

Norton wins Newton Wrestling Tournament

By DICK BOYD

Coach Bill Johnson's Norton Community High School wrestling team surprised everyone outside of Northwest Kansas when they became the smallest school to win the prestigious Newton Wrestling Tournament of Champions last year and they really got everyone's attention last weekend when they won it for the second year in a row!

No team with lower enrollment than a Class 5A school had ever won the tournament until last year and this year the Blue Jays returned for the 43rd annual Friday-Saturday event and brought home the team trophy again.

Norton amassed 165 points to win the championship over 26 other schools.

Perry, Okla., placed second with 155 and Colby was third with 139. They were followed by Bishop Carroll, 127.5; Valley Center, 119; Arkansas City, 116.5; Derby, 114.5; Wichita South, 112; Gardner-Edgerton, 110.5; Hutchinson, 107.5; Clay Center, 103; Maize, 100; Wichita Northwest, 79.5; McPherson, 73; Manhattan, 69.5; Emporia, 64; Salina South, 55; Buhler, 54; Dodge City, 52; Mill Valley, 50.5; Leavenworth, 44; Winfield, 31.5; El Dorado, 29.5; Andover, 28; Campus, 25; Newton, 22; Wichita East, 12.

Fourteen of the 27 teams who competed in the tournament are state ranked. In Class 6A, they are Manhattan, No.3; Hutchinson, No.4; Emporia, No.5; Maize, No.6; Derby, No.7; Wichita South, No.9. Ranked teams competing from Class 5A were: Arkansas City, No.2; Bishop Carroll, No.3; Campus, No.5; Salina South, No.9. Clay Center is ranked No.1 and Colby is No.6 in Class 4A. Norton is ranked No.1 in Class 3-2-1A. Perry, Okla. is ranked No.10 in the state of Oklahoma in all size enrollments.

Norton, Clay Center, Bishop Carroll and Perry, which is Class 2A, are all defending state champions.

This was the fourth year for Norton to compete in this tournament. The first year, Norton placed five wrestlers and scored 121 points to finish sixth. Two years ago, the Blue Jays placed eight wrestlers and scored 125 points to finish fourth.

Last year, eight of 13 Norton boys placed in the top eight as the Blue Jays won the championship with 170.5 points.

This year, only 10 Blue Jay wrestlers were entered and eight placed in the top eight of their weight classes.

Norton has had an individual champion all four years. This year it was senior 160 pound wrestler Lance Roe.

Norton had six wrestlers in Saturday night's championship finals, by far the most of any school. Placing second in their weight classes were: freshman Zach Bainter, 112; senior Clay Madden, 119; junior Nathan Broeckelman, 125; senior Luke Pfannenstiel, 152 and senior Davvid Stanley, 171.

Senior Jeremy Harding placed fourth at 145 and junior Blake VanEaton finished in seventh place at 140.

Not placing were junior Kent Mann, 130 and senior Jon Harding, 135.

Norton was open at 103, 189, 215 and 275 pounds.

For the second straight year, coach Johnson was named "Outstanding Coach of the Tournament".

Aaron Ely of Leavenworth, who is ranked No.1 at 119 in Class 6A in the state, was named "Outstanding Wrestler of the Tournament". Ely decided Madden in the championship match, handing Madden his first loss of the season.

Coach Johnson named the entire Norton wrestling team "Wrestlers of the Week".

"This tournament was tougher than last year's," said Johnson. "Most weight classes had five to eight defending state medalists. To finish in the top eight was extremely tough and eight of our wrestlers did just that."

"I'm very proud of the way our boys wrestled in this tournament."

"Coming into the tournament, I didn't know if entering only 10 out of 14 wrestlers would be enough to place in the top three teams."

"On Friday, we wrestled extremely well and put six in Saturday's finals. That was a very successful first day."

