

WHS Women Win Four Swim Events

Written by Mike Kelly

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The Watauga High women's swimming team won two of its three dual meets Wednesday night in Valdese.

The WHS women defeated East Burke 206-133 and they defeated South Iredell 189-156, but the Pioneers

were upended by Draughn 184-177. WHS also won four events, the 200 medley relay (Hailey Middlebrook, Doria Kosmala, Anne Taylor and Darby Middlebrook) in 2:05.59; Anne Taylor won two events, the 50-free style in 26.32 and the 100 freestyle in 58.02; and Darby Middlebrook won the 100 breast stroke in 1:15.26.

Hailey Middlebrook turned in a pair of second-place finishes. She finished second in the 200-freestyle (2:18.51), and she finished second in the 100 back stroke (1:09.18); Darby Middlebrook finished second in the 100 butterfly (1:14.32).

The WHS men lost all three of their dual matches. The Pioneers were bested by Draughn 189-146, East Burke 183-152 and by South Iredell 167-148. And the Pioneers, who didn't win any events, did produce four second-place finishes. WHS turned in a second-place finish in the 400 freestyle relay (Noah Allain, Justin Zumbo, Sam Erwin and Marcus Funston) by crossing the finish line in 3:59.98. Justin Zumbo finished second in the 100 back stroke (1:07.35) and Marcus Funston finished second in the 50 freestyle (24.85) and the 100 butterfly (59.36).

"Although we had some good individual swims, overall I was disappointed in the meet." said WHS coach David Gragg. "We did not swim as well as I wanted. I am not sure if it was the Christmas break, not being in school today, or just poor coaching, but we are not where I need us to be in order to challenge for conference titles. I had swimmers not show up, so the line-up was not as solid as I had planned. Several slots in events were open and cost us points.

"Anne Taylor swam well in the 50 and 100 Free as did Doria Kosmala in the 200 IM. Kaitlyn Erwin turned in her strongest performances of the year in the 200 IM and 100 Back and that will help with our depth. Justin Zumbo had a good swim in the 100 Free, and Sean Zumbo had strong swims in the 100 Fly and 100 Breast. Sam Erwin performed well in the 200 IM. John Vollmer showed a lot character by finishing the 500 Free after his goggles filled up with water and swallowed some at the beginning of the 20-lap race. Our next meet will challenge us again with teams from our conference and being the last chance to compete before the conference meet."

The Pioneers travel to the Hickory YMCA next Tuesday, January 10 for a four-team meet with Fred T. Foard, Hickory and South Caldwell.

HUSKIES MAKE IT 11 IN A ROW

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The Ashe County High men's basketball team just keeps rolling along. The Huskies won their 11th straight game Wednesday night as they clobbered North Wilkes 71-30 down in Hayes. The Huskies (11-1 overall; 7-0 in the Mountain Valley 1A/2A Conference), who are ranked seventh in the state in Class 2A by NCPreps.com, took control of the game right away as they built a 16-2 lead in the first quarter. It was 39-13 by halftime.

Andrew Lopp led three players in double-figures with 15 points. Zeb Richardson and Sam Gammons each had 11 points.

North Wilkes won the women's game as the Vikings rallied from a one-point deficit and defeated Ashe County, 39-36. The Vikings outscored Ashe County (4-8 overall; 2-5 MVC) 13-9 in the final stanza. Kayla Spears led the Huskies with nine points; MacKenzie Johnson and Paige Spell each had eight points.