

Cowboys take fourth at state

By Sharon Corcoran

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The Cowboys finished fourth as a team this weekend at Salina with five out of seven wrestlers placing at the tournament and one taking the state title at his weight.

Senior A.J. Stephens finished his high school career as state champion at 140 pounds, while senior Bob Doxon finished second at heavy-weight, to lead the team. Senior Aaron Deeds and junior Keegan Smith finished fifth at 152 and 145, and junior Fernando Martinez was sixth at 189.

Junior Kade Sheldon was knocked out in the first round, losing two matches at 112, while junior Ryan Taylor lost his first match at 160, won one but lost the next.

Goodland earned 74.5 points to place fourth among 56 teams. Clay Center won the tournament with 151, Andale was second with 116.5 and Colby was third with 112. Behind Goodland were Abilene with 60, Andover-Central with 59.5 and Chanute with 55.

"I was extremely pleased with the outcome of the state tournament," said Coach Joseph Sramek. "What I was most proud of was how several of our wrestlers fought back to place after losing their first match on Friday. Everyone who wrestled at state showed a lot heart and desire."

Stephens beat junior Shae Hinman of Andover-Central by major decision, 17-4, in his first match, then beat senior Brandon Hopkins of Anderson County by major decision, 11-1. He beat freshman Cody Hill of Hugoton 9-2 to advance to the finals, where he beat senior Levi Whitley of Concordia 9-3. Stephens finished his season with a 41-1 record.

An article in the Sunday edition of *The Salina Journal* said Stephens used a huge second period to beat Whitley. Both were active in a scoreless first period, the paper reported, before Stephens finally broke the match open with an escape, takedown and 3-point near fall in the second.

Whitley made it interesting with three quick points early in the third, but Stephens was able to turn back the rally for a 9-3 win.

"It's a thrill," Stephens told a reporter. "It's just the greatest feeling. Fourth was the best I had ever finished at state."

Doxon opened against junior Dennis Devader of Holton and won 7-1. He then pinned senior Kyle Smith of Rose Hill in 1 minute, 3 seconds, and beat senior Taylor Brown of Colby 3-2. In the finals, he lost 7-2 to senior Alex Hackathorn of Perry-Lecompton. Doxon finished the year 37-2.

Deeds lost his first match 9-5 to senior Coree Yingling of Spring Hill. In the consolation bracket, he



Goodland junior Fernando Martinez (above) pinned junior Dylan Bowman of Wellington in 1 minute, 9 seconds, but lost his next two matches to take sixth place Saturday at the Class 4A state wrestling tournament in Salina. Cowboys senior Bob Doxon (right) beat senior Taylor Brown of Colby Friday to advance to the finals, where he lost to senior Alex Hackathorn of Perry-Lecompton to finish second.

Photos by Dennis Saint/The Goodland Star-News

beat senior Wyatt Coffin of Tonganoxie by a technical fall, 15-0. He beat senior Aaron Quisenberry of Kansas City-Bishop Ward 4-0. Deeds lost by major decision, 9-1, to senior Jonny Prater of Pratt, setting up a match for fifth, in which he beat senior Brenton Daniel of Rose Hill by major decision, 12-1. Deeds was 37-7 for the season.

Smith lost his first match to senior Buzz Hermreck of Paola 4-2. He beat senior Brandon Langston of Meriden-Jefferson West 3-0, senior Christian Fazel of Concordia 3-1 and senior Jake Auten of Osawatomie 7-2. He lost to junior Tyler Wallace of Clay Center, setting up the match for fifth, where he beat senior Cody Inslee of Pratt 4-1.

Martinez pinned junior Brandon Craft of El Dorado in 3:29 in the opening round but lost a major decision, 8-0, to senior Alex Rupnick of Hoyt-Royal Valley. He beat junior Dalton Lamay of Ottawa 8-6 and pinned junior Dylan Bowman of Wellington in 1:09. He lost 7-2 to senior Hal Rivard of

Wamego, dropping to the bracket for fifth and sixth. There he lost to Craft by major decision, 15-2, finishing sixth.

