

# Camaraderie and commitment unify wrestlers

JACK LAMMERS

Wrestling is often considered to be an individual sport, relying solely on self-motivation and work ethic. For members of the wrestling team, the program offers something more. "Many of the wrestlers on the team won't ever work as hard as they do on the team," Geoff Bingham, assistant coach, said.

"This year we don't have Putnam and Milwaukie, teams we could count on beating. Instead we have Canby, another competitive league team that is ranked fourth in the state," Bingham said. With a resurgence of tough competition at the league level, wrestlers face a season which will continue to push them.

"Only the top four out of 22 will advance to the State Tournament. This will make the State Tournament a very challenging 16 man bracket. Want to accomplish a big step in wrestling? Qualify for state," Doug Samarron, head coach, said. With league opponents Oregon City ranked third and

Canby ranked fourth, the competition calls for a strong team with depth, something Bingham believes isn't a pipe dream.

"This year's freshman class

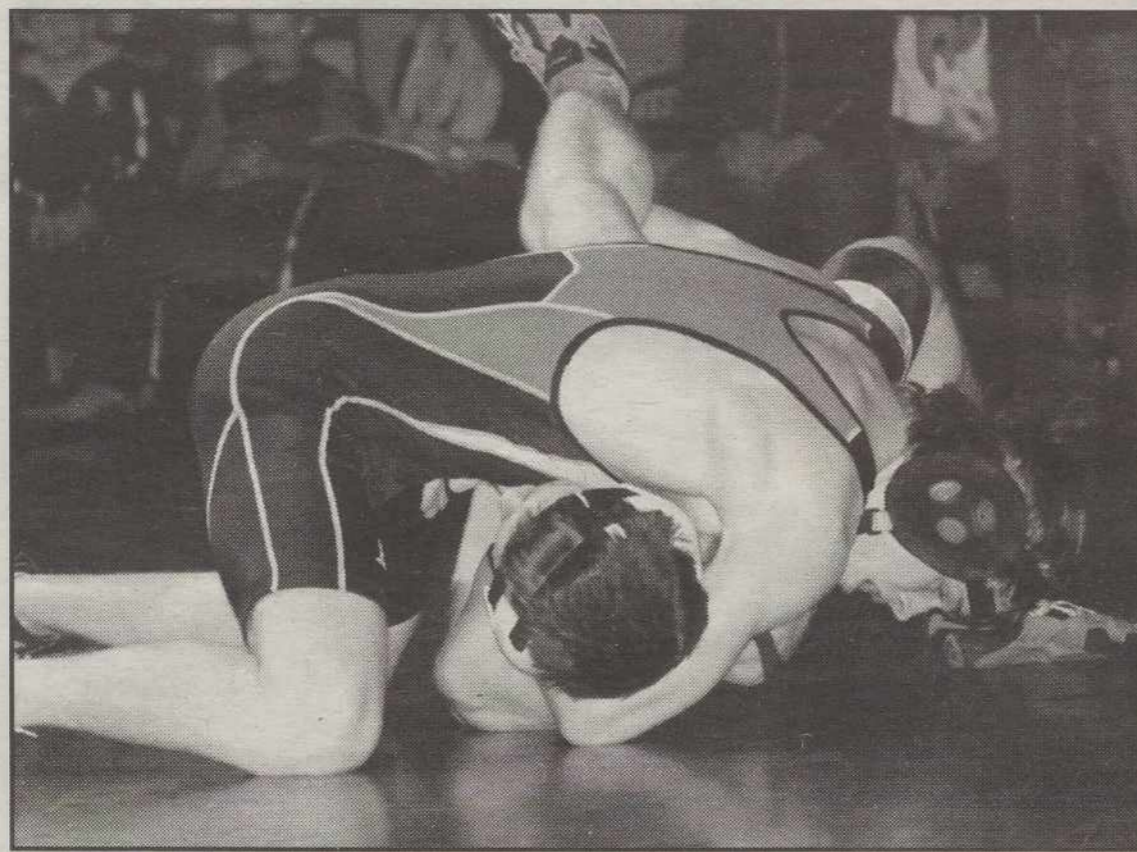


Photo by Tracie Krellwitz, Stop Action Memories  
**Braden Krellwitz, junior, takes down Lake Oswego's Tyler Cunningham, senior. Krellwitz defeated Cunningham with a pin that gave West Linn the lead and secured a 55-21 victory.**

is pretty normal in terms of size, but individually they suck it up and get it done. The team's improvement week over week shows their potential to lead the team in

the future," Bingham said. The determination of this freshman class might one day rival that of the senior arsenal of Anthony Chay, Brian Schiwe, Christian Wilson and Travis

Toney," Samarron said.

