

Norton wrestlers honored at annual banquet

By DICK BOYD

The "three-peat" Class 3-2-1A State Champion Norton Community High School Wrestling Team was honored during the annual banquet on Sunday, April 9 at the American Legion Hall in Norton.

For the first time in Norton's long history of wrestling excellence, the Blue Jays have won the state wrestling title three years in a row.

Norton's domination of a field of 224 of the best wrestlers from all over the state was so overwhelming that the Blue Jays had enough points at the end of one day of competition to earn this season's state championship.

Norton rolled up 186.5 points to easily outdistance second place Smith Center, who scored 110. St. Francis was third with 108 points. Phillipsburg placed fourth with 86.5 points, ensuring that three of the top four teams were from the Mid-Continent League.

This year's Norton Blue Jay wrestling team compiled a 15-3 overall dual record, which included a perfect 8-0 dual record and championship of the Mid-Continent League.

In addition, they won their third straight championship of the Hoxie Invitational, placed third in the Goodland Holiday Classic dual tournament, placed third in the Clay Center Invitational, won their third straight championship of the J.R. Durham Invitational in Norton, won the Mid-Continent League Tournament championship for the seventh year in a row, won the Panther Classic in Phillipsburg for the third year in a row and won the Regional Tournament for the second year in a row.

Norton's biggest victory prior to the state championship was their second straight championship of the prestigious Newton Tournament of Champions. Until Norton won the title a year ago, no team from a school smaller than Class 5A had won the championship in the long history of the tournament.

Nine Norton wrestlers qualified for the state tournament with their performances in the toughest regional tournament in the state.

The Blue Jays who competed in the state tournament, their grade, weight, place and season record were: Clay Madden, senior, 119, champion, 39-1; Luke Pfannenstiel, senior, 152, champion, 33-6; Lance Roe, senior, 160, champion, 37-1; Nathan Broeckelman, junior, 125, champion, 40-2; Zach Bainter, freshman, 112, second, 24-3; Jeremy Harding, senior, 145, second, 27-5; Kent Mann, junior, 130, third, 29-8; Blake VanEaton, junior, 140, third, 35-9; Jon Harding, senior, 135, fifth, 32-14.

The Norton wrestlers compiled an impressive 35-6 won-loss record and a perfect 9-0 pin ratio in powering to the state championship.

Madden is the first wrestler in Norton history to win four state tournament championships. His career record is a phenomenal 128-10.

Individual awards

Following a potluck meal, Head Coach Bill Johnson spoke to the

wrestlers, parents and fans and presented awards.

"We're here tonight to honor our seniors and the entire wrestling team for a very successful season," said Coach Johnson.

"Many thanks to the parents for their understanding and support during the season. Nothing is accomplished without the effort of the families along with the wrestlers. All the effort paid off with all nine wrestlers medaling in the state tournament. We compiled a 35-6 record in the state tournament and that statistic is incredible."

The "Most Outstanding Wrestler" award, the most prestigious of all, was presented by Coach Johnson to Clay Madden and Lance Roe.

"This award usually goes to just one wrestler but we coaches felt that both Clay and Lance deserved it this year," said Coach Johnson.

"Clay is one of only 20 wrestlers in the entire state in all classes to ever win four straight state championships.

"Lance was an expert in takedowns which he demonstrated over and over."

Not only was Roe the season takedown leader for Norton, but he became the all-time leader. He had 193 takedowns this season and recorded an incredible 515 takedowns in his outstanding career.

Roe is also Norton's career leader for technical falls with 27. He had nine this year and 10 last season. He is also the career leader for three-point near falls with 114. He also holds the single season record of 45 which he set last season.

Madden scored 198 team points this season to rank third on Norton's all-time list. Broeckelman ranks second overall with 201 points he scored this season. Roe scored 174 points and ranks No. 9 all-time. Pfannenstiel scored 170 to rank No. 11 all-time and Jon Harding scored 168 to rank No. 13 all-time. Jeff Boyle is the all-time points leader for a season with 211 scored in 1995-96.

Broeckelman ranks No. 5 all-time in season falls with the 25 he compiled this season. Madden is right behind him in No. 6 with this season's 23 falls. Jon and Jeremy Harding each had 21 falls this season to tie Michael Sprigg, who got his in 2001-02.

Roe, Broeckelman, Madden and VanEaton are among the all-time leaders in season major decisions (8-14 points) for Norton. Broeckelman had 11 this season to rank him No. 2 behind Roe's 12, which he recorded in 2003-04. Madden and Roe both won nine

major decisions this season which tied for third all-time. VanEaton won eight majors this season and ranks No. 5. Roe is the career champion for major decisions with a total of 31.

