The Alexander Central Cougars were rude guests on Friday night as they defeated Watauga 20-0 at Kidd Brewer Stadium, spoling Homecoming for the Pioneers.

Yes, that Kidd Brewer Stadium, home of the three-time national champions, Appalachian State University. A power outage at Jack Groce Stadium and a nearly one-hour delay trying to repair the problem force a change of venue. The game finally kicked-off at 9:15 pm Friday night. But the move and Appalachian's generosity couldn't save the Pioneers.

The Cougars (7-2 overall; 4-0 in the Northwestern 3A/4A Conference) finally put the game away with a 17-point explosion in the fourth quarter. The win moves Alexander Central isnto a first-place tie with Hibriten in the overall standings,and into a first-place tie with South Caldwell in the Class 4A division.

And the Cougars play South Caldwell next Friday night in Taylorsville.

"Our young men believe in what we're doing," said Alexander Central coach Tom Harper, the NW3A/4A Coach of the Year last season. "They've bought into the program. We hang our hats on our defense, and we pride ourselves on being a very physical team."

But the Pioneers (3-6; 1-3 NW3A/4A) matched the Cougars blow-for-blow defensively. And for the most part, they kept quarterback Kyle Kinnard, the NW3A/4A Offensive Player of the Year last fall, in check for the better part of the game.

The Cougars, who only had 94 yards offensively in the first half, finished with 273 yards, with 263 yards of that coming on the ground. Kinnard, who burned WHs with three touchdowns and nearly 200 yards offensively last fall, was held to a meager 67 yards.

He was sacked four times, and he was 4-9 passing for ten yards.

But the Pioneers couldn't get anything going on offense. In what must be their most disappointing effort of the year, the Pioneers were held to 34 total yards on 42 plays, and -2 yards rushing in 21 attempts.

"(Alexander Central) play a lot of technique," said WHS coach Tim Pruitt. "Their defensive line, honestly, is probably the strong defensive front we've seen all year. They're well coached,and they're an excellent football team. We either missed our blocks, or we missed the hole. We couldn't anything going, and we couldn't pull off a big play.

"It was a very physical game, and I'm very proud of our defense. They did a great job keeping up in the game; they gave us a super effort."

The Pioneers only crossed midfield twice on Friday night. Following a short punt by Kinnard in the first quarter, the Pioneers got the ball near midfield and marched it to the Alexander Central 43-yard-line before the drive stalled. They never got across midfield again until Seth Sloan picked up a Nick Salyer fumble at the WHS 29 and returned it 33 yards to the Cougars 38 with the issue decided and 2:10 remaining on the clock.

WHS moved the ball down to the Alexander Central 24 before they turned it over on downs. WHS also had its best scoring chance of the game on that drive, but Caleb Watson's potential

touchdown pass to Brian Bolster in the end zone was broken up by Cougars defensive back Caleb Price.
"They defensive back made a great play in the end zone," Pruitt said. "It was a nice pass to Bolster and the defensive back got his hand in there and broke it up. But we just didn't make plays, and they did. It's as simple as that. Making plays wins games."
Watson, who was playing his first game in two weeks following a concussion, was forced to go all the way at quarterback in the second half because Ethan Greene was injuried late in the first half. Greene, who threw for a career-best 217 yards and four touchdowns last week against Fred T. Foard, suffered a bruised sternum on a vicious hit by Cougars linebacker Dustin Anderson.
Watson, who was pressured for the better part of the night by Alexander Central's defensive front, was 3-17 for 29 yards and four interceptions.
"It didn't come togther tonight, that's all I can say," Watson said. "99 (Stephen Burns), he's scarey up there. But their whole defensive front just kept coming. They pressured me, but we just didn't come to play. We have to go back to work and try to pick up a win next Friday night at Hickory."
The Red Tornadoes (3-5; 2-2 in the NW3A/4A) moved into sole posssession for fourth place on Friday night by knocking off St. Stephens, 35-21. But like WHS,the Red Tornadoes must win one more game to become playoff eligible. The loss also leaves WHS with an 0-2 record in the Class 4A division.
Our coverage from Hickory next Friday night begins at 6:30 pm on Oldies 100.7 FM.
NOTES: Friday night's match up at Kidd Brewer Stadium was Watauga's first appearance at ASU since 1998. The game was moved to Kidd Brewer Stadium following a power outage at Jack Groce Stadium. "ASU turned what could have been a terrible night into a terrific night," said WHS Athletics Director Tom Wright. "They allowed us to play our game, and they went above and beyond to accomidate us and the press. They also sold concessions. I'm very thankful to Athletics Director Charlie Cobb and to ASU for all of their help and generosity." Apparantly, the electrical panel caught on fire at Jack Groce Stadium, forcing the change of venue. The panel, according to Wright, burned up and melted. "The county and New River (Light and Power) tried to salvage it, but to no avail," he said. "It's pretty badly damaged, and its going to require quite a bit of repair." But ASU saved the day. "Actually, I was told it was Stephen Poolis, who made the phone call," WHS coach Tim Pruitt said. "I was told he called Charlie's (Cobb) wife and got the ball rolling, so to speak. But I am thankful to everyone, ASU, the Boone Police Department, the security at ASU, and to all the people involved that I don't even know, and will probably never meet, that made tonight possible. I just wish the outcome could have been better.".....The Cougars have won two in a row against the Pioneers. They also picked up their first win in Boone since 2003.....The teams have split their last 16 meetings right down the middle. But since 1986, the Pioneers own a 14-12 lead in the series.....WHS also suffered its second shutout of the season.....The Pioneers fall into fifth place in the NW3A/4A.....The 17-points combined between the teams is the lowest total in this series since 2000, when the Cougars defeated WHS 10-7 and knocked the Pioneers out of the playoffs. It was also the final game as head coach for Mike Probst at WHS.

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	1	2	3	4	T		
Alexander Central	0	3	0	0	-	20	
Watauga	0	0	0	0	-	0	

2Q:A - WHISNANT 42 YARD FIELD GOAL, 3-0
4Q:A - FARLEY 25 YARD RUN, (WHISNANT KICK), 10-0
A - WHISNANT 43 YARD FIELD GOAL, 13-0
A - KINNARD 1 YARD RUN, (WHISNANT KICK), 20-0

FIRST DOWNS: ALEXANDER CENTRAL 16, WHS 4
RUSHING YARDS: ALEXANDER CENTRAL 47-263, WHS 21- -2
PASSING YARDS: ALEXANDER CENTRAL 10, WHS 36
TOTAL YARDS: ALEXANDER CENTRAL 56-273, WHS 42-34

ALEXANDER CENTRAL: RUSHING - ROBERTS 13-72, SALYER 9-73,KINNARD 21-57
PASSING - KINNARD 4-9-0 10
RECEIVING - G.SMITH 1 13

WHS: RUSHING: WATSON 15-23
PASSING: WATSON 3-17-4 29, GREENE 2-4-0 7
RECEIVING: SCOTT 2-16