

JV wrestlers win Alma varsity tournament

By DICK BOYD

The Norton Community High School junior varsity wrestling team opened its season Saturday by winning the championship of the Alma, Neb. Varsity Invitational Wrestling Tournament.

The Norton junior varsity compiled 157 points to easily outdistance second place Wauneta-Palisade, which scored 118.5 points. Third place went to Kearney Catholic, 117 and fourth to Eustis-Farnam, 116. They were followed by Overton, 75; Alma, 66; Pleasanton, 59; unattached, 45; Wilcox-Hildreth, 43; Loomis 34; SEM, 31; Southern Valley JV, 29. Norton had only one champion but four Blue Jays placed second, four were third and two fourth.

Thirteen Blue Jay wrestlers competed for Norton and six competed on the unattached team. Assistant Coach Dayton Hager accompanied the wrestlers.

Norton's champion was freshman Travis Ray, 112 pounds.

Placing second were freshmen Andrew Black, 103; Aaron Husted, 130; Jeff Soderlund, 135 and Zach Mannel, 215.

Winning third place were sophomores Jared Bebb, 119, and Chris Davis, 145, and freshmen Todd Bolt, 125, and Clay McMullen, 140.

Fourth place finishes were won by senior Paul Juenemann, 189, and freshman Ben Rojas, 275.

Also competing for Norton were freshman Brian Sproul, 152 and junior Brady Linner, 171.

Unattached were: freshmen Bryce Engelbert, 112, third place, Aaron Van Der Wege, 119, and Austin Brown, 125; and sophomores Michael Ward, 135; Jordan Durham, 140, fourth place and Shane Stanley, 189.

For his gold medal performance, Travis Ray was named "Junior Varsity Wrestler of the Week".

"This was a varsity tournament. There are always some good wrestlers at this tournament," said Norton head coach Bill Johnson. "Overall, Coach Hager said we wrestled outstanding. We outthusted the competition and were in better physical condition than our opponents. It was a very good day for our junior varsity wrestlers."

Ray was seeded No. 3 at 112 pounds. He received a first round bye, then pinned No. 2 seed Justin Shriver, Overton, in 3:29 minutes in the semi-finals. He won the championship with a 4-2 decision over No. 1 seed Andy Miller, Alma.

Bryce Engelbert wrestled unattached at 112. He was seeded No. 4 and pinned No. 5 seed Curtis Burden, SEM, in 47 seconds. He was pinned in 3:05 by Miller and dropped into the consolation bracket. He pinned Shriver in 1:52 to place third.

At 103 pounds, Black pinned No. 1 seed Ezequial Garcia, SEM, in 2:49 of their first round match. In the semi-finals, he won a 13-1 major decision over No. 4 seed Jacob McCann, Kearney Catholic. In the championship finals, he was pinned in 4:33 by No. 2 seed Brandon Rimpley, Overton.

Garcia pinned McCann in 2:09 to place third.

Husted was seeded No. 3 at 130 and received a first round bye. In the semi-finals, he pinned No. 2 seed Kane Keller, Eustis-Farnam, in 1:06. In the championship finals, he was pinned in 1:29 by No. 1 seed Ben Kahle, Kearney Catholic.

Keller placed third by pinning No. 4 seed Ryan Eckhout, Pleasanton.

Soderlund was seeded No. 3 at 135 pounds. In the first round, he pinned Denny Holstein, Overton, in 1:33. In the semi-finals, he decided No. 2 seed Tyler Pieper, Eustis-Farnam, 10-9. In the championship finals, he was pinned in 1:33 by No. 1 seed Danny Norwood, Kearney Catholic.

Pieper placed third with a 6-4 decision over No. 4 seed A.C. Werner, Wauneta-Palisade.

Ward wrestled unattached at 135 and lost to Norwood by a fall



in 1:46 in the first round, then lost by a fall in 1:12 to No. 5 seed Mark Florom, Alma, in the consolation bracket.

At 215 pounds, Mannel pinned No. 2 seed Kyle Freeland, Loomis, in 1:22 of their first round match. In the semi-finals, he pinned No. 3 seed Travis Cumpston, SEM, in 1:35. In the championship finals, he was pinned in 1:28 by No. 1 seed Craig Tarr, Wilcox-Hildreth.

Cumpston placed third by pinning Freeland in 2:23.