"I'm not disappointed that we had only one champion. It was our little school against the rest of the state plus one Oklahoma team. In fact, no school had more than one champion. Wichita South had three in the finals and no champions. Perry had two and one champion. Bishop Carroll had two and one champion. Maize had two in the finals and only one champion. Clay Center had two finalists and no champions. In fact, every single champion was from a different school."

"This tournament is tougher to win than our state tournament. We go to this tournament to prepare for the state tournament. We want all our wrestlers to be tested before the state tournament and they were tested in this tournament. In order to be the best wrestlers, you have to wrestle the best. The competition in this tournament is very tough."

"Obviously, I'm very pleased we placed eight of 10 wrestlers and that all 10 made it to the quarter-finals."

"I had several comments from other coaches and spectators on how hard our wrestlers compete, win or lose. This is a real compliment to our wrestlers. I'm proud of the way we go out and lay it on the line each and every time. If you don't go out and compete hard every time, anyone can beat you. A lot of times, the best wrestler doesn't win."

"Many, many thanks to all our fans, many of whom made the 500 mile trip to Newton to support us. The Norton fan section was larger than any other school's."

Norton had a win-loss record of 27-12 in the tournament and a pin ratio of 12-2. "We were leading at the time when we were pinned in those two matches and probably would have won them," said Johnson.

Individual placings

Norton's Lance Roe is ranked No.1 in the state in Class 3-2-1A at 160 pounds and was seeded No.3. In the first round, he won a 21-6 technical fall over Tanner Kriss, Colby. In the quarter-finals, he won a 13-5 major decision over No.6 seed Alex Juby, Buhler.

In the semi-finals, Roe wrestled No.1 state ranked at 145 in 6A and No.2 seed Romero Cotton, Hutchinson. Cotton brought a 17-1 record into the match. Roe

scored five points in the first period on two takedowns and an escape but Cotton tallied four points on a takedown and two escapes to make the score 5-4 in Roe's favor. In the second period, Cotton scored a point on an escape to tie the score at 5-all. Neither wrestler scored in the third period, sending it into overtime. In the one minute extra period, both wrestlers were on their feet and neither could takedown the other. Cotton had the choice for the next 30 seconds and he chose bottom. Roe rode him for the entire 30 seconds for the 6-5 victory!

In the championship finals on Saturday night, Roe wrestled Brendan Lund, Clay Center, who had handed Roe his only loss of the season when they met in the Clay Center Invitational earlier this season. Lund is ranked No.1 in the state in Class 4A and was seeded No.1. Roe took Lund down twice in the first period to take a 4-1 lead, then took Lund down for a three-point near fall in the second period to extend his lead to 7-1. In the third period, Roe earned two more takedown points and Lund got two for a reversal to make the final score 9-3 and earn the gold medal for Roe.

With the win, Roe extended his season record to 21-1. Lund is now 17-1.

In the third place match, Cotton won a 9-1 major decision over Juby.

Zach Bainter is ranked No.4 in the state at 112 pounds and was seeded No.5. In his first match, he pinned Jabez Zinobu, Maize, in 3:54, then won a 5-3 decision over Devin Slane, Andover. In the semi-finals, Bainter wrestled No.2 state ranked in 6A and No.1 seed Mike Creekmore, Wichita South. After a scoreless first period, Bainter took a 2-0 lead with a reversal and pinned Creekmore in 3:49 to advance to Saturday's championship finals.

