

Storm Softball Finishes Fourth

Written by Staff Reports

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The Watauga Storm 14U Fastpitch Softball team played to a fourth-place finish in the ASA Diamond Classic, played this past weekend in Gray, Tennessee.

Of the 10 teams present, the Storm finished the two-day tournament with a record of 3-3. Highlighting the tournament was the contributions of various players, at the plate and in the field. The team was led at the plate by centerfielder Hope Lapointe, who finished with a 10 for 15 contribution (.667). Pitcher Megan Jackson (7-14, .500) and shortstop Sierra LaPlante (7-15, .467) also posted high averages. As a whole, the team posted a .400 average over the six game span.

"We're very pleased with the manner in which the girls hit the ball," said Watauga coach Jay Jackson. "We had one game where we did not hit at all and one game where we hit only in the first couple of innings. To finish at .400 is a good sign. We can build on this.

"We had some outstanding play from many of our girls this weekend. Maykala Pennington got her first win on the mound, going the distance in a 14-2 win over the Lady Tigers of Wise, Va. MaKenzie Wallace was the difference in a 6-4 win over the Thunder of Johnson City, TN. She delivered a terrific inside-the-park grand slam home run that was, no doubt, the difference in that game. I'm particularly encouraged with the play of our girls as they are not bashful when trying to make the difficult plays of throwing girls out at the plate and at third base. Catcher Katie Rumburg, along with shortstop LaPlante and third baseman Rachel Cox, defensively stopped several rallies with key tagouts."

The Storm takes to the diamond, again, this weekend as they compete in the AAU Top Gun Summer State Championships to be held in Concord. This tournament features approximately 40 teams in the 14 and under age bracket and will be divided into at least three divisions. Jackson, along with Coaches Mike Steele and Richard Butler, like their chances of competing at a continued high level.

"Finishing fourth in this tournament was an achievement for us," Jackson said. "We can play better defensively and we'll need to. We'll be playing against a large number of teams in our division and having this past weekend's experience should be both good and challenging for us."