

# Sports

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## IV athletes recognized

By Darcy Wallace  
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Illinois Valley High School winter athletes in basketball, wrestling and cheer wrapped up an exciting winter season during the awards ceremony Tuesday, March 8.

The boys basketball team, more commonly known as the Brotherhood, made State playoffs for the first time since 2002. Four wrestlers competed and excelled at State, three of them earning medals. Lady Cougar basketball players turned inexperience into confidence, improving their record. Cheerleaders overcame obstacles to become a major force in supporting fellow Cougars.

Cheer coach Heather Merrill said Christina Sabrina Van Tassel and Brittany Mosley were selected to cheer at the Shriner's Hospital all-star game.



"We did have some ups and downs but I'm pleased how it turned out," Merrill said. "They pulled together because there were things they wanted to accomplish...it was about the team."

Mosley and Van Tassel won Most Valuable, Seth Williams won Most Improved, and Mosley and Tyierra Hess brought home Most Inspirational recognition.

Girls basketball coach Loren King said the whole team, including varsity and junior varsity players, made big improvements in 2011 and are looking forward to improving on the program for next season.

"I'm very proud of the girls," King said. "The last third of the season I think they really started to pull

together. Most people don't get the chance to be a part of a team that is close and has common goals. I think [Lady Cougars] got a sense of that towards the end of the season."

Freshman Samantha Frederick won Most Improved, while Senior Laurissa Tausaga and junior Kristen Vidalez won Most Valuable Player and Most Inspirational, respectively. JV teammates Naviya Dixon and Marisol Sanchez won Most Valuable and Most Improved.

Besides recognition for their athletic contributions, IVHS students are excelling in

academics: 20 Cougars were named Scholar athletes, maintaining a GPA of 3.5 or higher.

In wrestling, freshman T.J. Hughey won Most Valuable in the JV category after competing at the State level in his first year on the

Cougar wrestling team, and Julian Northrup won a Most Inspirational for JV wrestling.

"[Northrup] wrestled in 215 and 189-pound [weight classes] for us and did really well," said longtime IV wrestling coach Jay Miller.

Senior Zach Anderson won Most Improved on the varsity team as a returning member who made some of his most noticeable improvements in the last few months of the season, Miller said. And Gabe Miller, a senior, won Most Inspirational for the varsity team.

Coach Miller the 'mat stat' team of Christina Ricci, and Cassie Miller for statistics and helping out the team all season long.

"It was a good banquet, with a lot of

thanks for people who helped make everything possible, like the custodians, cafeteria workers, fans and [others]," said boys basketball coach Jeff Winters. "Everybody seemed to have a good time."

Several members of the Brotherhood took home awards of their own. JV basketball players Zach Welch and Myles Hodge won Most Valuable and Most Improved, respectively, for their contributions to the JV team.



Senior Roger Hults was MVP of the varsity squad, with Fred Hults winning Best Defensive player and Tyler Robbins winning

and Josh Free and Josh Free won Most Improved. Other unique to the boys team was the "Mr. Hustle" award going to senior Curtis Paulson and the "Double/Double" award for senior Jesse Bethke.

## IV equestrian team doesn't horse around



(Courtesy photo for Illinois Valley News)

IVHS Equestrian Mali Whicheloe displays her skills in the meet March 4th through 6th in the Jackson County Expo Center.