As a whole, the team has demonstrated the application of its improvement to accomplishments including a 10th place finish at the 2010 Pac-West Tournament against top teams from Oregon, Washington, and California. Throughout the season, wrestlers such as Ryan Harman, junior, have scored personal victories.

Most recently the team lost to Clackamas in a dual meet 19-48 after losing to Oregon City 19-48 and beating Lake Oswego 47-19.

"Harman did very well at the Pac-West Tournament, beating some incredibly skilled opponents including one top-seeded wrestler," Bingham said.

"This year's coaching staff has come out ready to contend. With the league's changes, they are holding nothing back," Braden Krellwitz, junior, said. Krellwitz wrestles for most of the year and when he isn't wrestling, he is running on the cross country team. "Braden is always the first one done at track workouts and comes out with the same intensity every

round. Braden's attention to technique is what makes him such a talented competitor," Bingham said. Both the coaches and Krellwitz see this year as one of rebuilding and preparing to compete at a district level.

"Our goal is to see at least ten wrestlers at the state competition, and our team has the potential to do that. Coach Samarron's focus on fine-tuning has definitely helped our team to compete at a higher level," Bingham said.

The coaches' expectations for the team are high and with less than two months until State, the season is far from over. Ultimately, it is the wrestlers and the experience of total commitment that will carry the combination of ambition and desire from this season into the rest of their lives according to Samarron and Bingham.

The sport does have an individual level, but the team's members push each other to improve. "We push our entire team to the limit so that the team can encourage one another and improve," Bingham said.

## Team captains lead Debutantes with experience, knowledge

SEAN PEBLER

The Dance Team is led by three captains this season: Alyssa Bridgman and Taylor Swanson, seniors, and Mackenzie Johnson, junior.

"They all use their diverse skills to guide the team in the right direction," Hailey Zaayer, dance team

be great," Wilcox said.

Both coach and players believe in putting in extra effort to achieve success.

"This year is unique because we are all very dedicated to going the extra mile and to grow as a team and really lift each other up and not leave anyone



Photo courtesy of Angie Sharpe  
**Alexis McKinley, junior, commands the other dancers in a floor competition on Jan. 29 at Canby High School. The Debutantes placed second out of eight teams, falling short of first place by only 1.61 points.**

member, said.

The captains lead by example, calling on their past experiences in dance to perform to their best abilities.

"Being chosen as a junior captain was at first very intimidating but I feel like Alyssa, Taylor and I all work extremely well together, which made for an easy transition into the position," Johnson said.

An intense work ethic and drive to succeed is key, according to head coach Amanda Wilcox.

"This is the hardest working team we have had in a few years. It's so great to coach girls who want to

behind," Zaayer said.

Wilcox believes that the team creates a healthy balance of fun and hard work when they step out onto the dance floor.

"We all have a great time together, which I think comes from a mutual respect for one another," Wilcox said. "The girls are motivated and hard working, but we also know when to have a good laugh."

In her seventh year at West Linn and her 16th year coaching dance, Wilcox is respected by her athletes.

Debutantes

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## Boys' Basketball Team finishes second round of league games with 3-7 record

JENNIFER SITTON

After a somewhat rocky start that included numerous injuries and a 3-5 preseason record, the boys' basketball team is hoping to settle into league play, while continuing to improve.

The Lions began league play with two losses against Lakeridge, 49-53, and Lake Oswego, 57-66.

"We didn't play our best against Lakeridge and Lake Oswego," Riley Wilkerson, senior, said. "They were both really beatable teams."

However, the outlook of the Three Rivers League has been changed this year with the addition of Canby and the loss of Rex Putnam and Milwaukie.

"The league isn't as strong at the top this year as it has been in the past, but you also don't have those gimme games like you used to," Eric Viuhkola, head coach, said. "It's made all the games competitive. Lake Oswego is the most talented of the teams, but every team in the league is beatable."

The Lions found their first league win at Oregon City. The team led the entire game and finished with a 64-50 win. That win was followed by a 46-59 loss to Clackamas and a 65-58 win over Canby to finish up the first round of League with a record of 2-3.

To start the second round of league games, the Lions faced the Lakeridge Pacers and Lake Oswego Lakers. The Lions

fell to the Pacers 43-58. That game was followed by a tough 50-71 loss to Lake Oswego.

However, the Lions bounced back in their game against Oregon City, winning by a decisive 23 point margin, 80-57. The team then fell, 62-51 to Clackamas. The Lions finished the second round of league play falling to Canby, 51-70. Mitchell Cokely, junior, put forth a strong individual performance with 24 points.

