

Sports

Brown channels personal skills from his commitment

JACK LAMMERS

Standing atop the halfpipe winners' podium is where Andrew Brown, senior, witnessed the combination of his passion and success. With friends at his side and the ability to experiment with a relatively novel sport, Brown observed that what drew him to snowboarding is its development.

"I love participating in the sport because I can be a part of one of the most progressive sports in the world," Brown said.

Brown's last four years on the Snowboard Team gave him a true feel for the sport and the program's advancement. As he has pressed through his high school career, he has seen himself develop among and away from the powder, but seeing the capability to intertwine a pastime with

other aspects of his character gives Brown motivation as he heads towards college.

"Andrew has always been a strong rider across the board. He doesn't always get on the podium, but he consistently scores in the top 10 within the

overall team scores strong. Andrew has also helped the younger riders by riding with them and having a positive attitude."

This year, the senior class has forged a reputation for the team as a powerhouse



Photo courtesy of John Gertlar
Andrew Brown, senior, performs a method air at Mount Hood Meadows during a halfpipe competition on Feb 12. This season Andrew placed consistently within the top ten in league for the halfpipe and in this competition Brown took seventh among six other teammates in the top ten.

league," Graham Peterson, head coach, said. "This consistency helps keep our

displaying skills in a seemingly effortless fashion, something that contradicts the great deal of practice hours and their attention to detail." On Feb. 12, Brown was among 12 other teammates to place

in the top 15 in a league half-pipe competition.

"He is part of a strong foundation that supports the whole team and creates an environment for progression," Peterson said.

What Brown discerned from his experience is the multidimensional advantages of the sport. According to Brown, snowboarding takes on roles of both internal motivation as well as stimulus through the support of teammates.

"The individual commitment is one thing, but what is most appealing about the team is its creation of a friendly atmosphere where you can experience teamwork and progress," Brown said.

Outside of snowboarding, Brown commands a difficult schedule including international relations, AP Statistics and AP Spanish. Brown also holds a spot on the Boys' Varsity Tennis Team this spring, another sport in which he excels.

Brown's future will mostly

deviate from his competitive snowboarding career, but according to Peterson, the effect Brown has on his teammates and on the team's dynamic is a feat that will easily flow into successes, whether they emerge on his first day at business school or on the path to his vocation, whatever that may be.

"(Brown) has left a positive impact on the program.

Hopefully, he has learned the value of working toward a goal and what it takes to be successful," Peterson said.

Next year he plans to attend the University of Portland Business School and as Peterson has acknowledged, Brown's character is obviously transferable to other aspects of his life.

"Andrew has become a very well-rounded rider over the years. He has developed a calm focus that makes him a great competitor," Peterson said. "That type of focus will be a great asset for Andrew on and off the hill."

Ski Team takes first at State

TY CLARKE

Another State Championship can be added to the West Linn trophy case, courtesy of the Boy's Ski Team. They finished off a season that saw a first place finish in every league meet. The boys took first in the State competition, which was held in Bend March 2-4, while the girls finished fourth. Overall, both the boys and girls combined to finish third.

"Honestly, the team did far better than

I knew that West

Linn

Ski

team

was

very

good,

and had a large

quantity of amazing racers,"

head coach Cooper Raasch

said. "I knew they had what

it took to win, but State has

to be 100 percent mistake

free, a single crash from

a racer can ruin a teams

chance at victory. This team

was almost perfect last

week, and this is why they

are champions."

The team had high

placing individuals as well.

Mackenzie Burns, senior,

took first place overall

for the second year in a

row. The boys also had

an individual first place

finish of their own; Stephan

Splisoser finished in first

place overall. An overall

first place finish consists of

a combination Salom and

Giant Salom

"Mackenzie and Stephan are simply two of the best skiers in Oregon, and ski fast every time they are on a course," Raasch said. "They make winning look easy."

The success on the slopes has not been the only thing that has developed this year. The team chemistry has grown as well. Raasch says the team has become a large family.

"I have gained a great deal of respect for the athletes on this team, and the



Photo courtesy of Paul Ramsey
Stephan Splisoser, junior, flies down the mountain during the State competition. Splisoser's first place overall finish headlined the competition for a boys' team that won the State title.

seniors will be missed next year," he said. The head coach is not the only one who feels this way.

"I think the team has definitely become closer to each other due to the fact that we are all very outgoing and nice people, not to mention the shared love of skiing," Splisoser said. "I, along with the coaches, have also seen an improvement in the ski racing abilities among the racers on the team, and this is possible because our team is very balanced and we are always chasing each other and striving to do better."

AUSTIN CUMMINS

The Wrestling Team finished their season with a 13th place finish out of 45 teams at the State meet. The tournament was highlighted with a second place finish by Ryan Harman, junior, in the 171 lb. weight class.

"I thought it was pretty awesome because it was my first time at State," Harman said. "Last year I wasn't that good and I improved over the last year. It showed how much better I got."

Coaches agree that Harman improved greatly since last season, with many believing he put in some of the best performances of his career.

