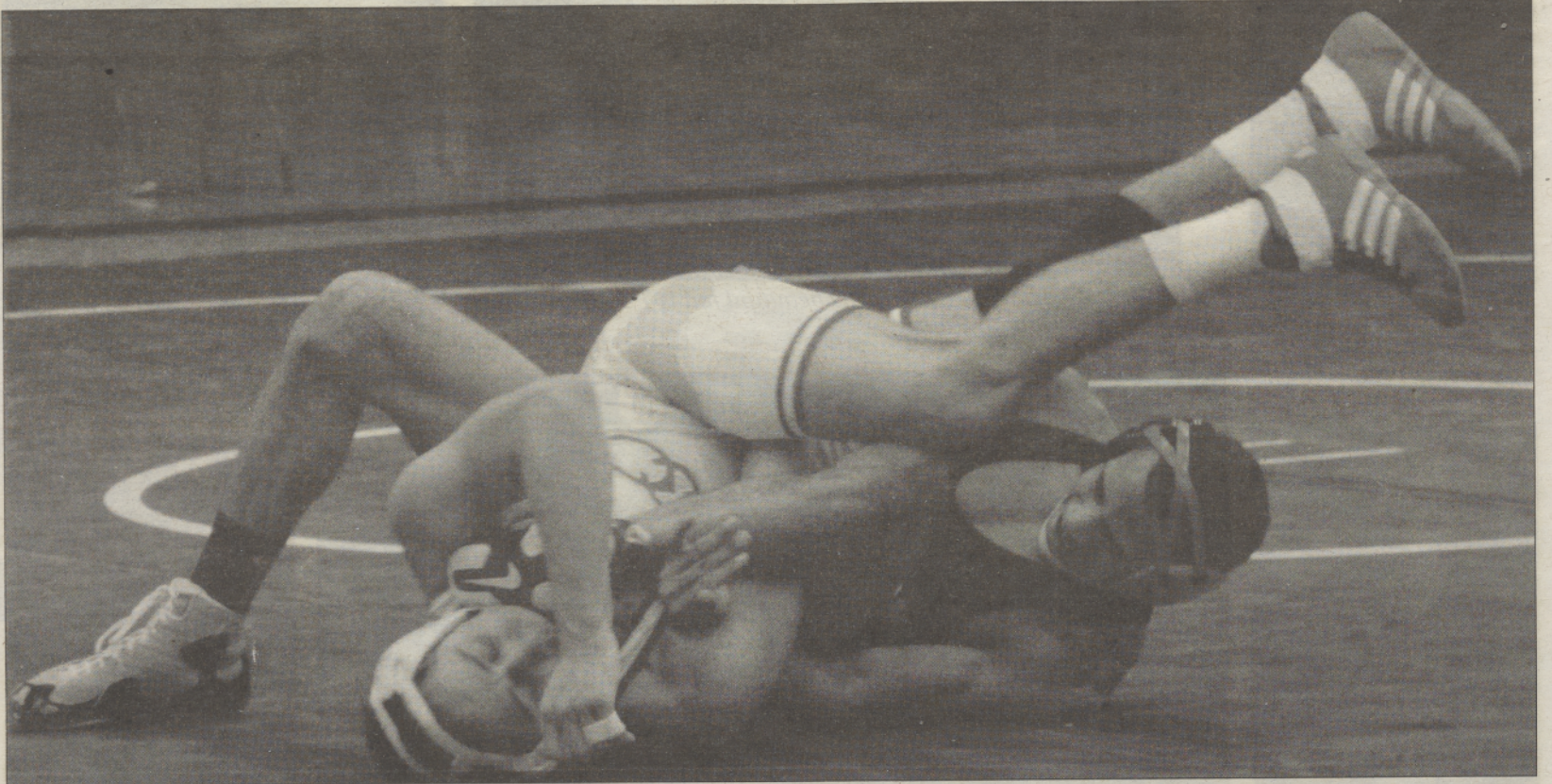
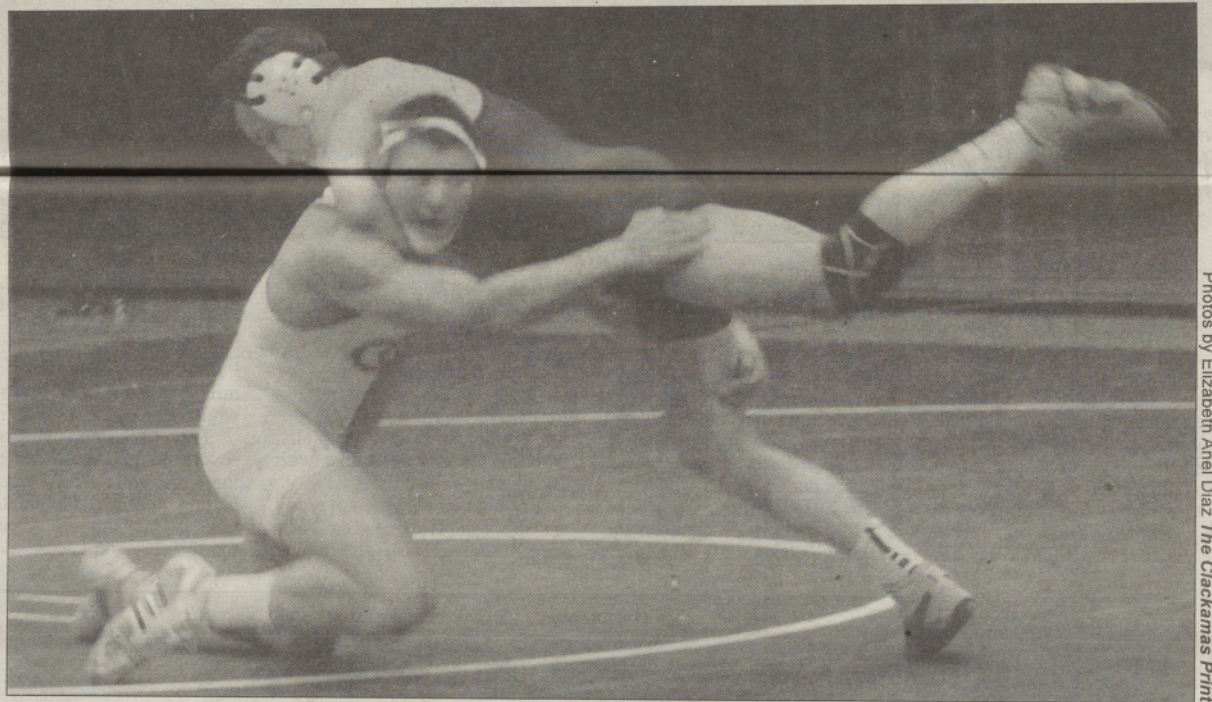
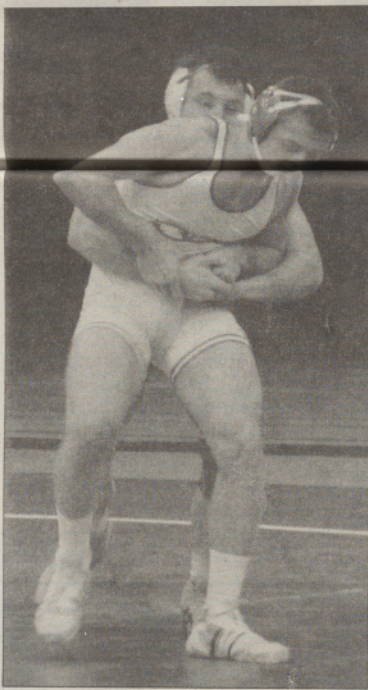


