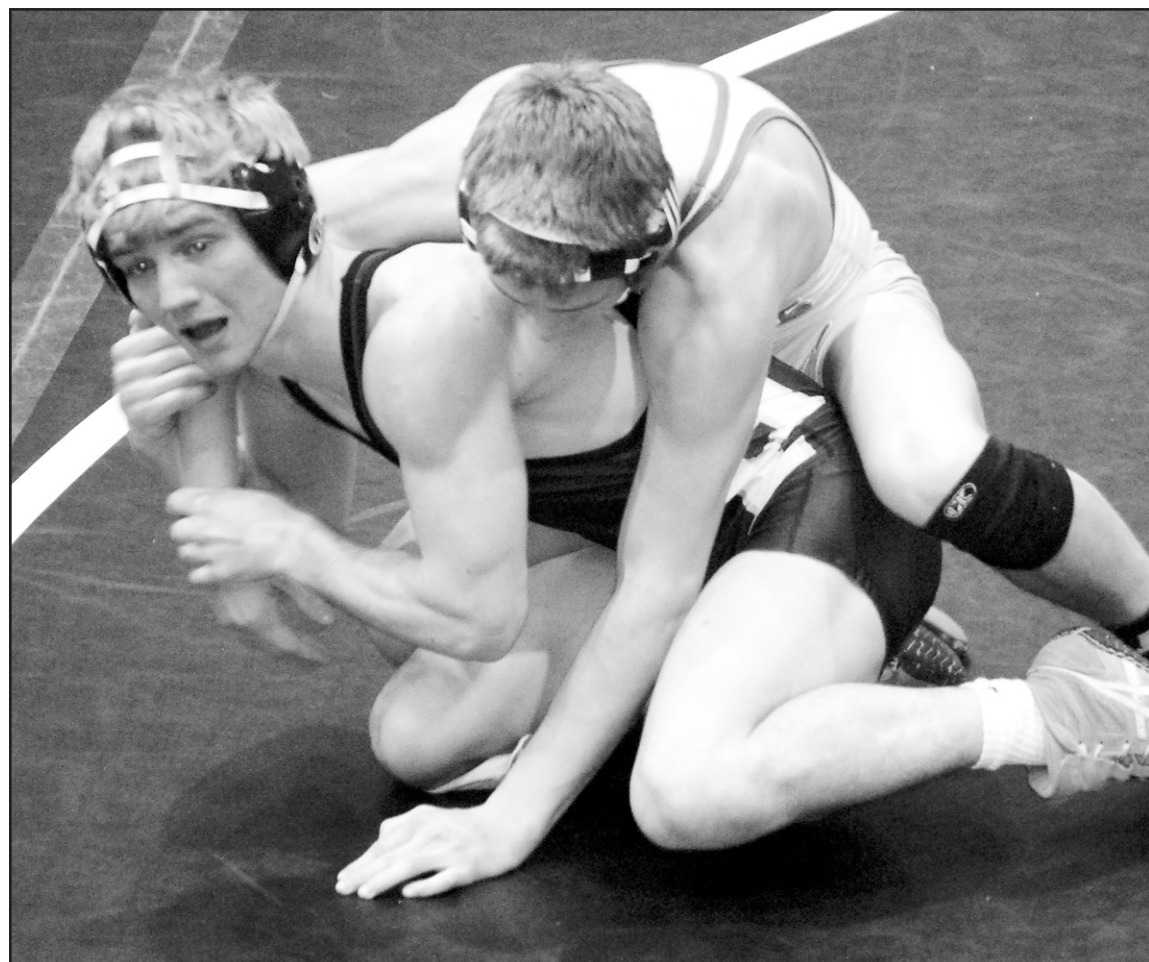


# At the Game



**SHAKOTAH BLANKA**, left, competes at the state championship. Above Clay Cassaw attempts to take down another wrestler. The two wrestled hard, but fell short of bringing home any medals.

*Photos courtesy of Shawna Blanka*

## Sainty wrestlers compete in state tournament

The St. Francis Indians placed two wrestlers in to the state tournament, held this past weekend, Feb. 28 and March 1, in Hays. Clay Cassaw, at 132 pounds, and Shakotah Blanka, at 285 pounds, wrestled hard, but just fell short of bringing home any state medals.

