For the first three quarters of Wednesday night's game at Lentz-Eggers Gym, the Fred T. foard High boys basketball team did not resemble a first-place

team. They were beseached by turnovers and inconsistent play. But those doubts were quickly erased in the fourth quarter as the Tigers (19-3 overall; 9-1 Northwestern 3A/4A Conference) came to like and outscored the Pioneers 32-12 in the final stanza.

The end result, the Tigers won going away 69-41, and with the win, the Tigers also increased their lead in the NW3A/4A Conference. The Tigers lead second-place Hickory by 1 1/2 games; St. Stephens, which is in third place, is two games back.

The Tigers also beat the Pioneers for a second consecutive time after losing seven straight in the series back in 2009-10. For WHS, the loss drops the Pioneers into fifth place, one-half game behind South Caldwell for the No.4 seed and home-court advantage in the opening round of the conference tournament, which begins Monday, February 18. South Caldwell comes to town Friday night.

"We just had a little more in the tank than they did in that final quarter," said Fred T. Foard coach Rob Bliss. "IT's tough playing on back to back nights, especially at this level. But our strength all year has been our depth, and we had more stamina in the last quarter."

But the Pioneers (10-8; 4-5), despite a sloppy effort by both teams, hung tough and trailed 37-29 heading into the fourth quarter. But then it all fell apart. Trailing 45-35, the Tigers went on a 21-2 run and broke the game open. Jordan Turner did most of the damage with four threes in the second half, including three trifectas in the fourth quarter. He hit five three pointers on the night and finished with a game-high 19 points.

His three ball with 3:18 left gave the Tigers a commanding 56-35 advantage.

"Give (Watauga coach) Rob (sanders) credit," Bliss said. "For three quarters, we couldn't pull away. They made a big shot, or a big hustle play that kept us close. But you could see the fatique factor taking over in the fourth quarter. It all starts with the legs. And when the legs go, you're shooting touch goes with it."

Jay Harrill scored WHS' first field goal with 1:24 left in the fourth quarter. But by that time, the Tigers were up 66-37. They led by as many as 37 points in the final stanza.

Joe Isenhour poured in 11 for the Tigers Brice Falgout and Derrick Barnes each had six points apiece. Cameron Baker and Ben Margolis led the points with ten points apiece. The Pioneers also had three players foul out. Coverage of Friday night's game with South Caldwell begins at 6 p.m. on Oldies 100.7 FM.

NOTES: The WHS JV boys avenged an earlier loss to Fred T. Foard by beating the Tigers 41-34. Utah Jones led WHS with 12 points; Aaron Dobbins had ten points and Michael Ebaugh had eight rebounds. T.J. Poulos had seven points and six assists.

FRED T. FOARD 69. WATAUGA 41

Score By Period	**1st**	**2nd**	**3rd**	**4th**	**Total**
Fred T. Foard	14	12	11	32	69
Watauga	11	10	8	12	41

FTF: BLISS 2, MATTHEWS 8, CAMERON 4, TURNER 19, SCHMIDT 3, FALGOUT 6, BARNES 6, WIGINGTON 1, TOMBERLIN 4, ISENHOUR 11, KIRK 5. FG: 14, 3FG: 7, FT: 20-37.
THREE-POINTERS: TURNER 5, SCHMIDT, FALGOUT.

WHS: HARRILL 6, STURGILL 4, GAILES 6 (2 ASSISTS, 2 STEALS), AUGUSTINE 2, MARGOLIS 10 (3 REBOUNDS), KOPPENHAVER 2, BAKER 10 (7 REBOUNDS, 2 ASSISTS), MACKEY 1 (2 ASSISTS). FG: 7, 3FG: 4, FT: 15-19.
THREE-POINTERS: GAILES 2, MARGOLIS, BAKER.

NORTHWESTERN 3A/4A CONFERENCE

WEDNESDAY'S GAMES

GIRLS:
FRED T. FOARD 70, WATAUGA 39

BOYS:
FRED T. FOARD 69, WATAUGA 41

TUESDAY'S GAMES

GIRLS:
ALEXANDER CENTRAL 56, WATAUGA 49
FRED T. FOARD 56, HIBRITEN 29
HICKORY 66, SOUTH CALDWELL 31
ST. STEPHENS - BYE

BOYS:
WATAUGA 58, ALEXANDER CENTRAL 41
FRED T. FOARD 74, HIBRITEN 48
SOUTH CALDWELL 54, HICKORY 52
ST. STEPHENS - BYE

FRIDAY'S GAMES

SOUTH CALDWELL @ WATAUGA
FRED T. FOARD @ ST. STEPHENS
HIBRITEN @ HICKORY
ALEXANDER CENTRAL - BYE