The North Carolina High School Athletic Association has released the state playoff pairings in high school basketball.

The Watauga High men and women will both begin post-season play Monday night. The WHS men will open at home against Greensboro Page, the No.5 seed from the Metro 4A Conference. The Pirates (13-11), who beat WHS (14-8) in the second round of the Western Playoffs two years ago, feature a young team with six sophomores on the roster.

But following a 1-6 start, the Pirates, who were beaten in the opening round of their conference tournament, are 12-5 in the last 17 games. Their top players are De'Mone Harrison, a 6-1 senior guard and Jackson Kent, a 6-3 senior guard.

The winner of this game will play either A.C. Reynolds, the No.2 seed from the Mountain Athletic 3A/4A Conference, or Garinger, the No.3 seed from the MEGA 7 Conference, in a second-round game Wednesday night.

For the WHS women (10-12), they will open the playoffs on the road against East Gaston, the No.2 seed from the MEGA 7 Conference. Ironically, the WHS women haven't won a state playoff game since the 1996-97 season. And believe it or not, their last win came against East Gaston down at Providence High School in the sectional finals that season.

Current varsity assistant and jay-vee coach Jerry Moretz was in a similar capacity with the women's team that season. Tom Wright was Watauga's head coach. That team finished the year at 21-9 and lost to Greensboro Page in the Western Regional semi-finals.

East Gaston, which defeated West Mecklenberg in conference-tournament play to claim the No.2 seed, was 6-6 in league play. East Gaston (11-11) eventually lost to Charlotte Catholic, the regular-season champion, in the semi-final round.

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And because the state association has elected to play the men's and women's games on the same night this season, Oldies 100.7 FM will run an alternating schedule concerning our broadcasts. Monday night, Oldies 100.7 FM will broadcast the WHS men's game against Greensboro Page. Our coverage begins at 6:30 pm. Then on Wednesday night, if the WHS women defeat East Gaston, Oldies 100.7 FM will broadcast their second-round game against the winner of Mallard Creek and McDowell.

And Oldies 100.7 FM will continue to alternate games until one or both teams are eliminated from the state playoffs.

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In other playoff news, Avery will open post-season in Class 1A Monday night. The women will take on Elkin, the men will play West Wilkes. And Ashe County will play a pair of home games in the opening round of the Class 2A playoffs.

The women will entertain Madison; the men take on Polk County.

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Also, congratulations to WHS senior Caleb Courtney, who has made a verbal committment to attend Milligan College, a NAIA school in Milligan,TN. Courtney turned a career game against Hibriten on January 28 as he poured in 20 points, grabbed five rebounds and blocked two shots. For the year, he is averaging 5.5 points-per-game in Northwestern 3A/4A Conference play, and he is shooting 54% from the floor for the season.

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Hibriten and Hickory captured the Northwestern 3A/4A tournament championships Friday night in Hickory. Hickory won the women's title by beating South Caldwell, the regular-season champion, 66-47. Hillary Sigmon was named the tournament's Most Outstanding Player; Hibriten defeated Hickory 53-47 in the men's finals. Darius Lipford was named Most Outstanding Player in the men's tournament.