

Wrestlers struggle to win, but stay competitive

EMILY REED

The Varsity Wrestling Team is facing a difficult season with very challenging competition. After a disappointing first few tournaments Doug Samarron, head coach, pulled a great performance out of the team to finish at the Pacific Coast Championships over winter break.

Captains Michael MacClanathan and Toney Chay, seniors, turned in outstanding matches with Chay winning the championship at 140 lbs.

"In my coaching career,

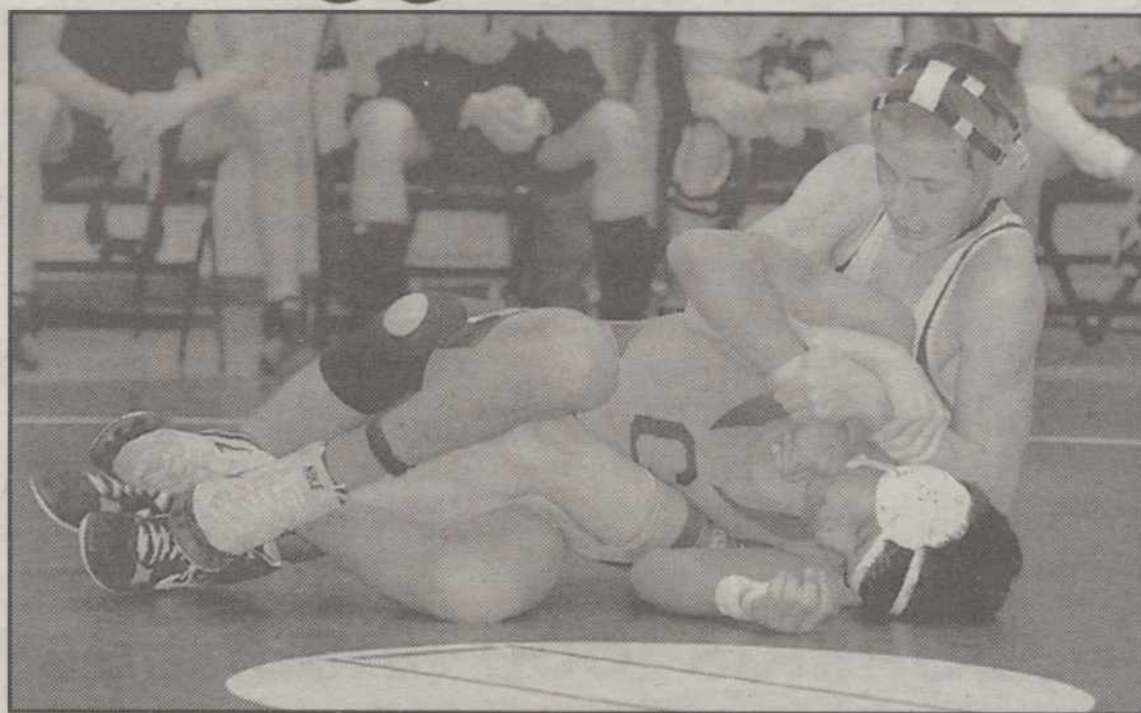


Photo by Tracie Krellwitz, Stop Action Memories
Brandon Schutzler, junior, pins a wrestler from Corvallis in the Crater Wrestling tournament on Jan. 16. The Lions won fifth place.

I have coached four State champions, and 44 State place winners. I hope the number keeps growing," Samarron said.

Donald Paulson, senior, won second place in the State meet at 153 lbs. last year and is expected to place again. Other possible State contenders include MacClanathan and Chay, Brian Schiewe, Christian Wilson, Travis Schutzler, Logan Krellwitz.

West Linn is historically one of the top ten teams in the state. In 2008, the team earned

second place in the District Championships. Through 2007, the team won 11 District titles in a row.

During the Oregon Classics on Jan. 8 and 9, the team again performed well. They won their first dual meet against Milwaukie. There were not wrestlers to compete in the heavyweight and 103 lb. division, and the Lions had to forfeit these matches creating a three way tie between McNary, Redmond and the Lions. Then, it came down to the numbers. Because of the forfeits, West Linn did not win enough matches to win the tournament, and went home with a still respectable fourth place finish.

