

## HCHS sweeps Lee, Pineville

By JOHN HENSON

Harlan County Schools

Usually much more specific in his instructions, an exasperated Mike Jones encouraged junior point guard Tyler Brewer to "do something, Tyler" with the Harlan County Black Bears clinging to a five-point lead midway through the third quarter of Thursday's home opener against Pineville.

As if on cue, Brewer stole the ball near midcourt and sailed in for a dunk that seemed to briefly spark the moribund Harlan County offense. Junior guard Alex Sergent followed with back-to-back 3-pointers to put the Bears in control on the way to a 65-54 win.

"Once we got into our offense, Sergent made some shots and we got a little lead," Jones said.

But other than the brief surge in the third quarter, Jones could find little with his team's performance to feel good about.

"We're not a team yet by no stretch of the imagination," Jones said. "We'll get embarrassed Saturday (against Middlesboro) if we come out and play like this. That's not to take anything away from the Pineville. They did what their coach asked them to do. Their kids were disappointed they lost because they knew they played a pretty good game.

"When you can't do the things you've been doing since June, it's a lack of mental concentration. I had to call two timeouts in the first half just to remind them what offense we were in. Until we get to where we decide we're going to play the way we're capable we'll struggle."

Harlan County's trio of junior guards carried the offense as Sergent scored 18, followed by Chad Massingill with 16 and Brewer with 12.

Junior center John Simpson and freshman guard Cody Collett each scored 16 to lead Pineville (2-3).

Pineville made one last run in the fourth quarter, getting as close as five with 2:27 left when Simpson hit two free throws. Simpson scored six straight points following a 3-pointer by teammate Seth Jefferey as the Lions cut a 14-point deficit to 55-50. Jones went to his spread offense at that point and the Bears put the game away at the line as Brewer and Caldwell hit four straight to push the lead back to 10.

Sergent and Massingill hit 3-pointers and Brewer completed a three-point play as Harlan County appeared in control early with a 19-12 advantage after one quarter. But just like in their win over Lee, Va., on Tuesday, the Bears went ice cold in the second quarter, hitting only four of 18 shots as Pineville closed the half with an 8-0 run to cut the Harlan County lead to 31-28. The Bears didn't score over the final 4:23 of the half after two free throws by James Bond and didn't have a field goal over the final six minutes after Aaron Caldwell went coast to coast for a layup that stretched the HCHS lead to 26-15.

Harlan County hit eight of 13 shots in the third quarter, led by a trio of treys from Sergent and three baskets by Massingill.

The Bears cooled off again in the fourth quarter, hitting only three of nine shots.

Pineville may have made it more interesting but also could connect on only three of

nine shots. The Lions made a run at the free throw line as Harlan County had trouble stopping Simpson when he got the ball inside.

Pineville made the game close despite being without junior forward Byron David Asher, who has been unable to play thus far due to a broken hand. Asher, ranked among the region's top 10 players in the preseason, is expected back next week. "Harlan County has a great team, and I thought our kids battled," Pineville coach J.D. Strange said. "I was real proud of my kids tonight. If we can start doing the little things better, we'll keep improving."

Harlan County (2-0) plays host to Middlesboro on Saturday in the district opener for both teams.

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#### PINEVILLE (2-3)

Cody Collett 5-16 1-2 16, Seth Jeffrey 3-10 0-0 9, Jared Philpot 3-4 1-2 7, Jacob Skinner 2-5 2-4 6, John Simpson 3-5 10-16 16, Conner Ford 0-0 0-0 0, Luke Brooks 0-0 0-2 0. Totals: 16-40 14-26 54.

#### HARLAN COUNTY (2-0)

Tyler Brewer 3-9 6-7 12, Alex Sergent 6-12 1-1 18, Chad Massingill 4-8 7-7 16, Aaron Caldwell 3-5 2-7 8, Chase Calton 1-2 0-0 2, James Bond 1-9 2-3 4, Shamil Clark 1-1 0-0 2, Tyler Miller 1-3 1-2 3. Totals: 20-50 19-27 65.

