

Greene Mows Down Cougars

Written by Mike Kelly

Wednesday, 18 April 2012 10:54

Ethan Greene just keeps getting better each time out. The Watauga High senior had it in high gear Tuesday night as the Pioneers white-washed Alexander Central 6-0 at Grayson Stadium in Taylorsville. The win allows

WHS (11-7 overall; 7-2 Northwestern 3A/4A Conference) to clinch a tie for second place in the NW3A/4A Conference standings. South Caldwell clinched a tie for the regular-season championship Tuesday night by outscoring Hickory, 12-6.

But Greene, who will sign his National Letter of Intent with Pfeifer University Monday, was in the spotlight Tuesday night for WHS. The right hander, who has 52 strikeouts and 13 walks allowed in 49 1/3 innings of work, simply dominated the Cougars (7-12; 2-7). He scattered three hits, walked one, picked a runner off and struck out ten. It was Greene's (5-2) fifth win of the year, his fourth complete game and his third shutout of the season.

"My breaking pitches, especially my curve ball was really working good today," he said. "And David (Martin) did a great job calling the game behind the plate. I was real comfortable out there tonight. I was able to throw strikes today with my curve ball and slider. I was able to keep them off the plate, especially with two strikes."

It's also the second time the Pioneers have pitched a shutout against the Cougars this season. Matt Proffitt blanked the Cougars 5-0 back on March 16. For the year, the WHS pitching has held Alexander Central to just eight hits. The Cougars never staged a real threat against Greene Tuesday night.

"Greene is a great pitcher," said Cougars coach Jerry Whitman. "He did a great job keeping us off balance. And we didn't make the plays behind our guy (Josh McLain). I thought he did a great job, but Greene shut us down."

McLain (2-2), who left the game in the sixth, scattered seven hits, and struck out 12 in the loss. But he walked five and four of the five runs he gave up were earned. As a matter of fact, the Pioneers scored two runs (one in the third, and one in the fourth) without the benefit of a base hit. And the Cougars aided the cause by committing four errors.

Martin's run-scoring single in the third inning put the Pioneers on top to stay. And the Pioneers put the game way with three runs in the sixth. Max Linnville, who sat out the last two games with a hamstring injury, had a two-run single in the frame. That base hit by Linnville also snapped an 0-7 slump.

"We know how tough it is to win here," said WHS coach Pete Hardee. "I wasn't real pleased with our intensity to start the game. I had to get on them in the first inning. But we manufactured some runs, and we got some timely hits, especially with men in scoring position. And what can I say about Greenie.

"The guy has been outstanding. He was throwing his curve for strikes all day. He was totally on today. And when he has both of his breaking balls and change up working, he's tough. He makes it look easy. It looks like he's leasurly throwing. But when you hit your spots, and throw strikes like he did today, it's a tough thing to hit."

The Pioneers return home to play South Caldwell Friday night. Proffitt gets the starting nod against the Spartans. Our coverage begins at 6 p.m. on Oldies 100.7 FM.

NOTES: Alexander Central defeated WHS 2-0 in the JV game. The Pioneers only made two

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hits--Matt Lambert had a double; Jesse Illich had a single. Hunter Isaacs suffered the loss. He gave up two runs on six hits in five innings of work with two walks and three strike outs.

NORTHWESTERN 3A/4A BASEBALL

TUESDAY NIGHT'S GAMES

WATAUGA 6, ALEXANDER CENTRAL 0

SOUTH CALDWELL 12, HICKORY 6

HIBRITEN-FRED T. FOARD SUSPENDED BY RAIN IN THE SIXTH INNING.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT'S GAMES

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HIBRITEN-FRED T. FOARD PPD AND MOVED TO THURSDAY NIGHT.
ALEXANDER CENTRAL @ HICKORY

THURSDAY NIGHT'S GAMES

HIBRITEN @ ST. STEPHENS

FRIDAY NIGHT'S GAMES

SOUTH CALDWELL @ WATAUGA
WEST WILKES @ ALEXANDER CENTRAL
FRED T. FOARD @ ST. STEPHENS
HICKORY @ HIBRITEN

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SATURDAY'S GAMES

MOUNT TABOR @ WATAUGA
FRED T. FOARD @ DRAUGHN
HIBRITEN @ ST. STEPHENS
SOUTH CALDWELL @ WEST CALDWELL

NW3A/4A STANDINGS

NORTHWESTERN 3A-4A STANDINGS

x-SOUTH CALDWELL 10-0; 18-1

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Watauga □□□□□□□□□□ **7-2;**□ **11-7**

St. Stephens 4-4; 8-7

Hibriten 3-4; 6-9

Hickory 3-5; 12-6

Alexander Central 2-7; 7-12

Fred T. Foard 1-8; 4-14

x - REGULAR SEASON CHAMPIONS