

Blue Jay wrestlers win Hoxie Invitational

By DICK BOYD

Coach Bill Johnson's Norton Community High School varsity wrestling team successfully defended last season's championship in the annual Hoxie Invitational Wrestling Tournament on Saturday in the Hoxie High School.

The Blue Jays, who are also the defending Class 3-2-1A state champions, ran away with the team title. Norton compiled 207.5 points to easily outdistance Hoxie, which scored 138 to edge Oakley, 137, for second place. Oberlin placed fourth with 105, followed by Plainville, 85; Trego 84 and Dodge City, 75.

Unlike last year when Norton's heavyweight Michael Sprigg had to win for Norton to edge Hoxie 182-180.5, the Blue Jays took a big lead early in the tournament as 11 of 13 Norton wrestlers placed in the top four of their weight class and six earned championships.

Sprigg, who is a senior and defending state champion, won the championship again and sophomore Logan Keiswetter (103), and juniors Clay Madden (112), Jon Harding (130), Luke Pfannenstiel (140) and Lance Roe (152) won as well.

In addition to winning the state championship last season, Sprigg placed second his sophomore season and fourth his freshman year.

Madden is a two-time state champion. Pfannenstiel was injured last season but placed fifth in the state tournament his freshman season and Roe placed fourth last season and fifth his freshman season.

Jon Harding was wrestling varsity for the first time.

Finishing second were sophomores Nathan Broeckelman (119) and Blake VanEaton (145). Broeckelman placed second in the state last season.

Third place finishes went to sophomore Kent Mann (125), who



Norton senior Michael Sprigg pinned Brock Euhus, Oberlin, in 25 seconds in their 275 pound semi-finals match in the Hoxie Invitational Wrestling Tournament on Satur-

day. Sprigg, the defending state champion, needed just 61 seconds to pin three straight opponents en route to the tourney championship.

— Photo by Claudia Lacy

placed fifth in the state last season and junior Jeremy Harding (135).

Junior Davvid Stanley (171) came in fourth.

Norton compiled a 28-10 match won-loss record and had a 24-6 pin ratio.

"We had high expectations going into the tournament but you never know how you will perform on your first outing," said Coach Johnson. "We came out and, with hardly any flaws, our team dominated."

"You always lose some matches you shouldn't and win some you shouldn't but it balances out. We did let a few matches slip away."

"Our conditioning is not real good right now but we will build toward that as the season progresses."

"I was pleased with our hustle. When we stepped on the mat, we

were ready to wrestle at 100 percent.

"We had eight guys in the championship finals and didn't wrestle as well as we could have in the finals but had six champions."

Lance Roe was seeded No. 2 at 152 but completely dominated his three opponents and Coach Johnson named him "Wrestler of the Week".

"In the past, this has been an outstandingly tough tournament with many, many state placers competing but competition was down a little from the past," said Coach Johnson. "This year, we had just two former state champions wrestling each other for a championship. Oakley's Levi Younkin was the 125 pound state champion and Hoxie's Cale Farber was the 119 state champion. They wrestled at 135 on Sat-

urday and Younkin won in overtime and received the outstanding wrestler of the tournament trophy. "We've been concentrating on working on our feet in practice so we are weak on moves on bottom like escapes and reversals. We definitely need to work more on getting away from opponents."

Keiswetter was seeded No. 1 at 103 pounds. After receiving a first round bye, he pinned Steven Samuelson, Oakley, in just 39 seconds of their semi-final match. In the championship match, Keiswetter completely dominated No. 2 seed Tanner Popp, Hoxie, and won the championship with an 18-2 technical fall.

Samuelson decided No. 3 seed Jared Root, Dodge City, 1-0 to win the consolation championship.

Madden was seeded No. 1 at 112

and pinned his way through the tournament. In the first round, he pinned Chris Bersino, Dodge City, in 1:08. He pinned No. 4 seed Breck Simonsson, Oberlin, in 2:46 of their semi-finals match and pinned No. 2 seed Mark Samuelson, Oakley, in 5:56 of the championship match.

Bersino pinned Simonsson to win the consolation championship.

Jon Harding was seeded No. 3 at 130 and drew a first round bye. In the semi-finals, he pinned No. 2 seed Josh Guthrie, Dodge City, in 3:06 and won a 4-2 decision over No. 1 seed Joe Olson, Trego, to win the championship.

Guthrie pinned No. 4 seed Cass Baalman, Hoxie, to win the consolation title.

At 140, Pfannenstiel was seeded No. 1. In the first round, he pinned John O'Crotty, Dodge City, in 1:40, then pinned No. 4 seed Jake Weigel, Plainville, in 5:02 of their semi-finals match. To win the championship, he shutout Kelly Younkin, Oakley, 7-0.