"Ryan Harman did great," Geoff Bingham, assistant coach, said. "To finish in fourth at regionals and then go on to win second at State, he wrestled the best tournament of his life."

Other highlights included teammates Anthony Chay, senior, and Braden Krellwitz, junior, placing third and sixth, respectively.

It proved to be more difficult to advance to State with the new lineup format according to Bingham and Samarron. Instead of having two 32-man brackets, the tournament now has 16-man brackets, meaning fewer wrestlers from each school moved on and competed in fewer matches.

"The State Tournament had the toughest 16 kids (per weight) in the state battling for

a place on the podium," Doug Samarron, head coach, said. "We had three out of four stand

Bingham said.

The team also earned a second place finish in the Kirk

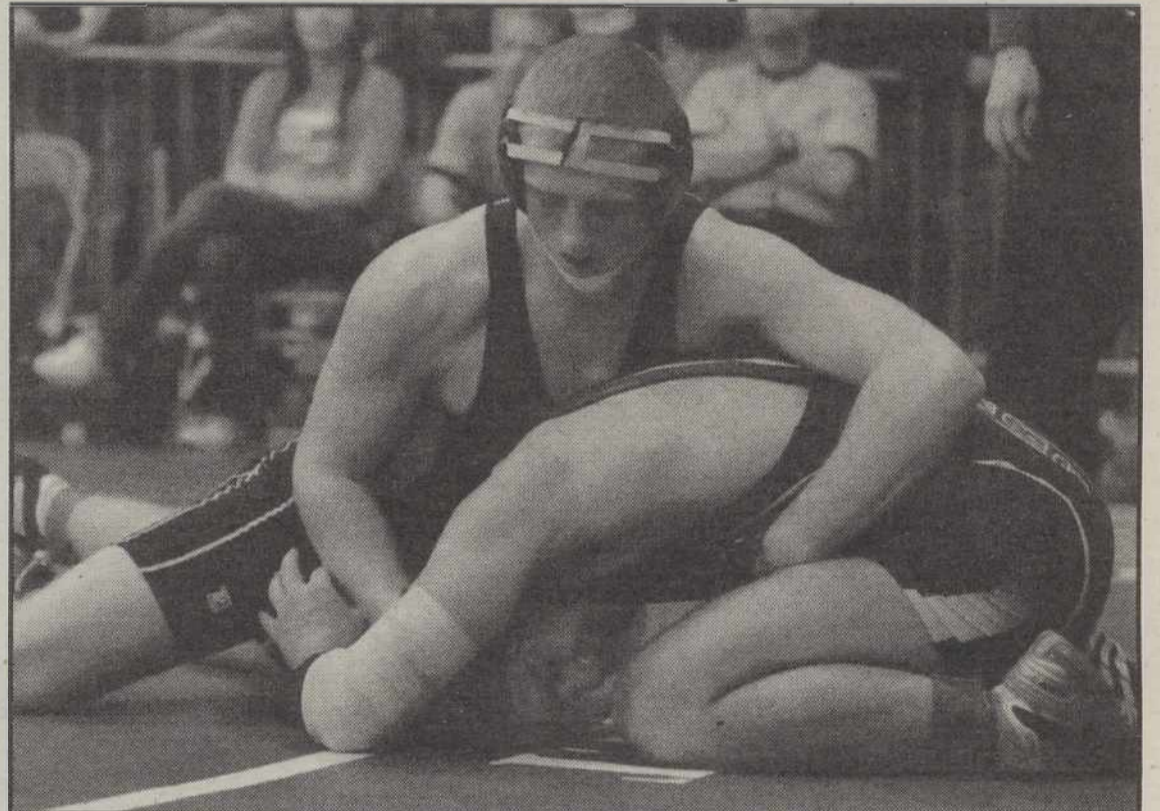


Photo courtesy of Tracie Krellwitz, Stop Action Memories
Ryan Harman, junior, wrestles his Canby opponent to the ground at State. Harman won the match by a decision of 4-3, placing second in the 171 lb. class at the State Tournament on Feb. 26-27.

on that podium, proving that hard work and a little extra effort pays off."

The team competed at Districts on Feb. 18-19, with four of the eight seeded competitors placing above fourth. Against other league competitors, Krellwitz placed first, Chay earned second, Michael Skoczylas, junior, won third and Harman achieved fourth. These top four wrestlers moved on to compete at the State tournament.

"Going to Regionals was tough as a team, and State's new format made it difficult, but we did a great job and we've come a long way from the beginning of the season,"

Spencer Invitational held Feb. 6.

"It was funny. Even though we had placed second to Glencoe, we beat Westview, who had beaten Glencoe in the past," Bingham said. The main highlight was when Michael Webb, freshman, pinned an opponent who was at least 70 lbs. heavier than he is.

There will be many key wrestlers returning to compete next season, leading to a sense of optimism in the program.

"Three out of the four (from State) are returning next year with solid experience. I am excited about West Linn wrestling and building future champions!" Samarron said.