



Taylor Brack (above) won by injury default in his first match against a wrestler from Cheyenne Wells at a tournament in Burlington on Saturday.
Photo by Rachel Miscall/The Goodland Daily News

Cowboys pin their way to top

By Rachel Miscall
The Goodland Daily News
Goodland wrestlers pinned their way to the top Saturday, out wrestling 11 teams from Kansas and Colorado for first place at the Burlington Cougar Classic.

Coach Chris Guillot said seniors Kyle Whisler and Bryce Abbey shared the award for outstanding wrestler at the tournament at Burlington High School. He said the team's seniors led the Cowboys to victory.

"Our seniors are really showing their leadership," Guillot said, "two first, a second and a third."

After pinning two Burlington wrestlers in less than a minute and outscoring a Yuma wrestler, Abbey took first place in the 125-pound weight class. Whisler pinned all three of his opponents in 1:30 to 5 minutes for the top spot in the 140-pound weight class.

Heavyweight Curtis Swager, a senior, took second in his class after pinning a Yuma wrestler, winning his second match in overtime and falling in the third to a wrestler from Burlington. Senior Shandon Wolak took third in the 152-pound class, after pinning two opponents, outwrestling one from Atwood and losing to another Atwood wrestler. Guillot said he showed major improvement.

"Shandon wrestled his best tournament in two years," the coach said. Where the seniors led, Guillot said, the younger wrestlers followed. Goodland took first place overall with 215 points, which was over 45 more points than the second team, Burlington, with 179 points.

Brothers Bryce Bahe, a 130-pound junior, and Blayze Bahe, a 103-pound freshman, snatched first place in their classes, while Dustin Kling, a 135-pound sophomore, Brandon Nemechek, a 215-pound junior, and Thomas Tompkins, a 189-pound junior, took second.

The Cowboys won nearly half of their matches by pins as 12 of 14 starting wrestlers pinned one or more opponents.

"We wrestled really well," the coach said. "We improved on our pinning this

week. We need to keep our intensity for six minutes."

Guillot said the team will be working on endurance in practice this week, hoping to have a good showing at Saturday's Holiday Classic at Goodland's Max Jones Fieldhouse.

The coach said though the wrestlers have started out the season strong — taking second place in their first tournament in St. Francis — there's always room for improvement. This week, he said, they will be practicing positioning and counters.

Guillot said before the tournament that the result would be a sign of things to come, predicting that the teams to beat would be Wray and Canon City.

"It's going to be another really good test," he said, "like it was last week in St. Francis."

The Cowboys passed with flying colors, but Guillot — who led last year's wrestlers to a state championship — said he just wants to see the team improve each week.

"We plan to work hard," he said before the season began, "and whatever the results are, that's what they'll be."

Individual results include:

103 — Blayze Bahe, first. In the first match he pinned M. Clevenger from Broomfield in :59 seconds, and beat J. Walsh, 6-1, from Broomfield in the second match.

112 — Kyle Schulte, did not place. He beat I. Garcia, 11-0, from Broomfield in the first match, lost 11-6 to T. Mitchek from Burlington in the second match.

119 — Mark Carmichael, third. He pinned M. Onderco from Broomfield in 1:49 seconds in the first match, lost 6-2 to L. Oestman from Yuma in the second match, pinned M. Frimx from Yuma in 1:29 in the third and beat Tyrel Duell, 11-4, from Burlington in the fourth.

125 — Abbey, first. In the first match he pinned Mangus from Burlington in :54 seconds, and he pinned T.J. Charley from Yuma in :51 seconds in the second match before beating Barret Duell from Burlington 6-2 in the third.

130 — Bryce Bahe, first. He won by a technical fall in the first match against J. Reid of Akron with a score of 18-2,

won by technical fall in the second match against T. Flores of Broomfield with a score of 17-2 and beat T. Rueben of Atwood, 16-5, in the third.

135 — Kling, second. He pinned Klements of Broomfield in 3:27 in the first match, beat K. Krentz, 7-3, of Cheyenne Wells in the second match and was pinned by J. Frihauf of Burlington in the third.

140 — Whisler, first. He pinned T. Vap of Atwood in 1:36 in the first match, pinned K. Witzel of Stratton in 3:50 in the second and pinned K. Diamond of Akron in 4:50 in the third.

