

Surprise, Surprise....

Written by Mike Kelly
Saturday, 12 April 2014 10:25

And it wasn't what Watauga High girls' soccer coach Brittany Bolick expected.

The Watauga High girls' soccer team suffered through another disappointing performance Friday night. The Pioneers (10-2-3 overall; 5-2-1 Northwestern 3A-4A Conference) battled Freedom to a 1-1 tie at Jack Groce Stadium.

The match was scoreless for 65 minutes before Watauga finally scored. Abby Carson scored on a feed from Madi Critcher for a 1-0 lead. But that lead didn't last long

Freedom (6-7-1; 1-6-1) pulled even just six minutes later to tie the match. Sophomore Joella Knopf scored on an assist by Logan Dunston. Knopf buried one from 25-yards out.

The teams battled through a pair of ten-minute overtime periods. The tie leaves WHS in third place and 2 1/2 out of first behind St. Stephens in the NW3A-4A standings. The Indians (8-0 NW3A-4A) defeated Patton 7-0 Friday night'

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"We dominated the play, but we just couldn't find a way to put one in," Bolick said.

The goal by Knopf was Freedom's first in Boone in 15 seasons. The Patriots had last played at Watauga in 2009, and they last beat Watauga in Boone in 1999 before losing their next nine matches.

Freedom goalkeeper Quay Mills made 15 saves.

Watauga won the junior varsity match, 1-0. Meghan Gottfried scored the game's only goal at the three minute mark of the first half.

The Pioneers play at Hibriten Tuesday.

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WHS SOFTBALL FALLS TO FREEDOM, 7-6

Friday night's loss exemplified the type of season the Watauga High softball team is having. The Pioneers (2-9 overall; 2-8 Northwestern 3A-4A Conference) dropped a 7-6 decision to Freedom Friday night at the WHS Softball Complex.

As usual, a costly mistake led to a big inning. With the game tied 2-2 in the top of the fifth inning, an error opened the door for Freedom. The Patriots scored four runs to take a 6-2 lead. Rebecca Epley, who victimized WHS with a two-run triple in the first inning, hurt the Pioneers again with a two-run double in the fifth.

The Pioneers rallied and scored three times in the bottom of the seventh, but they fell short in their comeback attempt. Elizabeth Dollar paced WHS offensively going 3-4 with a double, a triple, and two runs-batted-in. Her RBI triple made it 6-3 in the bottom of the fifth, and her run-scoring single in the seventh, made it 7-6, but Dollar was cut down at second base to end the game.

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Shelby Winebarger and Megan Jackson, who was 2-4 with a double, each drove in two runs. Sarah Combs scored twice.

Jackson got the start and suffered the loss. She coughed up two earned runs on three hits with four strikeouts in four innings.

"The fifth inning has been our problem inning lately," said WHS assistant coach Jerry Moretz. "We made the switch, but it backfired on us. It's been tough. But our girls have set a goal for themselves. They want to win their remaining games (against Hibriten on Tuesday and Patton on Thursday) before the Easter (holiday) break."

"We looked like we were going to take it to them," Kostis said. "Sometimes we've struggled against a slow pitcher. She's got good speed, but she's slower than what we've seen this week, so it took us a little while for us to get used to it. We made great adjustments early on during an at-bat instead of striking out and waiting until next time."

Michala McCune finished up and gave up five runs, only one earned, on six hits with five strikeouts. The Pioneers travel to Lenior to play Hibriten Tuesday; they travel to Patton on Thursday.

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HICKORY DOWNS WHS IN BOYS' LACROSSE

The Watauga High boys' lacrosse team saw its hopes for a conference championship take a huge step backwards Friday night.

The Pioneers (2-6 overall; 2-2 North Carolina Conference 13) were bested 13-7 by first-place Hickory on the road at Barger Stadium. The loss leaves WHS in third place, two games off the lead with four conference games left to play.

Hickory (5-1 NC 13; 6-2), which maintained a half-game lead on Freedom for first place, also

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swept the season series against WHS. The Patriots (4-1 NC 13 and overall) knocked off Patton 8-3 Friday night.

Jake Williams scored three goals to pace the Pioneers; Zack Williams had two goals; Dylan Arbogast and Canyon Mueller each had a goal apiece.

The Pioneers take on Freedom at home in a doubleheader on Tuesday at Leigh Wallace Memorial Field. The first game starts at 5 p.m.; the second game will follow.

NC CONFERENCE 13 STANDINGS

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(Through Friday's games)

Hickory 5-1; 6-2

Freedom 4-1; 4-1

WATAUGA 2-2; 2-6

St. Stephens 2-3; 3-5

Patton 0-6; 0-8

Friday's games

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Hickory 13, Watauga 7

Freedom 8, Patton 3

SOFTBALL

Northwestern 3A-4A

Freedom 7, Watauga 6

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Hibriten 11, Fred T. Foard 7

St. Stephens 16, Patton 9

S. Caldwell 17, Hickory 1, 4 inn.

GIRLS SOCCER

Northwestern 3A-4A

Freedom 1, Watauga 1, OT (tie)

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St. Stephens 7, Patton 0

Hickory 2, South Caldwell 0