

Norton wrestlers win J.R. Durham Invitational

By DICK BOYD

Medaling eight wrestlers in the first nine weight classes from 103 to 151 pounds, Coach Bill Johnson's Norton Community High School wrestling team successfully defended last year's championship in the J.R. Durham Invitational Tournament on Saturday in the NCHS Memorial Gym in Norton.

The No. 1 state ranked (Class 3-2-1A) Blue Jays rolled up 161 points to outdistance Cozad, Nebraska, the No. 3 state-ranked team in Class B (equivalent of Class 5A in Kansas) in Nebraska. Cozad placed second with 136 points.

Scott City, the No. 10 ranked team in Class 4A, finished in third place with 101.5 points. Hoxie, who is ranked No. 2 in the state in Class 3-2-1A, finished in fourth place with 82.5 points, followed by Mill Valley, a Class 5A school, 80; Smith Center, No. 6 ranked in Class 3-2-1A, 77; Beloit, 77; TMP-Hays, 69; Atwood, 37; Russell, 31; Leoti, 26.5; Quinter, 9.

Nine of the 14 wrestlers Norton entered in the tournament won medals by placing in the top four of their weight class. The Blue Jays had three champions, three runners-up and three third place finishers.

Winning gold medals for Norton were junior Clay Madden, 112; junior Lance Roe, 152 and senior Michael Sprigg, 275.

By vote of all the team coaches, Sprigg was named "Outstanding Wrestler" of the tournament.

Earning silver medals for Norton were sophomore Logan Keiswetter, 103; sophomore Nathan Broeckelman, 119 and sophomore Blake VanEaton, 145. Bronze medal winners from Norton were junior Jon Harding, 130; junior Jeremy Harding, 135 and junior Luke Pfannenstiel, 140. "This was the toughest J.R. Durham Tournament that we've had for a long time," said Coach Johnson. "There were several brackets where some very good wrestlers did not even place.

"Cozad also had nine wrestlers in the finals so it was important that all of our wrestlers perform well for the sake of the team. We won three of six championship matches, with which I was not completely satisfied, but all three of our wrestlers going for third place won and that really helped in the team race.

"We were happy to win the championship but still have some things to work on. We're not doing as well as in the past on leg attacks. We'll work in practice on creating angles so it's harder for an opponent to counter you."

Norton compiled a 29-15 winning record in tourney matches and had a 15-6 pin ratio.

Coach Johnson named VanEaton "Wrestler of the Week" for Norton. "Wrestler of the Week" VanEaton was seeded No. 4 at 145 pounds. In the first round, he pinned No. 5 seed Cole Fairbank, TMP, in 1:28. In the semi-finals, he won an 8-4 decision over No. 1 seed Ben Mettlen, Scott City. In the championship finals, VanEaton wrestled No. 2 seed Tyler Sturgeon, Cozad, a competitive match. The first period ended with no score. VanEaton got an escape for the only point of the second period to take a 1-0 lead into the final period. Sturgeon scored three points in the third period to edge VanEaton 3-1 for the championship.

