

## Dual tourney proves successful for wrestlers; next up is regionals

Written by Brenda Johnson Brandt

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Wrestling in a dual tournament was a new experience for HHS grapplers, but provided good mat time for the team members Saturday, Feb. 7 at Eaton.

The matches paved the way for this weekend's regional action at Akron Friday and Saturday, Feb. 13-14.

Dragon wrestlers seem to be peaking at the right time, and coach Duane Stroh looks forward to this weekend's regionals which will determine qualifiers for the big show in Denver Feb. 19-21.

Eaton's dual tourney involved a 12-team format with four pools of three teams each. Holyoke defeated both Skyline and Lyons to put the Dragons in the top flight for the second round of wrestling.

HHS tied with Eaton 30-30, but won the dual on criteria, as the Dragons won more actual wrestled matches.

Berthoud and Greeley West both defeated HHS to round out the Dragon team action at 3-2 for the day.

"We really enjoyed this tournament," said coach Stroh. "It's what we needed before going to regionals."

It was completed by 4 p.m. so the team was home by 7 p.m., and best of all, it gave everyone four or five matches for the day, noted Stroh.

Eaton won the dual tourney, and Holyoke was the only team to defeat them in the dual competition. Berthoud placed second, and Holyoke was third.

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The local coach noted he's excited for regionals, pointing out Holyoke is in an extremely tough region this year.

With the most recent rankings citing four teams from this district in the top 10, the competition will be stiff. Wiggins is most recently ranked second in the district, with Holyoke eighth, Merino ninth and Wray 10th, said Stroh.

Some HHS wrestlers competed in two different weight divisions Saturday, in order to match up with other wrestlers in the dual tourney. Results of individual wrestlers in the Eaton duals follow:

Mark Edmonds—4-1 for the day, at 103 and 112 lbs. He is looking good and ready to go to regionals, said coach Stroh. His only match loss was when he bumped up to 112 for one of the duals.

Edmonds pinned Justin Vang of Lyons in 1:08, was pinned in 5:29 by Alvin Schmidt of Greeley West, pinned Federick of Skyline in 1:00, pinned Tylor Bethol of Berthoud in 1:45 and won a 4-2 decision over Dante Foes of Eaton.

Brian Strong—4-1 record at 119 lbs. "He has really turned a corner for us, and looks forward to moving on to regionals," said coach Stroh of Strong's wrestling.

Strong won a 13-5 major decision over Cameron Walker of Lyons, was pinned in 2:17 by Joseph Martinez of Greeley West, won a 14-4 major decision over Boyd of Skyline, pinned Brad Novell of Berthoud in 1:14 and pinned Tanner Karsley of Eaton in 1:15.

Chad Stroh—4-0 at Eaton at 125 and 130 lbs. He bumped up a weight for a couple of the duals, and won all his matches in first-period pins.

Stroh pinned Jake Hoeft of Erie in 1:03, pinned Roy Garza of Greeley West in 1:48, pinned Cordova of Skyline in 1:53 and pinned Darrius Lohr of Eaton in :53.

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Skyler Dittmer—4-0 record, primarily at 130 lbs. He had a good undefeated day and bumped up a weight a couple of times.

Dittmer pinned Tyler DiSanto of Erie in 3:17, pinned Alex Guerrera of Greeley West in 1:39, decisioned D. Barnett of Skyline 7-4 and decisioned Jaden Olearnick of Eaton 14-9.

Seth Baker—3-1 record at 135 lbs. in an outstanding day. Baker pinned Colt Sell of Erie in :36, pinned Brisno Furney of Greeley West in 5:18, pinned Schumann of Skyline in 3:12 and lost a 6-16 major decision to Curtis Martinez of Berthoud.

Parker Redfern—filled Akron's 130-lb. slot, going 0-4 for the day. Coach Stroh noted Redfern wrestled well all day, but had a tough day. He will wrestle 152 lbs. in the regional tourney.

Redfern was pinned in 2:31 by Tanner Hirstine of Cherry Creek, lost a 2-13 major decision to Alex Saldo of Berthoud, was pinned in :42 by Joey Castanza of Pueblo County and was pinned in 5:29 by Josh Archer of Wray.

Broc Pelle—3-2 record at 140 lbs. He drew as hard a bracket as anyone, noted coach Stroh. Pelle got caught by last year's state runner-up from Greeley West, but followed through in the tourney, wrestling his best all year.

Pelle pinned Roland Valadez of Lyons in 1:40, was pinned in :24 by Nathaniel Garcia of Greeley West, pinned Josh Betchtold of Skyline in 2:27, was pinned in 3:02 by Brandon Wahbert of Berthoud and pinned Alex Bustas of Eaton in 1:11.

Brandon Price—1-4 record at 145 lbs. He struggled in his first match, but marked a win during the tourney and made big progress from the beginning of the season, noted coach Stroh.

Price was pinned in 2:41 by Brysen Daughton of Lyons, decisioned Marc Neito of Greeley West 13-7, lost a 9-14 decision to Jarrod Bechtold of Skyline, was pinned in 1:34 by Marcus Lucero of

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Berthoud and was pinned in 1:02 by Matt Smith of Eaton.

Luke Garrett—3-2 record at 160 lbs. in a great day. Coach Stroh noted Garrett had one kind of average match, then went 3-1 the rest of the day, wrestling very well. He finished with a pin over an Eaton opponent who had defeated him the previous week.

Garrett decisioned Brock Burchard of Lyons 14-7, won a 20-4 tech fall over Raul Slito of Greeley West, lost a 4-9 decision to Gram of Skyline, lost a 6-11 decision to Nicholas Henderson of Berthoud and pinned Justin Hatchell of Eaton in 1:25.

Mitch Wittman—1-4 record at 171 lbs., with a big win on the day, noted coach Stroh. “He’s starting to put it together, and I’m proud of the progress he’s made,” added Stroh.

Wittman pinned Bobby Clark of Lyons in 1:50, was pinned in 1:00 by Devon Rojas of Greeley West, was pinned in 1:01 by Riley of Skyline, was pinned in 2:14 by Joshua Atkinson of Berthoud and was pinned in 1:22 by Lucas Short of Eaton.

Casey Sage—0-4 record at 189 lbs. Sage has also made great progress this season, praised coach Stroh.

Sage was pinned in 1:53 by a Lyons wrestler, was pinned in :40 by Martinez of Skyline, was pinned in 1:42 by J.T. Pickert of Berthoud and was pinned in 1:42 by Bryce Kammerzel of Eaton.