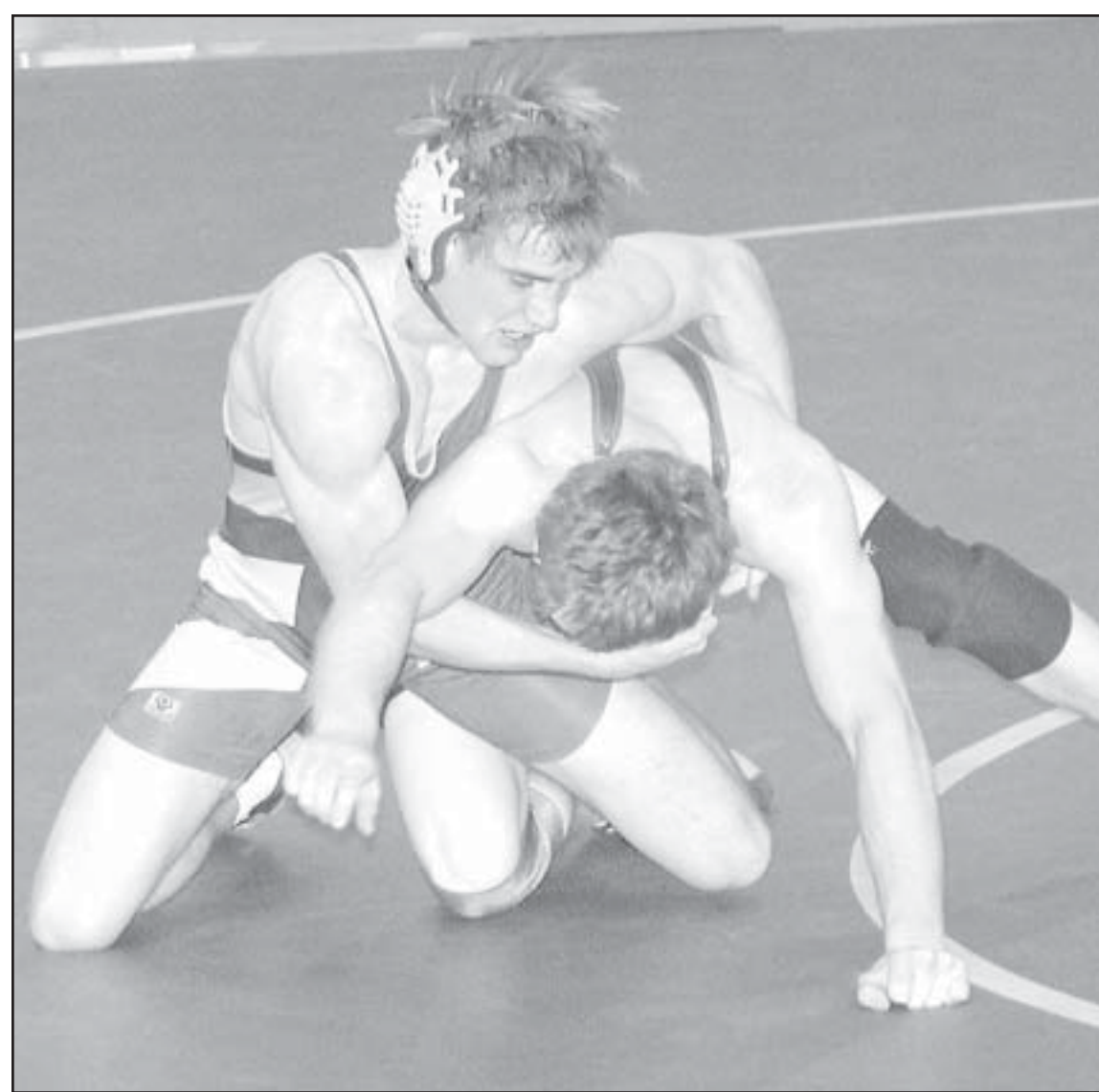
Bainter wrestled Micah Ankenman, Hutchinson, who is ranked No.3 in the state in 6A and was seeded No.2. Ankenman got two takedowns and Bainter got two escapes in the first period to put Ankenman ahead 4-2. In the second period, Bainter got a reversal to tie the score at 4-all. Ankenman prevailed in the third period, however, when he took Bainter down for two points to win 6-4.

Bainter is now 10-1 for the season and Ankenman is 15-4. Ankenman is the son of Tom Ankenman, who was a three-time state champion for the Norton Blue Jays when in high school here.

