

Norton wrestling banquet well attended

By **DICK BOYD**

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The 2012-13 Norton Community High School Wrestling Banquet was held on Sunday, April 14 in the High School Cafeteria to honor the state champion Blue Jays and say good-bye to the senior class.

A very large crowd of wrestlers, coaches, family and fans were in attendance.

This was Bill Johnson's 24th year as the head wrestling coach at Norton. He started the season with a 79 percent winning percentage. Norton won the state championship for the third time in four years and sixth time under coach Johnson.

His assistant coaches again this season were Doug Ray, Shane Miller and Tony Fiscus.

Student managers were Austin Hager, Jordyn Gosselin, Rickete Green and Lindsay Addington.

Norton had 13 returning lettermen, 11 of them starters. The five senior lettermen were John Risewick, three-year letterman, three-year state placer, 35-5 record last season; Cody Ellis, two-year letterman, 14-21 last season; Eli Bozarth, two-year letterman, missed 2012 due to injury, 25-14 record previous season; Jared Bohl, three-year letterman, 30-11 record last season and Lucas Engel, one-year letterman, 6-13 last season.

Five juniors were returning lettermen: Branson Addington, two-year letterman, two-year state qualifier; Ethan Ross, two-year letterman; Alec Hager, two-year letterman, one-year state placer; Cole Renner, one-year letterman, one-year state qualifier and Kolton Harting, two-year letter winner.

Three sophomores were returning lettermen: Caysean Campbell, Jared Tallent and Kendall Miller.

Season review

Norton opened the season on a positive note on Saturday, Dec. 1 by winning the annual Hoxie Invitational with 166.5 points. Oberlin followed with 152, Plainville scored 139; Scott City earned 108 points and Hoxie scored 101.

Norton had five champions: sophomore Caysean Campbell, 106; junior Ethan Ross, 113; junior Alec Hager, 126; senior John Risewick, 132 and senior Eli Bozarth, 145. Sophomore Jared Tallent, 138 and senior Cody Ellis, 152, each placed runner-up. Junior Kolton Harting, 182, placed third.

On the same day, the Norton junior varsity wrestlers competed in the varsity St. Francis Invitational and finished in fifth, just one-half point out of fourth and three points out of third. Freshman Gavin Lively, 145, placed first; junior Branson

Addington, 113, was runner-up; sophomore Kendall Miller, 152, was runner-up; freshman Skylar Johnson, 106, placed third; freshman Mike Kasson, 132 and junior Toby Nickell, 138, both placed fourth.

The next Friday, Dec. 7, the Norton junior varsity wrestlers did even better in the varsity Southern Valley Invitational where they finished fourth out of 15 teams. Champions were Skylar Johnson, 106 and Cody Ellis, 152. Cody was a varsity wrestler who had a conflict with the Clay Center Invitational the next day. Mike Kasson placed runner-up at 132 and freshman Riley Hager finished third at 120.

On Saturday, Dec. 8, Norton placed fourth in the always tough Clay Center Invitational. Garden City, ranked No. 1 in Class 6A, was the champion. Caysean Campbell, Ethan Ross, Alec Hager, John Risewick and Cole Renner, 170 pound junior, all placed runner-up. Lucas Engel finished third at 220. Branson Addington, Jared Tallent and Jared Bohl, 160, all placed fifth. Eli Bozarth wrestled at 145 but was injured and had to default. Unfortunately, Eli was lost for the season.

The Blue Jay wrestlers were impressive in their next outing, the Mid-Continent League Round Robin Tournament in Phillipsburg on Friday, Dec. 14. Norton won the championship with 239.5 points. Phillipsburg was second with 199, followed by Plainville, 181.5. Norton had five champions: Ethan Ross, 113; Alec Hager, 126; John Risewick, 132; Gavin Lively, 145 and Lucas Engel, 220. Jared Tallent, 138; Cody Ellis, 152; Jared Bohl, 160; Kolton Harting, 182, all placed runner-up. Caysean Campbell, 106 and Cole Renner, 170, each finished in third. Norton had a 32-13 won-loss record and had a 12-5 pin ratio.