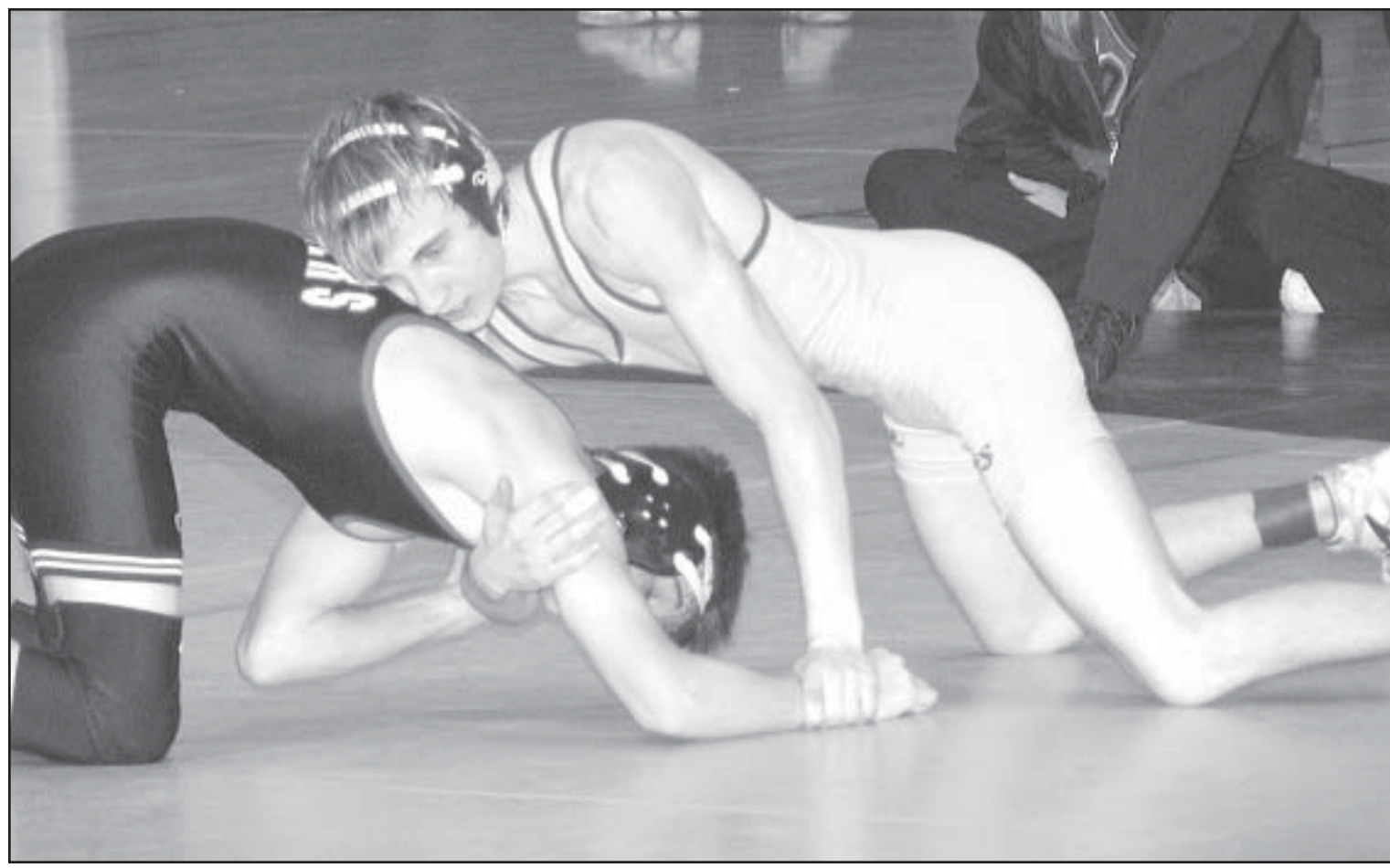
VanEaton is now 10-6 for the young season.

Mettlen won a 6-2 decision over No. 3 seed Justin Howard, Atwood, to place third.

At 112 pounds, Clay Madden, who is ranked No. 1 in the state, was seeded No. 1. In the first round he pinned Kevin Moss, Hoxie, in just 30 seconds. In the semi-finals, he pinned No. 5 seed Justin Sauer, Scott City, in 1:10. In the championship finals, he wrestled No. 2 seed Micah Chrisinger, Cozad, who is ranked No. 2 in Nebraska and brought a perfect 13-0 record into the tournament.

Neither wrestler scored in the first period. Madden took a 1-0 lead with an escape in the second period. The third period was also scoreless, allowing Madden to win a 1-0 decision and the championship. Madden's season record is now 13-1.