Third place went to Joey Stephens, Derby, the No.3 seed, with a 5-3 decision over Creekmore.

Clay Madden is ranked No.1 in the state at 119 and was seeded No.1 in the tournament. In his first round match, he won a 13-3 major decision over No.8 seed Logan Cooper, Campus. Next, he pinned Brett Delich, Shawnee, in 2:41. In the semi-finals, he pinned No.5 seed Seth Mertins, Valley Center, in 1:50.

In the championship finals, Madden wrestled No.1 state ranked in 6A and No.3 seed Aaron Ely, Leavenworth. Madden trailed by just 2-0 after a first period takedown. Neither wrestler scored in the second period. Mertins scored 11 points on two near falls, two takedowns and an escape and



Norton's 140 pound wrestler Blake VanEaton gets two points for a takedown against Smith Center's Travis Warner in Thursday's dual. Warner is ranked No.1 in the state and VanEaton is ranked No.3. It was a hard fought match, but Warner prevailed 8-4.

— Telegram photo by Dick Boyd

Madden scored just two points on two escapes in the final period as Ely won a 13-2 major decision.

It was the first season loss for Madden who is now 21-1. Ely is now 13-1.

No.2 seed Trison Graham, Ark City, won third with a 10-4 decision over No.6 seed Trenton Powell, Colby.

At 125 pounds, Nathan Broeckelman is ranked No.1 in the state and was seeded No.1. In the first round, he won an 11-6 decision over Dane Rodriguez, Derby, then he decided No.8 seed Cody Broyles, Ark City, 8-6. In the semi-finals, he pinned Beau Hintzen, Maize, in 1:41.

In the championship finals, Broeckelman wrestled No.2 seed Nick Nothern, Salina South. Neither wrestler scored in the first period. Broeckelman took a 3-1 lead in the second period with an escape and takedown. Nothern rallied in the final period and scored 3 points on an escape and takedown to win 4-3.

Broeckelman is now 22-2 for the season and Nothern is 19-1.

Third place went to Stephen Swan, Perry, with a 7-2 decision over No.3 seed Justin Broadbent, Mill Valley.

Luke Pfannenstiel, who is ranked No.3 in the state at 152, was seeded No.3 in the tournament. In the first round, he pinned Alan McMurray, McPherson, in 1:44. In the quarter-finals, he won a 15-3 major decision over No.6 seed Blake Long, Derby. In the semi-finals, Pfannenstiel, won a 3-2 decision over No.2 seed Kyle Allen, Clay Center.

In the championship finals, Pfannenstiel wrestled No.1 state ranked in 5A and No.1 seed David Loos, Bishop Carroll. Loos got two takedowns and Pfannenstiel scored on two escapes in the first period to trail 4-2. Another takedown by Loos and escape by Pfannenstiel in the second period made the score 6-3. Pfannenstiel

got his only takedown of the match in the third period but Loos got an escape to win 7-5. Pfannenstiel is now 18-4 for the season and Loos is 17-3.

Davvid Stanley was seeded No.2 at 171 pounds. In his first match, he pinned David Bonner, Dodge City, in 4:48. Next, he pinned Lucas Ortiz, Leavenworth, in 4:45. In the semi-finals, Stanley pinned his third straight opponent when he made Gabe Myers, Valley Center, count the lights with a fall in 3:02.

Stanley wrestled No.1 seed Dusty Ward, Perry, in the championship finals. Ward scored four points on two takedowns and Stanley tallied two on two escapes in the first period to put Ward ahead 4-2. In the second period, Ward added to his lead with an escape and takedown to make the score 7-2. Stanley continued to battle in the third period but was able to score only three points on a takedown and escape while Ward added six more points on a near fall, takedown and escape to win a 13-5 major decision.

Stanley is now 15-10. Ward extended his season record to 16-2.

No.4 seed Ryan Garrett, Buhler, placed third by pinning Myers in 2:10.