Jared Bebb was seeded No. 4 at 119 pounds. In the first round, he was pinned in 53 seconds by No. 5 seed Philip Lee, Kearney Catholic. Van Der Wege wrestled unattached and was pinned in 19 seconds of his first round match with No. 1 seed Corey Snider, Overton. Bebb and Van Der Wege dropped into the consolation bracket where they wrestled each other. Bebb won by a fall in 1:22. Bebb then pinned Caleb Roberts, Alma, in 2:00 and pinned No. 3 seed Blake Sanders, Eustis-Farnam, in 2:59 to place third.

No. 2 seed Dirk Vapenik, Wauneta-Palisade, won the championship by pinning Snider in 3.

At 125 pounds, Bolt was seeded No. 3. In the first round, it took him just 18 seconds to pin Tyler Swanson, Overton. In the semi-finals, he was pinned in 1:40 by No. 2 seed Jesse West, Wauneta-Palisade. In the consolation bracket, Bolt pinned No. 5 seed John Matson, unattached, in 56 seconds. Bolt won the consolation championship by pinning No. 4 seed Joe Webber, Southern Valley, in 2:38.

West won the championship with a 9-2 decision over No. 1 seed Will Craig, Wauneta-Palisade.

Brown wrestled unattached at 125 pounds. He was pinned in 2:38 of his first round match with Craig. In the consolation bracket, he was pinned in 3:59 by Matson.

McMullen was the No. 2 seed and drew a first round bye at 140 pounds. In the semi-finals, he was pinned by No. 3 seed Brandon Percival, Southern Valley. In the consolation bracket, he pinned No. 5 seed Casey Drew, Pleasanton, in 3:39 to reach the consolation finals.

Durham wrestled unattached at 140 and was seeded No. 4. In his first round match, he pinned Drew in 4:51. In the semi-finals, he was pinned in 1:45 by No. 1 seed Jake Smith, Wauneta-Palisade. In the consolation bracket, he pinned Greg Schepler, Wilcox-Hildreth, in 32 seconds to reach the consolation finals against his teammate McMullen. The consolation championship was won by McMullen with a 7-5 decision.

Smith won the championship with a 16-0 technical fall over Percival.

At 145, Davis was seeded No. 2 and drew a bye. In the semi-finals, he lost a 10-7 decision to No. 3 seed Josh Vanden Berge, Kearney Catholic. In the consolation bracket, Davis pinned Matt Mullen, unattached, in 2:43. He won the consolation championship with a 10-3 decision over No. 4 seed Chris Beason, SEM.

No. 1 seed Pat Kohl, Eustis-Farnam, won the championship with a fall in 1:05 over Vanden Berge.

Juenemann was seeded No. 3 at 189 and received a bye. In the semi-finals, he was pinned in 38 seconds by No. 2 seed Brennon Malcom, Eustis-Farnam. In the consolation bracket, he faced teammate Stanley, who was wrestling unattached. Juenemann pinned Stanley in 2:59 to advance to the consolation finals. Juenemann injury defaulted to No. 4 seed Jeff Svoboda, Loomis, and placed fourth.

Stanley lost his opening match when he was pinned in 3:07 by No. 1 seed Ben Robison, Alma.

Robison won the championship with a 5-2 decision over Malcom.

At 275 pounds, Rojas was seeded No. 4. In the first round, he was pinned in 1:00 by No. 5 seed Chris Beins, unattached. In the consolation bracket, he pinned No. 3 seed Andrew Ward, Wauneta-Palisade, in 2:02. In the consolation finals, he was pinned in 1:35 by Beins in the second meeting of the two and placed fourth.

No. 1 seed Justin Hood, Pleasanton, won the championship by pinning No. 2 seed Andy Lange, Overton, in 1:54.

Sproul wrestled at 152 pounds. In the first round, he was pinned in 29 seconds by No. 2 seed Peter Barger, Wauneta-Palisade. In the consolation bracket, he shutout Mike Shaw, Southern Valley, by a 10-0 score. Next, he wrestled No. 4 seed Colby Gray, Loomis, and was pinned in 1:47.

Gray placed third with a 3-1 decision over No. 3 seed Grant Schroll, Pleasanton. No. 1 seed Drew Sorenson, Kearney Catholic, won the championship by pinning Barger in 4:34.

Linner lost his first round match at 171 pounds by a fall in 1:13 to No. 1 seed Jake Rundback, Wauneta-Palisade. In the consolation bracket, he pinned No. 5 seed Aaron Kimberly, Loomis, in 2:18. Next, he wrestled No. 2 seed Kyle Saylor, Kearney Catholic, and was pinned in 54 seconds.