No. 2 seed Jon Richards, Oberlin, decided No. 3 seed Bowe Neuenschwander, Hoxie, 13-7 to win the consolation championship.

Roe was seeded No. 2 at 152. In the first round, he pinned Luke Brin, Plainville, in 2:19, then pinned No. 3 seed Ricky Hilgers, Trego, in 3:10 of their semi-finals match. In the championship finals, Roe won a 21-4 technical fall over No. 4 seed Scott Miller, Oberlin.

Hilgers won third place by injury default over No. 1 seed Shawn Kuhman, Oakley.

Sprigg spent about a minute on the mat in winning his three matches at 275. In the first round, he made Andy Brown, Plainville, count the lights in just 15 seconds. No. 4 seed Brock Euhus, Oberlin, was on his back for the count just 25 seconds into his semi-finals match with Sprigg. In the championship finals, Sprigg pinned No. 2 seed Andy Osborne, Trego, in just 21 seconds.

In the consolation finals, Euhus pinned Brown.

Broeckelman, 119, was seeded No. 2. In the first round, he decided Gage Reichert, Oberlin, 11-3, then pinned No. 3 seed Matt Montoya, Dodge City, in 3:02 of their semi-finals match. In the championship match, he wrestled No. 1 seed Paul Owings,

Plainville. After falling behind 2-0 in the first period, he wrestled Owings even the rest of the way but lost by an 8-6 decision and placed second.

Montoya decided Reichert 9-1 for the consolation championship.

VanEaton, 145, was seeded No. 2. In the first round, he pinned Canaan Bishop, Oberlin, in just 46 seconds. In the semi-finals, he outpointed Drake Moore, Oakley, 10-3 to reach the championship finals. He wrestled No. 1 seed Michael Schamberger, Hoxie, for the title and lost a 4-2 decision to place second.

Winning the consolation championship was No. 4 seed Brandon Brown, Plainville, who decided Moore 7-2.

Mann was seeded No. 2 at 125 and received a first round bye. In the semi-finals, he lost a 3-1 decision to No. 3 seed David Barth, Oberlin. In the consolation bracket, he pinned Heath Maley, Trego, in 3:53. In the consolation championship match, he shutout No. 4 seed Patrick Whissenand, Dodge City, to place third.

No. 1 seed Tyler Baker, Hoxie, won the championship by pinning Barth.

Jeremy Harding, 135, was seeded No. 3. In the first round, he pinned Royal Fisher, Oberlin, in 1:10. In the semi-finals, he lost a 12-4 major decision to No. 2 seed Cale Farber, Hoxie. In the consolation bracket, he pinned No. 5 seed Chris Keas, Plainville, in 2:01, then pinned No. 4 seed Brian Frick, Trego, in 59 seconds to place third.

Younkin decided Farber 4-2 in overtime to win the championship.

Davvid Stanley was seeded No. 4 at 171. In his first round match, he pinned No. 5 seed Tobo Dirks, Trego, in 3:15. In the semi-finals, he was pinned in 2:56 by No. 1 seed Jeff Dennis, Oakley. In the consolation bracket, Stanley pinned Mark Axelson, Plainville, in 1:58 to reach the consolation finals where he wrestled No. 3 seed Matt McGinty, Hoxie. McGinty pinned him in 2:04.

Dennis pinned Reichert to win the championship.

Korey Look, 160, lost his first round match by a fall in 2:42 to Conner McMullen, Plainville. In the consolation bracket, he pinned Taylor Dirks, Trego, in 2:41 but lost by a fall in 1:25 to No. 3 seed Cole Halbleib, Oakley.

Brandon Kaufman, Dodge City, won third place when he pinned Halbleib. McMullen pinned No. 2 seed David Obermeyer, Hoxie, to win the championship.

Blake Hillebrand, 215, wrestled for the Blue Jays. In the first round, he was pinned in 1:02 by No. 1 seed Tim Erwin, Hoxie. In the consolation bracket, he was pinned in 2:31 by No. 3 seed Aaron Racette, Oakley.

Erwin decided No. 2 seed Anthony Garcia, Dodge City, 10-1 to win the championship. Racette decided No. 4 seed Jake Padgett, Oberlin, 15-2 to place third.

Norton was open at 189 pounds. No. 4 seed Michael Malay, Trego, pinned No. 3 seed Kyle Rietcheck, Oakley, to win the championship. No. 2 seed Tyler Brungardt, Plainville, decided Bret Marietta, Oberlin, 3-1 to place third.

Next varsity action for Norton will be Saturday in the Clay Center Invitational Wrestling Tournament, beginning at 9:30 a.m.