Roe is the all-time season leader in near falls for three points with 45 he recorded last season. Roe also has the career record with 114. Jon Harding was this season's leader with 29 which ranks him eighth overall. Broeckelman had 26 this season which ranks him No. 12 all-time.

Pfannenstiel recorded 32 near falls for two points this season to set the all-time Norton record in this category. Jon Harding had 19 and ranks No. 7 all-time.

Others receiving statistical season awards were: Jon Harding, most reversals, 21; Blake VanEaton, Kent Mann, most decisions (1-7 points), 12 each; Zach Bainter, fastest pin, 12 seconds.

Named "Most Improved Varsity Wrestler" was senior Jeremy Harding, who placed second in the state at 145.

Receiving the "Coach Durham" award was senior 152 pound state champion Luke Pfannenstiel. The award is based on hard work, sportsmanship, academics and good citizenship.

The "Underdog Match Winner of the Year" award was won by senior Jon Harding at 135. He defeated state champion Brad Esterl, Beloit, twice and received the award for pinning Esterl in the Durham Invitational.

"The Most Exciting Match" award winner was senior state champion Lance Roe. He received the award for defeating Romero Cotton, the eventual Class 6A state champion, 6-5 in overtime to win the 160 pound gold medal in the Newton Tournament of Champions. Roe successfully rode Cotton in the second overtime to win.

Junior Shane Stanley at 189 won the "Key Match of the Year" award for pinning David Hadley, Phillipsburg, in the Panther Classic. Hadley had defeated Stanley in the Mid-Continent League Tournament.

"Most Promising Freshman of the Year" award winner was Zach Bainter, who placed second in the state at 112. Winning the "Outstanding Sophomore of the Year" award was Jeff Soderlund.

The "Junior Varsity Wrestler of the Year" award winner was sophomore Travis Ray.

"Most Improved Wrestler" award went to junior Jared Bebb.

Classroom "Academic Award" winners and their grade point averages were: Logan Kelly, freshman, 3.85; Travis Ray, sopho-

more, 3.5; Nathan Broeckelman, junior, 3.63; Clay Madden, senior, 3.27.

Assistant Coach Deyton Hager presented the following junior varsity awards: Travis Ray, most takedowns, 29; Jeff Soderlund, most reversals, 17; Jared Bebb, most near falls for two points, 20; Jared Bebb, most near falls for three points, 22; Travis Ray and Brock Lauer, most decisions, 6; Jared Bebb, most major decisions, 3; Jeff Soderlund, most falls, 19; Gordon Bebb, fastest pin, 10 seconds.

Winners of the "Wrestler of the Week" awards during the season were: Jeremy Harding, Zach Bainter, Hoxie Invitational; Jared Bebb, junior varsity in Alma; Jon Harding, Clay Center Invitational; Travis Ray, junior varsity at Southern Valley; Clay Madden, Phillipsburg, Stockton duals and Goodland Dual Tournament; Clay Madden, J.R. Durham Invitational; entire Norton team, Trego, Smith Center duals and Newton Tournament of Champions; Shane Stanley, junior varsity at Elm Creek; Shane Stanley, Davvid Stanley, Nathan Broeckelman, Jeff Soderlund, Kearney, Hays duals and Mid-Continent League Tournament; Lance Roe and Brock Lauer, Plainville, Ellis duals and Panther Classic; Zach Bainter, Osborne, Hill City duals; Jared Bebb, junior varsity at Colby; Clay Madden, Lance Roe, Nathan Broeckelman, regional tournament; entire team, state tournament.

Coach Johnson gave special recognition to senior managers Kayla Douglas, who has been a student manager the last three years and Lexi Wolf, who has been a student manager all four years of high school.

"We are really going to miss these managers," said Coach Johnson. "They were so capable and dependable."

Special thanks from Coach Johnson went to underclassmen managers Jessica Sprigg, chief statistician; Lacey Roe, Justin Bainter and Andrew Black.

In addition to Madden, Roe, and Jon and Jeremy Harding, other seniors on this year's squad were Davvid Stanley, Tyler Burns and Wil Wilhite.

Coach Johnson called the seniors forward and presented plaques to those who had wrestled four years. "This is the most successful class of wrestlers to go through Norton high school in its history," said Coach Johnson. "They were state team champions three years and finished second their freshman season."

Coach Johnson read aloud parts of the Kansas Senate Resolution No. 1830 which was passed to honor the Norton wrestling team after their state championship.