Norton continued to wrestle well the next day, Saturday, Dec. 15 in the Holiday Classic in Goodland. The Blue Jays finished runner-up to Colby in the duals competition. Each went into the finals with 4-0 records in pools. Colby won seven matches and Norton won five as the Eagles prevailed 36-26 in their dual for the title. Norton lost 12 points by being open at 195 and 285. "The championship match with Colby was a tough, close one," said coach Johnson. "Lively and Harting came up with huge pins that kept the score close."

The Norton junior varsity was also receiving valuable mat time on Saturday, Dec. 15 when they placed fifth out of 20 teams competing in the varsity

tournament in Cambridge. Kendall Miller was the 152 pound champion. Freshman Weston Erbert, 126, was runner-up and Toby Nickell, 145, placed third.

On Tuesday, Dec. 18, Norton won a dual at Phillipsburg by a 37-30 score. Norton was leading 31-30 when the 285 pound match began. Norton junior exchange student Andre Valencia pinned his opponent to ensure the team victory.

Norton began the new year on Friday, Jan. 4 by defeating Ulysses 39-30 in a dual in Wilmeth Kirk Memorial Gym and producing an impressive victory in the 48th annual J.R. Durham Wrestling Tournament on Saturday in the NCHS Stull Gym. Norton had won seven consecutive Durham championships before tying for fourth last year. The Blue Jays scored 130.5 points, followed by Plainville, 123; Hoxie, 104; Ulysses, 102.5; Cozad, 99; Scott City, 94; Smith Center, 84.5. Caysean Campbell, 106; John Risewick, 132 and Jared Tallent, 138, won gold medals. Ethan Ross, 113; Alec Hager, 126 and Cody Ellis, 152, placed runner-up. "Our hard work in two-a-day practices over the Christmas break paid dividends for us," said coach Johnson.

On Friday, Jan. 11, the Norton junior varsity wrestlers had their best outing of the season when they won the varsity Elm Creek Invitational with 155 points. Medicine Valley was second with 129. Toby Nickell, 138; Gavin Lively, 145; Kendall Miller, 152, were champions. Skylar Johnson, 106; Riley Hager, 120 and freshman Chandler Sumner, 195, placed runner-up.

While the junior varsity wrestlers were winning at Elm Creek, the Norton varsity wrestlers were competing in the first day of the prestigious 50th annual Newton Tournament of Champions, the toughest competition they would have all season. Norton is the smallest school to ever win the tournament and Norton was the smallest school to compete this season. Entering only 9 of 14 weight classes, Norton placed 15th out of 27 teams. Grand Island, Neb. won the championship. Placing for Norton were John Risewick, 132, fourth; Jared Tallent, 138, eighth; Kolton Harting, 182, eighth and Lucas Engel, 220, eighth. Norton proved once again that the Blue Jays are capable of wrestling against the state's larger schools.

On Thursday, Jan. 17, Norton had another chance to wrestle Colby, this time in a dual in Wilmeth Kirk Memorial Gym in Norton. Colby was ranked No.1 in the state in Class 4A

and Norton was ranked No.2 in Class 3-2-1A. It was a hard fought dual which was not decided until the final matches. Colby won eight matches and Norton won six as the Eagles outscored the Blue Jays 42-31. "We were missing three varsity wrestlers but we went at them nose-to-nose," said coach Johnson. "We have good backups and that really helps us."