Jeremy Harding is ranked No.6 in the state and was seeded No.4 in the tournament. In the first round, he pinned Ronnie Schmidt, Newton, in 1:19. Next, he edged No.5 seed Michael Schwind, Valley Center, 3-2. In the semi-finals, he lost a 10-3 decision to No.1 seed Austin Workman, Perry, who is ranked No.7 in all classes in the state of Oklahoma. In the consolation bracket, Harding wrestled Alex Patrick, Wichita South, and decided him 6-4 to qualify for the consolation championship match. Harding injury defaulted to No.3 seed Taylor Finley, Colby, and placed fourth.

Jeremy Harding's record is now 19-3.

No.2 seed Nathan Thibault, Maize, won the championship with an 8-6 decision in overtime over Workman.

Blake VanEaton is ranked No.3 in the state at 140 and was seeded No.7. In the first round, he pinned Isaac Oglesby, Derby, in 47 seconds. Next, he was shutout 7-0 by No.2 seed Zac Hintzen, Maize. In the consolation bracket, he won a 13-1 major decision over Jordan Kolterman, Clay Center. In his next match, he lost a 4-1 decision to No.3 seed Levi Sides, McPherson. In his final match, he shutout Brandon Moberly, Salina South, 5-0 to earn seventh place.

VanEaton is now 21-4.

No.1 state ranked in 4A and No.1 seed Cole Garcia, Colby, won the championship with a 9-2 decision over Hintzen. Third place went to Sides when No.6 seed

Mitch Arnold, Bishop Carroll, injury defaulted.

Kent Mann was the No.6 seed at 130 pounds. In the first round, he overpowered Colton Snook, Derby, and won a 16-0 technical fall. He lost his quarter-finals match by a 6-1 score to No.3 seed Ry Fleming, Perry. In the consolation bracket, he wrestled Jared Flanagan, Colby, and led going into the third period where he was pinned in 3:50.

Mann is now 15-4 for the season.

No.1 seed Wes Barrett, El Dorado, won the championship with a 12-7 decision over No.2 seed Daniel Munoz, Wichita South. Third place went to Fleming with a 9-7 overtime decision over No.5 seed Kirk Godfrey, Ark City.

Jon Harding was seeded No.4 at 135 pounds. In the first round, he pinned George Alvarez, Ark City, in 2:56. In the quarter-finals, he was pinned in 2:23 by No.5 seed Bishop Price, Wichita South.

In the consolation bracket, he lost a 6-4 decision to Daniel Gonzales, Colby.

Jon Harding is now 16-7 for the season.

No.2 seed Aldon Isenberg, Gardner, won the championship with a 7-4 decision over Price. Third place went to No.1 seed Tom McDonald, Bishop Carroll, with a 16-2 major decision over Adam Schwandt, Perry.

At 103 pounds, No.1 seed Nathan Furches, Derby, won the championship with a 2-1 decision over No.2 seed John Keller, Bishop Carroll. Third place went to No.3 seed Dante Rogers, Wichita Northwest, with a 3-2 decision over Ladd Rupp, Perry.

