

VHS Sports Report – Two Loggers Bring Home State Titles

Wrestling – Vernonia High School senior Wyatt Jones and junior Brandon Depue each won an individual State Championship in wrestling on Saturday, June 26. Both finished their season undefeated with 23-0 records after winning their weight brackets in the two day tournament, held at Sweet Home.

Previously, both Jones and Depue were crowned as District Champs at the District meet on June 17. Both Depue and Jones moved their record to 20-0 on the season and earned their trip to the State Tournament. Junior Cody West finished 2nd at Districts at 220 pounds and also qualified for state, as did senior Pete Crystal with a 3rd place finish at 160 pounds.

For Jones, the State Championship was the perfect conclusion to his impressive career, which saw him earn his fourth trip to the State Tournament as the #3 seed at 138 pounds. Jones received a bye in his opening round match at 138 pounds on Friday, and then defeated a tough opponent from perennial state powerhouse Culver 5-3 to advance to the semi-finals on Saturday. Jones cruised into the finals with a 13-2 semi-final win over the #2 seed. He won the gold medal with a 5-1 defeat of the #1 seed, Cutter Tanaka from Pine Eagle who had knocked Jones out of the State

Tournament last year in overtime.

Junior Brandon Depue made his third trip to the State Tournament as

matches against fellow state champion Jones.

“I told these guys they had the capability to both be state champions, they just had to believe in themselves, something my college coach instilled in me” said coach Calhoun. Calhoun went on to acknowledge the influence of previous head coach Chris Barnes as being instrumental in the team’s success. He also gave praise to all the Mat Pack coaches, fellow teammates, and parents and fans who “helped turn these two young men into State Champions.” Jones and Depue also sent a big thank you out to their bus driver Cathy Meyer, “the best fan ever!”

“With the way that Brandon and Wyatt practiced all season, and did all the right things, I knew they had a chance to win it all,” said Calhoun. “They did all the work, with the help of their teammates. I told them they had the tenacity and talent to accomplish this. I told them they needed to stay busy on the mat, and they did it.”

Two other Loggers earned the trip to the State Tournament. Senior Pete Crystal lost his opening match at 160 pounds, but rebounded with a win by fall in 1:29 in the consolation round, before being knocked out in his third match against the District Champion, and #2 seed, from Kennedy.

Junior Cody West lost his open-

ing match at 220 pounds, and was then eliminated from the tournament when he fell in the consolation round.

With just four wrestlers in the tournament, the Loggers finished in 8th place in the team standings out of 48 teams.

The State Tournament was not sanctioned by OSAA but was organized by a group of volunteers from Restore College Wrestling Oregon, including Calhoun’s legendary college coach at Pacific University, Mike Clock. “It was great for the kids to have a way to culminate their season, and especially the chance for our two seniors to finish out their careers,” said Calhoun.

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State Wrestling Champions Brandon Depue (left, 113 lbs) and Wyatt Jones (right 138 lbs) with coach Chuck Calhoun.

the #1 seed at 113 pounds, and received a bye in the first round on opening day. He won his second round match by fall in just 33 seconds, earning his place in the semis on Saturday where he defeated a tough opponent from Culver 9-7. In the finals Depue defeated the #2 seed in the tournament – another wrestler from Culver – 4-3. Following the match, Depue told head coach Chuck Calhoun that he attributed his ability to persevere against two tough opponents to all the training he had done, especially practice

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