

At the Game

Sainty wrestlers place third in tourney

The St. Francis Indians competed in the Scott City Classic on Saturday, Jan. 18. The wrestlers did extremely well and over all and the team finished third out of fourteen teams.

This was a fantastic weekend for St. Francis wrestling, said Coach Dylan Loyd. I couldn't be more pleased with the job these young men did this past weekend and how they competed. This was a great tournament for us; we saw some good competition and were able to see some teams that will be in our regionals here in a couple of weeks.

Going into this tournament Coach Buffington and I really didn't know what to expect. We got hit with the sick bug pretty hard this last week and didn't have one day of practice where our full team was there. We had a lot of kids miss some quality practice time and many of them still weren't feeling well on Saturday. They all gutted it out and decided that they wanted to compete and they did just that, and I couldn't be more proud of them.

These kids deserve this, it shows the improvements that they have made throughout the season and how hard work does pay off. They have tasted success, they know now what they can accomplish when they put their mind to it, and it's very important for us to use this as a building block and continue to push one another to be even better. Individually, every wrestler contributed this weekend and competed like Indians.

Team Scores:

1. Liberal, 142.5
2. Wichita Co. / Leoti, 108.0
3. St. Francis, 101.0
4. Ellis, 99.0
5. Ulysses, 96.5
6. Holly, 94.5
7. Scott City, 73.5
8. Holcomb, 66.0
9. Cimarron, 57.0
10. Larned, 56.0
11. Hoxie, 54.0
12. Lakin, 40.5
13. Greeley County, 28.0
14. Sublette, 20.0

Team Totals: St. Francis wrestlers listed first followed by their opponents: takedowns 24-22, escapes 12-12, reversals 7-4, nearfalls 19-21, wins 18-13, major decisions 2-0, decisions 3-3, falls 18-13.

Individual Results:

120- Connor McBride- lost by a fall to Hensley, Ellis; won by fall over Dittmer, Greeley County; lost by a 5-0 decision to Ridder, Wichita County.

Connor McBride wrestled very well Saturday, said Coach Loyd. His first match he lost to a kid from Ellis who very well could be on the podium at state. Once he got into the backdoor he picked up a dominating win and dropped a close match to a kid from Leoti. I feel like he gets better every week and he works very hard every day in practice.

132- Clay Cassaw (Champion)- won by a fall over Medina, Holcomb; won by a 10-1 major decision over Rodriguez, Ulysses; won by a 2-0 OT decision over Burns, Holly.

