

# Wrestlers take eighth at Culver Invite

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Sisters wrestlers attended the annual Culver Invitational held on Friday and Saturday, December 11-12, and came away with an eighth-place finish. Culver took first place with a team score of 245.5 in the two-day, 18-team tourney, Harrisburg was runner-up at 191.5, and Lowell finished third with 160.

The Outlaws were only able to take 16 of their 27 wrestlers due to sickness and injuries, but Coach John Downs told *The Nugget* he still hoped the Outlaws would place in the top 10 and finish ahead of Ridgeview.

Sisters did just that with a 98-point finish, two points ahead of Ridgeview who finished ninth with 96 points. The top-10 finish was a huge accomplishment for the matmen, as they realized that each year they have gotten better and better. In 2013 the Outlaws placed 18th at this same tourney, and in 2014 they placed 12th.

"This was accomplished by all wrestlers wrestling to the best of their ability, and many of them moving up through their brackets,

scoring points for the team," said Downs.

Four Outlaws stood out at the tournament; senior Mitch Gibney (220 pounds); senior Clayton Darst (170 pounds); freshman Parker Ford (106 pounds), and sophomore Cole Pade (126 pounds).

Gibney, who was seeded third, pinned his way through the finals for a second-place finish. Mitch pinned his first opponent, Hunter Sims of Corbett in 22 seconds, and then pinned Bill Crites from Crook County in 30 seconds. In the quarterfinals, he recorded his third pin against Chase Cook from Nestucca in 1:36. Sean Hancock of Ridgeview was pinned in 1:38 in the semifinals.

The finals were a different story. Gibney faced William Beard from Glide, the three-time 5A state champion. Mitch went all three rounds with Beard, but Beard won in a 5-3 decision.

"I don't think Beard realized how strong and fast of a wrestler Mitch was until the final whistle blew," said Downs. "I was very proud of Mitch. He proved to the other teams that he is an Outlaw to be reckoned with when he steps on the mat. He earned

much respect this weekend from the other coaches and schools. The future of this season for Gibney looks great. His goals for placing at state now seem more in reach."

Downs told *The Nugget* that Clayton Darst had his best performance in the four years he has wrestled for Sisters High School.

Clayton beat Clark Jernstedt from Myrtle Point with a fall in 30 seconds in his first match. He had one of the most exciting matches of his career thus far in his match against No.-2 seed Bryson Belloir from Glide.

Darst went after Belloir right out of the gate, caught him with a leg-lock around the waist and a half-nelson, and pinned him in 1:09 seconds. The win put Darst in the semifinals against No.-3 seed Ben Hughes from Culver. Darst finished in third place.

Parker Ford earned a fifth-place finish. Parker pinned Cheyenne Neet from Reedsport in 16 seconds, and then faced No. 1-seed Steven Beckman from Joseph. Ford lost by a fall to Joseph in 3:33. In the consolation bracket, Ford plowed his way through to the semifinal, where he lost to Carson Keith of Ridgeview.



PHOTO PROVIDED

Mitch Gibney made the podium with a second-place finish.

Keith ended up as the third-place wrestler, and Ford had to face Cheyenne Neet from Reedsport once again. Ford won by a fall in 38 seconds for fifth place.

Pade also wrestled very well during the tournament. Cole had 17 wrestlers in his bracket and walked away with a sixth-place finish. The weight class had many district and state placers in it from the previous year. Pade pinned Trentyn Tennant from La Pine in 5:44, and then ran into No. 4-seed Abraham Nonato from Ridgeview, where he lost 18-9

in a major decision.

Pade then had to battle back through the consolation bracket. His first match was against Ben Waters from Ridgeview, and Cole won with a major decision, 16-7. In the quarterfinals, he beat Tadd Anderson from Culver with a major decision, 13-0. In the semifinals he met Jordan Whittles of Nestucca. Pade lost to Whittles by a fall in 4:59. Whittles went on to earn third place, and Pade wrestled in the fifth- and sixth-place match where he lost 10-4 to Nonato of Ridgeview.

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