

stuff shots

Wrestlers cap banner season

by MARK FLOYD
Sports Editor

You get the feeling that the Sandy High School wrestling coaches can hardly wait until next year rolls around.

One can hardly blame them.

The Pioneers finished fourth in the state this year and will return a pair of state champs and a third place finisher. Chris Jones, 148, and Dan Martin, 157, were Sandy's first titlists in the past two decades. Both are juniors.

Sophomore Larry Topliff, 98, was third in the tournament and was one match away from winning it all. Topliff had beaten the kid earlier in the season who ended up second.

That is a lot of points coming back next year, probably as many as anyone in the state. But that's only the tip of the iceberg.

Mike Rohweder, 106, Dean Fischer, 141, and Tim Sytsma, 191, went to state and lost in the first round. All will be back and all should do much better next year.

Rohweder had the misfortune of drawing a defending state champion in the first round. Fischer spent most of the year on junior varsity and should really shine next year. Sytsma was competing in his first state and should also be tougher next season.

That's a lot more potential points.

But there is more. A wrestler by the name of Chuck Kearney, who took second in state at 168, may be in a Sandy uniform next year. His father is the assistant coach at SUHS and the Kearneys have been looking for a house in the area. If Kearney, who is just a sophomore this year, wrestles for Sandy, the Pioneers are going to be one rugged team.

There are other reasons for the Sandy coaches' optimism. The Pioneers had the best freshmen team in the district and one of the best junior varsity squads. There are a lot of underclassmen who could make it big next season.

Depth has been a big factor in the team championship the past two years and the Pioneers should have a number of wrestlers who could come through and qualify for state. And anyone who makes state from the Timber Valley League has a chance to pick up points, the league is so tough.

Scott Skipper, a 178-pound sophomore, placed fourth in the TVL and came one point away from a state berth. And he has the potential to go a lot higher. Randy Carmony, a 191-pound junior, also placed fourth in the TVL and could move to heavyweight.

Just look at the returners. Topliff at 98; Rohweder, 106; Fischer, 141; Jones, 148; Martin, 157; Kearney (hopefully), 168; Skipper, 178; Sytsma, 191; and Carmony, heavyweight.

That leaves just a few gaps. Bill Mathews will be a senior with three years experience next season at 115. Robert Paul placed well at district in the 123-pound class and the sophomore should do well next season. Carey Larson came on strong at the end of the season at 136 and Paul Gagner will return at 130.

That doesn't mean that any of these people have spots sewn up. Not with such a great group of underclassmen pushing them. Sandy won the district freshmen meet and waiting in the wings are future hopes such as Frank McKinnis and Loren Bateman. And there are others.

There have always been strong wrestlers at Sandy, but the program has really taken shape the past couple of years. That is a tribute to Pioneer coach Ron Calhoun and a strong group of assistant coaches.

It is also a tribute to the wrestlers, themselves. There are few athletes at the school that have worked harder in the off-season than Jones, Martin and Topliff. That work has obviously paid dividends and the rest of the athletes at the school should take note.

Don't be too surprised if Sandy is rated as one of the teams to beat for the state title next year.



Sandy High basketball coach Dennis Warren, seen here at one of his developmental clinics for youths, announced his resignation this week.

Warren resigns from Sandy High hoop post

Sandy Union High School boys basketball coach Dennis Warren submitted his resignation to the district last Wednesday.

Warren has been varsity coach for the past four years and served as assistant for eight years prior to that.

"The basic reason for my resignation is that I feel that it is really time for a change," Warren said. "A change for myself and for the basketball program. I find myself putting in more and more time and not seeing results like I should with the time I've committed."

"We've been going year-round to try and be competitive," Warren added. "And in order to do that, you have to make a lot of sacrifices, from the financial end to sacrifices with your family. If a guy makes those kind of sacrifices, he needs more positive results than I've been able to bring about with the basketball program."

Warren came to Sandy 12 years ago after attending Linfield College, where he played basketball. He attended Lakeview High School.

Warren's Sandy High team struggled to a

4-18 overall record this season, 2-12 in Timber Valley League play.

"I'm not bailing out because of a lack of talent or anything," Warren said. "I feel we've built a good foundation and the program is on solid ground. I'm not leaving it in shambles."

Warren plans to remain at SUHS where he teaches physical education. He hopes to coach track if a position opens up.

"I feel some commitment and gratitude to some people in the community who have done a lot for the program in the last four years," Warren said. "And I'd like to express my gratitude toward those people."

The position of head coach will not be opened until Sandy High has a teaching vacancy, according to district superintendent Jack Peters.

"They usually let us know some time in April," Peters said. "The position won't be open until we have vacancies. We also have coaches from inside (the district) who will be eligible."

Donkey basketball game set

The ever-popular Donkey Basketball will be returning to Sandy High School this Wednesday, March 11.

Games will begin at 7:30 p.m.

The event is sponsored by the Sandy FFA (Future Farmers of America). The FFA will challenge the San-

dy High faculty and the Sandy Fire Department. A total of three games will be played.

The donkeys, veterans of these basketball games, will be provided by the Kay West Company.

Tickets will cost \$2.50 at the door for adults, \$2 for

students and \$1.50 for kids six through 12. Children under six will be admitted free.

There will be a discount if tickets are purchased ahead of time. Tickets will be available from members of the FFA.

Highest finish ever

Chessmen place 6th at state

The Sandy High chess club went into the state tournament unheralded, but emerged with a sixth place finish and a trophy.

The tournament was held last weekend at Grants Pass.

All six of the Pioneer players picked up victories for Sandy, as the surprising Pioneers finished up their best season ever. Sandy finished second in the Timber Valley League district tourney to Oregon City and wasn't expected to be much of a factor at state.

But Sandy got wins from Stuart Bilyeu, Tim Zimmerman, Chris Botcheos, Pete Watkins, Roman Scott and Scott Benson, and finished with 2-1-1 record.

"It's nice that everyone

won," club advisor Roger Ford said. "It makes for a real good team victory."

Crescent Valley, 3-0-1, won the 16-team tournament, followed by Medford, 3-0-1; Corvallis, 2-0-2; and Churchill, 3-1. Sandy, South Albany and Clackamas tied with 2-1-1 records, but South Albany was awarded fifth place on a tiebreaker system, the Pioneers were sixth and Clackamas seventh. The top six teams received trophies.

Sandy opened against South Albany in the first round and drew with the Rebels, 2 1/2 to 2 1/2. Corvallis handed the Pioneers their worst defeat of the season in the second round, sweeping all five matches in a 5-0 win.

Then came Hidden Valley and Sandy crushed the local school 4-1. Sandy's fourth and final match came against Rex Putnam, a team which had humiliated the Pioneers early in the season by a 3 1/2 to 8 1/2 score (a different scoring method was used in the TVL).

This time Sandy turned the tables on the Kingsmen and claimed a 24-16 (3-2) win.

"That was a sweet victory," Ford said. "The guys were a little nervous going in, but they performed well. It was quite an upset."

First board Bilyeu scored one point for Sandy at state; Zimmerman had two at second board; Botcheos had 2 1/2 at third board; Watkins had two at fourth board;

Scott had one at fifth board; and alternate Benson scored one point.

"Our guys showed a lot of improvement over the year," Ford noted, "especially Zimmerman, Botcheos and Benson. Their play at the end of the year was markedly better than at the beginning."

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Prep of the Week:



CHRIS JONES

Sandy High junior Chris Jones recently won the state wrestling title in the 148-pound weight class. He beat defending state champ Kris Pihl of Canby in the finals to claim the title. Jones defeated Pihl three times this year. Congratulations, Chris!

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