No. 3 seed and No. 2 state



Norton junior Clay Madden controls Cozad, Neb. senior Micah Chrisinger during their 112 pound championship match in the J.R. Durham Tournament on Saturday. Madden, who was seeded No. 1 and ranked No. 1 in the state, handed

ranked in Class 5A Justin Broadbent, Mill Valley, placed third by pinning Sauer in 1:46.

Lance Roe, who is ranked No. 2 in the state at 152 pounds, was seeded No. 1. In the first round, he won a technical fall in 3:20 over Josiah Jones, Atwood. In the semi-finals, he won a 4-3 decision over No. 5 seed Tom Kriley, Smith Center.

Two other state ranked wrestlers were also in the 152 pound bracket but No. 6 seed Cody Lang, Russell, decided both of them. In the first round, Lang won a 10-7 decision over No. 3 seed and No. 5 state ranked, Todd Kendrick, Scott City, and in the semi-finals, he won a 6-5 decision over No. 2 seed and No. 2 state ranked Earl Johansen, Mill Valley, to reach the championship finals against Roe. Roe took control early in the title match and held a 5-0 lead after one period. In the second period, Roe pinned Lang in 3:49 to win the championship and extend his unbeaten season record to 15-0.

Kriley placed third with a 4-3 decision over No. 4 seed Eric Love, Cozad.

Norton's Michael Sprigg also brought a perfect record into the tournament and was able to extend it to 14-0 and win the 275 pound championship. The No. 1 seeded and No. 1 state ranked Sprigg pinned Scott Burris, Hoxie, in 23 seconds of their first round match. In the semi-finals, Sprigg needed 24 seconds to make No. 4 seed K.C. Higley, Atwood, count the lights.

In the championship finals, Sprigg wrestled No. 2 seed and No. 2 state ranked in 4A Guy Miller, Scott City. Sprigg

decided Miller 7-3 in the dual at Goodland earlier this season but Miller gave him a much tougher match this time around. There was no score after one period. Sprigg took a 1-0 lead with an escape in the second period but Miller escaped in the third period to tie the score at 1-1 and send the match into overtime.

Both wrestlers were penalized one point for stalling in the overtime, making the score 2-2 and sending the match into a sudden death tiebreaker. In this situation, the wrestler who scored the first point in the match has the opportunity to choose either the top or bottom position. Sprigg chose the bottom and escaped for the 3-2 win and the championship.

No. 3 seed Marty Rodriguez, Leoti, placed third with a 7-6 decision over Higley.

Logan Keiswetter, who is ranked No. 3 in the state at 103 pounds, was seeded No. 2. In the first round, he won an 8-2 decision over Anthony Maaske, Cozad. In the semi-finals, he pinned No. 3 seed Bobby McDonald, TMP, in 3:22. In the championship finals he wrestled No. 1 seed Bret Delich, Mill Valley. The first period was scoreless. Keiswetter fell behind 3-1 in the second period but tied the score at 5-all in the third period to send the match into overtime where Delich decided him 7-5.

Keiswetter's season record is now 10-3.

McDonald placed third by deciding No. 4 seed Tanner Popp, Hoxie.

At 119 pounds, Norton's Nathan Broeckelman, who is ranked No. 2 in the state, was seeded No. 1. In

the first round, he pinned Kale Wann, Russell, in 1:54. In the semi-finals, he won a 6-1 decision over No. 5 seed Travis Budke, TMP. In the championship finals, he wrestled No. 2 seed and No. 6 state ranked Matt Mighebrink, Atwood.

Broeckelman trailed 2-1 after one period but tied the score at 2-all in the second period. Mighebrink scored two more points, however, in the third period to win 4-2. Broeckelman's season record is now 13-2.

Budke decided No. 3 seed Nick Kough, Scott City, 9-2 to place third.