Pineville	12	16	12	14	—	54
Harlan County	19	12	20	14	—	65

3-point goals: Pineville 8-21 (Collett 5-10, Jeffrey 3-9, Philpot 0-1, Skinner 0-1), Harlan County 6-12 (Sergent 5-8, Massingill 1-2, Bond 0-2). Rebounds: Pineville 23 (Simpson 9, Skinner 4, Collett 2, Jeffrey 2, Philpot 2, Ford 2, Brooks 2), Harlan County 32 (Caldwell 8, Miller 8, Massingill 5, Brewer 4, Bond 4, Sergent 2, Calton 1). Turnovers: Pineville 11, Harlan County 7. Fouled out: Pineville (Philpot, Simpson).

By JOHN HENSON

Harlan County Schools

BEN HUR, Va. — Trailing by six at halftime of their season opener Tuesday, the Harlan County Black Bears needed an energy boost. They found it with a 2-2-1 press that turned the momentum and sent the Bears to a 60-46 victory.

"We got to standing and stopped moving because we weren't pressing," Harlan County coach Mike Jones said of the Bears' lack of intensity in the first half. "We ran one part of our offense right the first half, and then we missed a layup."

"We corrected and did some nice things toward the end when we attacked and found some open people and got easy shots. We just have to get better. We have to play better from start to finish. We can defend when we figure out where we're supposed to be. I can't figure out why we can't do that, but we will."

Junior guard Chad Massingill was the only consistent offensive threat throughout the game for the Bears as he finished with 23 points, causing problems for the Lee defense with baseline drives.

"He was the only one the first half attacking the basket. Everybody else just wanted

to stand and shoot," Jones said. "They took a lot of shots they don't normally take." Junior forward Aaron Caldwell added 16 points and junior guard James Bond contributed 10 for the 1-0 Black Bears.

Massingill had three baskets in the first quarter as Harlan County built a 13-8 lead. Lee stayed within striking distance with 3-pointers, one each by Adam Pendleton and Matt Lawson.

Pendleton, a junior forward, led Lee (1-1) with 23 points.

Harlan County's offense went flat in the second quarter and Lee outscored the Bears 18-8, led by 10 points from Pendleton.

Lee's lead grew to seven early in the third quarter before the Bears' press began to turn the momentum. Lee had six turnovers in the period as Harlan County went on an 11-0 run. Massingill had three baskets in the quarter as the Bears built a 40-34 advantage.

Even though he didn't score, junior point guard Tyler Brewer took over the game in the fourth quarter as he carved up the Lee zone with passes to Caldwell and Bond for layups. The junior duo combined to hit nine of 10 shots as Harlan County outscored Lee 20-12 in the final period.

Harlan County, ranked No. 1 in the 13th Region in several preseason publications, became the last team in the region to open its season.

"I felt really afraid of this opening game for a while because I didn't feel we were ready mentally," Jones said. "I tried to remind them at halftime that they were reading the paper too much. I've seen three games this year scouting and we couldn't beat any of them the way we played the first half. We responded well enough to win the game. We still didn't get in position defensively. We just made a few more shots the second half."

Harlan County plays host to Pineville on Thursday in the second game of a girls/boys doubleheader.

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#### HARLAN COUNTY (1-0)

Tyler Brewer 0-6 0-0 0, Alex Sergent 2-9 4-4 9, Chad Massingill 8-19 7-7 23, Aaron Caldwell 7-10 2-3 16, Chase Calton 0-0 0-0 0, James Bond 5-7 0-0 10, Tyler Miller 1-2 0-0 2, Shamil Clark 0-0 0-0 0. Totals: 23-53 13-14 60

#### LEE, Va. (1-1)

Jeremiah Bishop 0-1 0-0 0, Dustin Powers 1-10 1-2 4, Adam Pendleton 6-18 9-10 23, Cody Haynes 4-10 0-0 8, Josh Lawson 3-6 0-0 6, Matt Lawson 1-2 0-0 2, Alan Bolinsky 1-2 0-0 2, Jordan Hoskins 0-0 0-0 0. Totals: 16-51 10-12 46.

Harlan County	13	8	19	20	—	60
Lee	8	18	8	12	—	46

3-point goals: Harlan County 1-7 (Sergent 1-5, Brewer 0-1, Massingill 0-1), Lee 4-20 (Pendleton 2-7, M. Lawson 1-2, Powers 1-6, Bishop 0-1, Haynes 0-4).

