

Habich Named Coach Of Year

Written by Mike Kelly

Sunday, 01 December 2013 09:31

Well, it didn't take long for Ryan Habich to make an impact with the Watauga High football team. Habich led the Pioneers to an 8-4 record and the No.1 seed among the Class 4A schools in the

Northwestern 3A/4A Conference.

And for his efforts, Habich was named the NW3A/4A Coach of the Year. Adrian Snow was the last WHS coach to win that honor back in 2006.

The Pioneers also had nine players named to the all-conference team. That's the most selections WHS has had since 2007. He also led WHS to its most profitable season since 2007 with those eight wins. And keep in mind two of those losses came in overtime (to Freedom, which won the regular-season title in the NW3A/4A) and by one point (against Hibriten, which lost in the Class 3A state quarterfinals on Friday night).

"Our goal was to be competitive, especially in conference this season," Habich said. "And we accomplished that. Our guys really stepped it up, and we're young. We're going to have 22 seniors on this team next year. And we have an entire off season to get get bigger and stronger. Our future looks pretty good."

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Aaron Dobbins, Cameron Baker, Hunter Isaacs, T.J. Poulos, Stephen Shirley, Justin Greer, Dakota McCrary, Jake Williams, and Kenon Fox were named to the all-conference team; Zach Williams and Jacob Rutz were named honorable mention.

"It was great playing for coach Habich," McCrary said. "He really brought a lot of discipline to our team. We've lacked that in past years. He told us from day one (when camp opened) that we were a team, there were no individuals. And if anyone didn't agree with that, they could pack up their stuff and leave right now. He made us a better team. We owe all of this to him and the coaching staff."

Khris Garden of Freedom was named the Offensive Player of the Year, Tim Perkins of Patton was named the Defensive Player of the Year and Jahiz Linebarger of Hickory was the Special Teams Player of the Year.

Freedom led the way with 14 all-conference selections, Hibriten had 11.

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Dobbins was the NW3A/4A leading passer this season with 1,983 yards. He tossed 24 touchdown passes with only eight interceptions and he completed 53% of his passes. And keep in mind, Dobbins only played in ten games this season.

He left the season opener against Alexander Central with a concussion early in the second quarter, and he sat out the Ashe County game the following week.

Baker was among the leading receivers in the NW3A/4A with 42 receptions for 1,064 yards and 14 TD receptions. Poulos, an all-purpose player, was also among the leading receivers in the league with 41 catches for 742 yards and eight receiving TDs.

Zach Williams was WHS' leading rusher as he finished the season with 845 yards on 152 carries and 18 TDs---which was second most rushing TDs in the NW3A/4A. McCrary was WHS' leading tackler with an average of 11 stops per game.

WHS ALL-CONFERENCE SELECTIONS:

Aaron Dobbins

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Cameron Baker

Hunter Isaacs

T.J. Poulos

Dakota McCrary

Justin Greer

Stephen Shirley

Jake Williams

Kenan Fox

Honorable Mention:

Zach Williams

Jacob Rutz

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Coach of the Year

Ryan Habich, Watauga

Photo Courtesy: Ryan Habich, WHS Athletics