The Blue Jays' Jon Harding, who is ranked No. 6 in the state, was seeded No. 4 at 130 pounds. In the first round, he pinned No. 5 seed Robby McClung, Mill Valley, in 5:55. In the semi-finals, he wrestled No. 1 seed, No. 1 state ranked and unbeaten Tait Weatherbee, TMP, and was pinned in 2:47.

In the consolation bracket, he pinned Chris Barber, Cozad, in 58 seconds. Barber had upset No. 3 seed and No. 6 state ranked Alex Ryan, Russell, 8-6 in overtime in the first round. Ryan entered the tournament with a perfect 7-0 record. In the consolation finals, Harding wrestled McClung for the second time in the tourney and pinned him this time in 2:53 to place third.

Harding is now 10-5 for the season.

In the championship match, Weatherbee extended his unbeaten record to 18-0 by winning a 7-3 decision over No. 2 seed and No. 1 state ranked in 4A Logan Dreiling, Scott City.

At 135 pounds, Norton's Jeremy Harding was seeded No. 4 and is ranked No. 5 in the state. In the first round, he won a technical fall in 5:30 over No. 5 seed Jason Baker, Leoti. In the semi-finals, he wrestled No. 1 seed and No. 2 state ranked Cale Farber, Hoxie, and lost a 5-3 decision.

In the consolation bracket, he pinned Robert Binning, Atwood, in 3:49, then decided No. 2 seed and No. 3 state ranked Travis Warner, Smith Center, 4-1 to win the consolation title. Harding's record is now 14-3.

Farber won a 10-0 major decision over No. 3 seed and No. 5 state ranked in Nebraska Kyle Banzhaf, Cozad, to win the championship.

The Blue Jays' Luke Pfannenstiel was seeded No. 3 at 140 pounds. In the first round, he won a 13-4 major decision over Dustin Warta, Smith Center. In the semi-finals, he lost a 6-2 decision to No. 2 seed and No. 4 state ranked Tracy Jordan, Beloit.

In the consolation bracket, he won a 7-6 decision over No. 4 seed Ryan Driscoll, Russell and decided No. 1 seed and No. 4 state ranked in Nebraska Justin Lemmer, Cozad, 7-5 to place third. Both Pfannenstiel and Lemmer had entered the tourney unbeaten. Pfannenstiel's record is now 13-1 for the season.

In the championship final, Jordan won a 4-0 decision over No. 5 seed Matt Westin, Mill Valley, who upset Lemmer with a 4-1 decision in the semi-finals.

Two undefeated wrestlers met for the 125 pound championship. Tyler Baker, Hoxie, was seeded No. 1 and state ranked No. 2 and he wrestled Joel Pflaster, Cozad, who was seeded No. 2 and ranked No. 1 in the state of Nebraska. Baker pinned Pflaster in 5:51 to extend his unbeaten record to 20-0. Pflaster is now 17-1.

Sophomore Kent Mann competed for Norton at 125 pounds. In the first round, he was pinned in 1:50 by No. 3 seed Bradley Esterl, Beloit. In the consolation bracket, he won a 4-0 decision over Alex Buettner, Mill Valley, then lost a 2-1 decision to No. 5 seed David William, Russell. William upset No. 4 seed and No. 3 state ranked Justin York, Smith Center, 6-4 in the first round. Esterl won third place with a 13-0 major decision over William.

Mann's record is now 5-5.

Norton senior Paul Juenemann competed at 189 pounds. His first match was in the bunny bracket where he pinned Zach Meyer, Hoxie, in 2:27. In his first round match, he was pinned in 1:20 by No. 2 seed and No. 6 state ranked in Nebraska Cale Osborn, Cozad.

In the consolation bracket, he pinned No. 3 seed Kirk Palmer, Smith Center, in 2:53. In his next match, he was pinned in 1:34 by No. 4 seed Chase Elliot, Mill Valley. Juenemann is now 5-7 for the season.

