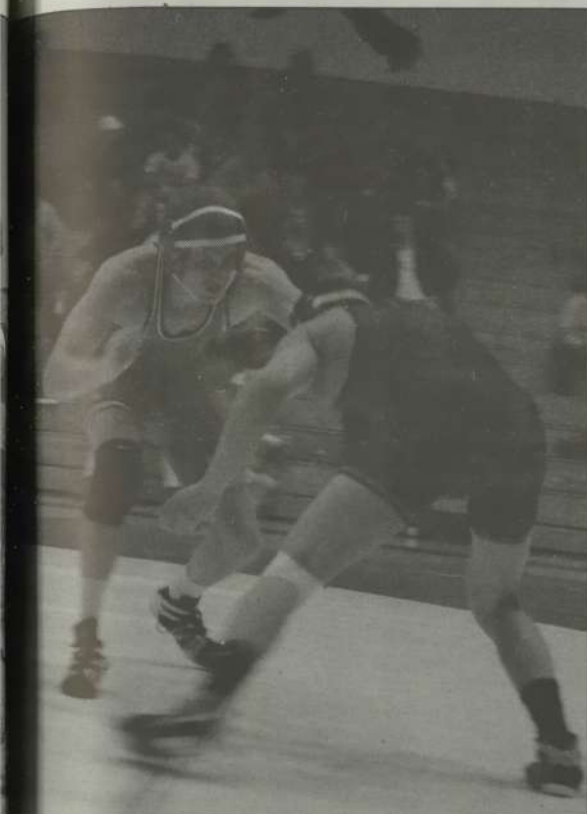


New challengers approach the mat



All photos John Petty Clackamas Print
Martin Davis and Branden Mina square off during a 133 pound weight class match Oct. 29.

With many new faces, the wrestling team looks to match success from years past.

By Mark Sunderland
The Clackamas Print

One season down and there is still much for the hope for the new season. The last three years Clackamas Community College has earned fifth, seventh and third place at nation-

Last year we finished third in the nation as a team. We have five All-Americans last year including our national champion, Tyrell Fortune; our heavyweight and this year we're looking to improve on that. We've been in the top three years that I've been here as the head coach, the nation, and the top five out of the three," said Rhoden, head coach for the wrestling program.

It was off to Fortune for battling his way up to National champion and All-American. During an interview with Rhoden, he explained that

there are 10 different weight classes for college wrestling and becoming an All-American means that a wrestler has placed within the top eight of the 10 in the nation. A formidable feat it sounds like and Clackamas had five students make All-American last year at nationals.

The new season has lent Clackamas a couple return students - Caleb Kociemba, weighing in at 184, and Brett Sanchez at 197. Both of these players placed as an All-American. Kociemba and Sanchez are two of the eight that wrestlers that went to nationals last season.