145 — Taylor Brack, third. He won by injury default in 2:50 over J. Eisenhauch of Cheyenne Wells in the first match, lost 3-0 to T. Seaney of Burlington in the second match, beat F. Thorton, 11-9, of Akron in the third and pinned J. Nelmeir of Atwood in 2:43 in the fourth.

152 — Wolak, third. He pinned M. Davidson of Akron in 4:48 in the first match, was pinned by N. Howard of Atwood in the second match, beat N. Chaot of Atwood 4-2 in the third and pinned S. Erbert of Stratton in 1:34 in the fourth.

160 — Jordan Bedore, did not place. He pinned A. Fode of Las Animas in 2:20 in the first match, lost to C. Meford of Cheyenne Wells 14-6 in the second and was pinned by Custis of Broomfield in the third.

171 — Brack Abbey, did not place. He lost to C. Brachtenba of Stratton 7-4 in the first match, was pinned by D. Steelman of Cheyenne Wells in the second and was pinned by T. Schmidt of Atwood in the third.

189 — Tompkins, second. He pinned B. Beachley of Burlington in :17 in the first match, beat C. James of Burlington 4-3 in the second and lost 3-2 to B. Schmidt in the third.

215 — Nemechek, second. He pinned A. Jostes of Stratton in :54 in the first match and lost to J. Horenick of Atwood 13-5 in the second match.

Heavyweight — Swager, second. He pinned M. Cork of Yuma in 2:55 in the first match, beat V. Palon of Broomfield 3-1 in the second and lost 5-0 to J. Ingram of Broomfield in the third.

Rockies sign top pitcher

DALLAS (AP) — Coors Field didn't figure to be the destination for the game's top free-agent pitchers.

But in one week, the Colorado Rockies have added Mike Hampton and Denny Neagle to a rotation that spends half its time in baseball's most hitter-friendly ballpark.

"It's a tough place to pitch," Rockies general manager Dan O'Dowd admitted Saturday. "We didn't come in there and sell Mike Hampton on how it was a pitcher's heaven."

Instead, the Rockies sold Hampton on a \$121 million, eight-year contract — the richest in baseball history — and the Colorado lifestyle.

"This was a place I could move my family to without having to take my kid out of school every three months," said Hampton, who never felt comfortable in New York in his one year with the Mets. "Colorado was the place for my family."

Sandy Alderson, one of baseball's executive vice presidents, didn't appreciate Hampton's claim.

"Announce the deal," Alderson said. "He's an outstanding pitcher. It's a lot of money. Case closed. I don't want to hear about the Wheat Ridge (Colo.)

school system."

Hampton's deal comes on the heels of Neagle's \$51.5 million, five-year deal on Monday. The Rockies are also in the running for Darren Dreifort, the top remaining pitcher on the free-agent market.

All of this has left many baseball people in shock. Following Darryl Kile's disastrous stay in Coors Field — he went 21-30 with a 5.84 ERA in two seasons with the Rockies — few thought top pitchers would sign with Colorado again. Kile rebounded to go 20-9 with a 3.91 ERA this year in St. Louis.

"We're different pitchers," said Hampton, Kile's teammate in Houston for four years. "He relies on his good curveball. I think my style might suit it a little better."

Over the last three seasons, the Rockies and their opponents have hit .320 with 700 homers and 3,126 runs in games at Colorado, compared to .257 with 394 homers and 1,920 runs when the Rockies are on the road.

That does not bode well for either Hampton or Neagle. Neagle gave up the most flyballs in baseball last season and Hampton has walked 200 bat-

ters over the past two years, meaning their ERAs may inflate as much as their salaries.

"There's no doubt it's the toughest place to pitch," Hampton said. "It's a test I look forward to and something that I think will make me a better pitcher in the long run."

But there are some factors that point to Hampton having some success in the thin air: He was the hardest pitcher to homer off last season, allowing only 10 in 217 2-3 innings, and his ratio of groundballs to flyballs was second in the majors to Greg Maddux.

"I make my living getting groundballs," he said. "Unless they want to hit the ball under the fence for a home run, it doesn't matter to me."

Even if he does that, he will still have a difficult time matching his 2.05 ERA that he posted at pitcher-friendly Shea Stadium. Hampton's career record at Coors is 4-1 with a 6.88 ERA.

But his batting average could get a boost. He hit .274 this season and won the Silver Slugger Award as the top hitting pitcher, but didn't hit a homer.

"If that stays that way, I'll have to give one of those Silver Sluggers back," said Hampton.

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