

## Harper Leaves Hickory For FTF

Written by Mike Kelly

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Believe it or not, Tom Harper is on the move once again. Harper, who left a snug job at Alexander Central High to become the new football coach at Hickory last fall, was named the new football coach at Fred T. Foard Monday night. The hiring was approved by the Catawba County School Board Monday evening.

Harper replaces Watauga County native Jason Phelps, who stepped down after two years with the Tigers. Fred T. Foard was 2-8 last season, the Tigers were 5-15 during Phelps' two-year stay with the program. Harper is Fred T. Foard's third head coach in four years. Phelps replaced Ryan Gettys in 2011.

The Tigers haven't had a winning season since 2008 (they were 9-3 that season), and they've only produced three winning campaigns since 1999.

Harper is 50-55 in his career. He was spent five years (2007-2011) at Alexander Central, and won 26 games during his last three years with the Cougars. And he led them to a Northwestern 3A/4A Conference title in 2010. He was 8-5 in his only season at Hickory.

Harper, who replaced John Worley at Hickory (Worley retired in February of 2012), led the Red Tornadoes to the second-round of the Class 3A state playoffs. The Red Tornadoes were eliminated by Lawndale-Burns.

### **NORTHWESTERN 3A/4A CONFERENCE BASEBALL MONDAY'S GAMES**

FRED T. FOARD @ NEWTON-CONOVER, PPD

McDOWELL @ SOUTH CALDWELL, PPD

### **TUESDAY'S GAMES**

**WATAUGA @ ST. STEPHENS**

HIBRITEN @ ALEXANDER CENTRAL

HICKORY @ FRED T. FOARD

SOUTH CALDWELL - BYE

**Photo Courtesy: Tom Harper, PHOTO SUBMITTED**