 54 on February 29, 1964....GBR would like to thank Daniel Clark for that information....St. Stephens defeated WHS in the JV game, 46-45. Dillon Carmichael paced WHS with ten points.

ST. STEPHENS 103, WATAUGA 98 (8 OT)

SCORE BY PERIODS	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	1OT	2OT	3OT	4OT	5OT	6OT	7OT	8OT	TOTAL
ST. STEPHENS	11	15	16	15	4	6	8	6	8	6	2	7	- 103
WATAUGA	18	13	13	13	4	6	8	6	8	6	2	2	- 98

STS: FARLEY 37, HOUSTON 15, MCGILL 7, STARKEY 20, BEASLEY 6, IJAMES 12, CONNER 4, FULTZ 2. FG: 27, 3FG: 9, FT: 24-41.

THREE-POINTERS: STARKEY 5, MCGILL 2, HOUSTON, FARLEY.

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WHS: HARRILL 10, STEURY 4, STURGILL 4, GAILES 3 (4 ASSISTS), MARGOLIS 7 (7 REBOUNDS, 6 ASSISTS), KOPPENHAVER 2, BAKER 22 (18 REBOUNDS, 6 ASSISTS), HOWSER 29 (7 REBOUNDS), MACKEY 11 (10 REBOUNDS, 4 ASSISTS), LAMBERT 4 (3 STEALS). FG: 33, 3FG: 7, FT: 11-18.
THREE-POINTERS: HOWSER 3, MARGOLIS 2, MACKEY, GAILES.

NORTHWESTERN 3A/4A CONFERENCE

TUESDAY'S GAMES

GIRLS:

WATAUGA 66, ST. STEPHENS 37

HICKORY 72, FRED T. FOARD 66

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ALEXANDER CENTRAL 71, HIBRITEN 62

SOUTH CALDWELL - BYE

BOYS:

HIBRITEN 103, WATAUGA 98 (8 OT)

HICKORY 93, FRED T. FOARD 90 (OT)

HIBRITEN 43, ALEXANDER CENTRAL 41

SOUTH CALDWELL - BYE

WEDNESDAY'S GAMES

WATAUGA @ HIBRITEN

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ALEXANDER CENTRAL @ SOUTH CALDWELL