

# Making their presence felt

Dallas and Central sent a combined 23 wrestlers to the OSAA Class 5A State Wrestling Championships in Portland on Friday and Saturday.



Central senior Alberto Meza works to break free from Lebanon's Arien Craggett in the 195-pound semifinals. Meza earned an 8-3 decision.



Dallas sophomore Tanner Earhart gets lifted from the mat by Blaine Hays of Sandy. Earhart won via a 9-4 decision en route to a fourth-place finish.



Central junior Collin Swinehart looks to escape from Crater's Logan Meek in the 138-pound semifinal on Saturday. Swinehart earned a 6-3 decision to advance.



Dallas freshman Treve Earhart attempts a takedown against Churchill's Gavin Carroll in the 152-pound semifinal on Saturday. Earhart lost a 5-2 decision.



Dallas' Cody Janssen tries to maintain control against Hillsboro's Gabe Schade on Saturday in the third round of the consolation bracket. Janssen lost via major decision.

## Perfect: Central makes big statement at state

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"I just wanted to place," Tuipulotu said. "I didn't have any idea I was going to go to the finals."

Tuipulotu's performance may have surprised himself, but Holstad said this could be the beginning of a special run for the sophomore.

"I think this experience is going to be big for him coming into the next couple years," Holstad said. "I don't see this as his last stop at the finals. He's a special athlete."

Oscar Amezcua (160) and David Negrete (182) did not place.

The Panthers finished



Tuipulotu

ninth in the team standings with 85 points. More importantly to Holstad, Central finished second among Mid-Willamette Conference teams, a fact he hopes helps the Panthers' wrestling program continue to build.

"It's nice to finish above the other teams in our league except for Dallas," Holstad said. "This is where it counts. We had solid performances from these guys."



T. Swinehart

Hopefully it will be contagious with the other guys."

As for Tanner, his focus will be on finishing his senior project and freestyle wrestling in the spring. But for now, Swinehart is content to celebrate a four-year dream come true.

"It just feels good to accomplish my goal," Swinehart said. "My goal was to win a state championship and I did it."

## Title: Dallas places fifth

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Miller pinned Hood River Valley's Jason Shaner to place fifth.

"I knew it was my last match," Miller said. "It was a thank you to the coaches for making me better."

Janssen's state tournament began with a bang, upsetting top seeded Gabe Brauchler of Redmond.

"I just wanted to place at state," Janssen said. "That's how you make a name for yourself. I didn't want to leave unnamed. I knew I could beat him going into it. I just did my thing that I worked on in practice and it just worked out."

Dallas finished fifth in the team standings with 141 1/2 points. Hermiston won the team title with 161 points.

"The boys did great," Dragons coach Tony Olliff said. "We had some first time state participants place, which is a very tricky thing to do. We had some returners get back on the podium and we had a number of wrestlers contribute



Dallas senior Matt Hofenbredl looks for the fall against Sandy's Kyle Grahn in the 132-pound semifinal.

to our total team effort."

Junior Angie Sletten finished third in the girls 113-pound bracket. Sletten pinned Saylor Neher of Cleveland in the third place match.

"As soon as I saw the ref's arm go up, I started crying. I was so excited," Sletten said. Sletten may be the team's only girl, but she's hoping her story can inspire others to join the male-dominated sport.

"Girls will come over to me and hug me and talk to me," Sletten said. "That's just inspiring to me."

Dallas' trip to the state wrestling championships may have featured unexpected twists and turns.

But wrestling does more than provide students a chance to play a sport, Janssen said. It provides something else entirely.

"Wrestling will knock you down," Janssen said. "You just have to get back up."

## Family: Teammates rally

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The Dallas High wrestling program has dealt with tragedy before. Each time the Dragon family, and the wrestling community at large, pulled together. His teammates left the arena with him. His teammates made sure it was OK.

A press release issued Monday by Dallas High Principal Steve Spencer revealed just how big of a family Dallas wrestling is.

"On behalf of the Matt Hofenbredl family, Dallas High School Wrestling program and Dallas School District, I wish to express sincere thanks to everyone who has shared in our grief this weekend. The outpouring of condolences and prayers from the statewide wrestling community and attendants at the tournament have been immense and are greatly appreciated. In what should have been a time of highest celebration following Matt Hofenbredl's victory in the finals of the

132-pound OSAA Class 5A wrestling championships, his family lost Larry 'Grandpa' Hofenbredl to a sudden cardiac event.

"We are grateful to the many first responders at the scene, especially Dallas Assistant Coach Josh Christensen, Silverton Athletic Trainer Jennifer Kroeg, David Sarmiento Trauma/Critical Care Liaison from Bend Anesthesia Group, and Ryan Miller of Dallas.

"During this time of loss, we take comfort in knowing that Grandpa Hofenbredl passed doing something he loved above all else, supporting his grandchildren and Dragon Wrestling. He will be missed as a staple of support in the stands, not just for Matt, but for all of the Dragon wrestlers."

Visitation is Friday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. at Dallas Mortuary Tribute Center. Celebration of Life is Saturday at noon at the Dallas High School Gymnasium. There's little question

Larry Hofenbredl was an important part of Dallas wrestling.

"Grandpa Hofenbredl was a loyal supporter and contributor to the Dallas wrestling program from the roots to the tips," Dallas coach Tony Olliff said. "A lot of coaches got to coach and wrestlers got to travel because of his contributions. We would have preferred Matt's third state title to be a 100 percent happy event for us, but we have no way of knowing if perhaps it might have been a 100 percent happy event for Grandpa Hofenbredl."

As difficult as Saturday's shocking event was, it's Dallas' sense of family that showed up in a big way, his teammates leaving the arena as quickly as possible to be there for their friend and classmate, something that wasn't lost on Hofenbredl.

"I can't thank everyone enough who has been here for me and helped me," he tweeted.