

# Wrestling season officially ends with banquet

By DICK BOYD

The Norton Community High School wrestling team was honored for another outstanding season during the annual banquet on Sunday evening at the American Legion Hall in Norton.

With only five returning lettermen, coach Bill Johnson's Blue Jays compiled another impressive record en route to a third place finish in the Class 3-2-1A state tournament.

In his 16th season at Norton, coach Johnson guided his wrestlers to a 19-1 dual record. Their only dual loss was to Garden City in the Holiday Classic in Goodland where Norton placed second.

In the season opener, Norton won the annual Hoxie Invitational for the fourth year in a row. Then, the Blue Jays placed second in the tough Clay Center Invitational after finishing third a year ago. After the Holiday Classic, Norton won their fourth straight championship of the J.R. Durham Invitational in Norton. The Blue Jays edged Beloit by 4.5 points for the championship when Alex Thomas won the 285 pound match.

Inclement weather prevented the Norton wrestling team from defending their two-time championship in the prestigious Newton Tournament of Champions so they accepted an invitation to the Emporia Dual Tournament and returned with a perfect 5-0 record.

The Blue Jays steamrolled to their eighth Mid-Continent League Tournament champion-

## Top award goes to Broeckelman

ship in a row with 203 points. Smith Center was second with 149.

Next, Norton defeated Hays and Kearney in duals in Norton. The win over Hays was easy but the dual with Kearney went to the 285 pound match before being decided.

Again, Thomas met the challenge when he decisioned Taylor Foss 7-5 to produce a 30-27 victory for the Blue Jays. Later in the season, Foss won the Nebraska state championship in the largest enrollment class.

Norton was ranked No.1 in the state of Kansas and Kearney was ranked No.3 in the state of Nebraska at the time of their dual.

The Blue Jays' next action was in the annual Panther Classic and they won the championship for the fourth year in a row. Phillipsburg was second and Beloit was third.

Norton completed the Mid-Continent League race with a perfect 8-0 dual record. It was the 12th consecutive MCL dual championship for the Blue Jays.

The Class 3-2-1A regional tournament, the toughest in the state, came next. The Blue Jays were good hosts but not so good that they let any other team win.

Norton captured their third regional championship in a row and the entire team was named "Wres-

tlers of the Week" by coach Johnson.

Ten Blue Jay wrestlers qualified for the state tournament in Hays. Although Norton had beaten Smith Center in the MCL tournament and 43-23 in their dual and defeated Beloit in the J.R. Durham Invitational and Clay Center Invitational, both teams edged Norton for the championship. Smith Center and Beloit tied for the title in one of the few such occurrences in state history and Norton finished just 1.5 points behind in third place.

Assistant coaches this year were Doug Ray, Shane Miller and Chance McKinney. Student managers were seniors Jessica Sprigg and Morgan Kauten and junior Star Greene.

The seven Blue Jays who placed in the state tournament, their grade, weight, place and season record were: Nathan Broeckelman, senior, 130, champion, 40-0; Alex Thomas, junior, 285, third, 38-1; Blake VanEaton, senior, 152, fourth, 30-9; Zach Bainter, sophomore, 125, fourth, 32-12; Jeff Soderlund, junior, 145, fourth, 34-12; Kent Mann, senior, 135, sixth, 36-4; Zane Perez, freshman, 119, sixth, 30-11.

Also competing for Norton in the state tournament were Connor Pfannenstiel, 103, freshman;

Kaenon Keiswetter, 112, freshman and Aaron Husted, 140, junior.

### Individual awards

Following a potluck meal, coach Johnson and his assistants spoke to the wrestlers, parents and fans and presented awards.

The "Most Outstanding Wrestler" award, the most prestigious of all, was presented to two-time state champion Nathan Broeckelman, who finished his four-year high school career with a magnificent 138-22 record.

Broeckelman took over the all-time career wins leader position from Lance Roe, 2006 senior, who had 136 career victories. He also became the career team points leader with 690, surpassing Michael Sprigg, 2005 NCHS graduate. He also moved into the No.2 position for team points in a season with 209. Jeff Boyle set the record of 211 in 1996.

He also became the first Norton wrestler to ever record 40 victories in a season. Sprigg was the previous leader with 37 in 2005 and Boyle recorded 36 wins in 1996.

Broeckelman also tied for third all-time with four-time state champion Clay Madden, a 2006 graduate, and Roe on the number of major decisions in a season with nine. He was already second to Roe's 12 with 11 that he reached

in 2006.

Broeckelman is also No.17 on the list of season takedowns with 65 this season.

Receiving the "Coach Durham" award was Blake VanEaton. The award is based on hard work, sportsmanship, academics and good citizenship.

Named the "Most Improved Wrestler" of the season was Jeff Soderlund, who progressed from a junior varsity wrestler last season to a fourth place finish in the state tournament this year.

Senior Jared Bebb won the award for "Most Courageous Wrestler". "This is an award we don't give every year," said coach Johnson. "But, this young man was very deserving. He gave up 30 pounds when wrestling because he chose to move up to a heavier weight to make our team."