Early in the season, Viuhkola didn't want to put a numerical goal on how he expected the team to finish in league. "We just want to try and get better every game," Viuhkola said. The team traveled to Arizona over winter break, where the players learned a lot, according to Viuhkola.

In the Arizona tournament, the team went 2-1, beating a team from Edina, Ohio 63-57 and a team from Gilbert Christian High School 83-69.

"We had a disappointing two point loss in overtime of the championship game," Viuhkola said. "But I think the team learned from it that little mistakes will cost them."

The tournament also saw the return of two injured players, Devon Hawkins, sophomore, and Connor Kelley, senior. According to Viuhkola, their return gave the team more athleticism, even

if their play was still a little disjointed.

"We played really well in the first two games. Plus we had our whole team back which was nice," Wilkerson said. The five day tournament also helped the team to come together as a whole. "Everyone really bonded. We spent a lot of time together and had a lot of fun going

to restaurants, the mall and hanging out at the hotel."

While TRL standings and post-season playoffs lurk in the back of everyone's minds, the Lions are taking things one game at a time.

According to Viuhkola, the most important game is simply "the next one."

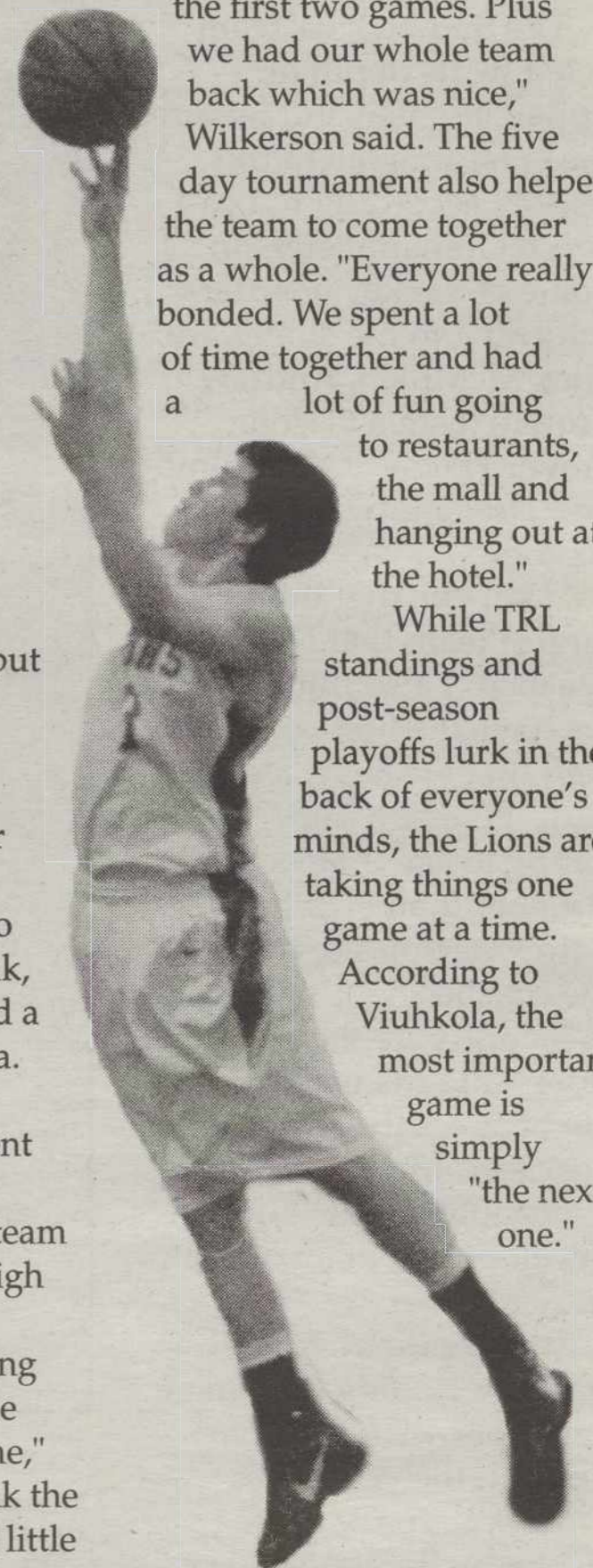


Photo by Rachael Woolley  
**Mitchell Cokley, junior, drives to the basket for a layup in a game against Canby on Jan. 18. The Lions beat the Cougars, 65-58, to finish the first round of league play with a 2-3 record.**