"Overall, this was an outstanding state tournament when it comes down to talent. There were a lot of quality wrestlers there this weekend, and it was a joy to be able to watch some of the state's finest. For the first time in 3-2-1A state history, there were two four-time state champions crowned on the same night, and it was cool to be able to be a part of that" said Coach Dylan Loyd.

"As far as our team goes, we didn't perform like we had hoped going into it. We thought we had a pretty decent shot bringing home two state medals, but sometimes things don't go as planned and you can always question it, but in the end all we can do is make the improvements that are needed to be made."

"Any time you compete at the state level you know there won't

be any easy matches and in order to get on the podium you're going to have to beat quality kids, and both Clay and Shakotah were in two tough brackets. I believe that if the state tournament were to be wrestled this coming weekend, you wouldn't see the same six placers, and that just shows the depth in both weights, and that can be said for all weight classes."

"Across the whole state of Kansas- kids are getting better, it used to be that Western Kansas pretty much dominated the state but, that can't really be said anymore because Eastern Kansas in the last couple of years has really produced some tough wrestlers. It just goes to show that if you want to be able to compete at a high level you have to be willing to do more than what you're asked to do. You have to be willing to put in the time- wrestle in the off-season, do Kansas Kids, wrestle Freestyle/Greco, go to camps in the summer, and the list goes on."

"Luckily for our program, I believe we have the kids that are willing to do just that to get to where they want to go, and Clay

and Shakotah are two of those kids. Neither of them achieved what they wanted to this weekend, and luckily both of them will be back next season. After talking to them when the wrestling was over they both are committed to getting better and making improvements. No one likes the feeling of coming up short of their goals, and I'm proud of them for being committed to excellence on and off the mat."

### Team Standing: (Top 20)

Norton-127.0; Rossville-81.0; Beloit -80.0; Effingham-Atchison Co.-78.0; Hoisington-75.0; Phillipsburg-67.0; Silver Lake-66.0; Fredonia-63.0; Smith Center-56.0; Marysville-54.0; Oberlin-49.5; Marion-41.5; Hoxie-37.0; Plainville-35.5; St. Mary's-32.5; Ellsworth-32.0; Sylvan-Unified-30.0; Gypsum-SE of Saline-28.0; Minneapolis-28.0; Bennington-27.0

### State Champions

106- Bryce Gfeller- Rossville; 113- Branson Addington- Norton; 120- Tristan Porsch- Hoxie; 126- Haegan Schaefer- Silver Lake; 132- Brandon Ball- Hoisington; 138- Brogan Humphrey- Fredo-

nia; 145- Greg Tooley- St. Mary's; 152- Tagen Lambotte- Rossville; 160- Bowe Behymer- Beloit; 170- Dylan Weisner- Plainville; 182- Nick Wuthnow- Salina-Sacred Heart; 195- Tristan Speer- Troy; 220- Dylan Gassman- Oakley; 285- Fritz Berger- Sylvan Unified

### Individual Results

132: Clay Cassaw- won by a fall over March, Riley County; lost by a 9-7 OT decision to Ragnoni, Bennington; lost by a 3-2 decision to Bannister, Phillipsburg.

"Individually, Clay wrestled tough this weekend; he just made a couple of mistakes. He lost a close match in overtime in the quarter finals to a kid who 3-4 weeks ago kind of had his way with Clay and to be honest the ref kind of made a questionable call that gave the other kid the match. Clay got down 6-0 but, he battled back, tied it up, and lost in overtime but, I was proud of him. On the backside he lost to Bannister from Phillipsburg, who Clay had defeated twice this season, 3-2 and that ended his quest for a state medal. Clay had a good season though; many people don't know

this but Clay didn't start wrestling until junior high and for him to get to where he is now as only a sophomore goes to show how hard he has worked. I have no doubt that a year from now we will be referring to Clay as a state medalist."

285- Shakotah Blanka- lost by a 4-0 decision to Leuthold, Sabetha; lost by a fall to McCoy, Eureka.

"Shakotah had a tough week, at the beginning of the week Shakotah came down with a skin disease and he was unable to practice for a couple of days leading up to the state tournament. We honestly were worried that he may not be able to wrestle, but luckily the doctors cleared him at weigh in, and he was able to compete," said Coach Dylan Loyd.

"This was a tough weight and I was surprised with how well these heavyweights could move, it was unbelievable. Shakotah lost a tough first round match that put him on the backside. In the first round of backside he had to wrestle a stud from Eureka, who battled all the way back to place 5th. Shakotah has come a long ways from where he was a year

ago. This season he had his way with kids who had beat him last year and that shows the improvements he has made."