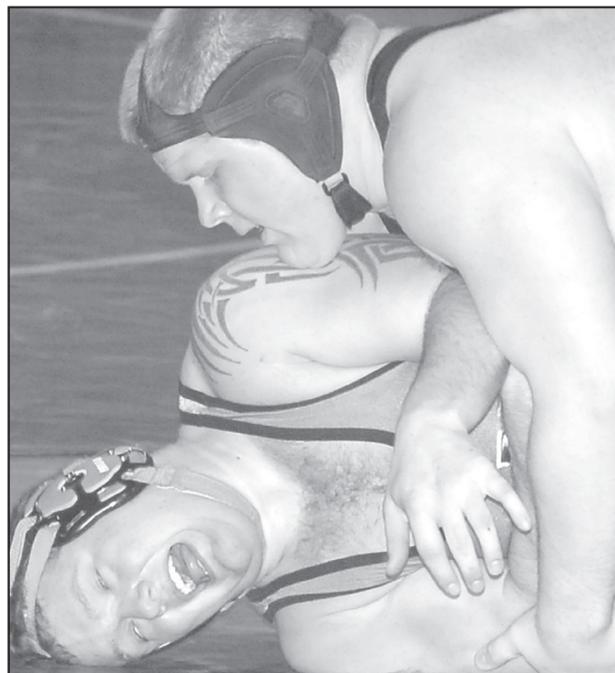
Taylor was pinned by senior Nolan Colvin of Chanute. He beat senior Jake Love of Eudora 3-2 but then lost 2-1 to senior Clint Holland of Prairie View.

Sheldon lost 12-5 to junior Alan Callahan of Baldwin and 12-7 to sophomore Kane Lovvorn of Holton.

"Overall we had a very successful year," Sramek said. "All the wrestlers had great attitudes and worked really hard to earn all their achievements."

"What I am most proud of this season is that no matter what the score was or who we were wrestling, our wrestlers never gave up — they always were ready to work and become better."

"I would like to thank all the seniors for their hard work and time they put into wrestling. The seniors we are losing will be some hard shoes to fill — 137-29 was



the overall record of our seniors this year — lots of wins to replace. They all had outstanding careers, and I am glad they let us coaches be part of it."

Next year, the team will have nine returning wrestlers with varsity experience, he said, and four state

qualifiers. The team also has some junior varsity wrestlers the coach expects to compete for varsity spots next year and do very well for Goodland in the future.

"We will continue to be very competitive in the future and have a lot of success," he said.

Weskan girls advance

The Weskan Lady Coyotes whipped the Brewster Lady Bulldogs, 63-36, while the Tribune Jack Rabbits edged the Sharon Springs Wildcats, 55-52, at the Class 1A regional basketball tournament Saturday in Tribune.

Both advance to the substate tournament this week in Colby.

The Jack Rabbits out scored the Wildcats 22-18 in the fourth quarter to take the lead — and the game.

The Rabbits led by narrow margins in the first two quarters, then Sharon Springs took a one-point lead, 34-33, going into the fourth quarter.

With the win, the Jack Rabbits (19-4) will face Victoria (15-7) at 5 p.m. on Thursday at the Colby Community Building.

The other semifinal will match Kensington (22-1) against Golden Plains (11-12) at 6:30 p.m. at the community building.

Weskan led Brewster throughout their game on Saturday to win 63-36.

The Lady Coyotes led 17-4 at the end of the first quarter and 26-16 at the half.

In the third quarter, they outscored Brewster 15-12 to lead 41-28. In the final quarter, Weskan outscored Brewster 22-8.

The Lady Coyotes are coached by Andy Scheopner of Goodland.

The girls Class 1A substate semi finals will be played on Friday at the community building.

Weskan (20-3) will face Lucas-Luray (13-9) at 5 p.m. and the second game at 6:30 p.m. will feature Northern Valley (14-7) against Hoxie (16-6).

The substate championship games will be played on Saturday, with the girls at 5 p.m. and the boys at 6:30 p.m.

The Class 1A state championships will be March 5-8 at Busch-Gross Coliseum at Fort Hays State University.

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School calendar for February 26 to March 3

Today: Gold Day. Substate basketball in Goodland.

Wednesday: Black Day. PDC screening.

Thursday: Gold Day. Sub-state basketball. Kansas Music Educators Association State Band/Choir.

Friday: Black Day. Sub-state basketball. Kansas Music Educators Association State Band/Choir.

Saturday: Sub-state basketball. Kansas Music Educators Association State Band/Choir. Kansas State DECA Career Development Conference in Overland Park

Monday: Kansas State DECA Career Development Conference in Overland Park. 3 p.m., junior high league scholar's bowl. 6:30 p.m., track rules meeting at Oakley. 5:30 p.m., Reading night at West Elementary. 7 p.m., American Field Service State Roundup Meeting.

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