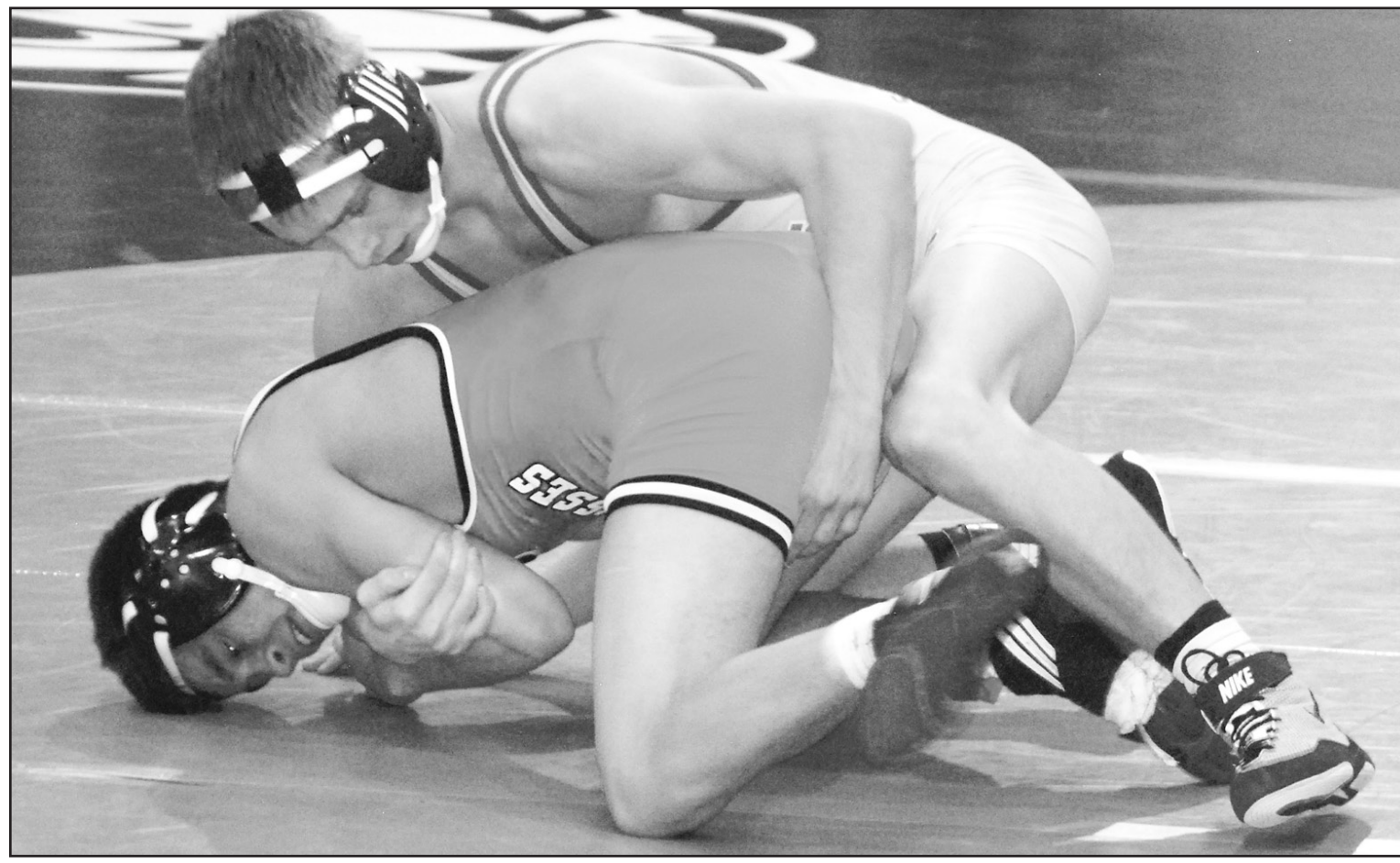
Clay Cassaw wrestled very well this weekend he dominated his way into the championship finals, said Coach Loyd. He defeated a returning state qualifier from Holly, Colorado, in overtime. He keeps getting better and better every week and is really starting to develop some confidence that is going to be huge come crunch time.

138- Garrett Brunk (placed 4th)- won by a fall over Anchondo, Scott City; lost by a fall to Nordyke, Holly; won by a 1-0 decision over Rowh, Hoxie; lost by a 6-5 decision to Toothaker, Cimarron.

Garrett Brunk started off the tournament with a big win in what we call a redemption match; he was defeated by Anchondo from Scott City earlier this season then pinned him in dominant fashion on Saturday, said Loyd. Garrett is as tough as anybody in this weight class; he is another one who I think week by week is getting more and more confident. He works very hard in practice and that hard work shows.

145- Justin Pacheco (placed 3rd)- lost by a fall to Kropp, Scott City; won by a 4-2 decision over Martinez, Liberal; won by a fall over Becerril, Holcomb.

I couldn't be more proud of Justin Pacheco, said Coach Loyd. He was by far the sickest of the bunch and he missed the majority of the week from school and practice. Going into the tournament we just



CLAY CASSAW has his opponent right where he wants him as he works for a pin in the Scott City Classic on his way to first place.

