

Pioneers Lose In Heart-Breaking Fashion

Written by Mike Kelly
Saturday, 12 May 2012 11:05

It just wasn't meant to be. The Watauga High softball team was just three outs away from nailing down its first win in the state playoffs in four years (2008) Friday night. The Pioneers (9-12), who trailed 3-2, rallied for four runs in the top of the seventh for a 6-3 lead. But East Gaston (15-4) came charging back with a four-run rally of its own in the bottom of

the seventh to beat the Pioneers 7-6 in the opening-round of the Class 4A state playoffs in Mount Holly, N.C. Haley Bartlett's bloop single over a drawn-in infield plated the winning run. "The kids worked real hard," said WHS coach Stephanie Long in a dejected tone. "They fought real hard to win this game. I am so proud of these girls. I love them all. And to lose it like this really hurts. It's very disappointing. I didn't want the season to end."

The Pioneers, who wiped out deficits of 2-0 and 3-2, finally took the lead in the top of the seventh. Savannah Drummond's pinch-hit, two-run single gave WHS a 4-3 lead. The Pioneers tallied two more times. Allison Townsend drove in WHS' final run with an RBI single that made it 6-3. But the Warriors rallied in the bottom of the seventh. Cassidy Eudy reached on an error by Townsend at second base to ignite East Gaston's comeback in the bottom of the seventh. Mindy Roberts followed with a two-run homer that made it, 6-5. Shelby Winehester followed with a single, and she scored on Karie Davis' RBI double to tie the game. Leanyna Brown followed with a single sending Davis to third, and setting the stage for Bartlett.

The win moves East Gaston into a second-round game against T.C. Roberson. The Rams (15-6) blew out Mooresville 22-2 in their first-round game. Michala McCune had a run-scoring single in the fourth inning; Kim Robinson, who was on the mound in relief when the winning run scored in the seventh, drove in a run with a single in the fifth that tied the game at 2-2.

ROCKETS SOAR PAST PIONEERS

A.C. Reynolds senior Shenny Lenhart is, without question, the most prolific scorer in the state of North Carolina this spring in women's soccer. Lenhart scored three times and picked up an assist as A.C. Reynolds (18-4-3) knocked off Watauga 5-0 in a second-round state playoff

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game at Jack Groce Stadium Friday night.

The Rockets didn't waste any time getting on the board. Lenhart gave the Rockets a 1-0 lead by scoring at the six minute mark of the first half. She added another goal at the 30-minute mark that staked the Rockets to a 2-0 halftime lead. The Rockets put the game away with three goals in the second half. Lenhart now has scored 41 goals this season, and she has 106 in her career. Lenhart has signed with UNC-Asheville. WHS finishes its season at 12-7-1.

NORTHWESTERN 3A/4A SOFTBALL SCOREBOARD

FRIDAY NIGHT'S GAMES

EAST GASTON 7, WATAUGA 6
ST. STEPHENS 7, SOUTH POINT 1
FREEDOM 8, HIBRITEN 4
ALEXANDER CENTRAL 8, SOUTH CALDWELL 0
FRED T. FOARD 3, TUSCOLA 0

TUESDAY NIGHT'S GAMES

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McDOWELL @ ALEXANDER CENTRAL
ST. STEPHENS @ ENKA
FRED T. FOARD @ CREST

NORTHWESTERN 3A/4A SOCCER SCOREBOARD

FRIDAY NIGHT'S GAMES

A.C. REYNOLDS 5, WATAUGA 0
T.C. ROBERSON 4, ALEXANDER CENTRAL 0
ST. STEPHENS 5, ASHBROOK 1
TUSCOLA 2, HIBRITEN 1 (OT)

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SATURDAY NIGHT'S GAMES

HICKORY @ ENKA
ASHE COUNTY @ CUTHBERTSON