

Blue Devils Down Pioneers On PKs

Written by Mike Kelly

Thursday, 31 October 2013 08:51

The Watauga High boy's soccer team was eliminated in the opening round of the North Carolina High School Athletic Association Class 4A state playoffs Wednesday night.

WHS (16-5-1), which made it to the western regional semifinals last year (their first trip since 1999), were upended by Mooresville, the No.27 seed in the western playoffs, by penalty kicks. The match ended in a 1-1 tie, and following two scoreless overtime periods, and two sudden death sessions, the Blue Devils (12-9-1), from the Northern Piedmont 3A/4A Conference, won the match by outscoring WHS 3-0 in penalty kicks.

The Blue Devils advance to the second round where they will play at East Forsyth on Saturday. East Forsyth, the No.11 seed from the Piedmont-Triad 4A Conference, blanked North Davidson 2-0 in its first-round match.

For WHS, which was ranked 11th in the Class 4A North Carolina Soccer Coaches Association Top 15 Poll, a great season came to an end, and head coach Woody McKay said his final good-byes to a great senior class that produced 34 wins the last two years.

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"It's was a tough loss," he said. "They really got off to a quick start and forced the play. They scored six minutes into the game, and then they just slowed things down from there. It was more of a defensive struggle from there. We really never found our rhythm."

Jonathan Quintero scored for Mooresville in the first half, and goalkeeper Jake Chasteen made a huge save late in the opening stanza that kept WHS close at 1-0. The Pioneers finally broke through and tied the game at the 60-minute mark of the second half. Cam Linnville set up Logan Raichle, who scored to tie the game.

"It was a beautiful goal," McKay said. "But we just couldn't score again. Give Mooresville a lot of credit. They forced it to penalty kicks, and they made their shots when it counted the most."

The Blue Devils scored on their first two attempts and led 2-0 in the penalty-kick round. Logan Raichle and Nick Kellner were stopped on their attempts by goalkeeper John Merrill of the Blue Devils. Jake Chasteen, who will play soccer at Appalachian State University next fall, hit the post on his attempt. Merrill guessed wrong and dove the wrong way on the shot. Quintero scored on his penalty kick attempt to clinch the match.

"Jake is one of our best offensive players," McKay said. "That's why we let him shoot. It was drilled, but it hit the post. It was just one of those nights. Logan ripped a good shot on his

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attempt, but their keeper made a huge stop. Tough loss, but I'm proud of the season we had."

Wednesday night's win also avenged a 2-1 loss against the Pioneers in the opening round of the state playoffs in 2011. The last time WHS lost in the opening round of the state playoffs was in 2010. They lost to Charlotte-Vance 7-2 that season.

WEDNESDAY'S GAMES

CLASS 4A

MOORESVILLE 1, WATAUGA 1 (MOORESVILLE WINS 3-0 ON PKS)

CLASS 3A

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FREEDOM 3, ENKA 1

ST. STEPHENS 2, ASHBROOK 1

FRED T. FOARD 6, WEST HENDERSON 2

CHINA GROVE-CARSON 4, HICKORY 1

CLASS 2A

ASHE COUNTY 3, WEST STOKES 2

CLASS 1A

AVERY 3, HIGHLAND TECH 0