Photo courtesy of Shawna Blanka

wanted to see him compete and give it all he had and he really impressed me. As the tournament went on he got better every match which shows how tough this kid is. If he puts his mind to something he will get it done.

152- Lane Hoffman (placed 4th)- lost by a fall to Castillo, Wichita County; won by a fall over Acton, Cimarron; won by a 12-3 major decision over Cruz, Liberal; lost by a fall to Castillo, Wichita County.

Lane Hoffman wrestled better this weekend, said Coach Loyd. He dropped his first match of the tournament and was able to come all the way through the back door to place 4th. His conditioning is getting better each week and I expect big things from him moving forward.

170- Lane Hobrock (placed 4th)- lost by an 11-5 decision to Palmer, Holly; won by a fall over Waters, Cimarron; won by a fall over Hawkins, Holcomb; won by a fall over Tate, Lakin.

Lane Hobrock just flat out got after it this weekend, said Loyd. He was in the biggest bracket on Saturday and dropped a match early in the tournament and was able to win 3 big matches in a row by fall to get into the 3rd/4th place match. He has improved leaps and bounds from the beginning of the season and still has a lot of room to grow. Coach Buffington and I love this kid's intensity and his willingness to get better and give it his all every time he steps on the mat.

195- Ryan Grover- lost by a fall to Maravilla, Ulysses; lost by a fall to Haas, Ellis.

Ryan Grover wrestled well this week. I've said it numerous times about this kid but, he simply doesn't back down from anybody. He doesn't care if the kid is a two time returning state champion, he will go after him and give it his best and I love that. He is a good kid who does everything we ask of him to the best of his ability, and there is no doubt he is going to be good, said Loyd.

220- Kyler Zwegardt (placed 2nd)- won by a fall over Burton, Sublette; won by a 2-1 decision over McClurg, Liberal; lost by a fall to Orosco, Ulysses.

Kyler Zwegardt showed more improvement this weekend, he was able to make the finals in what might have been the toughest weight class in the tournament. It's crazy to think how good he is for having only wrestled two months. He's a testament of what hard work can do, he has a great attitude and he wants to learn and be the best at anything he does., said Coach Loyd.

285- Shakotah Blanka (placed 3rd)- won by a fall over Palmer, Holly; lost by a fall to Crick, Cimarron; won by a fall over Massey, Sublette; won by a fall over Palmer, Holly.

Shakotah Blanka had a very good weekend. He lost a match in the semi's to a very tough kid and I think after the match you could see in Shakotah's eyes he knows he can beat him. He came

through big for us in the 3rd/4th place match to guarantee us a team trophy and I'm real excited to see him continue to improve, said Loyd.

Coaches Awards

Most Exciting Match- Shakotah Blanka's pin for 3rd to guarantee us a team trophy.

Coach's Award- Justin Pacheco- he showed us a lot of mental toughness to overcome being very sick to compete like he did.

Practice Wrestler- Lane Hobrock.

Key Match Award- Garrett Brunk's redemption match over Anchondo from Scott City.

Most Outstanding Performance- Clay Cassaw, Champion at the 31st Annual Scott City Classic.

This upcoming week will be a very busy week for us, Coach Loyd said. We have a dual against Atwood-Rawlins County Thursday night, then we will go compete in the Bob Kuhn Classic in Hays on Friday and Saturday.

Varsity Indians drop thriller

By Douglas Sloper

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The Lady Indians did not not look good against Dighton on Friday night in St. Francis. While the Lady Indians played hard, Dighton, looking more experienced, made fewer mistakes, defeating the Lady Indians. The Indians played a tough Dighton team, and the game had many lead changes as both teams battled. St. Francis tied the game in the final second of regulation, but lost the game in overtime.

The junior varsity Lady Indians were beaten badly by the Hornets. The junior varsity Indians played a close game against Dighton, but also lost.

