

Pioneers Win Overtime Thriller

Written by Mike Kelly

Wednesday, 23 November 2011 01:51

Watauga High men's basketball coach Rob Sanders picked up his 98th career win Tuesday night, but it sure wasn't easy.

The Pioneers (1-0) staved off a pesky Cloudland team to win 69-66 in overtime in Roan Mountain, TN. Junior Ben Margolis buried a pair of baseline jumpers in the first overtime period

to put the Pioneers on top to stay. Margolis finished with seven points, five in the extra session. And despite some shakey moments at the foul line down the stretch, the Pioneers hung on to get the win.

"Cloudland wasn't going away," said WHS coach Rob Sanders. "They wouldn't back down. They forced us to play their tempo in the first half, but we finally settled down in the second half."

And Matt Proffitt played a huge role in WHS's turnaround in the second half. The senior, who didn't play last season, scored all of his points in the second half. He finished with 11 points and 15 rebounds. He scored nine of his points in the fourth quarter, and he did most of that playing with four fouls.

"Matt is a great athlete," Sander said. "He's very fast getting up the floor. He had some great looks in the first half, but his shots weren't falling. We just told him to keep at it. Things finally turned in his favor in the second half, and it really paid off for us."

The Pioneers had three players in double figures. Jake Pifer led the way with 18 points. He also had seven rebounds, three assists and two steals. Kyle Chambers finished with ten points. Ben Howser had nine points and nine boards.

"Jake got other people involved tonight," Sanders said. "And that's what we want him to do. That's why we dropped the motion offense we ran last year. Everybody on our team stopped playing, and they started watching Jake. Tonight, he did a good job taking his shots when they were there, and spreading things around."

It was a tightly contested game from start to finish. The Pioneers trailed by as many as seven points in the first half, and led by as many as eight points in the second half. The game ended in a 61-61 tie, forcing overtime.

"It was a good test for us to start the season," Sanders said. "We were challenged and our guys responded. Like I said on the pre-game show, we have the parts, now it's just a matter of finding the right chemistry with these guys. And a lot of that depends on our seniors. They've got to lead this group."

"Our goal is to have this team ready by conference time (in mid-December). We want people to say, 'they're not rebuilding, Watauga's reloading.'"

Zac Potter led the Highlanders (0-4) with 20 points; Dylan McClellan, and all-district selection last season, chipped in with 18. The Pioneers travel to Avery, Friday, December 2.

NOTES: The WHS JV boys defeated Cloudland 51-18. Trevor Eggers led the way with 12 points and four assists. Cameron Baker had eight points and six rebounds, Matt Lambert had eight points and four steals, Jake Chasteen had six points and six rebounds.....The WHS JV

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girls lost to Cloudland, 62-27.

WHS 69, CLOUDLAND 66

	1	2	3	4	OT	TOTAL
WATAUGA	13	14	18	15	8	69
CLOUDLAND	17	10	15	19	5	66

WHS: PIFER 18 (7 REBOUNDS, 3 ASSISTS, 2 STEALS), POULOS 2 (5 ASSISTS, 6 REBOUNDS), PROFFITT 11 POINTS (15 REBOUNDS), MARGOLIS 7, HOWSER 9 (9 REBOUNDS), CHASTEEN 4, KOPPENHAVER 4, STURGILL 4.

CLOUDLAND: CARNETT 11, HILL 10, POTTER 20, T. WHITEHEAD 7, McCLELLAN 18.

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Cloudland Dumps WHS, 57-32

The Watauga High women's team lost its season opener Tuesday night in Roan Mountain, TN. The Pioneers (0-1), featuring an entirely new team loaded with young players, dropped a 57-32 decision to Cloudland Tuesday night. The Highlanders (3-0) finally broke the game open with a 14-0 run in the fourth quarter.

Former Pioneer Brooke Rhodes, now playing for Cloudland, finished with nine points and seven rebounds. Courtney Clark led the Highlanders with 17 points, including five trifectas. Hannah Margolis led the Pioneers with 13 points. Savanna Wood had eight points, including two threes.

Cloudland led all the way and built a 14-point lead at 21-7 early in the second quarter. But the Pioneers put together a 9-2 run of their own and trailed by seven points at the intermission. But the Highlanders stepped things up in the third quarter and gradually pulled away.

It was 41-27 after three, and the Highlanders built a commanding 27-point advantage in the fourth quarter. WHS travels to Avery Friday night, December 2. Our coverage of the men's and women's games begins at 6 p.m. on Oldies 100.7 FM.

WHS coach Klay Anderson was not in attendance Tuesday night for personal reasons concerning his family.

CLOUDLAND 57, WHS 32

	1	2	3	4	TOTAL
WATAUGA	7	11	16	5	32
CLOUDLAND	15	10	16	16	57

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WHS: WOOD 8, DUNNIGAN 5, EPPLY 5, MARGOLIS 13.

CLOUDLAND: MILLER 10, RHODES 9 (7 REBOUNDS), CHAMBERS 2, McKINNEY 2, WILSON 9, HUGHES 6, CLARK 17, JOHNSON 2.

TUESDAY'S GAMES

WOMEN:

NEWTON-CONOVER 70, ST. STEPHENS 26

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WEST WILKES 44, HIBRITEN 39

SOUTH CALDWELL 59, WEST CALDWELL 50

ALEXANDER CENTRAL 49, DAVIE COUNTY 41

MEN:

NEWTON-CONOVER 63, ST. STEPHENS 29

HIBRITEN 68, WEST WILKES 26

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SOUTH CALDWELL 56, WEST CALDWELL 49

DAVIE COUNTY 73, ALEXANDER CENTRAL 53

MONDAY'S GAMES

WOMEN: PATTON 37, HIBRITEN 30

MEN: HIBRITEN 79, PATTON 51

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