

Sports

Wrestlers grapple for Three Rivers League standing

■ SIMON KIRSCH

Staff Reporter

As rivalries go, West Linn and Oregon City is one of the oldest and the Varsity Wrestling Team added another win for the Lions Jan. 10 in a dual meet against the Oregon City Pioneers, 47-23.

The pressure to win was very strong and according to Cameron Callaghan, senior, this was one meet the team had to win.

The first match of the night was at 189 lbs. between Spencer Hansen, senior, and Nick Shafer of Oregon City. Hansen won the match by pin in under two minutes.

Up 23-6 with only a third of the meet over, West Linn looked to be winners.

"We didn't want to get too optimistic, but it definitely helped us in our matches," Ryan Krellwitz, senior, said. "Whenever [the team] gets a winning streak going, there's that pressure to keep it going, and it helps."

The streak continued with a 5-2 win by Logan Krellwitz at 119 lbs., but lost the steam when Oregon City forfeited the 125 lbs. match against Prescott Garner, senior.

Blazers rebuild troubled organization; fans return after lackluster year

■ ISAAC CALLAGAN

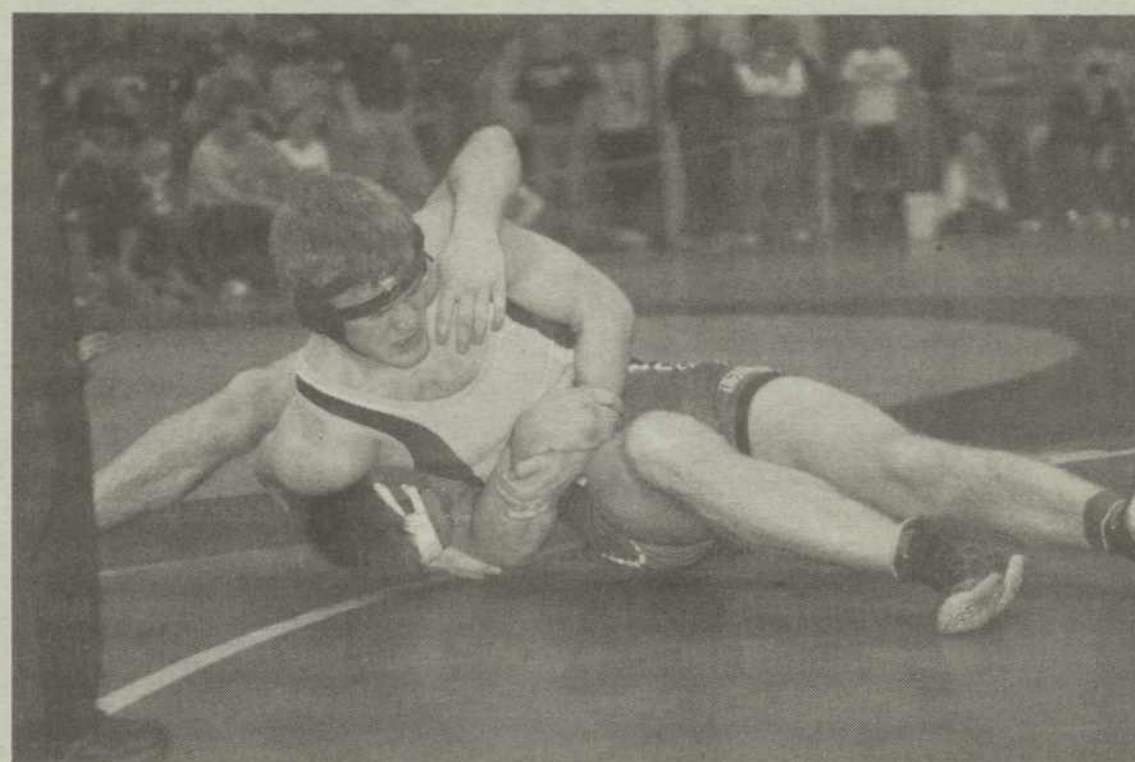
Contributing Writer

21-61. This was the Blazer's record last season, the culmination of a slow, six-year slide that began with the game seven loss to the Los Angeles Lakers in the 2000 Western Conference Finals. However, the team once known as the Jail Blazers has made strides this year to repair its record and reputation.

The Blazers started by firing John Nash, General Manager, and by drafting two high-quality players in the 2006 National Basketball Association draft. These moves have changed the attitudes of some people towards the Blazers.

"This year they brought in some better players, younger players who want to play and don't want to get into trouble," Nicole Aden, senior and Varsity girls basketball player, said.

For the steady fans, the play has been encouraging as well. Max Cathcart, junior, said that he has been following the Blazers consistently for as long as he can remember, and



Ryan Krellwitz, senior 171-pound wrestler, locks a head-in-arm on his Pioneer opponent during a dual meet against Oregon City. He won his match with a pin, contributing to the Lions' 47-23 win.

Photo courtesy of Tracie Krellwitz

Oregon City made the same decision to forfeit last year, apparently fearing a pin by Garner.

