

STATE REPORTS

KANSAS

Don Vest

The Kansas State High Wrestling Championships were held once again in Hays (1-2-3A) and Wichita (4-5-6A).

In the 1-2-3A Championships, Hoxie edged Ellsworth 140-130. Coach Baker's depth proved to be the difference as Ellsworth had four in the finals to Hoxie's three. Phillipsburg's Andy Ubben, a three-time heavyweight champion, was chosen the Outstanding Wrestler of the year. He will continue his wrestling at Ft. Hays State. The 1-2-3A Coach of the Year was Jeff Giles of Minneapolis. Some of the more outstanding individuals this season will be Matt Gilliland (130), Hoxie, Eric Johnson (140), Norton; Matt Pyle (145), Sabetha and Shawn Drennen (145), Minneapolis. The favorite role for 2003 goes once again to Hoxie.

The 4A Championships produced a close contest between winner Clay Center and Goodland (104.5-100). The Outstanding Wrestler for 4A was Trevor Charboneau (119) of Clay Center. Trevor has taken his talents to the next level at the University of Nebraska-Kearney. The Coach of the Year for 4A was Kit Harris of


Baldwin. There are several outstanding individuals in this division for 2003: Jake Kriegbaum (119), Abilene, Earl Jones (130), Coffeyville, Danny Grater (140), Clay Center, Nathan Allison (145), Ft. Scott, Jacob Strait (189), Concordia and Jordan Bedore (215), Goodland. The favorites for the 2003 season include Colby, Goodland, Abilene and Clay Center.

The 5A Championships proved to be a blow-out for Bishop Carroll High School. Coach Stovall developed one of the most outstanding squads in the state. The Outstanding Wrestler award went to four-time State Champion Doug Hoover of Kapaun-Mt. Carmel. Hoover has moved north to the Nebraska Huskers team. The Coach of the Year award went to Bishop Carroll's Mark Stovall. Some of the more outstanding individuals returning this season include Garret Harding (112), Winfield, Tanner Gardner (119), Shawnee Heights Topeka, Josh Baldridge (119), Wichita-Campus, Charles Knox, Jr. (119), Wichita West, Lukas Zouzias (140), Salina South, Nathan Payne (171), Paola and Ty Richardson (189), Ark City. Pre-season favorites include Bishop Carroll, Ark City and Shawnee Heights. Topeka-Seaman and

KC-Turner could be considered dark-horses for placing near the top.

The 6A Championships resulted in one of the closest team races in history. Hutchinson nosed out Manhattan when all of the points were added up (132-131). Coach Mike Garcia of Hutchinson was awarded the Coach of the Year for his team's outstanding performance. The Outstanding Wrestler of 6A went to three time champion Justin Dyer (189) of Olathe South. Dyer is wrestling for Coach Spates at the University of Oklahoma this season. Some of the wrestlers to watch this year are Kelly Heincker (112), Derby, Cody Garcia (119), Hutchinson, Marcus Herrera (125), Emporia, Steward Bogart (140), Shawnee Mission-South, Ryan Kromer (171), Garden City, Zach Hemmerling (215), Hutchinson and Adam Venegas (HW), Olathe North. Hemmerling and Venegas were chosen First Team All-State in football. The favorites for 2003 are more of the same with Manhattan, Hutchinson and Emporia battling it out again. Garden City and Junction City could be considered dark-horses.


Soon after the high school season, the All-Star Matches begin. The Metro Classic



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or as it is now called "The Battle at the Border" comes first. This All-Star Match draws participants from roughly a 75 mile radius of the Kansas-Missouri state-line. This year's attendance was in the 2500 range. The event is a well publicized and well supported competition held each year at the Kansas City Kansas Community College. James Ball got the Kansas squad off to a good start with a 5-0 decision over two-time Missouri Champion Brent Rolofson. Missourian Jake Fisher (145) put his team ahead for the first time, 16-13, by pinning Matt Dukes. The Kansans, however, put together a string of five victories with Josh Johnson of Leavenworth's win at 152 over Shane Griffin. Two-time Kansas Champion Josh Carroll of Olathe North had one of the more exciting matches of the evening when he met Michigan-bound Chase Verdoorn. The Missourian won this very close match 3-2. Kevin Pulliam of Harmon High closed out the match at heavyweight with a 16-5 major decision of Keith Fillion. This left the final score 34-19. This annual event has evolved into a very spirited competition for wrestlers, coaches and fans which is good for the sport in this area.

