

Norton Wrestlers Win Regional Championship!

By DICK BOYD

Coach Bill Johnson's Norton Community High School wrestling team won the Class 3-2-1A Regional Wrestling Tournament for the third year in a row when they overwhelmed the opposition in the toughest regional in the state, which was held Friday and Saturday in the NCHS Stull Gymnasium in Norton.

With a large crowd, estimated at between 1,800 and 2,000 fans looking on, the No. 1 state ranked Blue Jay wrestlers took an early lead and amassed 221.5 points during the two days.

Scott City, who dropped down from 4A this year, finished second with 159 points, 62.5 behind Norton. Earning third place was St. Francis, the No. 6 ranked team in the state, with 129 points.

Phillipsburg, ranked No. 4 in the state, and Oakley, ranked No. 10, tied for fourth with 126 points each.

Oberlin, who is ranked No. 6, placed sixth with 114.5 and was followed in the top 10 by Atwood, 68; Hill City, 66; Trego Community, 62 and Holcomb, 41.5. They were followed by Lakin, 38.5; Stockton, 30; Leoti, 23.5; Hoxie, 21.5; Cimarron, 18; Quinter, 15; Montezuma-South Gray, 12; Sublette, 11. Cheylin and Grainfield had competing wrestlers but they did not earn any points.

This regional tournament was unquestionably the toughest of the four in the state with five of the top 10 ranked teams in the state competing and 27 of the state ranked individuals wrestling.

Ten qualified for state
Ten of the 14 Blue Jay wrestlers who competed placed in the top three of their weight class and qualified for the Class 3-2-1A State Wrestling Tournament this Friday and Saturday at Gross Memorial Coliseum in Hays.

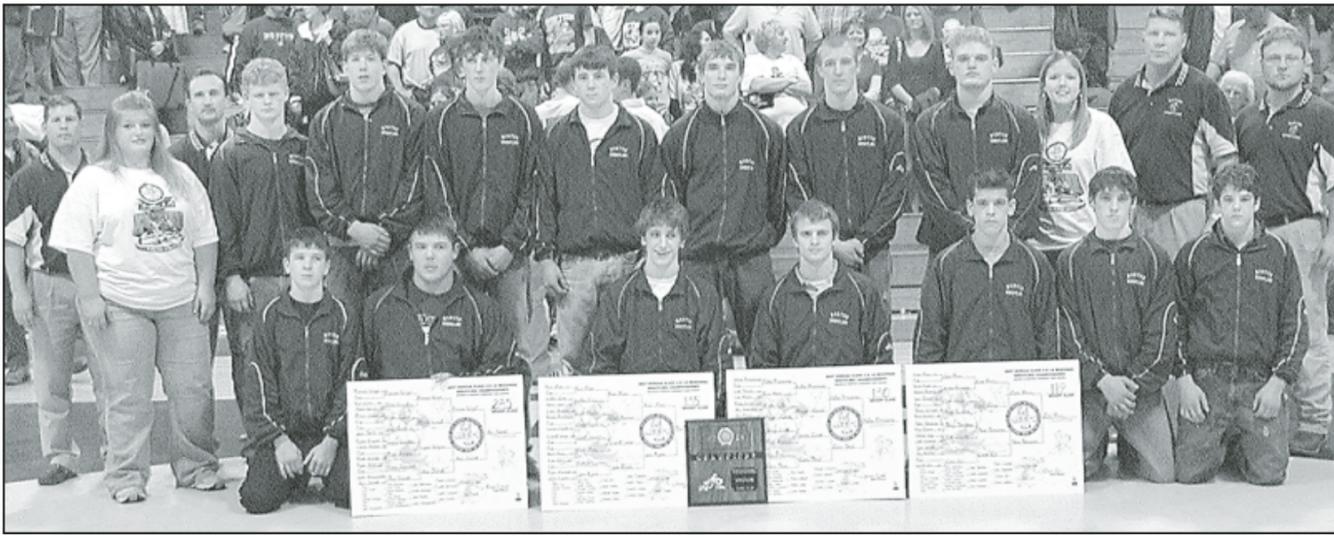
Scott City qualified nine wrestlers for state competition and eight Phillipsburg wrestlers also earned a trip to the state tournament. Five Oakley wrestlers qualified and four each from St. Francis and Oberlin. Three each from Atwood, Hill City and Trego and two from Stockton made it to the "big show".

