

## Bulldog Wrestlers A Big Presence at State

■ Cory Bryant is state champ again, team finishes 6th.

By Ron Karten

Six Willamina High School wrestlers took their skills, confidence and upper body strength to the Oregon State Championships at the Portland Coliseum late in February. One came home as best in the state — Cory Bryant in the 140-pound class. He came home first last year, too.

"We ended up in 6<sup>th</sup> (place)," said Bulldog Wrestling Coach Arianh Fasana, "which I guess according to rankings is a little higher than

we were expected to do. That's about where we belonged, but we could very easily have been fourth. We just needed to win one more match."

In his own high school wrestling career, Fasana took state titles in the 98-pound and 112-pound weight classes in 1988 and 1989, respectively.

"All our guys who placed did really well," said Fasana.

Cory Bryant was state champion.

"He's a two-timer now. He wrestled really smart," said Fasana. Bryant had squared off against Dayton's Joe Silva before and they were 2-2 against each other before the state finals. "(Bryant) handled him very easily. Was in control the whole match. He knows how to get ready before a big match. Knows to bring his best game to big tournaments. He does a great job at preparing himself," said Fasana.

Bryant beat wrestlers from McKenzie and Nyssa on his way to defeating Dayton's Silva on points, 10-4. His performance included one pin along the way.

Following in weight order, Jared Staben, 112 pounds, defeated opponents from Oakridge and Central Linn before running into Nyssa's Monte Nicholes who went on to win the state title in this weight category.

"Jared (Staben), at 112 pounds, for just being a sophomore, he did pretty well," said his coach. "He ended up fourth."

Tribal member Lee Wilson, 119 pounds (see sidebar), ran into a buzz saw in last year's state champ, Central



Linn's Lee Fincher in his first match.

"Lee placed fourth also," said Fasana. "He had a really tough weight bracket, so that was really good."

Wilson's half-brother, Vince Fagundes, 130 pounds, made the semi-finals, outpointing Glendale's De Pham and pinning Central Linn's David Anthony, before running into a 15-5 defeat by Enterprise's Austin Himes.

"Vince (Fagundes) was fourth also. He's a junior, he'll be back next year. He went to state last year but this was the first year he placed."

Steve Schussman, 135 pounds, like some of his teammates, drew a tough early match, and went down to Santiam Christian's Britton LaTulippe.

And Jake Harper, 152 pounds, had an even harder time with Elgin's Cody Burgess in his first match, but did accumulate his 100<sup>th</sup> high school win during the tournament.

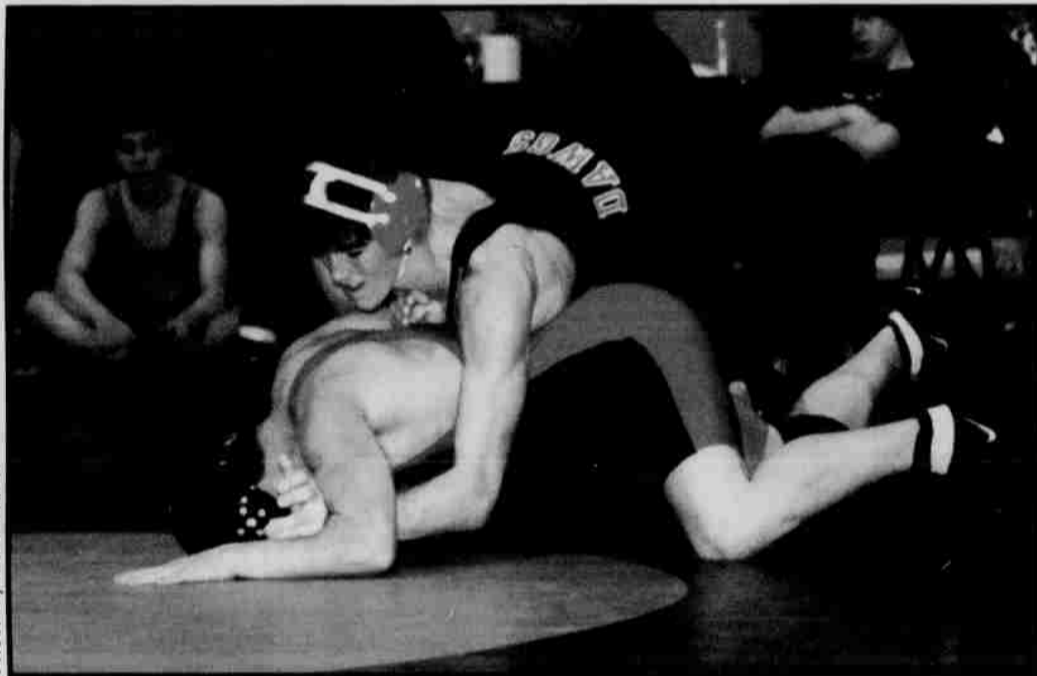


Photo by Peta Tinda

**The Best** — Willamina Senior Cory Bryant repeated as State Wrestling Champion by defeating Dayton's talented and tough Joe Silva. Bryant, shown here in the District Championships, dominated Silva in the championship match after splitting four matches with Silva prior to the State Championships at the Coliseum in Portland.