Another post-high school competition was the Annual East-West All-Stars Match held this year at Topeka High. The East prevailed this year 32-27. Some of the highlights included 5A's Outstanding Wrestler, Doug Hoover of Kapaun-Mt. Carmel meeting 4AT's Outstanding Wrestler, Trevor Charbonneau of Clay Center. The match was a series of attacks and counter-attacks by both wrestlers with Hoover winning 3-2. Another highly anticipated match occurred with 5A's Jared Vogel of Bishop Carroll meeting 6A Champion Nick Chrisman of Wichita Campus. Vogel dominated the match to the tune of 10-2. Another battle of State Champions was enjoyed in the match with Shane Conaghan (171) of St. Thomas Aquinas being matched with Brad Reiman of Valley Center. Conaghan, representing the East squad, prevailed 6-3. State Champions also met at 189 with Justin Dyer, the 6A OW from Olathe South, going against Jeff Mortimer of Minneapolis. Dyer topped off his Kansas career with a 16-1 technical fall of Mortimer. Two High School National Championship All-Americans met at 215 with Brad Seller of Bishop Carroll being matched with T.J. Staab of Plainville. Seiler won a very tight match 3-1. The All-Star Dual ended with Andy Ubben of Phillipsburg, the outstanding wrestler from 1-2-3A, edging 5A Champion Kevin Pulliam of Harmon High 1-0. Held in conjunction with the Kansas Kids' State Championship, this event drew over 2000 fans. This year's competition was dubbed

"The Battle at the Capitol."

In the National High School Championships held in Cleveland, Ohio, Kansas placed fourth. All-Americans included Devin Schwartz (103), Great Bend, 3rd; Doug Hoover (125), Kapaun-Mt. Carmel, 8th; Bryce Bahe (130), Goodland, 8th; Jared Vogel (140), Bishop Carroll, 3rd; Justin Dyer (189), Olathe South, 6th; Josh Carroll (215), Olathe North, 4th; Blake Seiler (215), Bishop Carroll, 5th; T.J. Staab (215), Plainville, 7th; Andrew Ubben (HW), Phillipsburg, 5th. This is the highest Kansas has ever placed in this national event.

Team Kansas Cadet team placed the most in the 30 year history of sending teams to the nationals in Greco-Roman and freestyle. In the Greco-Roman competition Danny Grater (140) placed first. Tristen DeShazer (98) was fifth; Jake Kriegbaum (112), 5th; and, Jordan Bedore (215), 3rd. In the freestyle Seth Metzler (91) was 8th; Jake Kriegbaum (112), 7th; Charles Knox, Jr. (119), 8th; Lukas Zouzas (130), Grater (140), 4th; Neil Erisman (140) 7th; and Jordan Bedore (215), 2nd.

The Junior Greco-Roman and freestyle teams didn't do as well as the Cadets this year. Tanner Gardner (105) was the big story this year as he won the Greco-Roman competition with a tech fall in the finals. In freestyle he placed third with another tech fall in the consolation finals. Ian Bork (215) placed third with a hard-fought battle in the medal match finals of Greco-Roman.

On a sadder note, the state mourns the passing of Bill Stanhope, the long-time leader of the Topeka Tornadoes. His guidance was vital for the Kids' State Championships in Topeka and the Kids' Folkstyle Nationals also held in Topeka in the spring. His knowledge and sense of humor made events happen with the kids and parents in mind. He was the 2000 *Wrestling USA Magazine* Man-of-the-Year. His leadership, guidance and wit will be greatly missed.

All wrestling fans in Kansas are looking forward not only to the high school season but the post season for completions at the Kids, Cadet and Junior levels in the spring and summer. 🏆

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