"Next year he will be a senior and with that comes the leadership role, and I have no doubts that he will fulfill that role. He is committed to wrestling this offseason and I know if he believes in himself and has the confidence in his abilities there is no reason for him to not accomplish the goals he has set for himself."

"We have a good nucleus coming back next season, and I am looking forward to seeing what they all do this offseason to get better. It is time for St. Francis wrestling to get back to where we need to be, and I believe that we are beginning to scratch the surface of our potential," said Coach Loyd.

"Also, thank you to all the fans who supported our qualifiers this weekend down in Hays. I'm thankful and grateful for the support this community has for its wrestling program. St. Francis Wrestling is and always will be a "Tradition of Excellence."

## Local selected for the all-star classic

By Douglas Sloper  
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Mason Schiltz has been selected to participate in the Annual Northwest Kansas All-Star Basketball classic. The game will be held at the Colby Community Building on Sunday, April 6. Mason is part of a select group, as only 20 seniors in the Northwest Kansas region are invited to participate in this game.

Mason, a senior at St. Francis Community High School, is the son of Rob and Carla Schiltz. He plans on attending the University of Kansas, and after graduation, pursue an advanced degree in optometry.

Mason is currently playing forward for the Indians, and is averaging 13.8 points, 6.4 rebounds, and 1.3 assists per game. His field goal percentage is 50 percent, and he hits 80 percent of his free throws. His season highs are 26 points and 12 rebounds.

His high school honors include All Northwest Kansas League Academic Basketball, All Northwest Kansas League third team, in his junior year and honorable mention in his sophomore year. He was also named to the All Tournament Team in the Sagebrush Classic in his junior and senior year.



**MASON SCHILTZ** shoots the ball at a recent basketball game. He has been selected to play in the Northwest Kansas All-Star Basketball Classic. *Herald staff photo by Douglas Sloper*



**KOBE TICE** placed first in his weight class at the Leoti Takedown Tournament.

*Photo courtesy of Shawna Blanka*

## Wrestlers take home medals

There were six kid wrestlers that participated in the Leoti Takedown Tournament in Leoti on Saturday, Feb. 22. All six placed, with one champion, Shadryon Blanka.

6U: Asher Robbins, 46 lbs., won by fall; lost 7-11 dec.; won by fall; lost 0-13 major dec. for fourth place. Joel Gilliland, 52 lbs., lost 6-11 dec.; won by fall; lost by fall; won 9-1 dec. for third place.

8U: Brady Ketzner, 55 lbs., won by fall; lost a 0-12 major dec.; won a 8-6 dec.; lost 0-10 major dec. for third place. Logan McCarty, 61 lbs., won by fall; lost a 0-6 dec.; won by fall; won a 9-0 major dec. for third place.

10U: Shadryon Blanka, 95 lbs., won by fall and won by fall for first place. Colton McCarty, 110 lbs., won by fall; lost by fall; won by fall; won a 9-6 dec. for third place.

"The kids are improving so

much week by week, it's amazing. It's really a nice bunch of kids to be around," said Coach Mike McCarty.

### Benkelman Tourney

There were nine St. Francis wrestlers participating in the Benkelman tournament on Sunday afternoon. All nine placed, with Shane Todd, Brady Ketzner, Logan McCarty, Kobe Tice and Shadryon Blanka, earning championship titles.

6 and under: Asher Robbins, 46 pounds, placed second. He lost a 5-8 decision and won by fall. Joel Gilliland, 52 pounds, placed second. He won by fall, won 13-2 decision and lost by decision. Shane Todd, 52 pounds, placed first. He won by fall, won by fall, won by forfeit.

8 and under: Brady Ketzner,

55 pounds, placed first. He won a 11-4 decision; won by decision and won by fall. Logan McCarty, 61 pounds, placed first. He won by fall, won 12-0 decision and won by fall.

10 and under: Kobe Tice, 76 pounds, placed first. He won by fall, won by fall. Shadryon Blanka, 96 pounds, placed first. He won by fall, won by fall, won by fall.

12 and under: Colton McCarty, 110 pounds, placed second. He lost by fall, won by fall, won by fall.

14 and under: Tayton Weeter, 100 pounds, placed second. He lost by fall, won by fall.

This weekend there will be several wrestlers attending the Western Kansas Classic in Hays.