Cougars control action on the mat



Top: Clackamas' 141 pounds freshman Robbie Rizzolino scrambles for control and position while attempting to avoid a pin. His opponent Matt Gay of Southwestern Oregon won the match via decision with dominant control and elusive techniques which included a one-handed cartwheel evade.
Bottom left and right: Clackamas' 184 pounds freshman Adrian Salas shows his wrestling prowess and strength overcoming Southwestern Oregon's Kolbjorn Skaflestad.



Photos by Elizabeth Anel Diaz The Clackamas Print

David Beasley Sports Editor

The No. 4 ranked Cougar wrestling team continued to represent the fighting spirit of Clackamas last Friday. They took out No. 23 ranked Southwestern Oregon Lakers.

The match announcer, Aaron Hall, introduced the wrestlers with crowd-pleasing, fight-style face offs. It was good foreshadowing of the impressive battles that took place. The Cougars showed how hard work and determination pay off. They set a good example for all Clackamas students with their work ethic and performance.

"In wrestling, you're never done," said Hall. "You're working on your weaknesses and strengths a lot."

The 125-pound division was a forfeit for Clackamas, and Southwestern Oregon's Matthew Nguyen was awarded the win. The score started out 0-6 in favor of the Lakers.

The first match was CCC's very

talented C.J. Palmer versus Lucas Garza at 133 pounds. With a bit of a feeling-out process, Palmer finally caught the elusive Garza. Palmer held him with all four limbs up, winning via pin.

"He was really defensive, he didn't want to wrestle," said Palmer. "I had to lose four pounds before the meet. I was tired from running. It's hard cutting weight right before a match."

The team score was tied after the first match 6-6. Next, at 141 pounds was CCC's Robbie Rizzolino against Matt Gay. As Rizzolino tenaciously attempted to catch Gay, Gay executed a spectacular one-handed cartwheel evade. Gay gained the advantage and used excellent control. Gay won by decision. The score was then 6-9 Lakers lead.

At 149 pounds, Kenny Martin faced the Lakers' Aaron Villain. Martin won the competitive match 7-4 and tied the meet 9-9. The Lakers had to forfeit the 157 pounds match, so the Cougars took the lead 15-9. For the 165 pounds division, Shane Sheppard of Clackamas wrestled Andrew Orr.

A few seconds into the match the

referee halted the action for blood on the mat.

"There's blood everywhere," he declared.

It was Orr's nose. At the restart from standing position Orr took a two-point takedown and got a pin. Orr won. The score was tied again, 15-15. Moving up the weight divisions, at 174 pounds, Tyler White was set to wrestle Mikey Ayala of Southwestern Oregon. White had a very good takedown and near-fall, accruing five points, and relentlessly tried to get Ayala's arm out from underneath to get a pin. Ayala defended the pin, but White won. Clackamas took the lead again, 18-15.

Next up was 184 pounds Cougar powerhouse Adrian Salas versus Kolbjorn Skaflestad.

Skaflestad almost had a two-point takedown but Salas rolled at the last second. The referee called it as off the mat. The Lakers' coach was very upset with the call. Salas executed a powerful two-point takedown and got two more points controlling the action and then two more. Salas got an impressive pin winning the match.

For the 197 pounds division, Ithoughama Odigizuwa accepted the win for Clackamas, putting the score at 24-15 as the Lakers' forfeit.

Last, but certainly not least was CCC's imposing 285 pounds Brandon Johnson against Teran Reedy.

Johnson had a strong two-point takedown and grabbed another three points before almost pinning Reedy. Johnson earned another three points for a dominant score of 8-0. He got another two-point takedown for 10-0 and one point for stalling was awarded to Johnson against Reedy, 11-0. Then one point was awarded to Reedy against Johnson for stalling, 11-1. Johnson executed one of the night's most spectacular techniques with a takedown slam right at the buzzer. Johnson won 14-1.

"The slam was great," said announcer Hall. "It was fantastic, the crowd loves those techniques. It gets the crowd into it."

Johnson's win put the final meet score at 34-15. Clackamas won, as expected, in dominating fashion. The following morning, Saturday, Jan. 25, the team traveled to Forest Grove for the Boxer Open tourna-

ment.

Johnson was satisfied with his team's performance Friday night. He knew he had to stay consistent in his own game as well to succeed in the championships this season, he said.

"There's been ups and downs," said Johnson. "Trying to have more ups right now, just trying to push through being tired, trying to get in shape this season. Third round is usually when I start getting tired. You can lead the whole match and lose it all at the end."

Palmer had confidence in his team for the remainder of the season and saw the possibility of championship glory.

"The biggest challenge will be getting mentally prepared," said Palmer. "I think everyone should be ready."

The Cougars' last home meet will be against Pacific University on Jan. 30 at 7:30 p.m. Then on Feb. 15 they will head to Rock Creek, Wyo., for regionals.