The top four wrestlers in each weight class qualified for the state tournament.

Norton is the three-time defending state tournament champion.

Seven Blue Jays wrestled in Saturday evening's finals and four won championships. Champions were freshman Zane Perez, 119; senior Nathan Broeckelman, 130; senior Kent Mann, 135 and junior Alex Thomas, 285.

Placing second for Norton were freshman Connor Pfannenstiel, 103; freshman



CLASS 3-2-1A REGIONAL WRESTLING CHAMPIONS — The Norton Community High School Wrestling Team is pictured Saturday evening after winning the championship of the Regional Tournament in the NCHS Stull Gymnasium in Norton. Pictured are, from left, front row: Connor Pfannenstiel, Alex Thomas, Kent Mann, Nathan Broeckelman, Zane Perez, Zach Bainter, Kaenon Keiswetter; back row: Head Coach Bill Johnson, Manager Jessica Sprigg, Assistant Coach Shane Miller, Jeff Soderlund, Jordan Durham, Jared Bebb, Todd Bolt, Blake VanEaton, Aaron Husted, Shane Stanley, Manager Morgan Kauten, Assistant Coach Doug Ray, Assistant Coach Chance McKinney.

Kaenon Keiswetter, 112 and senior Blake VanEaton, 152. Finishing in third place were sophomore Zach Bainter, 125; junior Aaron Husted, 140 and junior Jeff Soderlund, 145.

Also competing for the Blue Jays were junior Todd Bolt, 160; senior Jordan Durham, 171; senior Jared Bebb, 189 and senior Shane Stanley, 215.

"I was really pleased with the way our young men wrestled," said coach Johnson. "It was a total team effort. All 14 of our wrestlers scored points for us and all except one won a minimum of two matches."

"To qualify 10 wrestlers for the state tournament sets us up nice."

"Our good conditioning won us a lot of matches. Our wrestlers have been working hard in practice and that dedication has paid off time after time. In many of our matches, our opponents were fading as the match progressed."

"Having seven wrestlers in the championship finals will help our seeding at state. We won four of our championship matches but the other three could have gone our way."

"Sometimes in big moments like this, wrestlers won't open up and wrestle to their capabilities but all of ours opened up and competed well."

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

Unbeaten senior Matt Migchelbrink, Atwood, who is ranked No. 1 in the state and was seeded No. 1 at 125 pounds, was voted "Regional Wrestler of the Year" by the team coaches.

Peter Koster, Oakley head coach, was voted "Regional Coach of the Year" by the team coaches.

Norton compiled an outstanding 40-14 won-loss record in the tournament and had an excellent 21-5 pin ratio.

Nathan Broeckelman is ranked No. 1 in the state and extended his unbeaten record to 36-0. He is a three-time state placer. In addition to winning the 125 pound state championship last season, he placed third in the state his sophomore year at 119 pounds and second his freshman season.

Kent Mann is ranked No. 3 in the state and his record is now a sterling 34-1. Mann is a two-time state placer. He finished third in the state last season at 130 pounds and was fifth his freshman year at 103 pounds.

Blake VanEaton is ranked No. 2 in the state and is now 27-7. He is also a two-time state placer. VanEaton was sixth in the state at 145 pounds as a sophomore and placed third at state last year at 140 pounds.

Zach Bainter was state runner-up last year at 112 pounds as a freshman and is ranked No. 4. His record is now 28-10.

Alex Thomas extended his perfect record to 34-0. He is ranked No. 4 in the state. This is his first year to wrestle for Norton.

