The Watuaga High women's track program could be flirting with a possible state championship this coming spring in outdoor track.

The Pioneers, who had a top three finish at the state indoor track meet (though it was a polar bear meet in Fayetteville) on February 12, took a serious step towards the outdoor campaign on Friday. Sidney Cook and Tara Trivette of the Pioneers turned in solid performances at the New Balance Nationals at the Armory in New York City.

Competing in the Emerging-Elite Division, Cook finished ninth in the pole vault event. And she turned in the second-best effort in school history with an effort of 11-feet, 2 1/2 inches. Sally Gurganus, who won five state titles at WHS before she continued her track career at the University of South Carolina, holds the school record in both the indoor (11-10) and outdoor seasons (12-0).

Trivette finished fourth in the high jump with a season-best effort of 5-3.

"This is the best we've ever done up here," said WHS Indoor Track coach Daniel Isaacs. "There were a lot of great athletes from all over the country, and our girls did a great job. Now, the Championship Division is the top-rated division, but Sidney and Tara did a great job competing at their level.

"I'm real proud of them. They did a great job concentrating on their events. It's always very competitive up here, but Sidney and Tara were really focused."

And Friday's effort climaxed a very strong indoor season for the Pioneers. According to Isaacs, this is probably the strongest women's team WHS has had in quite a while. As a matter of fact, it's probably the deepest team WHS has had since his senior year way back in 1997, when the Taylor twins (Brenda and Lindsey) led WHS to its third consecutive state outdoor title.

"We have a lot of depth on this team," Isaacs said. "And the scary thing is that we're still pretty young. We have the distance people, and we have the field people that make us real strong. We can score in a lot of events. It should be pretty interesting this spring. I really believe we're at least a top two or three team."

And the men's team has some weapons of its own as well. Jordan Pineda returns in the throwing events (the shot put and the discus), and Mo Gore brings a lot of athletic ability to the team. The addition of Kyle Chambers is a real plus, according to Isaacs.

"Kyle is sprinting for us right now," he said. "And we really need help in that area. And for us, he brings a lot of speed to the table. But I'm confident he can help us in other areas as well. Kyle is a talented guy. Jordan is looking great, and Mo is terrific. He can do a lot of positive things for us. The guys are improving. It's a slow process, but it's getting there."

WHS had its season opener in the outdoor season rained out last Wednesday at South Caldwell. The Pioneers travel to Lenior for a four-team meet with Hibriten, South Caldwell and Alexander Central on Wednesday. The meet begins at 4:30 pm.