

# Sports

## HIGH SCHOOL SWIMMING

# Silverton takes step forward



Silverton's Jason Orr celebrates placing fourth in the 50 free at the OSAA Class 5A state swimming meet Feb. 17. BILL POEHLER/STATESMAN JOURNAL

## Senior Orr becomes first school swimmer to medal in 4 events

**Bill Poehler** Salem Statesman Journal  
USA TODAY NETWORK

GRESHAM – An official at the OSAA Class 5A state swimming meet approached Silverton High School swimming coach Lucky Rogers and said in jest that she was going to tell Silverton's loud rooting section that they were going to have to quiet down.

"I laughed and said good luck," Rogers said.

Silverton's appreciative audience recognizes how far the team, unofficially dubbed the Aqua Foxes, has come in a remarkably short period.

When Rogers took over the program as head coach for the 2015-16 season, a good season was when the team sent one athlete to the state meet. To have a swimmer compete in a state final was unheard of.

On Feb. 17 at Mt. Hood Community College, the partisan Silverton crowd that inhabited the best sec-

tion of grandstand nearest the finish line had plenty to cheer about.

"They show up and probably about five of them are related to me, but they all set up and cheered," senior Jason Orr said. "That's all I could ask for. I didn't even care what I did in the race just because they're all there for me."

But Orr became a star.

He became the first individual Silverton swimmer to compete in a state final when he exceeded his seeding in the 50 free to place fourth. Then he went out and placed second in the 100 backstroke.

And Orr became the first Silverton swimmer to medal in four events by teaming with Kyle Reiser, David Reeves, Blake Doerfler and Tristan Allen to place fourth and fifth in the 200 free and 200 medley relay races.

After scoring the school's first state tournament points as part of a relay last year, it was a huge step forward.



Orr dives in during the state swimming meet.

"We know we're the underdogs," Orr said. "None of us swim club swimming. We do a lot more just to get ourselves in contention really. People see that and want to be a part of it."

Silverton's girls placed seventh in the state meet with 14 points, the first points Silverton's girls have scored in a state swimming meet. Silverton's boys placed eighth with 18 points.

Considering Silverton – whose

boys and girls equaled their program best by placing second in the Mid-Willamette district meet a week before – had never scored a point in a state swimming meet until 2017, it was another step along the route.

"I've branded us the country kids against the country clubbers," Rogers said. "We swim from November to February. Jason put a

See **SWIMMING**, Page 2B

# Foxes' Orr named Athlete of the Week

**Bill Poehler** Salem Statesman Journal  
USA TODAY NETWORK

Jason Orr set a new standard.

The senior swimmer from Silverton High School concluded his high school career with some amazing performances.

He placed second in the 100 backstroke (54.41) and fourth in the 50 free (22.50) and swam on the Foxes' placing 200 medley and 200 free relay teams at last weekend's OSAA Class 5A state swimming meet.

He became the first swimmer from Silverton to score points at the state meet as an individual after being on the first relay team from his school to score points as a junior.

Orr was voted athlete of the week by a poll of readers.

He will be the subject of a future Two-Minute Drill video and will be honored at the June 4 Mid-Valley Sports Awards at the Salem Convention Center.

### Other nominees:

**Anna Despaigne, South Salem swimming:** The senior placed fifth in the 200 freestyle (1:55.37) and sixth in the 100 backstroke (58.65) and swam on the Saxons' state placing 200 free and 400



Silverton's free relay teams at the OSAA Class 6A state swimming meet.

**Ein Carlos, North Salem wrestling:** The junior won his second consecutive OSAA Class 6A state championship, this time by recording two pins, two technical falls and a win by injury forfeit in the state championship match at 152 pounds.

**Keegan Cook, Willamina wrestling:** The senior recorded four pins, all in the first or second round, to win the OSAA Class 3A state championship at 285 pounds at last weekend's state tournament.

# Only the strongest survive

## 12 Salem area wrestlers win individual titles at OSAA state finals

**Pete Martini and Gary Horowitz**  
Salem Statesman Journal  
USA TODAY NETWORK

PORTLAND — Mid-Valley wrestlers took part in 25 state championship matches Saturday in the OSAA tournament at the Memorial Coliseum.

Here is a recap of the night:

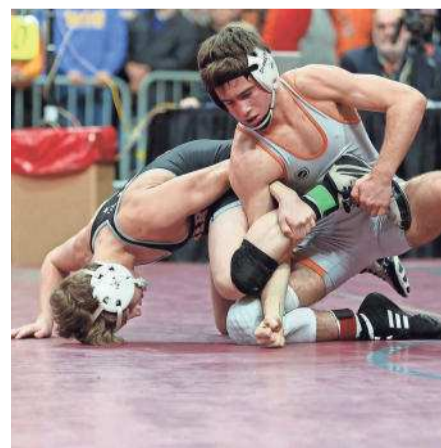
### 120 pounds

**Class 5A:** Silverton's Kaden Kuenzi started fast in the 5A 120-pound final against Crater's Zeth Brower with a 2-point takedown in the first period. But Kuenzi, the defending state champion at 106 and seeded No. 1 this year at 120, couldn't keep the momentum and lost 5-2. It was a rematch of last year's state semifinal won by Kuenzi.

### 132 pounds

**Class 4A:** North Marion's Russel Stigall beat Tillamook's Chad Werner 5-2 in the state title match.

"It felt good. It wasn't my best match, but I won, so it's all good," Stigall said. Stigall, a junior, won his second state championship, and next year,



Silverton's Kaden Kuenzi, right, and Crater's Zeth Brower compete in the OSAA Wrestling State Championships Class 5A final for weight 120 at Veterans Memorial Coliseum in Portland on Feb. 17. Brower was the champion. ANNA REED/STATESMAN JOURNAL

he will try to finish his high school career with three state titles.

### 138 pounds

**Class 4A:** North Marion's Brandon Gibson lost a close 2-1 decision to Marshfield's AJ Lira in the state title match. Gibson, a senior, was the No. 1 seed among Class 4A 138-pounders at the state championships.