Individual results

•103 — Connor Pfannenstiel is ranked No. 5 in the state and was seeded No. 4. He shutout Andrew Peterson, Oakley, 2-0; shutout No. 5 seed Darris Keller, St. Francis, 2-0; edged No. 1 state ranked and No. 1 seed Carlos Gallaway, Stockton, 5-4 in the semi-finals. It was Galloway's second loss of the season. In the championship finals, he wrestled No. 2 seed Francisco Antillon, Scott City. Pfannenstiel trailed 2-0 after one period and 2-0 at the end of the second period. He scored 1 point in the third period and lost a 2-1 decision to

place second. Pfannenstiel is now 24-11 for the season.

Third place went to Galloway, who pinned No. 6 seed Garth Griffith, Atwood, in 4:04. Galloway's record is now 23-2.

•112 — Kaenon Keiswetter is ranked No. 3 in the state and was seeded No. 1. He pinned Chad Jamison, Trego, in 28 seconds; pinned Regina Ward, Lakin, in 3:23 and pinned No. 4 seed Dillon Stucky, Scott City, in 3:54 to reach the championship match. He wrestled No. 5 state ranked and No. 2 seed Jace Campbell, Oakley, for the gold medal. He trailed by periods 2-1, 4-2 and lost 4-3 to place second.

Keiswetter is now 31-6 for the season and Campbell is 31-5.

No. 3 seed Zach Ceman, Phillipsburg, won third with an 8-3 decision over Stucky.

•119 — Zane Perez was seeded No. 1. He drew a bye, shutout Andrew Richards, Oberlin, 7-0 and decided No. 5 seed Tyrel George, Scott City, 4-2 to reach the championship finals. He wrestled No. 3 seed Steve Samuelson, Oakley, for the title. Neither wrestler scored in the first period and Perez tallied once in the second period on an escape. His 1-0 advantage held up in the third period for the win and the gold medal.

Perez is now 28-8 and Samuelson is 16-5.

No. 2 seed Chris Orr, Hill City, placed third with a 9-2 decision over No. 7 seed Tyler Johnston, Stockton.

•125 — Zach Bainter is No. 4 state ranked and was seeded No. 3. He pinned Shelby Mollenkamp, Quinter, in 2:28; pinned Ryan Kaiser, Trego, in 1:33 and lost a 7-2 decision to No. 3 state ranked and No. 2 seed Dustin Zahorsky, Phillipsburg. In the consolation bracket, Bainter pinned No. 5 seed Jesus Contreras, Scott City, in 1:41, then wrestled No. 4 seed Rayson Brachtenback, Hill City, in the consolation championship. Bainter led by periods 2-0 and 8-0 and finished with a 15-3 major decision and third place.

Bainter is now 28-10 for the season.

Matt Migchelbrink, Atwood, extended his unbeaten record to 29-0 by pinning Zahorsky in 1:54 to win the championship.

•130 — No. 1 state ranked and No. 1 seed Nathan

place second. Broeckelman drew a first round bye. He pinned Levi Koehn, Holcomb, in 15 seconds and pinned No. 4 seed Morgan Numrich, Scott City, in 1:16. In the finals, he wrestled No. 6 state ranked and No. 2 seed Gavin Smull, St. Francis. He held period leads of 2-0 and 4-2 before finishing strong to win a 7-2 decision and the gold medal.

Broeckelman extended his undefeated record to 36-0. Smull dropped to 28-8.

Third place went to No. 5 state ranked and No. 3 seed Jeremy Chase, Hill City, who pinned Numrich in 2:06.

•135 — Kent Mann is ranked No. 3 in the state and was seeded No. 1. He drew a bye, pinned Nathan Porter, Leoti, in 2:43 and pinned No. 5 seed Caleb Baalman, Oakley, in 3:41. In the championship

match, he wrestled No. 2 seed John Lynch, Lakin. Mann led 5-0 after one period and 8-0 after two and finished with a 10-0 major decision to earn the gold medal.

Mann is now 34-1 for the season. Lynch dropped to 31-8.

No. 4 seed Dakota Hayes, Scott City, placed third by pinning Heath Maley, Trego, in 2:13.