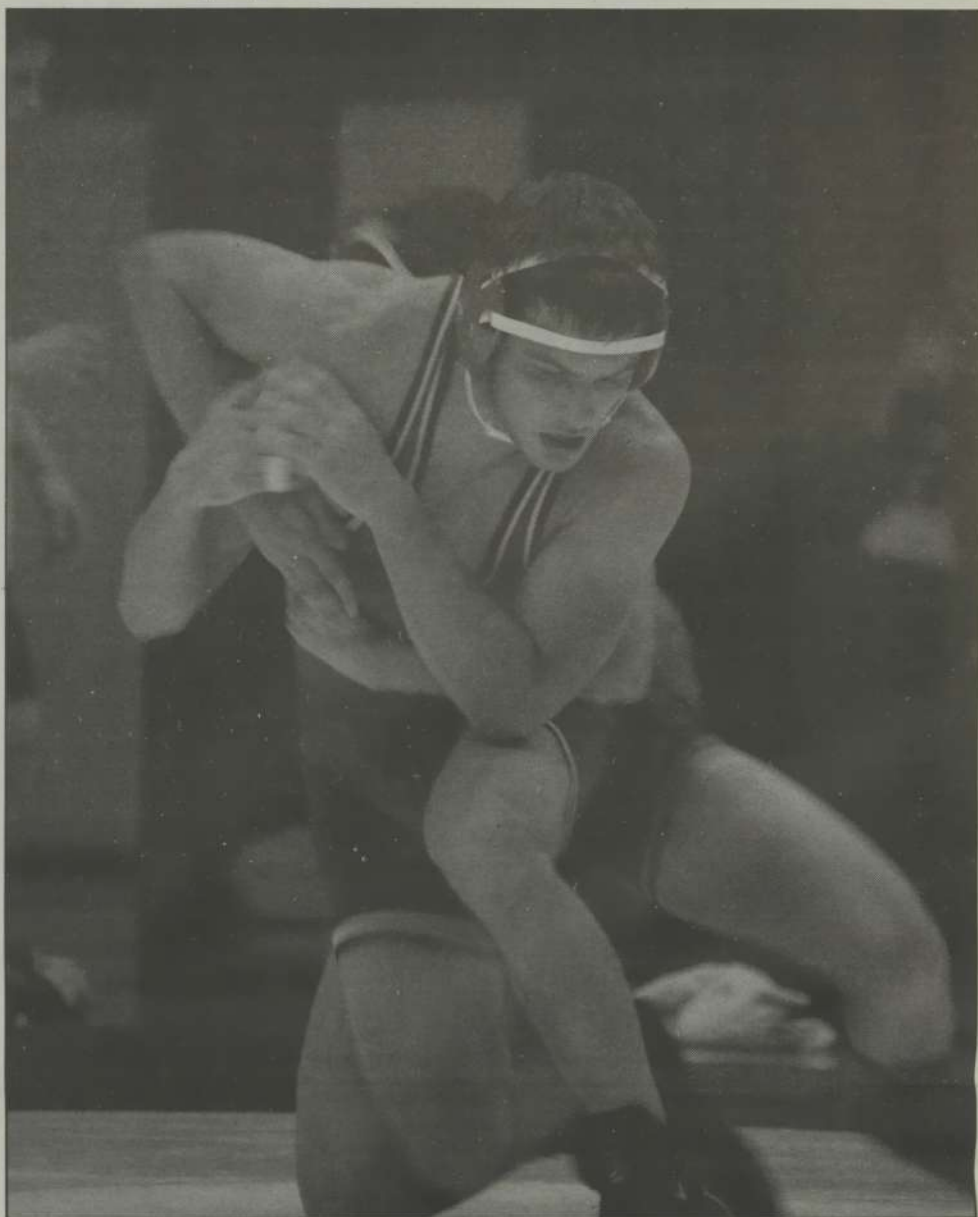
"(Kociemba and Sanchez) both did very well for us," Rhoden claimed.

Kociemba and Sanchez are two returners of whom a lot is expected for the upcoming season.

Of course, there are many new faces that make up the team this season.

"We do, we have a lot of new faces. We brought in about 15 to 18 new kids, freshmen and transfers. We have kids that are highly talented kids; Ryland Geiger is one of the kids and he was a high school national champion," said Rhoden about his new roster.

Geiger was the first name



Anthony Weerheim attacks Mitch Giberson from behind. Weerheim, a sophomore, and Giberson, a redshirt freshman, both wrestle in the 141 pound weight class. Giberson also wrestles in the 133 pound weight class.

that was said as a promising new talent to the wrestling program, and Rhoden believes that Geiger will do very well for the team.

Geiger wasn't the only name mentioned by Rhoden about who he believes have shown the most promise of the new athletes.

Billy Goldsberry was mentioned and Rhoden commented, "I like how Billy has been working and he's a 157 pounder right now. Pretty excited about his work ethic and how he's done."

Derek Mestrovich was another name that was given.

"And he's 165 right now. We're pretty excited about him, he's a transfer from Boise State," said Rhoden about Mestrovich.

Jon Reese is another promising new wrestler and he weighs in at 125.

The team began training in early September, getting a head start on the school year.

"Training's gone really well, we've been pleased with the guys overall," said Rhoden. "We've had a couple hiccups here and there with injuries early. Injuries are just going to happen in this sport. A good time to do it is right now, I think. They are not out for the season; they just have to recover and get back in and be ready to go for us."

It is still too early to say how well Clackamas will do, yet the words of Rhoden are optimistic and that lends an air of certainty. The training is going as well as one can hope for, maybe better, with the common knee and shoulder injuries happening before the season actually starts. It gives Clackamas a good set-up for the first match as Rhoden

said he would rather have his players injured now, rather than during the season.

It sounds like CCC's wrestling program has plenty of talent to draw from and with the program's history, they have much to strive for. The team's first meet is on Nov. 7.



Jon Reese attempts to take down Edison Hidalgo during the intersquad scrimmage Oct. 29.

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