

Jones Stands Out At State Games

Written by Mike Kelly
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Tyler Jones concluded a productive weekend that has raised his stock with college coaches. The rising senior from Watauga High went 4-6 with a walk and an RBI for a .666 batting average in four games at the Powerade North Carolina State Games in Winston-Salem. Jones went 1-1 with a walk on Sunday in the bronze medal game at BB&T Ball Park

at Wake Forest University. Unfortunately, Jones' team, the Region 7 All-Stars, lost to Region 8, 7-5, and finished fourth with a 2-2 record.

Jones effort this weekend rivals Cal Hardee of the Pioneers, who batted .455 representing the Pioneers at the State Games in 2009.

"Tyler had a great weekend," said WHS coach Pete Hardee, who was an assistant coach for Region 7. "He just continued doing what he did for us this spring. Tyler had a great tournament, and that's good to see because he's going to be one of our top players next season. Tyler also made an impression with the college coaches who were here. His stock has really gone up." The Region 7 team was coached by Jeff Burchett of Mooresville High; Hardee, Mike Herndon of Davie County, and Robert Little of Lake Norman were the assistant coaches.

Region 6 (from the Charlotte area) won the gold medal by knocking off Region 5 (from Winston-Salem) 3-0 in the finals. Region 3 won the fifth-place game by knocking off Region 2, 6-4; Region 4 won the seventh-place game by knocking of Region 1, 10-5.

SUNDAY'S GAMES

BB&T FIELD/WAKE FOREST UNIVESITY

SEVENTH PLACE GAME: REGION 4 def. REGION 1, 10-5

FIFTH-PLACE GAME: REGION 3 def. REGION 2, 6-4

BRONZE MEDAL GAME: REGION 8 def. REGION 7, 7-5

GOLD MEDAL GAME: REGION 6 def. REGION 5, 3-0

WEST DETHRONED AT STATE GAMES

For East Lincoln High women's soccer coach Jason Dragoon, it's been hit or miss the last four years at the Powerade North Carolina State Games. He led the West All-Star women's team to gold medals in 2009 and 2011, but he came away empty in 2010 and again this season. The West dropped a 3-2 decision to the North (they lost 7-6 on penalty kicks) on Saturday; they lost to the South 5-2 Sunday in the bronze medal game at Spry Stadium at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem. Trailing 2-1, the South scored four unanswered goals to win the match. "We played like a seasoned team," Dragoon said. "But we just couldn't buy a goal on Saturday. We only had a short time to come together, and these girls were so cohesive. They were an unselfish group. It's a shame we lost like we did Saturday. I mean we missed some excellent scoring chances by inches, mind you. It just wouldn't go in. It was just a tough day and tough weekend all the way around."

Lydia Mauney and Lillie Brady of Watauga High played for the West team. Brady suffered an ankle injury on Saturday and was only able to play seven minutes on Sunday; Mauney had a penalty-kick goal in Saturday's loss against the North. Macy Franklin of St. Stephens scored three goals for the West during the weekend's, two-day tournament.

"Lydia and Lillie are terrific players," Dragoon said. "I really enjoyed coaching them. They hustle all the time, and they have a great passion for the game. I really felt bad for Lillie after she injured her ankle. We taped her up, and she gave it a go on Sunday, but she really couldn't continue, so we had to pull her out. She wanted to go back in, but she wasn't really able to. She tried, though, and that's all that counts.

"I'm sorry I won't have a chance to coach (Mauney and Brady) next year because they'll be too old to play at this level, but it was a pleasure working with them the last two years. And it was a blast coaching this team. They worked real well together. It just wasn't our year. We may have come up short, but we had a lot of fun and that's all that matters."

The East won the women's gold medal game, knocking off the North, 5-1; the West led by Brian Jillings of Hickory (and a former assistant coach at WHS) won the men's gold-medal game by knocking off the East, 1-0. The South won the men's bronze medal game beating the North 4-2.

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SUNDAY'S GAMES

STATE SOCCER

SPRY STADIUM/WAKE FOREST UNIVERSITY

WOMEN:

BRONZE MEDAL GAME: SOUTH 5, WEST 2

GOLD MEDAL GAME: EAST 5, NORTH 1

MEN:

BRONZE MEDAL GAME: SOUTH 4, NORTH 2

GOLD MEDAL GAME: WEST 1, EAST 0