"Currently, I would say that Braden Krellwitz, Christian Wilson and Travis Schutzler, MacClanathan, Paulson, and Chay are carrying the team in terms of matches," Samarron said. "This year we are getting off to a slow start and we are lower in numbers but, we should be fine in February when it counts. And if we train properly we might surprise some people come the District Championships. I think this is a pretty tough team."

Swimmers ring in new year with hope for Districts Win

ELISE BROWN

The Swim Team is currently 5-1 with one tie, the one loss coming from the second meet of the new calendar year. At the meet on Jan. 7, the first of 2010, the team beat Oregon City, despite the absence of at least six swimmers. Some were sick, and some were at a club meet, but despite the low numbers, Maclain Marsh, head coach, is satisfied with the swimmers' results.

"It wasn't our best meet," Marsh said, "but the

swimmers still did extremely well."

Alexander Earhart, senior, and Justus Highbarger, freshman, both swam for personal best times in their respective 50 yard freestyle races. Elliot Prince, junior, achieved her best time, 5:57, in the 500 yard freestyle. Lindsey Gilmore, sophomore, swam the 100 yard breast stroke in 1:14.

"Historically, we're not a first place team," Marsh said. "We're more like a second or third place team, but we have

individuals that do extremely well."

On Jan. 14, the team swam against Lake Oswego, which team captain Kevin Sellers, senior, cites as their biggest challenge. They lost, though Gilmore, who expects the team to win Districts, said the races were close.

"The team was really into it," Gilmore said.

Both Sellers and Gilmore cited the addition of Marsh as new head coach as a contributing factor. Sellers recalls past coaches that had

trouble putting swimmers into their strong events.

"They would do that to give the swimmers the experience," Sellers said, "but the team wouldn't win because of it."

"There's a closer dynamic now because the coach is younger," Gilmore said. Marsh graduated from West Linn in 2005.

"You almost forget that he is your superior," Sellers said.

Districts will take place on Feb. 12 at Lake Oswego High School at 2 p.m.



Sheron's Scoop

INJURIES PLAGUE THE PORTLAND TRAIL BLAZERS

As ridiculous as it seems and how depressing it sounds, the Blazers have been reduced to eight active players in three games this season. First, Nicolas Batum, forward, went down with a shoulder injury. Then, two of the three second round draft picks followed. Patty Mills, guard, was out for the summer league games due to a fracture in his right foot which required surgery. The other injured rookie was Jeff Pendergraph, forward, who underwent left hip surgery Sept. 9.

The next one to go was Travis Outlaw, forward, with a left foot stress fracture, in mid November. After that was Rudy Fernandez, guard, who had back spasms that eventually led to a necessary surgery in early December. He returned in the win against the Milwaukee Bucks on Jan. 13. After Fernandez, who else but the head coach to rupture his Achilles tendon during practice? Nate McMillan underwent surgery Dec. 7 but was back by Dec. 15.

The big blow came when Blazers center and 2007 number one draft pick, Greg Oden, fell after trying to block a shot by the Houston Rockets and fractured his left patella. Of course, it didn't stop there. Pryzbilla went down awkwardly on his knee after going up for a rebound against the Dallas Mavericks. He dislocated his right patella and

ruptured the patella tendon. Both were quickly determined out for the season. The Blazers are without a true center for the season.

Due to all the injuries, the National Basketball Association allowed the Blazers two injury exemptions. The team chose to bring up Anthony Tolliver, Idaho Stampede forward, from the D-League. Tolliver didn't play up to expectations so he was sent back to the D-League. The Blazers also signed Shavlik Randolph on Dec. 30 for a 10 day contract. Randolph was with the Blazers last year but signed with the Miami Heat over the offseason. He was waived by Miami and picked up by the Blazers who also waived him and then decided to resign him.

Pendergraph and Mills were finally cleared to suit up and play with the Blazers. Pendergraph immediately received crucial minutes and proved he deserved more. Mills was first assigned to the D-League before being moved up to play for the Blazers after Steve Blake, guard, was hospitalized. Mills scored 38 points and had 12 assists, while adding seven of 10 three-pointers playing in the D-League but hasn't seen much time with the Blazers.

