

Senior wrestlers compete at state

By Rongi Yost
Correspondent

The Outlaws took three senior wrestlers, Damien Wills, Dustin Smith, and Casey Warburton, to the OSAA Oregon Wrestling State Championships held at the Memorial Coliseum in Portland on Friday and Saturday, February 16 and 17.

Damien Wills (145 pounds) faced No. 2 seeded Kade Van DeHey from Cascade in his first match of the tournament, and lost by a fall at the end of the first round. In his second match, he wrestled Ruben Chavez of Ontario, fought all three rounds, and lost in a 13-2 decision.

"I knew all weekend that Damien was fighting the left-over of a stomach flu, and nursing an injured knee from last weekend's regional tournament," said Coach John Downs. "I was proud of him not giving in to those issues, and fighting until the end."

Dustin Smith (152 pounds), also had two tough matches. Dustin lost by a pin to No. 1 seeded Garrett Lefevre from Marshfield in his first match of the tourney.

In his next match, he wrestled Bryce Anderson from Sutherlin, and was down 3-0 in the third round.

Downs described what happened next.

"With 30 seconds left in the match, Anderson took Dustin backwards, and Dustin placed his hand out and dislocated his pinky finger as he hit the mat," said Downs. "There was an injury time out, and the trainer looked at his finger, and while on the mat the trainer pulled the joint back into place."

Although Smith was in severe pain, he wanted to finish the match. The trainer wrapped up Smith's finger, and although he didn't win, he battled to the end.

"Dustin wrestled with pain and heart to finish his last match of his high school career," said Downs. "It was a tough end for him during those last 30 seconds, not being able to use his hand fully, but he was determined to finish strong."

Casey Warburton (185 pounds) wrestled some great matches.

Casey matched up against No. 4 seeded Dallas Lamphere from Henley in his first match of the tournament and won in a 6-5 decision.

"This was Casey's best match of his high school career," said Downs. "Lamphere was a tough opponent, but Casey wrestled perfectly. He listened to his coaches, and executed his moves at just the right time for all three rounds."

His next match against Maxwell Merritt from Banks was another long match that went all three rounds. Merritt beat Casey 15-11.

From there, Warburton went into the consolation rounds. Casey matched up against DeLaTora from

Phoenix and lost 6-2. This marked Warburton's third match of the day that went all three rounds.

"Casey was exhausted and just didn't have the energy to finish strong enough," said Downs. "At the end of the day he barely had enough energy to walk back to the stands. He had such an amazing season, especially giving up 20, 30, or even 50 pounds to his opponents. His success was noticed by other teams and coaches, where they started talking about him as the 'Baby Heavyweight.' The teams all knew that they'd have to work extremely hard to get past him.



PHOTO BY TREVOR SMITH
Casey Warburton won his match against No. 4 seeded Dallas Lamphere from Henley in a 6-5 decision.

"Walking out with him from staging to the mat gave me a sense of pride," said Downs. "I felt like everyone was watching us, and I was escorting a champion."

The three seniors also earned All League Honorable Mention from their success at the regional tournaments last weekend.



PHOTO BY TREVOR SMITH
Dustin Smith goes head to head against Bryce Anderson from Sutherlin.

OSU to require students to disclose convictions

CORVALLIS (AP) — Oregon State University says it will begin to require all students to self-report past felony convictions and any registered sex-offender status before enrolling for fall term, but will not bar them from school activities unless they pose a safety risk.

The Corvallis Gazette-Times reported Thursday that the new policy was recommended by a task force convened last year in the wake of public outcry over revelations that a university baseball team pitcher, Luke Heimlich, had an undisclosed conviction for molesting a 6-year-old family member when he was 15.

Heimlich was allowed to remain on the team. Heimlich said in a university statement that he completed counseling, but was removing himself to avoid being a team distraction.

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