Rebounds: Harlan County 34 (Massingill 7, Caldwell 7, Brewer 5, Sergent 5, Miller 5, Calton 3, Bond 2), Lee 21 (Pendleton 6, J. Lawson 5, D. Powers 3, Haynes 3, Bishop 2, M. Lawson 1, Hoskins 1) Turnovers: Harlan County 16, Lee 21. Fouled out: None. Technical fouls: Harlan County (Caldwell).

By JOHN HENSON

Harlan County Schools

By limiting visiting Pineville to 11 rebounds and forcing 28 turnovers, the Harlan County Lady Bears all but assured themselves of their fourth win in four games. Harlan County took 34 more shots from the field and coasted to a 69-38 win Thursday.

"I think a lot of it was our defense putting them on their heels, and they were settling for one shot," Harlan County coach Anthony Nolan said. "We pushed the ball and they were trying to get back instead of getting to the offensive glass. I thought we also did a good job of getting outlet passes."

"Those are growing pains of a young team. Those are our team weak points right now," Pineville coach Sam Shafer said. "Coach Nolan does a great job, and you can't turn the ball over that many times against a good team. They kept shooting until it went in. We just have to keep working."

All 16 Lady Bears played and 10 scored as Harlan County's improved depth was on display. Eighth-grade guard Brooklyn Massingill scored 12 to lead the Lady Bears while Sarah Evans and Miranda Davenport added nine each.

"I think one of the strengths of our team will be balance," Nolan said. "We have five or six players who are capable of scoring eight to 12 a night. We don't have to count on one person to carry us. I thought we got contributions from several people off the bench. Keisha (Mimes) showed a lot of confidence, Shannon (Shackleford) gave us some big minutes and Bella (Noe) is getting more comfortable handling the ball."

Pineville was led by senior guard Rebekah Brooks with nine points.

After falling behind 3-0 to start the game, Harlan County reeled off nine straight points by Davenport, Evans and Kaitlyn Stittums to take the lead for good. The Lady Bears built a 15-9 lead after one quarter with the help of an 8-2 advantage on the boards, leaden to 13 shots for Harlan County compared to only six for Pineville. Harlan County continued its hot shooting in the second quarter, connecting on eight of 13 to take a 39-21 advantage at the break. Harlan County closed the quarter with a 7-0 run as Carroll had baskets sandwiched around a 3-pointer by Massingill.

Massingill hit two 3-pointers to lead the HCHS offense. Lauren Lee and Shackleford provided a lift off the bench with baskets.

Evans, Mimes and Kalee Carroll each had two baskets in the third quarter as Harlan County turned the game into a rout, outscoring Pineville 22-10 in the period. Harlan County shot over 50 percent from the field in the first three quarters but cooled off in the final period as the starters sat out the entire quarter.

The Lady Bears will play host to Middlesboro at 6 on Saturday in the first game of a girls/boys doubleheader.

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PINEVILLE (2-2)

Rebekah Brooks 2-4 4-7 9, Annalee Adams 1-4 0-0 2, Devin Enix 2-7 3-4 8, Emily Mullins 2-4 0-0 6, Stephanie Epperson 1-2 3-4 5, Rachel Barnes 2-2 0-0 4, Stacey Washington 0-0 0-0 0, Lizzie Lee-Theis 0-0 0-0 0, Morgan Cornelius 0-0 0-0 0.

Totals: 12-25 10-15 38.

HARLAN COUNTY (4-0)

Miranda Davenport 4-7 0-0 9, Brooklyn Massingill 4-7 2-2 12, Kaitlyn Stittums 3-5 1-2 8, Kalee Carroll 4-7 0-1 8, Sarah Evans 3-6 3-4 9, Lauren Lee 1-2 0-0 2, Keisha Mimes 3-5 1-1 7, Madison Cornett 1-4 0-0 2, Shannon Shackelford 3-4 0-0 6, Shauntae Lewis 0-1 0-0 0, Bella Noe 3-6 0-0 6, Melissa Stewart 0-1 0-0 0, Rachel Carmical 0-2 0-0 0, Chelsea Niday 0-2 0-0 0, Becky Freeman 0-0 0-0 0.

Totals: 29-59 7-8 69.