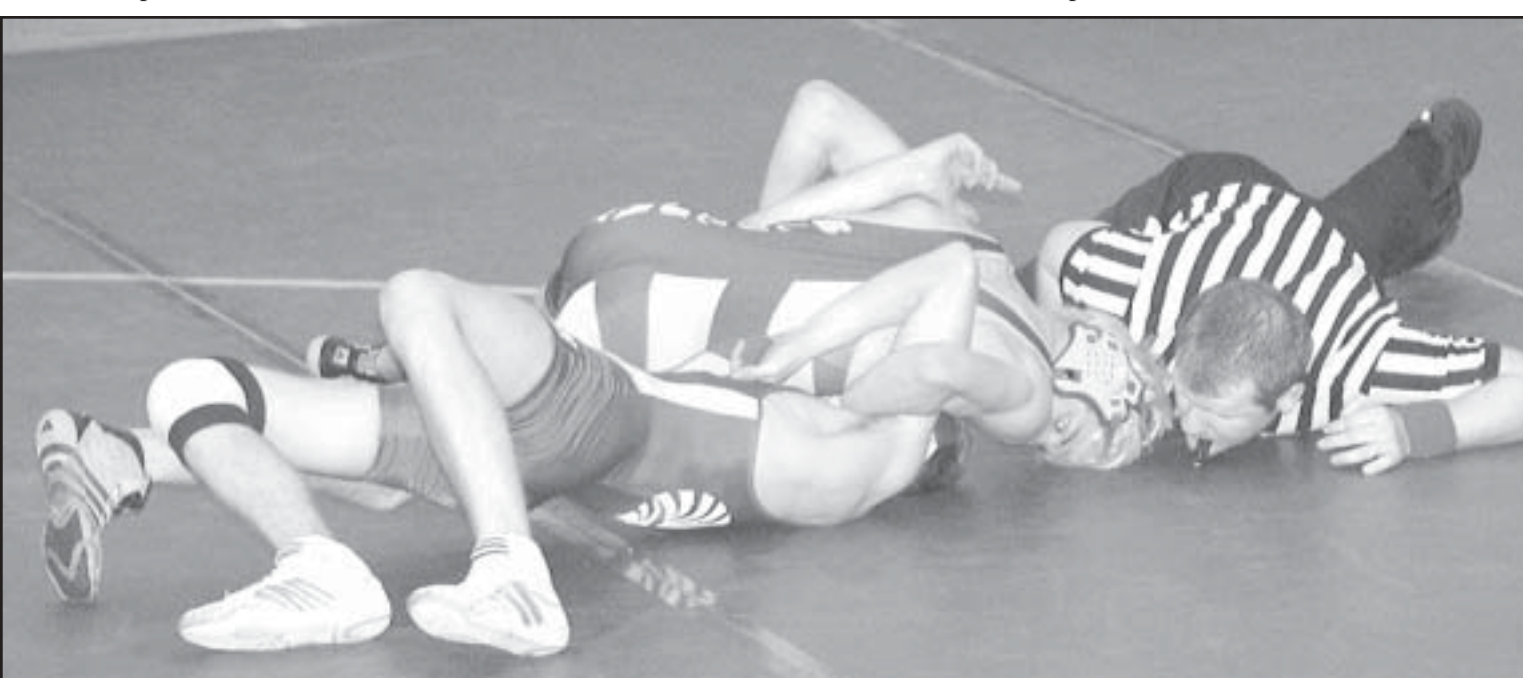
At 189, No.1 seed Alex Whitehill, McPherson, won the championship with a 4-2 overtime decision over No.2 seed Josh Marrs, Clay Center. Third place went to No.3 seed Ben Evans, Hutchinson, with an 11-3 major decision over No.5 seed Clint Bruce, Ark City.

No.2 seed Justin Nallarato, Valley Center, won the 215 pound championship with a 3-1 overtime decision over No.4 seed James Sparks, Emporia. Third place went to No.1 seed Jarrett Edison, Wichita Northwest, with an 11-3 technical fall over No.8 seed Sean Jaspere, Gardner, in 2:56.

The 275 pound champion was No.1 seed Tyler Jessen, Wichita Northwest, who pinned No.2 seed Xavier Louis, Wichita South. Third place went to No.3 seed Steve Andrus, Manhattan, with an 8-2 decision over No.4 seed Austen Hybsha, Andover.

Next action

Next competition for the Norton Blue Jay wrestling team will be Tuesday when they wrestle Hays High and Kearney, Neb. in the Wilmeth Kirk Memorial Gym, beginning at 4 p.m.



No.2 state ranked Nathan Broeckelman of Norton pins Travis Rempe, Smith Center, during Thursday's 125 pound match as the official looks carefully to make sure both of Rempe's shoulders are on the mat.

— Telegram photo by Dick Boyd