

Pioneers Release 2011 Football Schedule

Written by Mike Kelly
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Watauga High football coach Tim Pruitt has released the Pioneers 2011 football schedule.

The Pioneers, who were 3-8 last season, will play 11-consecutive games without an open date this season. They will also play five home games, beginning with the home opener against A.C. Reynolds on Friday, August 19 at Jack Groce Stadium. Fred T. Foard (which will also be the Northwestern 3A/4A Conference opener), Elizabethton, TN, Alexander Central and Hibriten (which will be Senior Night) round out the home portion of the schedule.

The homecoming game is still up in the air. It could happen on September 16 against Foard, or on September 30 against Elizabethton. The state playoffs begin on Friday, Nov. 4.

The Pioneers have also added two new opponents to the schedule this season. Elizabethton, TN and West Caldwell, a team the Pioneers haven't played since 2006. And the Warriors are coached by former WHS coach Randy Baldwin, who spent one season (1996) with the Pioneers. Gone from the schedule are Shelby and West Stokes.

WHS, which finished the 2010 season with a three-game losing streak, returns 18 seniors.

Among the returnees will be quarterback Ethan Greene, who shared playing time at the position with the departed Caleb Watson last year.

Kyle Chambers (who suffered a concussion in the Hibriten game in week eight), Alex Fox (who had his season cut short with a knee injury against Avery in the third game of the season), and Taylor Shuford are some of the top players the Pioneers will be counting on this fall. WHS missed the state playoffs last season for the first time since 2005.

2011 WHS FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

AUGUST 19 A.C. REYNOLDS
AUGUST 26 at ASHE COUNTY
SEPTEMBER 2 at AVERY
SEPTEMBER 9 at WEST CALDWELL
SEPTEMBER 16 FRED T. FOARD*
SEPTEMBER 23 at HICKORY*
SEPTEMBER 30 ELIZABETHTON

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OCTOBER 7 ALEXANDER CENTRAL *
OCTOBER 14 at SOUTH CALDWELL *
OCTOBER 21 HIBRITEN* (**SENIOR NIGHT**)
OCTOBER 28 at ST. STEPHENS*
NOVEMBER 4 STATE PLAYOFFS (TBA)

*** - DENOTES NORTHWESTERN 3A/4A CONFERENCE GAMES**