Pineville	9	12	10	7	—	38
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Harlan County	15	24	22	8	—	69
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3-point goals: Pineville 4-10 (Mullins 2-4, Brooks 1-3, Enix 1-3). Harlan County 4-12 (Massingill 2-5, Davenport 1-2, Stittums 1-3, Lewis 0-1, Niday 0-1, Cornett 0-2). Rebounds: Pineville 11 (Enix 3, Adams 3, Epperson 2, Brooks 1, Mullins 1, Washington 1), Harlan County 32 (Evans 8, Carroll 5, Mimes 4, Stittums 3, Davenport 2, Massingill 2, Shackelford 2, Cornett 2, Stewart 2, Lewis 1, Carmical 1) Turnovers: Pineville 28, Harlan County 12. Fouled out: None.

By JOHN HENSON

Harlan County Schools

BEN HUR, VA. — Finding the offensive rhythm that had been missing in their first two games, the Harlan County Lady Bears overpowered Lee, Va., 60-43 on Tuesday in the first game of a doubleheader.

"I thought we did move the ball well and attacked better," Harlan County coach Anthony Nolan said. "We've focused in practice on our post people sealing their man better, and we did a better job of that."

Junior center Sarah Evans scored 13 points to lead a balanced Harlan County attack. Sophomore guard Kaitlyn Stittums added 12 points and eighth-grade guard Brooklyn Massingill scored 10.

Mackenzie Cluesman paced Lee (2-1) with 15 points. Morgan Miles added 10.

"They have a well balanced team," Lee coach Stephanie Ward. "They are a really good ballclub."

Harlan County had success from the start getting the ball inside as Evans had two baskets and Carroll added one in an 8-0 run to open the game. Lee went over four minutes before scoring its first basket but cut the deficit to 10-7 as the Lady Bears had only one field goal over the final four minutes of the period. The teams combined for 15 turnovers in the quarter.

With the Lady Bears up by only two early in the second quarter, Evans scored on two straight trips to ignite a 10-0 HCHS run that was capped by Brooklyn Massingill's 3-pointers.

Harlan County received a boost from several reserves, led by sophomore center Shannon Shackelford and her five rebounds in the quarter. Bella Noe added a 3-pointer and Lauren Lee hit a short jumper as the lead grew to 29-16.

Harlan County led by as many as 14 before a late run sparked by Cluesman cut the

deficit to 31-23 at halftime.

Lee could get no closer than six in the third quarter, but the Lady Bears didn't start to pull away until Stittums caught fire in the fourth quarter. Massingill started the decisive 14-5 run with a 3-pointer. Stittums hit two straight treys and Evans added a basket as the lead grew to 55-40 with three minutes left. Davenport, Massengill and Stittums hit free throws to put the game away.

"Stittums is such a crucial ingredient for us on defense that anything she does offensively is a bonus," Nolan said. "Her shot selection and in-between game are very good."

"We'd make a little run, but they would withstand and pull back away," Ward said. Harlan County returns to action Thursday at home against Pineville in the first game of a girls/boys doubleheader.

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HARLAN COUNTY (3-0)

Miranda Davenport 2-7 0-0 4, Brooklyn Massingill 3-8 2-2 10, Kaitlyn Stittums 4-6 1-2 12, Kalee Carroll 4-9 0-2 8, Sarah Evans 6-8 1-3 13, Lauren Lee 2-3 0-0 4, Keisha Mimes 1-2 0-0 2, Madison Cornett 0-1 0-0 0, Shannon Shackelford 1-2 0-0 2, Shauntae Lewis 0-0 0-0 0, Bella Noe 2-3 0-0 5. Totals: 24-49 6-12 60.

LEE (2-1)

Mackenzie Cluesman 6-10 3-8 15, Courtney Tabor 2-6 0-0 6, Chelsey Parsons 3-7 0-0 6, Morgan Miles 4-11 2-4 10, Kelsey Skaggs 1-3 0-0 2, Kelli Scott 2-4 0-0 4, Mackenzie Arney 0-0 0-0 0, Alyson Robbins 0-0 0-0 0. Totals: 18-41 5-12 43.

Harlan County	10	21	11	18	—	60
Lee	7	16	10	10	—	43

3-point goals: Harlan County 6-14 (Stittums 3-5, Massingill 2-3, Noe 1-1, Lee 0-1, Cornett 0-1, Davenport 0-3). Lee 2-11 (Tabor 2-5, Cluesman 0-2, Parsons 0-2 Scott 0-2). Rebounds: Harlan County 25 (Evans 8), Lee 23 (Cluesman 9) Turnovers: Harlan County 16, Lee 22. Fouled out: None. Technical fouls: Harlan County (bench).