Osborn wrestled No. 1 seed, No. 2 state ranked and undefeated Tyler Weisner, TMP, for the championship and won a 2-0 decision over Weisner, who is now 17-1. Elliot placed third by pinning Ed Vargas, Leoti, in 2:31.

At 215 pounds, Norton senior Blake Hillebrand also had to win in the bunny bracket to get into the tournament. He pinned Austin Roth, TMP, in 59 seconds to reach the first round of the tourney where he was pinned in 1:05 by No. 1 seed and No. 6 state ranked Adam Rorabaugh, Smith Center.

In the consolation bracket, he pinned No. 4 seed Joe Beck, Mill Valley, in 1:58. In the consolation semi-finals, he was pinned in 2:38 by No. 3 seed Tim Erwin, Hoxie. Hillebrand's record is now 6-8.

Erwin won third place with an 11-1 major decision over No. 5 seed Kurt Gill, Cozad. Rorabaugh won the championship with a 4-2 decision over No. 2 seed and No. 6 state ranked at 189 Lucas Fox, Scott City.

Junior Davvid Stanley wrestled for Norton at 171 pounds. In the first round, he lost a technical fall in 4:43 to No. 3 seed Matt McGinty, Hoxie. In the consolation bracket, he lost a 10-5 decision to Joe Libel, Cozad. Stanley's record is now 7-9.

Libel won third place with an 11-8 decision over Caleb Simon, Quinter. No. 1 seed and No. 2 state ranked Austin Kingsbury, Smith Center, won the championship by pinning No. 2 seed and No. 5 state ranked James Wright, Beloit, in 5:48.

Senior Corey Look competed for Norton at 160 pounds and had to start in the bunny bracket. He was pinned in 1:44 by David Obermeyer, Hoxie. Look is now 1-3 for the season.

No. 3 seed and No. 4 state ranked Nick Newell, Beloit, won the championship with an 8-1 decision over No. 1 seed Aaron Rosin, Scott City. No. 5 seed Jake Nichols, Smith Center, placed third with a 4-0 decision over Obermeyer.



Blue Jay senior Michael Sprigg escapes the grasp of Scott City's Guy Miller to win a 3-2 decision in overtime in the 275 pound weight class in the J.R. Durham Tournament on Saturday in Norton. Sprigg, who was seeded No. 1 and is ranked No. 1 in the state, extended his perfect season record to 14-0. Miller was seeded No. 2 and is ranked No. 2 in the state in Class 4A. His only two losses this season have been to Sprigg.

—Telegram photo by Dick Boyd

Norton wrestlers to have busy week

This will be a busy week for the Norton high school wrestlers. On Thursday, they will compete in duals with Trego and Smith Center in the Wilmeth Kirk Memorial Gym at East Campus, beginning at 6 p.m.

Since this will be the final dual competition for Norton in Norton this season, it will be "Senior Night".

On Friday and Saturday, Norton will compete in the prestigious 42nd annual Newton Wrestling Tournament of Champions in Newton.

Competing in addition to Norton and Newton will be teams from Andover, Ark City, Bishop Carroll, Campus, Clay Center, Derby, Dodge City, El Dorado, Emporia, Hutchinson, Leavenworth, Maize, Manhattan, McPherson, Salina South, Valley Center, Wichita East, Wichita

Heights, Wichita Northwest, Wichita South, Winfield and Perry, Okla.

Wrestling will begin at 11 a.m. on Friday.

Admission for all or any part of Friday or all or any part of Saturday will be \$7 for adults, \$5 for students 1-12.

On Friday, the Norton junior varsity wrestlers will compete in the Elm Creek Invitational Wrestling Tournament in Elm Creek, Neb.

Competing in addition to the Norton junior varsity and Elm Creek will be Alma, Anselmo-Merna, Burwell, Overton, Rock County, Osceola, Southern Valley and junior varsities from Arapahoe, Cozad, Gibbon, Holdrege and Lexington.

Admission will be \$5 for adults and \$4 for students.