Norton got a break until Saturday, Jan. 26 when they competed in the Northwest Kansas Tournament of Champions in Oberlin. The break must have helped because Norton won the championship over 15 other teams. The Blue Jays amassed 196.5 points. Phillipsburg was runner-up with 171, followed by Plainville, 164.5 and Oberlin, 160. Nine of Norton's wrestlers placed. Alec Hager, 126; John Risewick, 132; Gavin Lively, 145 were champions. Ethan Ross, 113 and Jared Tallent, 138, were runners-up; Caysean Campbell, 106 and Branson Addington, 120, were each third. Lucas Engel, 220 was fourth and Kolton Harting, 182, placed fifth. "We wrestled outstanding," said coach Johnson. "We're definitely getting better."

The Norton junior varsity wrestlers proved that they were gaining stature when they placed runner-up, one point out of first place in the varsity Arapahoe Warrior Invitational, also on Saturday, Jan. 26. Elm Creek won with 134 points and the Norton junior varsity compiled 133 points. Toby Nickell, 138, was Norton's only champion but Skylar Johnson, 106; Kyle Bell, 113; Riley Hager, 120; Chris Chastain and Chandler Sumner, both 195, were all runner-up finishers. Garret Otter, 120, placed third; Derek Rowh, 132 and Michael Johnson, 285, both finished fourth; Weston Erbert, 126, finished fifth.

On Friday, Feb. 1, No.3 state ranked Norton and No.10

ranked Smith Center collided on the Redmen's home mats and the Blue Jays came away with an impressive 59-9 victory! Smith Center had to forfeit four weight classes and that hurt their point total.

The very next day, Norton competed in the annual Panther Classic in Phillipsburg and placed sixth, one point out of fifth. Three open weights, sickness and a line-up change hurt Norton's chances. John Risewick, 132, won the championship; Ethan Ross, 113, Branson Addington, 120; Jared Tallent, 128 and Cody Ellis, 134, each placed third.

Also, on Saturday, Feb. 2, 11 Norton wrestlers competed in the junior varsity division of the Panther Classic. All 11 medaled and 10 reached the finals. Skylar Johnson, 106; Riley Hager, 120; Derek Rowh, 132; Toby Nickell, 138 and Chandler Sumner, 195 all won championships.

The No.3 state ranked Norton varsity completed the regular season on Friday, Feb. 8 with an impressive "Senior Night" 53-18 victory over a visiting Goodland team in Wilmeth Kirk Memorial Gym. Senior wrestlers honored along with their parents were John Risewick, 132; Cody Ellis, 145; Jared Bohl, 152; Lucas Engel, 220 and Eli Bozarth, who was injured.

On Saturday, Feb. 9, the junior varsity wrestlers completed their outstanding season with some great performances in the Bill Voss Novice Tournament in Colby. Eleven Blue Jays medaled, four earned gold medals. Champions were Kyle Bell, 113; Riley Hager, 120; Derek Rowh, 132; Mike Kasson, 145. Toby Nickell, 138 and Andre Valencia each placed runner-up.

Norton was host to the Class 3A Regional Wrestling Tournament, the toughest of the four in the state. It was held Friday and Saturday, Feb. 15-16. Six of the top 10 teams in the state were

among the 23 teams entered. A total of 37 of 84 individually ranked wrestlers were scheduled to compete.

Norton entered 13 wrestlers in the Regional Tournament and nine qualified for the upcoming State Tournament as the Blue Jays rolled to the championship with 188 points. Oberlin was second with 145.5, followed by Plainville, 134.5 and Hoxie, 124. John Risewick, 132 and Cody Ellis, 145, won championships. Caysean Campbell, 106; Branson Addington, 120; Alec Hager, 126 and Jared Tallent, 138, all placed runner-up. Ethan Ross, 113 placed third and Jared Bohl, 152 and Lucas Engel, 220, each placed fourth.

The State Tournament was set for Friday and Saturday, Feb. 22-23 in Gross Memorial Coliseum in Hays and the nine qualifying Norton wrestlers called themselves "The Men in Black" and said they were on a mission. It was evident early on in the tournament that their mission was accomplished!