Norton boys return three starters

By DICK BOYD

Coach Doug Reusink's Norton Community High School boys varsity basketball team will open the season on Thursday when they play Holyoke, Colo. at 5 p.m. Central Time in the opening round of the Topside Tipoff Basketball Tournament in the Max Jones Fieldhouse at 12th and Arcade in Goodland.

Also competing will be Wray and Burlington, Colo.; McCook, Neb.; Ottawa, Weskan and Goodland.

In their first round games on Thursday, Burlington will play Ottawa at 3 p.m., Wray will play McCook at 7 p.m. and Goodland will play Weskan at 9 p.m.

Winners of the Norton-Holyoke and Burlington-Ottawa games will play in Friday's championship semi-finals at 5 p.m. and winners of the Wray-McCook and Goodland-Weskan games will play at 9 p.m. The losers will play in the consolation bracket at the same times.

The championship finals will be at 8 p.m. in Max Jones Fieldhouse on Saturday and the third place game at 4 p.m. in the Max Jones Fieldhouse. The consolation championship game will be at 4 p.m. on Saturday in the Junior High Gym and the seventh place game at 2 p.m.

Coach Reusink has only four returning lettermen from last season's 18-4 squad but three are returning starters. They are: Ryan Maddy, 6-foot, 2-inch senior forward, who averaged 14 points and 7 rebounds per game; Kyle Kats, 5-10 senior guard, who averaged 7.3 points, 3 rebounds, 4 assists; and Aaron Overlease, 5-10 senior guard, who averaged 5.3 points and 2.6 rebounds.

The other returning letterman is Heath Vincent, 6-5 junior center who averaged 4.5 points and 3 rebounds per game last season. Vincent is expected to start this season.

Other members of the squad are seniors Seth Mills, 5-10; Jason Green, 5-11; Josh Jackson, 6-2; Justin Shirk, 6-1; junior Nathan Morse, 5-10; sophomores Brian Juenemann, 5-10; Nic Lewis, 6-1;

Jared Engelbert, 5-8; and freshmen Luke VanSike, 5-6; Zach Dole, 5-7; Logan Kats, 5-8; Jared Cox, 6; Wes Georgeson, 6-1; Logan Runnion, 5-10; Galen Hildebrand, 5-9; Preston Herman, 5-10; David Counter, 5-6, freshmen.

Returning as assistant coaches this year are David Stover and Todd Fulton. Student managers are Kayleigh Brooks, Ashley Maybon, Jill Skrdlant and Casey Carter.

"We have a good nucleus returning with Kats, Overlease, Maddy and Vincent," said Coach Reusink. "Right now we are trying to find some depth in our lineup with the remaining juniors and seniors."

"The league will be as tough as it has ever been. Trego is the team to beat with Plainville and Phillipsburg returning most of their starters right behind them. Plainville returns four starters and Phillipsburg three. Osborne, also with three returning starters, will also be good."

"It will be a tough league. We'll have to play well every night."

"If we can develop some depth, hopefully, we will be in the mix."

If past records are any indication, the Blue Jay boys will definitely be in the mix. The 2002-'03 team won the Class 3A state basketball championship with a 22-5 record and last season's 18-4 Blue Jay squad was also outstanding. They won the Mid-Continent League Tournament for the sixth straight year and were undisputed league champions.

Norton was ranked No. 3 in the state when the Blue Jays entered the sub-state tournament. Norton's season ended in the semi-finals when they lost 50-47 to No. 6 state ranked Thomas More Prep-Marian of Hays on a three-point basket at the buzzer.

Coach Reusink's overall record in Norton is 165 wins and 119 losses. He is beginning his 26th year of coaching high school boys teams and has compiled an overall record of 379 wins and 165 losses for an outstanding 69.7 percent victory record. This is an average of 15 wins and 6.6 losses per year.



Norton's junior guard Nathan Morse (light jersey) reacts on defense after the Jays' Heath Vincent passed the ball inside during pre-season practice. Norton's boys and girls basketball teams will open the season Thursday in the Topside Tipoff Tournament in Goodland.

— Telegram photo by Dick Boyd

Norton County Weather for December 7 th - 13 th							
Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	
48/25	53/26	55/27	57/28	59/29	45/21	41/23	
Normal High	42			Sunrise 7:48 to 7:53am			
Normal Low	18			Sunset 5:15pm			
<p>December is starting on a dry and mild note. Good news for those farmers still trying to get the last of the corn and milo cut. Other than a couple cool fronts that could squeeze out some light rain or snow the county will be dry through the 15th. Temperatures will run 10-15 degrees above normal ahead of the cool fronts and drop to around normal behind them. We still have several wireless rain gauges, weather monitors and NOAA weather radios in stock for Christmas. Give us a call or order on-line.</p>							
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