It finally happened, and it was well worth the wait. Watauga High junior Savanna Wood nailed down her third straight appearance at the North Carolina High School Association Class 4A state golf tournament Monday afternoon with a fifth place finish at the Class 4A Western Regional

at the Brushy Mountain Golf Club in Taylorsville. Wood paced the Pioneers with a seven-over par 79, seven shots off the lead.

However, Wood didn't want to make the long trip to Pinehurst by herself, so her teammates chipped in with a strong effort Monday afternoon. Tasha Wilson fired a 93, Mary Seramur had a 105 and Rebekah Shoemake had a 130 as the Pioneers fired a team score of 277 and claimed the fourth and final berth to the state meet next Monday and Tuesday, October 29-30, at Pinehurst No.6. It's WHS' first appearance as a team at the state tournament in school history.

"In the three years since the state has implemented qualifying standards for regionals, this is the first time we have sent a full team to the state meet," said WHS coach Jamie Wilson. "The girls have worked so hard. I am so proud of them."

Pfafftown-Reagan won the regional title with a 237; Alexander Central, which won the Northwestern 3A/4A Conference regular-season title, finished third with a 251. Wood finished fourth at the state meet last year as a sophomore. She was 52nd as a freshman.

Abbey Hartsell of Alexander Central was the indvidual regional champion as she paced the field with an even-par 72 on her home course. Hannah Craver of Pfafftown-Reagan finished two shots back with a two-over par 74; teammate Victoria Allred of the Raiders finished third with a 76. Emily Stinson of Ardrey Kell finished fourth, five shots off the pace, with a 77.

Mooresville finished fifth with a team score of 281. Jesse Long paced the Blue Devils with an 87.

NOTES: The WHS tee times for Monday have been set by tbe NCHSAA. Savanna Wood tees off at 9:10 a.m. Monday; Mary Seramur tees off at 10:10 a.m.; Tasha Wilson at 10:20 a.m., and Rebekah Shoemake will tee off at 10:30 a.m. The final round will be played on Tuesday.

Team Scores
Reagan HS- 237
Ardrey Kell- 247
Alexander Central- 251
Watauga- 277

WHS Scoring
Savanna Wood- 79
Tasha Wilson- 93
Mary Seramur- 105
Rebekah Shoemake- 130