Eight of the nine Norton wrestlers earned state medals as Norton rolled up 129.5 points to win the championship! Runner-up team was Hoxie with 97 points, followed by Plainville, 83; Scott City, 68. John Risewick at 132 won his second state championship; Alec Hager, 126 and Caysean Campbell, 106, each placed runner-up; Branson Addington, 120; Cody Ellis, 145 and Lucas Engel, 220, each placed fourth; Ethan Ross, 113, was fifth and Jared Tallent, 138, finished sixth. Jared Bohl, 152, won one match. Norton compiled a 27-15 won-loss record and had a 7-1 pin ratio.

"This Norton team was one of the most improved teams I've ever coached," said coach Johnson. "No one expected us to do this well. It has been an amazing season, especially since we lost two state qualifiers Eli Bozarth and Cole Renner to injury."

BOWLING

Inter-City League

Standings as of March 14

1. Bailey Electric - 60.5 wins, 29.5 losses
2. B & C - 48 wins, 42 losses
3. BLD - 46 wins, 44 losses
4. Jett SS - 37 wins, 53 losses
5. Hawks Depot - 34.5 wins, 55.5 losses

High Line: Dennis Balderston-187, Dennis Corbin-181, Rusty Miller-177, Aaron Daniels-166, Bill LaSalle-166, B & C-605.

High Line Handicap: Dennis Balderston-238, Abe Burk-230, Dennis Corbin-227, Aaron Daniels-222.

High Series: Dennis Balderston-504, Rusty Miller-500, Bill LaSalle-468, Dennis Corbin-447, Bailey Electric-1630.

High Series Handicap: Dennis Balderston-657, Abe Burk-640, Brock Scott-604, Bill LaSalle-600.

Tuesday Housewife League Standings as of March 12

1. Amateurs - 31 wins, 13 losses
2. BEB & Assoc. - 26 wins, 18 losses
3. Lenora Nutrition Center - 16 wins, 28 losses
4. Moffet's - 15 wins, 29 losses

High Line: Joy Johnson-165, Sharron Smith-156, Jackie Wright-141, Amateurs-388.

High Line Handicap: Joy Johnson-233, Pam Menagh-210, Jennifer Miller-210, Amateurs-596.

High Series: Joy Johnson-421, Sharron Smith-414, Margaret Thomas-386, BEB & Assoc.-1127.

High Series Handicap: Joy Johnson-625, Jennifer Miller-604, Margaret Thomas-584, Amateurs-1743.

Tuesday Night Mens League

Standings as of March 19

1. Norton Chiropractic Center - 43 wins, 27 losses
2. RM & DC - 43 wins, 27 losses
3. WF & BR - 41 wins, 29 losses
4. BL & JE - 23 wins, 47 losses
5. AB & BB - 16 wins, 54 losses

High Line: Dale Carlson-188, Bill LaSalle-175, RM & DC.

High Line Handicap: Dale Carlson-240, Bill LaSalle-215, RM & DC-440.

High Series: Bev Miller-493, Dale Carlson-489, RM & DC-982.

High Series Handicap: Dale Carlson-645, Barb Burk-618, RM & DC-1225.

Tuesday Housewife League Standings as of March 19

1. Amateurs - 35 wins, 13 losses
2. BEB & Assoc. - 26 wins, 22 losses
3. Moffet's - 19 wins, 29 losses
4. Lenora Nutrition Center - 16 wins, 32 losses

High Line: Jacque Griffey-157, Sharron Smith-155, Kathleen Berlier-152, Cayla Cox-152, BEB & Assoc.-411.

High Line Handicap: Donna Van Kooten-224, Cayla Cox-223, Joy Johnson-215, Amateurs-613.

High Series: Jacque Griffey-424, Kathleen Berlier-419, Cayla Cox-413, Amateurs-1142.

High Series Handicap: Cayla Cox-626, Joy Johnson-604, Kathleen Berlier-587, Amateurs-1769.

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