Saylor pinned Shane Davis, Overton, in 2:20 to win third. Rundback won the championship by pinning No. 3 seed Kale Holloway, Pleasanton, in 3:20.

Norton was open at 160 pounds. No. 1 seed Henry Cross, Eustis-Farnam, won the championship by pinning No. 2 seed Allen Mintzmyer, Alma, in 5:50. No. 3 seed Tyler Livingston, Wilcox-Hildreth, placed third with a fall in 3:43 over No. 5 seed Taylor Bertholf, Kearney Catholic.

The Norton junior varsity will compete Friday in the Southern Valley Varsity Tournament at Oxford, beginning at 3:30 p.m.

Huskies' boys take second victory

The Northern Valley Huskies beat the Golden Plains Bulldogs, 74-60, Saturday in Rexford for their second basketball victory of the young season.

"After getting rid of the first game jitters and becoming more confident with a win, I felt we were ready to go out and take care of business and come away with two wins to start the season, which is exactly what we did," said Coach Jason Dibble. "With scoring having been a concern in the past, I hope to be able to say that we did get over the hump for now by going out and scoring 74 points in the second game of the year. Last year we never scored more than 59 points in any one game and this year we have surpassed that mark twice.

"I think our aggressive offensive mentality while playing under control is definitely paying off and also contributed to only 11 turnovers, which is tremendous considering our average last year.

"Joey gained some confidence by hitting two early threes to get us off to a good start against their zone and forcing them to play man on us where we executed our offense well. We did however get into some foul trouble early and were forced to put some players into a position they were not used to, but adjusted to very well.

"Andrew came off the bench and gave us some strong minutes in the first and all of the second quarter once Cole got his third foul.

"In the second half we did a much better job of defending the three, especially after Golden Plains hit 6 in the first half, but only managed two against our zone in the second half. Avery Thalheim had an outstanding game with 10 assists and Jesse and Henry contributed in the scoring department.

"If we continue to get to the free throw line and shoot like we are, it will definitely help us in close games. Coming out of this weekend with 2 wins was huge for our confidence, but we also need to continue to work hard in practice and not take anything for granted."

Joey Copper led scoring with 27 points, followed by Jesse Hilburn, 18; Henry Griffiths, 15; Avery Thalheim, 7; David Harris, 5; and Cole Kinderknecht, 2.

Rebounding honors went to Copper with five; Hilburn, four; Thalheim and Griffiths, three apiece; Kinderknecht and Andrew Sheley, two each; and Clarke Nelson and Scott Shearer, one each.

Steals were made by Copper, two, and Griffiths, Thalheim, Nelson and Hilburn, one each.



Husky Andrew Sheley grabs a rebound in the game Saturday against Golden Plains. — Telegram photo by Susie Marble

Making assists were Thalheim, 10; Griffiths, two; Hilburn and Sheley, one apiece.

The junior varsity was edged 49-44 by Golden Plains.

"In the beginning of this game we were making things harder for ourselves than we needed to," said the coach. "Once we settled down and figured out to pass the ball and make the defense move, we got some easy wide open looks at the basket.

"We were able to hit some 3s against the zone and especially opened some holes in the third quarter when Andrew seemed to score at will with 14 points in the quarter. We definitely played better in the second half coming from down 8 at half to up 2 at the end of the third.

"One of our weaknesses reared its ugly head again and we turned the ball over way too many times, but were still able to almost tie it with a David Harris 3 pointer that went in and out two or three times before falling out. One of the other weaknesses was rebounding on

the back side of our zone, but I want to give the kids credit for coming out and increasing our scoring from the first night. Cody Lowry and Chad Husted helped contribute to the scoring increase as well as David with seven rebounds."

Sheley led scoring with 16 points, followed by Cody Lowry and Chad Husted, 9 each; Scott Shearer, 4; Harris, Bryce Marble, and Nelson, 2 apiece.

Rebounding were Harris, 7; Sheley, 5; Anthony Simants, 4; Husted, 3; Shearer, 2; Lowry, Richie Kersch, and Chance Miller, 1 apiece.

Northern Valley 74,

Golden Plains 60

Northern Valley

Copper 9 2 5-3 27, Hilburn 3 1 9-9 18, Griffiths 6 1 1-0 15, Thalheim 0 1 4-4 7, Harris 1 1 0-0 5, Kinderknecht 1 0 2-0 2, Nelson 0 0 2-0 0. Totals 20 6 21-16 74.

Golden Plains

Totals 12 8 19-12 60.

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