

## Seniors Lead Pioneers Past Patriots

Written by Mike Kelly

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On a cold, blustery night at Jack Groce Stadium, the Watauga High boy's soccer team closed out the

regular-season on a very strong note.

The Pioneers blasted Freedom 3-0 on Senior Night. Justin Hall and Logan Raichle hooked up on the first goal of the game at the ten minute mark of the first half, and the Pioneers dominated from there.

"It was a great night, especially for our seniors," said WHS coach Woody McKay. "They all figured in the scoring. I wish we could have scored some of these goals in our previous games (in losses to St. Stephens, Hickory and Fred T. Foard), we might have won the (Northwestern) conference title. Oh well, that's how things go sometimes. But it was still a good way for us to end the season."

The Pioneers (16-4-1 overall; 9-4-1 NW3A/4A Conference) finished in third place in the conference race, but they are the No.1 seed among the Class 4A schools.

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"The playoffs begin next (Tuesday)," McKay said. "The pairings will be announced on Monday. We should have a home game, at least in the first round. But we'll see how it goes."

The Pioneers made it to regionals last year. It was their first trip to regionals since 1999. The Pioneers broke things up with two more goals for their commanding halftime lead.

Raichle picked up an assist on Canyon Mueller's goal at the 17-minute mark of the first half, and Grayson Fenwick set up WHS' final tally as he fed Hunter Martin, who blasted one in from 30-yards away.

Fred T. Foard (11-2-1 NW3A/4A) clinched the conference championship by knocking off Hibriten 5-1 in Lenior Wednesday night.

The WHS seniors who were honored on Wednesday night were: Justin Hall, Logan Raichle, Canyon Mueller, Grayson Fenwick, Hunter Martin, Jake Chasteen, Patrick Williamson, Cam Linnville, Matt Hall, Forrest Ludwig, Josh Lampkins, and Jacob Michel (who suffered a facial injury and is out for the season).