

Pioneers To Host East Gaston Monday

Written by Mike Kelly

Saturday, 23 February 2013 14:27

The North Carolina High School Athletic Association has released its pairings for the state basketball playoffs, which begin Monday night. The Watauga High boy's and girl's teams will both host first-round games. The girls play at 6 p.m., the

boy's game will follow.

The WHS boys (13-10), the No.1 seed from the Northwestern 3A/4A Conference and the No.5 seed in the West, will host East Gaston (11-13), the No.12 seed, from the MEGA 7 3A/4A Conference, Monday night at Lentz-Eggers Gym. East Gaston eliminated WHS in the opening round of the state playoffs last year in Mount Holly, N.C. The winner gets either Sun Valley (17-8), the No.4 seed, or Mallard Creek (18-8), the No.13 seed in the second round on Wednesday.

If Mallard Creek wins, the Pioneers would host again on Wednesday night. Ironically, Mallard Creek was 9-7 in the I-Meck Conference and finished fourth.

The WHS girls (11-13) will play East Gaston in the state playoffs for the third time in four years. The Pioneers defeated East Gaston in the opening-round of the state playoffs in 2009-10, when Brook Rhodes (now a senior at Cloudland (TN) High and who has signed with Presbyterian College, a Division I school and member of the Big South Conference) made her varsity debut in that game and scored 16 points against the Warriors. The Warriors defeated WHS in the opening round of the state playoffs at Lentz-Eggers Gym the following year, WHS is the No.2 seed from the NW3A/4A Conference and the No.8 seed in the West. East Gaston (8-17) is the No.9 seed in the West. The winner will play either North Mecklenburg (23-3), the No.1 seed in the West, or Lake Norman (13-11), the No.16 seed. If Lake Norman wins, the WHS girls will host a second-round game Wednesday night.

In other games, beginning with Class 4A, the South Caldwell boys (8-14) are the No.8 seed in the West and will play Charlotte-Garinger (8-16), the No.9 seed in the opening round. The Alexander Central boys (8-17) did not make the state playoffs.

In Class 3A, St. Stephens (19-7), led by Watauga County native Murphy Post, is the No.11 seed in the West and will open the state playoffs at Hickory (21-6), the No.6 seed, at Craft Gymnasium Monday night. Fred T. Foard, which won both the regular-season and tournament championships in the NW3A/4A, opens post-season play at home against Patton (7-18) on Monday. Hibriten did not make the playoffs. The Panthers (8-16) finished the season losing seven straight.

For the girls in Class 4A, Alexander Central (23-4), the No.1 seed among the 4A schools in the NW3A/4A, is the No.3 seed in the West. The Cougars, who lost to Hickory in the NW3A/4A Tournament championship game Friday night, entertain Huntersville-Hopewell (11-12), the No.14 seed, in the first round Monday night. South Caldwell (7-15) did not make the state playoffs.

In Class 3A, Hickory (24-2) has the top seed in the West. The Red Tornadoes, who pulled off the daily-double by winning the regular season (by a draw after Hickory, Fred T. Foard and Alexander Central shared a tri-championship) and tournament titles (they beat Alexander Central in the finals Friday night), will host Ashbrook (17-7), the No.16 seed from the Big South Conference, Monday.

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Fred T. Foard (18-8), the No.2 seed in the NW3A/4A, and the No.8 seed in the West, will open the state playoffs at home against the No.9 seed, R.S. Central (16-10). Hibriten (8-16), a No.14 seed in the West, travels to Shelby-Crest (18-4), the No.3 seed. for a first-round game. The Panthers, who lost to WHS in the opening round of the conference tournament, have lost five in a row. St. Stephens did not make the field. The Indians (3-21) finished the season with a 29-game losing streak in conference play.

In Class 2A, the Ashe County girls (12-12), a No.10 seed in the Midwest, will open the state playoffs at Surry Central (17-9), the No.7 seed, at 6:30 p.m.. The Ashe County boys (6-18) are a No.14 seed in the Midwest and will open the playoffs at No.3 Randolph-Trinity (19-4) Monday at 7 p.m.

In Class 1A, the Avery boys (12-14), led by first-year coach Scott Polsgrove, made the state playoffs and got a home game in the opening round. They're a No.8 seed in the West. They will host Cherokee (14-12), the No.9 seed, Monday night; the Avery girls (19-7) are seeded third and will play Rosman (16-8), the No.14 seed, at home on Monday.

Coverage of WHS basketball begins at 5:30 a.m. Monday on Classic Hits 100.7 FM.

STATE PLAYOFF PAIRINGS

GIRLS

CLASS 4A

MONDAY

HUNTERSVILLE-HOPEWELL (11-12) @ ALEXANDER CENTRAL (23-4)

EAST GASTON (8-17) @ **WATAUGA (11-13)**

CLASS 3A

ASHBROOK (17-7) @ HICKORY (24-2)

R.S CENTRAL (16-10) @ FRED T. FOARD (18-8)

HIBRITEN (8-16) @ SHELBY-CREST (18-4)

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CLASS 2A

ASHE COUNTY (12-12) @ SURRY CENTRAL (17-9)

CLASS 1A

ROSMAN (16-8) @ AVERY (19-7)

BOYS:

MONDAY NIGHT

CLASS 4A

EAST GASTON (11-13) @ **WATAUGA (13-10)**

CHARLOTTE-GARINGER (8-16) @ SOUTH CALDWELL (8-14)

CLASS 3A

PATTON (7-18) @ FRED T. FOARD (22-4)

ST. STEPHENS (19-7) @ HICKORY (21-6)

CLASS 2A

ASHE COUNTY (6-18) @ TRINITY (19-4)

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CLASS 1A

CHEROKEE (14-12) @ AVERY (12-14)