

Sports

To the mat: Wrestlers go on to be state champions

Athletes from all around the state came to Allen High School to compete against each other on January 29th and 30th. The WSMS students clinched four individual championships and steam-rolled through the competition.

The boys' wrestling team placed fourth respectively in the entire meet with four wrestlers placing in the top five: Ralph Rucker (Champion), Austin King (Runner-up), Mitchell Howell (Third Place), and Joe Ridgeway (Fifth Place). Coach Jerry Quinton and assistant coaches, Tommy Poynter and Cole Keifer, led both boys and girls teams.

"I think we wrestled well this season, but some of our players are rookies, so that may have had an impact on how well we did this season," said CJ Bacon, eighth grade.

The wrestlers had been working hard since the start of the second semester. Every school day, they worked out at offseason in the morning, and then they rode the bus to SCIS to practice wrestling techniques and strategies. Girls wrestlers had a similar schedule with wrestling in the early morning and then being driven to school where they then partake in offseason, with some girls going to boys practice to sharpen their skills.

"I think the team and I did great and with the rookies going to their second season. Next year, we're probably going to kill in

state," said seventh-grader, Ralph Rucker.

Ralph Rucker, the only boys individual champion, defeated everyone in his weight class, winning the final by a score of 7-1. Rucker is the third wrestler in Lovejoy history to take home a state championship. Next year, if Rucker wins the state championship again, he will become the first ever two-time champion in Texas history.

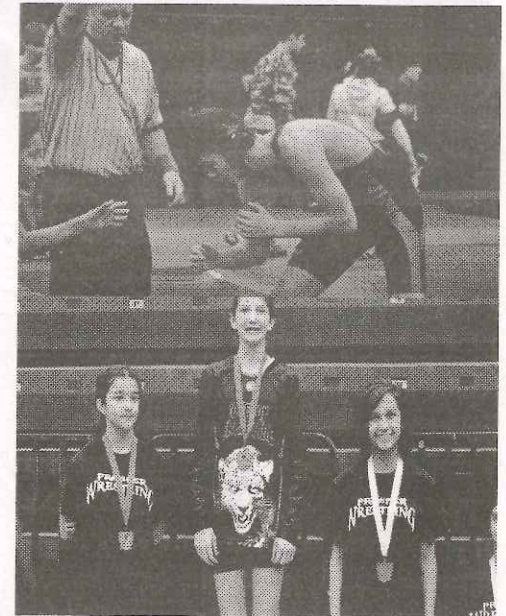
Mitchell Howell came close to becoming a two-time champion.

Instead, he became a two-time state placer. Last year, as a seventh-grader, Howell placed fifth. This year, Howell persevered to make it to the podium.

"I did good. I got first out of four people [in my weight division]. [Practicing] has helped me to do the moves correctly to improve," said eighth-grader, Katherine Heath.

Out of the five girl wrestlers that entered, all five placed on the podium. Three girls dominated, taking home individual championships: Katherine Heath, Haley Bennett, and Alexandria LeFort. Two others, Rachel Drew (runner-up) and Kendra Blaylock (third-place) placed on the podium as well. Drew and Blaylock say they will strive to become two-time state placers in the future.

"It was a struggle all the way through, but at the end of the day, you know



Top: Eighth grader, Jake Blaylock gets ready to wrestle his opponent.

Bottom: Eighth grader, Katherine Heath places first making her a state champion.

photos by Alexandria LeFort

you tried your best, and the only thing you can do is remember what you did wrong, so it will never happen again," said eighth-grader Alexandria LeFort.

-Carter Satterwhite and Alex LeFort, Staff Writers

Fun Facts
about
Ford:

Favorite
Movie:
Tin Cup.

Favorite
Food: All
Mexican
food.

Favorite
Hobby:
Golf.

Favorite
Place to