"He gave everything he had every minute he was on the mat." Zach Bainter received the "Outstanding Sophomore Wrestler" award.

Zane Perez was named "Most Promising Freshman Wrestler".

Co-recipients of the "Outstanding Junior Varsity Wrestler" award were Jordan Bebb and Matt Stanley.

Named co-winners of the "Most Improved Junior Varsity Wrestler" award were Robert Derauf and Coady McMullen.

The "Most Exciting Match" award winner was Blake VanEaton. He received the award for his regional tournament win over Dreiling of Scott City.

The winner of the "Key Match of the Year" award was Alex Thomas for his win over the eventual Nebraska state champion in the dual win over Kearney.

The "Underdog Match of the Year" award was won by Connor Pfannenstiel for his 5-4 regional victory over No.1 state ranked Carlos Galloway of Stockton.

The "Father-Son Practice" award winner was Dan Pfannenstiel.

Ron Zwickle received the "Fan of the Year" award for his faithful support of the Blue Jays.

Classroom "Academic Award" winners and their grade point averages were: Zane Perez, freshman, 3.7; Logan Kelly, sophomore, 3.86; Alex Thomas, junior, 4.0; Nathan Broeckelman, senior, 3.6.

Broeckelman and VanEaton were both named to the first team of the All-Academic Team chosen by the Kansas Wrestling Coaches Association and Michael Ward received honorable mention on the team.

Receiving post-season honors on the *Salina Journal's* All-Area Wrestling Team were Nathan Broeckelman, Alex Thomas, first team; Kent Mann, second team and Zane Perez, Zach Bainter, Jeff Soderlund and Blake VanEaton, honorable mention.

Broeckelman also competed in the post-season "Senior Classic".

Winners of varsity statistical awards for the season were: Nathan Broeckelman, 209 team

points, which is just two behind the record by Jeff Boyle; 65 takedowns; 9 major decisions and fastest fall, 15 seconds; Kaenon Keiswetter, 28 reversals, 27 three-point near-falls; Kent Mann, 18 two-point near-falls, 3 technical falls; Zane Perez, 15 decisions; Alex Thomas, 27 pins.

Receiving junior varsity statistical awards were: Matt Stanley, 32 takedowns, 18 reversals, 10 two-point near-falls, 19 falls; Andrew Soderlund, 14 three-point near-falls, 1 technical fall; Michael Ward, 1 technical fall; Coady McMullen, 6 decisions; Jordan Bebb, 2 major decisions; Todd Bolt, fastest fall, 9 seconds.

Coach Johnson called the seniors forward and presented awards to those who had wrestled all four years as well as those who wrestled fewer years. Honored for four years of competition were Jared Bebb, Shane Stanley, Blake VanEaton, Nathan Broeckelman and Kent Mann. Jordan Durham and Michael Ward are seniors who started wrestling their sophomore season.

Coach Johnson also honored senior managers Jessica Sprigg and Morgan Kauten.

The seniors presented framed color pictures of themselves to the coaches.

Coach Johnson recognized Fig Millan of KQNK Radio and Dick Boyd of *The Norton Telegram* for their outstanding news coverage of the Norton team. He noted that both are previous winners of the Kansas Wrestling Coaches Association "Media Person of the Year" award.

"Finishing third place in the state tournament is a great accomplishment," said coach Johnson. "Our guys are used to winning and hard work and dedication have gotten them there."

"This team had 395 wins which is second on Norton's all-time list.

We set the record with 401 last season. We had 206 pins and our team record is 209. Of our 10 state qualifiers, 7 placed. We won 19 dual meets, which is an all-time record for Norton.

"Several years ago, we were sneaking up on teams but that doesn't happen anymore. We competed well this season and displayed good sportsmanship. I'm really proud of this entire team. Every person wrestled their hardest in the practice room every day and all 30 wrestlers were part of our accomplishments this year."

Coach Johnson thanked his wife, his assistant coaches, school administration, parents and fans for the tremendous support of the wrestling program.

Coach Johnson also handed out some "fun" awards.

Winners were: Quiz the Coach Award, Shane Stanley; Clock Watcher Award, Jordan Durham; Six Pound Orange Award, Connor Pfannenstiel; Assistant Coach Award, Alex Thomas; Porker of the Year Award, Connor Pfannenstiel; Leaner of the Year Award, Jared Bebb; Mash Award, Jared Bebb.

## Good opening for Blue Jay track team

By DICK BOYD

Norton Community High School track athletes competed in the Smith Center Junior Varsity track meet on Monday and both girls and boys placed fourth in the team race.

"We are very pleased with the effort our athletes displayed and their performances reflect that effort," said Norton head track coach Jason Jones.

"We are proud of these results and we look to the future with anticipation. These athletes gave us a wonderful start to our competitive season."

### Girls

The Norton girls earned three gold medals. Junior Thea Wiseman won the javelin with a throw of 89-feet-8-inches and was followed by freshman Bethany Roy, third, 77'5" and junior Ashley Maybon, 11th, 53'7".

