

WHS Track Ranked Among State's Elite

Written by Mike Kelly
Tuesday, 26 April 2011 16:44

The Watauga High men's and women's track teams find themselves nestled among some of the top programs in the state with regional a little more than a week away.

The women's team, which dominated the Northwestern 3A/4A Conference Championships with 243 points, is currently ranked third with 196.75 points. The Pioneers top point-getter is sophomore Darby Middlebrook, who captured the women's Class 4A state cross country title last November. Middlebrook leads WHS with 54 points thanks to her efforts in the 3200-, 1600-, 800-meter runs.

Senior Sydney Cook, who has signed with Appalachian State, is second on the team in points with 31.5, thanks to her efforts in the pole vault and high jump events. Cook is just four inches shy of the school record of 12-feet, one inch set by five-time state champion Sally Gurganus in 2006. Cook turned in a personal-best effort of 11-9 this season at St. Stephens on March 23. Gurganus had the state record at 12-1, but ASU freshman Cassie Crawford shattered that mark by clearing the bar at the state finals last year at 12-6. And that record was victimized by Sydney White of East Forsyth, who jumped 13 feet in late March.

Kasey Jones, who was on the shelf to start the season with a nagging hamstring injury is third on the team with 20 points. Despite her late start, Jones won the NW3A/4A Conference championship in both the 100-and 300-meter high hurdles. Wakefield leads the standings with 237 points; T.C. Roberson is in second place with 214.25.

On the men's side, WHS, which dominated the NW3A/4A championships with 193.83 points, is ranked 19th with 71.5 points. Jordan Pineda is WHS's leading point-getter with 36. Pineda, who will enroll at Wake Forest University in July to play football for the Demon Deacons, is the NW3A/4A Conference champion in the shot put and the discus.

Jake Pifer, who has been a pleasant surprise in the jumping events, is third on the team in scoring with 11 points. Pifer jumped a personal-best six-feet, four inches last Saturday at the First Annual High Country Invitational at Jack Groce Stadium. Pifer also had personal-best efforts in the long jump (18-10.25) and the triple jump (41-2.25). Reid Harris has 15 points, thanks to his efforts in the pole vault. He cleared the bar at 13 feet last Saturday; his best effort this year has been 13-6. He's accomplished it twice: on April 2 at the Fleet Feet Sports Invitational in Claremont, and at the NW3A/4A Conference championships at Lenior-Rhyne University in Hickory on April 19.

Knightdale leads the standings with 246 points; Charlotte Vance is a distant second with 171.5. The Pioneers travel to the Elite Track Classic in Richmond, Va. this weekend.