

UDPATED: Pifer To Walk-On At Wallace State

Written by Mike Kelly
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Former Watauga High senior Jake Pifer, who graduated on May 26, has been invited to walk on by head coach John Meeks at Wallace State Community College in Hanceville, AL. Wallace State is a Division I junior college and a member of the Alabama Community College Conference. Pifer, a three-year varisty player, two-year starter and three-time all-

Northwestern 3A/4A Conference selection, joins a Lions program that was 20-17 last season. Behind Meeks, who begins his third year at the school this season, and third-team NJCAA All-American Jeremy McKay, Wallace State won its second state title in three seasons and made its second NJCAA Division I national tournament appearance. The Lions won the ACCC/Region 22 state championship after winning four games in four days as a No. 6 seed at the state tournament.

Pifer was WHS' only all-conference player last season. He averaged 19 points, six rebounds, two assists and three steals a game for a team that suffered through its first losing season in four years (2007-08). He's ranked fifth all-time in scoring at WHS. Pifer closed out his prep career with a memorable game against East Gaston in the opening round of the state playoffs last season. He scored 23 of his game-high 25 points in the second half, and nearly led WHS back from a 20-point, first-half deficit.

"Jake brings size to the perimeter for us," Meeks said. "He is a very good shooter and has good athleticism. He will be able to play a variety of positions for us right away. He will need to define a specific position and work on being a better ballhandler to be highly successful at the next level. Overall, he is a great kid and will be a tremendous asset to our program"

Pifer joins a coaching staff that's been together for ten years (at Bluefield College in Virginia and Lee University, an NAIA school in Tennessee). His new head coach, Meeks, spent two seasons as head coach at Louisburg College in North Carolina, where he went 51-15 and guided the Hurricanes to the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) Division II National Basketball Championship. Louisburg also notched its first ever tournament victory under Meeks, and he was named the 2010 NJCAA District 15 Coach of the Year. He has coached six NAIA All-Americans, 11 All-Conference players, four conference MVPs, three All-Region performers and one defensive player of the year.

Photo □ Courtesy: Jake Pifer, Bill Sheffield