Lady Indians

The Lady Indians got off to slow start against the Hornets. St. Francis missed many easy inside shots and layups. A taller, more aggressive Dighton team took full advantage of Lady Indians mistakes and controlled the boards, converting many second chance shots. They began to pull away to a 23-8 lead at the end of the first quarter.

The second quarter was a mirror of the first, St. Francis could not get into a game rhythm and many shots that wouldn't fall. As in the first quarter, Dighton continued to take advantage of the Lady Indians mistakes and pulled away to 43-17.

In the third quarter, the Lady Indians continued to play hard and never gave up, but the play of the first half was too much for them to overcome. The third quarter ended with Dighton up 66-28.

In the fourth quarter, a continuous clock was running, and nothing got any better for the Lady Indians. The final was score 74-35.

In spite of the lop-sided score, Coach Dinkel was satisfied with the effort the team put out. "We played a good Dighton team. We are a short

team, and unfortunately, that hurts us inside. I was extremely pleased with our effort throughout the game.

I didn't feel like we ever quit playing. We kept playing hard, like we were down by 4 instead of 39. That is something we have been known for the last couple of years, continuing to fight hard to the very end. It's been hit or miss if we have seen it this year. I'm so glad that it has returned.

We had a couple girls who were out throughout the week due to illness, so, again, we were not full strength either. I am ready for us to be healthy and see what we can do."

Lady Indians scoring: Kyla Bandel, 17 points; Valerie Wurm, 9 points; Emily Elfers, 3 points; Kylie Sherlock, 2 points, Journey Lee, 2 points; Justice Wiley, 2 points.

Indians

St. Francis got off to a fast start in the first quarter, jumping all over the Hornets, who seemed to be in a slower gear. The Indians took control of the boards and ran past the Hornets for a 10-1 lead early in the period. "Building on our win in Leoti, we came out and held a big strong, good shooting team to one point for most of the first quarter," said Coach Jeff Beims. Dighton began to get in a rhythm as quarter progressed, and was able to cut the Indians lead to 10-7.

As the second quarter got under way, the Hornets began to press the Indians, which took them out of their fast break game. St. Francis seemed to lose confidence and concentration, while Dighton started hitting shots, and they took over the offensive and defensive boards. Dighton took the lead 19-13 as the half came to a close.

Foul trouble plagued the Indians in the second half. Dighton came out and took control of the offensive and defensive boards, giving the Indians

no second chance shot opportunities. The Hornets continued to full court and half court press the Indians. In spite of the pressure, St. Francis was able to cut the Hornets lead to 41-39 at the end of the third quarter.

In the fourth quarter, both teams played hard and intense basketball, matching each other basket for basket. The Indians tied the score early in the quarter. Both teams continued to play hard as the score ebbed back and forth. As the closing seconds ticked away, Dighton appeared to have the game won 42-39, when the Cade Bracelin hit a 3 pointer as time ran out to tie the score at 42.

In the over time period, both teams continued to battle, but foul trouble was the Indians eventual undoing. With St. Francis over the limit, the Hornets free throw shooting made the difference, and Dighton pulled out the game 52-47.

"Dighton came in with a good team, having been ranked in the state for most the early season. Although we lost a tough one in overtime, I cannot overstate how impressed I am with the way our defense is playing," said Coach Biems. "Offensively, we are getting better, with timing and execution that we struggled with early on in the year. The last second shot came about because five guys were all on the same page. We have to be more consistent scoring when we get what we want, but we're getting a little batter every day."

Indians scoring: Wyatt Landenberger, 22 points; Cade Bracelin, 13 points; Mason Schiltz, 6 points; Jacob Baxter, 3 points; Jude Faulkender, 3 points.

The Lady Indians and Indians will be competing in the Northwest Kansas League Tournament, based in Oberlin, beginning on Monday, Jan 20.



WYATT LANDEBERGER launches another three-pointer in Friday night's game against Dighton.

Herald staff photo by Douglas Sloper