After finding the spark at the three-point line, Blake was hospitalized with pneumonia. He missed only four games and returned to the lineup,

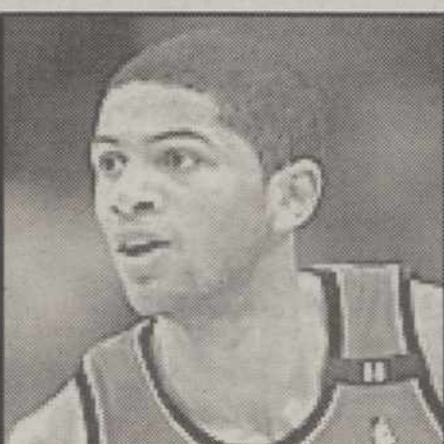
only playing seven minutes and going scoreless in the loss to the Cleveland Cavaliers. The next player to go was the last player anybody ever wanted to hear on the injured list, Brandon Roy, guard. Roy was listed as questionable for the game against the Orlando Magic due to a strained

hamstring which was shown on an MRI taken Jan. 14.

Fans may be saying it's a curse. Yes, it is unfortunate, but thanks to general manager, Kevin Pritchard, the Blazers have been able to stay close to taking first in the Northwest Conference, usually one game back of the Denver Nuggets.

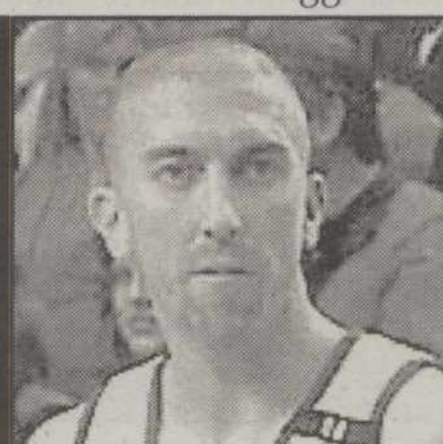
At one point, the Blazers were first in the Northwest Conference and third in Western Conference until the loss of two straight games. It only proves how great the Blazers will be once injuries subside—they'll have a strong starting team and an even stronger bench.

Nicholas Batum



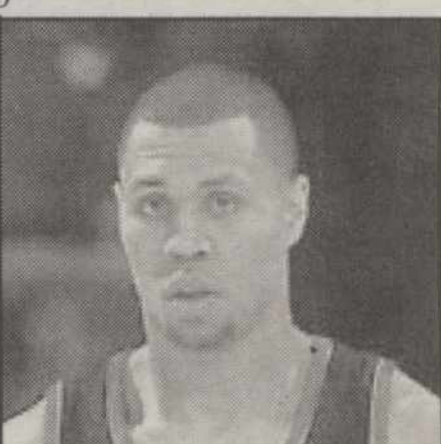
Surgery Oct. 30 on right shoulder. Returns on January road trip.

Steve Blake



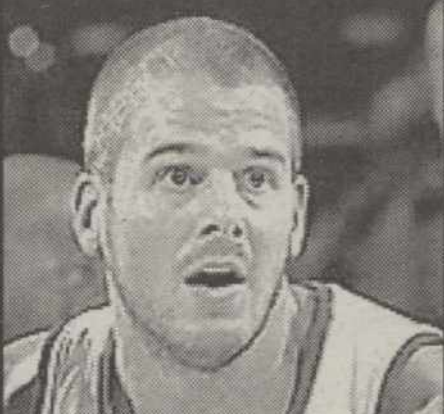
Hospitalized for pneumonia. Missed four games.

Brandon Roy



Sore left shoulder and right hamstring. Missed five games.

Joel Pryzbilla



Dislocated right patella and ruptured patella tendon. Out for season.

Rudy Fernandez



Surgery on Dec. 8 on back. Returned Jan. 18.

Greg Oden



Fractured left patella. Out for season.

Patty Mills



Surgery on July 13th on right foot. Returned Jan. 1.

Jeff Pendergraph



Surgery on Sept. 8 on left hip. Returned Dec. 19.

Travis Outlaw



Surgery on Nov. 18 on left foot. Out until March.

Photos courtesy of www.beyondthebeat.net, www.mkrob.com, www.realgm.com, poitiersbasket86.basketseason.com, www.sportsrumormill.com, photobucket.com, www.agentdagger.com, Ashley Sheron