Freshman Allison Corbin won the shot put event with a heave of 29'8" and Roy won the 800 meter run with a time of 2:57.02.

Freshman Bethany Winkel finished fourth in the 100 meter dash in 15.96 and junior Cydnie Milnes was fifth in 16.42.

Winkel also placed fourth in the 200 meter dash in 33.61 and Milnes was fifth in 36.27.

Corbin was fifth in the discus with a throw of 70'6" and Maybon was 10th with a distance of 56'8".

Roy placed third in the long jump with a leap of 12'8" and Milnes was fourth with a distance of 12'2.5".

### Boys

Junior Luke VanSlike won two gold medals for the Norton Blue Jays. He won the 1600 meter run in 5:41.60 and the 3200 meter run in 12:26.03.

Junior David Counter was

fourth with a clocking of 13:21.89.

Freshman Casey Robison finished second in the triple jump with a distance of 32'9.5" and freshman Zane Perez was fourth with a 32' performance.

Perez also placed third in the 400 meter dash in 58.53. Sophomore Brock Lauer was fourth in 59.45 and Robison was 8th in 1:11.90.

Robison also placed fifth in the high jump by clearing 5'2". Perez also finished in fifth in the long jump with a leap of 16'9.5".

Lauer, Robison, junior Travis Ray and junior Allen Robison combined to place third in the 1600 meter relay in 4:39.17.

Robison also placed fifth in the 200 meter dash in 26.14. Ray finished in 11th with a 27.26 and Lauer was 12th in 27.66.

Lauer also placed 8th in the 100 meter dash in 13.00, Ray was 9th

in 13.14 and freshman Robert Derauf was 13th in 14.13.

Junior Bryce Engelbert was 6th in the javelin with a throw of 98'9". Derauf was 7th with a 95'7" effort and Ray was ninth with a throw of 88'3".

Engelbert also placed 10th in the discus with a throw of 80'1" and junior Zach Mannel was 12th with a 74'5" effort.

Derauf finished in 8th place in the shot put with a heave of 32'7". Mannel was 10th with a distance of 32'3" and Robison was 18th with a 26' effort.

### Norton meet postponed

The Norton Invitational Track Meet which was scheduled for yesterday was postponed due to cold, snowy weather. It will be held on Monday, April 23. Field events will be held at 3 p.m. and running finals at 5 p.m. No preliminaries will be held.

postponed due to cold, snowy weather. It will be held on Tuesday, April 17 at 9 a.m.

The Norton varsity will compete Tuesday in the Ellis Invitational, which begins at 3 p.m.

## Golfers open with third-place finish

By DICK BOYD

Coach David Stover's Norton Community High School golf team opened the 2007 season with a third place finish in the Smith Center Invitational on Tuesday.

Phillipsburg won the championship with a 341, followed by Lakeside, 358; Norton, 394; Osborne, 399; Hill City, 425; Belleville, 444; Smith Center, 498; Beloit, 507.

Norton senior Pat Burton shot a 48/44 for a 92 and just missed being a medalist. Blue Jay senior Michael Ward carded a 48/46 for

a 94, followed by freshman Marcus Herman, 56-47-103 and junior Preston Herman, 56/49-105.

Also playing for Norton were junior Kyle Edgett, 56/52-108 and sophomore Logan Kelly, 64/59-123.

Medalists were: Jeff Jarvis, Phillipsburg, 79; C. Schneider, Phillipsburg, 80; M. Miller, Lakeside, 84; R. Sturgeon, Osborne, 89; C. Frasier, Lakeside, 90; Nam Nguyen, Phillipsburg, 91; A. Barker, Phillipsburg, 91.

"Although we saw improve-

ment from all our golfers on the back nine today, overall we did not play as well as we had hoped," said coach Stover.

Individually, I was pleased with the performance of Pat Burton, who came so close to medalist honors.

"Today's tournament will give us a good idea of the areas we need to work on in order to begin our overall team improvement."

The Norton Invitational Golf Tournament was scheduled to be held Thursday on the PDRA course south of Norton but was

Short marriage.

Bob Huggins and Kansas State University walked to the sports altar not too many months ago to begin what Wildcat basketball fans hoped would be a long and fruitful marriage.

Well, that relationship is all over.

No more Bob Huggins. No more Huggieville.

The coach who began filling the seats at Bramlage Coliseum for men's games resigned. He is taking the job at West Virginia.

The end came Thursday. It stunned every Wildcat fan, and probably most of the college basketball world.

The opening at West Virginia came about as a result of the res-

ignation of coach John Beilein, who took the same position at Michigan earlier in the week.

The Wildcats posted a 23-12 record under Huggins, and went 10-6 in the Big 12. Those 23 wins came close to the university's single-season record of 25. And the Big 12 finish was their best since the league's birth 11 years ago.

Huggins came to Kansas State after 16 years at Cincinnati. After being forced out as head coach of the Bearcats, Huggins took a year off before packing his bags and moving to Manhattan.

And now the search for a replacement begins, hopefully, for more than just one season. -TD

## Coach Huggins leaves K-State

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