"They did it so we couldn't keep the ball rolling," Krellwitz said. "If we keep pinning our opponents, our morale goes up, and theirs goes down. They did this with hope of losing 125 but winning the next few."

This tactic worked, as OC managed to win the 130 lbs. and 135 lbs. divisions against seniors Geoff McEvers and Gustavo Bessa.

that the recent changes are encouraging for the Blazer's future.

For many fans around the school, the most encouraging change has been the change in the leadership of the Blazers. "The change in the coach," was one of the better moves the Blazers have made," Cathcart said.

Already around the school, students such as Samantha Dewart, junior, are sporting Brandon Roy jerseys, showing acceptance for the Blazers' #7 pick. More encouraging is that a pre-season poll of NBA general managers voted Roy most likely to be Rookie of the Year.

"The future looks promising for the Blazers," Marcus Mackin, junior, said. "I believe that the Blazers have a real chance at making the playoffs in the next few years." Cathcart agreed with him, "Within two years, the Blazers will be a competitive team again."

There is a strong opinion amongst fans at school that the Blazers have the ingredients to form a cohesive, dominant team.

Brandon LaDick, senior, turned the meet around with a pin over Oregon City's Jake Morris at 140 lbs. According to Krellwitz, it seemed for

Freshmen make splash on Swim Team

■ HILLARY KRIPPAEHN

Staff Reporter

There are more freshmen on the Swim Team this year than sophomores, juniors and seniors combined. And the freshmen are doing well in the meets, according to Sarah Wilson, senior and team captain.

"They will have a strong team for the next couple of years," Wilson said. Kevin Sellers, freshman, has been doing especially well. "He is really quick," Jessica Houser, head coach, said.



Sarah Wilson, senior captain, competes in the 200 individual medley against Lake Oswego. Her second place contribution helped lead to a strong team showing against one of the Three Rivers League's elite teams.

Photo courtesy of the West Linn Tidings

At the Jan. 11 meet against Milwaukie High School, Sellers was outstanding according to Houser. "He was in some different events, including the 200 Individual Medley and the 200 Backstroke, but he still was very fast," Houser said.

"Milwaukie only had around 12 people on their team, so we won," Houser said. "It was a still a very important meet for us, though. We got to swim

a while as if Morris might take the match. But then, the flexible LaDick countered Morris and pinned to give West Linn the lead, 38-14.

That pin sealed a tie for West Linn and took some pressure off the later matches. John Bartlett won the meet for West Linn in his tough 145 lb. bracket.

"All we had to do at that point was keep pinning. [Oregon City] did manage to win a few more matches, but we'd gotten in some great pins, which is what really counts," Krellwitz said.

Wrestling the last match of the night, Krellwitz pinned his opponent in the 171 lb. division. He is hesitant to make predictions, though. Though West Linn looks like the District favorite, Krellwitz

wouldn't say either way, instead deciding to focus on current performances.

On Jan. 20, the Lions won the Crater Invitational. This individual weight bracket tournament is one of the toughest in the Northwest, according to Callaghan with some of the top schools being invited to attend.

"We competed against 15 others in our weight brackets, including someone from our team," Callaghan said. "Then our points combine for a team total."

West Linn beat second place Crater High School by a large margin and finished with five finalists. Bracket champions were LaDick, Garner, Hansen, and finalists were Callaghan and Lane Locke.

different people in different events. We also let different people swim Varsity."

In a meet against Lake Oswego High School on Jan. 4 the team lost to Lake Oswego, one of the best teams in the league. Many of the swimmers posted personal records.

"Swimming against the best teams makes us better," Houser said.

Houser has just begun to think about Districts and State and is trying to figure out who will swim in each

strong for both boys and girls, according to Houser. She mentioned that sisters Lauren Currey, senior, and Sara Currey, freshman, are good at the freestyle. They also enjoy being on the team together.

"It's great. I love getting to spend time with my sister," Sara said.

Thomas Hollingworth, freshman, also has fun being on the team with his siblings. "It's pretty cool. I like getting to hang out with my brother and sister," Hollingworth said.

Practices are not easy for swimmers according to Houser. It's also a challenge only being able to practice in the water three days a week. The other two days swimmers have dry land practices. During the dry land practices swimmers work on their endurance and are required to run two laps as a warm up. They also work in the weight rooms, run stadiums and participate in core training. The team also tries to have fun and play ultimate frisbee or capture the flag.

"Their hard work shows and pays off," Houser said.

"We work and get through it together," Wilson said.

Meets are every Thursday and fans are encouraged to come and cheer on the team. The next meet will be held Feb. 1 at 4 p.m. at the LO pool. They will be up against Clackamas High School.

"I have high expectations and they have risen to them," Houser said. "I am really proud of all the kids."

event. She predicts the team will do well.

There are several different events in which swimmers can participate. They include backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly and freestyle. A point system determines which team wins. First place earns six points, second place earns four points, third place gets three points, and so forth. Those points go toward a team score.

Breaststroke is very