## Tribal Member Lee Wilson Wrestles At Oregon State Wrestling Championships

■ Forth place finish sets up a promising future for high school senior.

Profile by Ron Karten

Tribal member Lee Wilson had about five pounds to lose the day before this year's Oregon State Wrestling Championships, and it's not like he's got that much extra to lose to begin with, but in his quietly confident way, the prospect — which daunts millions of Americans on a daily basis — wasn't even an item on his schedule. "Maybe I'll have an orange for dinner. You know," he said, "I eat light the night before."

Wilson, who has only wrestled for the Willamina Bulldogs for the last two years, made his first appearance at state this year. With a bye for the first round, he ran into last year's champ in the second and the result was not good but Wilson is a fellow who takes the ups and downs in stride.

"My goal was to place in the top four," he said of the state championships. "I beat the second-seeded kid. I did pretty good, I think."

A senior this year, Wilson has come around in other ways, as well. His 3.0 grade point average (GPA) last term and what he anticipates will be a 3.7 in the current term show a lot of improvement, according to his coach.

"He's matured a lot," said Fasana. "He does a good job at taking care of what he needs to get done. He gained a lot of experience (this year), and in wrestling, experience is huge."

As a newcomer at his first meet last season, Wilson recalled that Neahkah-nee's Justin Kamerer pinned him. "I made a mistake on the shot (shooting is the term for the duck and dive move by which wrestlers go for an opponent's legs to take him down from standing positions). I lost my grip."

For this year's Classic Wrestling Tournament, Wilson worked hard to get ready to meet Kamerer again. "I knew I could wrestle him," he said. "I had confidence. I knew I would go in and just try not to make any mistakes." The result - Wilson won by points, 11-9.

"This year," Wilson said, "(Nestucca's) Brandon Boyce beat me 3-1 at our home meet. At districts, I beat him 13-10. That built my confidence."

The whole wrestling effort came out of the horsing around kids do at home. "I thought it was fun when I was little," he said. For years, he has been "rough-housing" with his younger, half-brother Vince Fagundes. Fagundes brought the wrestling skills to school competition first, and Wilson watched him. Wilson's uncle, Barry Wilson, the team's assistant coach, also encouraged him along the way.

Since the Tribe's gym has been available, Wilson said he uses Tribal facilities, "probably twice a week," but looking back at his successes and

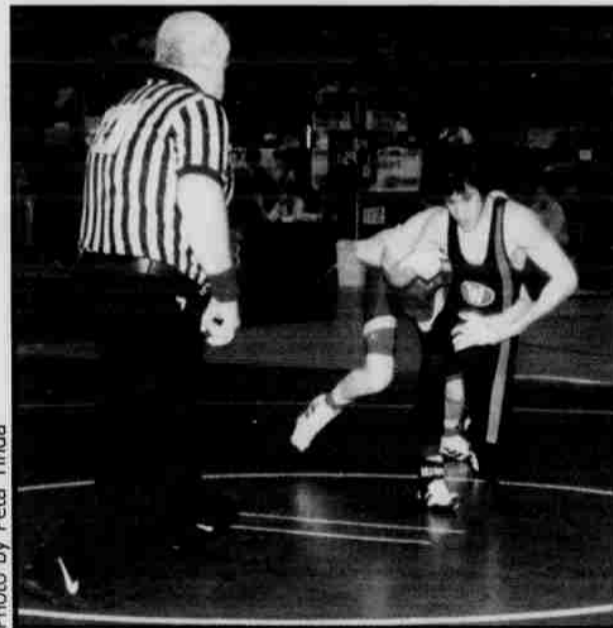


Photo by Peta Tinda

### Outlook For The Future Is Bright —

Tribal member and Willamina High School Senior Lee Wilson finished fourth in the State Wrestling Championships at Memorial Coliseum in Portland this year. Wilson, who gets good grades and volunteers at the local food bank, has made his family and friends proud.

failures in the sport, he said, "It's mostly natural."

"I use upper body strength. I don't really have a great shot, but a pretty decent shot." And when wrestling with others who also have good upper body strength, like Fagundes, Wilson says, "I try not to tie up. I wait for them to make a mistake."

After school and when wrestling's done, you might find Wilson either washing dishes or bussing them at the casino or working with the Tribe's grounds keeping crew.

He spends time working with his dad at his home-based shop restoring cars or tinkering with his Yamaha 125 motorcycle. He also likes to take the bike out in the woods.

Wilson also puts in volunteer time at the local food bank operated by his grandparents, Tribal members Marvin and Michelle Kimsey.

Friendly and pleasant to speak with, he takes a nice, simple view of his world, knowing where he excels, willing to work at improving where he doesn't, and he seems pretty pleased with his recent successes.

"It's pretty good to know that I can wrestle with the top guys at state," he said.