

## UPDATED: State Football Brackets Released

Written by Mike Kelly

Saturday, 06 November 2010 17:25

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The Watuaga High football team will miss the state playoffs for the first time since 2005. The Pioneers were eliminated from contention on Friday night.

St. Stephens rallied from an early 14-0 deficit and beat the Pioneers 31-28. WHS (3-8 overall; 1-5 in the Northwestern 3A/4A Conference) finished the season with a three-game losing streak, and dropping five of its last six games.

"It's been a tough year," said senior Baker Stanley, who ran for 109 yards and scored twice in his final game as a Pioneer. "Winning would be nice, and getting to the playoffs would be special. It would eliminate a lot of disappointments."

Unfortunately, the Pioneers victimized themselves by turning the ball over five times, and committing 18 penalties for a school-record 210 yards.

But while the Pioneers fell short of their quest, some other teams in the area made the grade. Ashe County, which began the season by losing five consecutive games, made the Class 2AA playoffs as a 16th seed. The Huskies (4-7) coming off their first losing season in five years (2004), travel to Pisgah, the top seed in the western region, Friday night. The Huskies closed out the regular season with a come-from-behind 28-27 win at East Wilkes.

Avery (8-3) received the No.3 seed in the western region of the Class 1AA playoffs, and will open post-season play at home against Bessemer City. The Vikings closed out the regular season with a 14-7 win against Mitchell.

In the NW3A/4A, Alexander Central, which won the regular-season championship by knocking off Hibriten 21-20 in overtime Friday night in Lenior (the Cougars first conference title since 1983), and South Caldwell (9-2) both received playoff berths in the Class 4A Division. The Cougars (10-1), the No.3 seed in the Class 4A western region, were originally scheduled to play Mooresville at home in the opening round. The Cougars will now open at home against West Charlotte from the I-Meck Conference.

And South Caldwell, the No.6 seed in the western region and the No.3 overall seed in the NW3A/4A which defeated Hickory 26-6 Friday night in their final regular-season game, will open the state playoffs at Charlotte Vance Friday night.

Hickory (4-7), which clinched the No.2 seed in the Class 3A Division, gets the No.7 seed in the Midwest Region and will play at James Carson Friday night; Hibriten (9-2), the No.1 seed in the 3A division and the No.2 seed overall in the NW3A/4A, received the No.2 seed in the West Region and entertains Patton Friday night in Lenior.

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