•140 — Aaron Husted was the No. 3 seed. He drew a bye, then pinned James Richmeier, Trego, in 3:30. He wrestled No. 6 state ranked and No. 2 seed Gage Reichert, Oberlin, in the semi-finals and lost by a pin in 6:42 in overtime. Husted won a 7-5 decision over Jesse Pacheco, St. Francis, to reach the consolation championship where he wrestled No. 4 seed Jarrett

Stanton, Holcomb. Husted decided Stanton 3-1 to place third.

Husted is now 23-10 for the season.

Reichert won the championship with a 10-7 decision over No. 1 seed Dustin Warta, Scott City.

•145 — Jeff Soderlund was seeded No. 4. He pinned Dal Schultz, Grainfield, in 33 seconds; pinned No. 5 seed Breck Simonsson, Oberlin, in 49 seconds and was pinned in 34 seconds by No. 3 state ranked and No. 1 seed Kade Bloom, Phillipsburg. Next, he pinned Brady Frewen, St. Francis, in 26 seconds to reach the consolation championship. He wrestled No. 3 seed Drake Moore, Oakley, and decided him 5-1 to place third.

Soderlund is now 30-10 for the season.

No. 2 state ranked and No. 2 seed Nick Kough, Scott City, won the championship with an 8-5 decision over Bloom.

Kough is now 38-3 and Bloom is 32-2.

•152 — Blake VanEaton is No. 2 state ranked and was seeded No. 2. He pinned Cody Stewart, Oakley, in 35 seconds; won a technical fall in 5:58 over Bill Leighton, Quinter and decided No. 6 state ranked and No. 3 seed Lakin Dreiling, Scott City, 3-1. In the championship finals, he wrestled No. 1 state ranked and No. 1 seed Jordan Gienger, St. Francis. He led 2-0 after one period and was still leading 2-0 after the second period. VanEaton made a wrong move in the third period and was pinned in 4:58 to place second.

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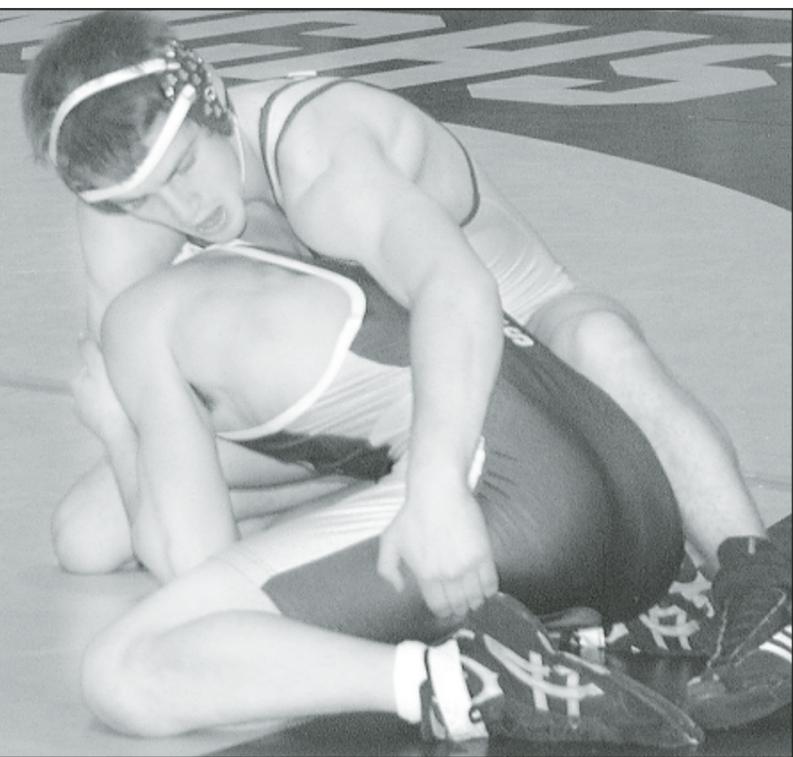
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Norton senior Nathan Broeckelman extended his perfect season record to 36-0 in winning the 130 pound weight class in the Class 3-2-1A Regional Tournament held over the weekend in Norton. Here he is shown making a move on Gavin Smull, St. Francis, during his 7-2 championship decision on Saturday evening.

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