Normally, an award is presented for "Fan of the Year" but Coach Johnson said he is giving it this year to the entire Norton community for their tremendous support.

Coach Johnson thanked his longtime assistant coaches Doug Ray and Deyton Hager for the many, many hours they dedicate to the wrestling program. He also announced that he will be losing Coach Hager, who will begin college classes at Kansas State University in Manhattan this fall. "We will really miss Deyton," said Coach Johnson. "He started working with kids wrestling, then was our junior high head wrestling coach and a high school assistant coach. We wish him well in this new endeavor."

"It has been great to see the community support of wrestling; keep up what you're doing," said Coach Hager.

"I'm proud to be a Blue Jay."

Coach Johnson told the crowd that Shane Miller, former head wrestling coach at Eureka High School, will be the new junior high head wrestling coach in Norton

and will also be an assistant coach for the high school.

Coach Johnson thanked his wife, Joy, and family for their support and retiring Norton Community High School Principal Lary Stull for the administration's continued support. He also thanked the Norton radio station and Norton Telegram newspaper for their good coverage of wrestling.

Coach Johnson asked all the mothers of Norton wrestlers to stand so they could receive an ovation of thanks.

The Norton senior wrestlers presented color photos of themselves to Coach Johnson.

Team records

The entire team set team records for the season in three categories: takedowns, 778; major decisions (8-14 points), 59 and falls, 209.

In individual wins, the team had 388 which was third all-time and only surpassed by the 2003-04 team which had 401 and last year's team which recorded 394.

This year's team had the second highest near falls for both two and three points in Norton history.

They had 143 near falls for two points which has only been topped by the 2003-04 team which had 157. They also had 193 near falls for three points which is only bested by last year's team which had 217.

This year's Blue Jay squad recorded 21 technical falls, which is third highest ever. Last year's team and the 2002-03 team both had 27 total technical falls.

Humorous awards

Coach Johnson also handed out some "fun" awards.

Winners were: Quiz the Coach Award, Jeremy Harding; Clock Watchers Award, Nathan Broeckelman; Six-Pound Orange Award, Donny Hildebrand; Assistant Coach of the Year Award, Andrew Black; Porker of the Year Award, Zach Bainter; Leaner of the Year Award, Clay Madden and Mash Award, Coady McMullen.

Here's Our List:

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- 2005 DODGE DAKOTA QUAD CAB 2 WHEEL DRIVE — Flame red with gray cloth seats, SLT, sport appearance, 3.7 liter V-6, automatic, air, tilt, cruise, power: seat/windows/locks/mirrors, stereo with CD player, sunscreen glass, chrome plated aluminum wheels, keyless entry, 7,000 miles.
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- 2003 DODGE RAM 1/2 TON SHOT BOX REGULAR CAB 2 WHEEL DRIVE PICKUP — Atlantic blue pearl with gray, 40/20/40 seating, SLT, 4.7 V-8, five speed automatic, air, tilt, cruise, power: windows/locks/mirrors, stereo with CD player, sliding rear window, 20" aluminum wheels, new tires, trailer tow package, bed liner, keyless entry, 43,000 miles.
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- 1996 FORD F250 3/4 TON EXTENDED CAB SHORT BOX 4 WHEEL DRIVE — Light blue with cloth 40/20/40 seating, XLT, 7.3 power stroke diesel, 5 speed manual, air, tilt, cruise, power: windows/locks, stereo with cassette, 5th wheel hitch, new clutch, dual tanks, aluminum wheels, 137,000 miles.

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BOWLING

LADIES INTER CITY

Standings April 3 — Nelson Bros., 35-9; Animal Health, 27-17; Land Surveyors, 25-19; Jamboree, 23-21; Superior Livestock, 17.5-26.5; High Game Scratch: Laura Leidig, 198; Jackie Wright, 161, 160; High Series Scratch: Laura Leidig, 449; Jackie Wright, 435; Olivia Krehbiel, 423; High Game Handicap: Laura Leidig, 234; Helen Muirhead, 212; Donna VanKooten, 209; High Series Handicap: Donna VanKooten, 563; Olivia Krehbiel, 558; Laura Leidig, 566

Results March 27 — High Game Scratch: Laura Leidig, 161; Kathleen Berlier, 155; Vendla Tacha, 151; High Series Scratch: Laura Leidig, 422; Kathleen Berlier, 409; Donna VanKooten, 401; High Game Handicap: Vendla Tacha, 217; Donna VanKooten, 202; Vida Perrill, 199; High Series Handicap: Vendla Tacha, 588; Donna VanKooten, 560; Vida Perrill, 536