Head coach Woody McKay and the Watauga High men's soccer team has revenge on its mind. And so far, the Pioneers (17-3-3) have evened the scored with a pair of opponents that victimized them in the last two-plus seasons. WHS picked

up a pay-bakc win with a 2-1 victory against Mallard Creek Wednesday night in the opening-round of the North Carolina High School Athletic Association Class 4A state soccer playoffs.

The Pioneers followed that up by defeated A.C. Reynolds, the No.2 seed from the Mountain Athletic 3A/4A Conference, in a second-round game Saturday night at Jack Groce Stadium. Alex Parsons tallied on an assist by Ryan Hellenbrand at the 19-minute mark of the first half for a 1-0 win. The victory vaults WHS into the Class 4A sectional finals against Cornelius-Hough Wednesday night (game time TBA).

"I guess it's pay-back time for us," McKay said. "We evened things up with Mallard Creek. They beat us in the state playoffs last year, and we beat A.C. Reynolds, which beat us earlier in the year. I like the way we're playing, and we're in a good position right now."

The win avenged a 2-1 at ACR (16-5-2) on August 27. It was WHS's first loss of the season after they opened the year with six consecutive wins. Hough (), the No.1 seed from the I-Meck Conference, defeated West Mecklenburg 4-0 in a second-round game Saturday night.

"We're just taking it one game at a time," McKay. "That's my attitude. I'm glad we're playing so well, especially on the defensive end. And we're creating chances offensively. I thought both teams had their share of chances in tonight's game. But I felt our defense was a little bit better. Their coach (Patrick Gladys) said our defense was real tight. they had a tough time establishing anything against us.

"We're in the Sweet 16, and now we have to focus on Hough Wednesday night. It's another game and another challenge. We'll go out, play hard and give it our best shot."

SATURDAY'S GAMES

CLASS 4A
WATAUGA 1, A.C. REYNOLDS 0

CLASS 3A
HICKORY 5, PATTON 0
FREEDOM 3, ST. STEPHENS 2 (2 OT)
ASHBROOK 2, FRED T. FOARD 0

CLASS 2A
TRINITY 3, ASHE COUNTY 1

CLASS 1A
ELKIN 4, AVERY 0