

Wrestlers strengthen technique at state competition

Three NT wrestlers qualified for IHSA finals

by *Claudia Levens*

New Trier's Jake Lowell placed fourth at the State IHSA finals, which took place Feb. 16-18 in Champaign IL.

The tournament consisted of a 16-man bracket with only the top wrestlers receiving State Medals.

Only the top three winners at regionals qualify for the sectionals, and the top four at sectionals qualify for state, so even getting to the State tournament required hard work and dedication.

Junior wrestler Jack Tangen said "We've been preparing since November which is when school wrestling starts.

"Each year wrestlers participate in many tournaments during the offseason as well, which then leads to the regular season all the way to the tournament.

This year, the team started off focusing on fundamental skills since they lost many experienced seniors.

Varsity Assistant Coach Tade Kemnitz said he was initially concerned whether the team's conditioning would suffer and whether they would be able to make it through a 6-minute match.

However, "to my surprise," he said, "Though we were sometimes

outmatched in skill or experience, we seldom lost due to fatigue. Going into next year with the fundamentals in place the focus can be shifted to chain wrestling and having wrestlers confidence in a few different moves from the feet, on top, and from on bottom."

Kemnitz said that they had their sights set on winning the CSL dual meet title.

After the state series began though, "the focus switched to what individuals needed to do in order to qualify for sectionals and State," he said.

Senior wrestler Jake Lowell, New Trier's 4th place finisher in the 195-pound weight class at State missed out on competing in the first place tournament by one match, "my goal this year was to come back stronger and make it to state then place," Lowell said.

For Tangen who competed in the 126-pound weight category and the other state competitor Patrick Ryan in the 138-pound category, the first match of the tournament brought losses which knocked them out of the bracket.

Ryan said, "I was hoping to contend for a state title this year but those hopes were derailed after an opening night loss."

Despite this, Ryan said "as team we had success. Just getting three guys down state was a big accomplishment considering last year

we had only one."

Additionally, both Ryan and Tangen are juniors, so both have good chances of qualifying for the tournament again next year.

The State wrestlers also got to compete in a dome at the State Farm Center in Champaign.

Lowell said he had to adjust to the environment, since the crowds were unlike anything he had experienced before as a competitor.

"I've never wrestled in a dome before," Lowell said. "It was pretty cool. The crowd was pretty loud. Every time someone made a move you could hear the excitement."

He also got some advice from his coaches to help him adjust to wrestling on Illinois' biggest high school stage: "They said just go out there like it was the New Trier gym," Lowell said.

Earlier this year, Lowell missed some meets due to some minor injuries.

According to the Varsity Coach Marc Tadelman, this may have actually benefited his record which ended up at 20-6 by the end of the seasons, since he may have been a little fresher when he came back.

Lowell opened the tournament with a 4-2, then won 7-2 in the quarterfinals.

He lost semifinals to a technical fall against Sandburg's Patrick Brucki who went on to win the State championship, but won his



Junior Mac Lamason takes on Evanston opponent on Feb. 3 | **Varsity Views**

consolation semifinal match 5-2 to reach the third-place bout where he lost to Downers South's Sergio Villalobos 4-1.

In terms of the competition leading up to the state meet, Kemnitz said "for the most part we wrestle the same schedule from year to year. We wrestled 21 dual meets. We went 5-0 in conference duals and 6-10 in non-conference duals."

The team wrestled the returning 3A State Champions Oak Park-River Forest, the returning 3A State Champions Dakota, the number 2 ranked 2A Crystal Lake Central, as well as other powerhouses like Carl

Sandburg, Hononegah, Grant, and Wheeling.

"We basically face the same teams every year in conference and at tournaments." Lowell said, "but you never know who is going to be at state so we were anticipating anyone and knew we had to wrestle hard."

Additionally, last weekend Sophomore Tyler Janczak, and Freshman Michael Miralles, Matthew McKenna, and Michael Stringer represented New Trier at the Frosh-Soph State tournament this weekend where Miralles, McKenna were named sectional champions

NU basketball makes history

Northwestern makes first ever NCAA March Madness

by *Jack Sobele*

A roar went up in the crowd when the ref signaled Northwestern ball. Out of bounds on Michigan, with 1.7 seconds to play.

Senior Forward Nathan Taphorn hurled a hail mary full court pass (and word on the street is the local pro football team could use a quarterback) that was caught by Sophomore Center Dererk Pardon.

He finished it. And they were dancing in Evanston.

The win over the Wolverines all but assured the Wildcats an at-large bid into the NCAA tournament, and on Sunday, it was sealed. They claimed the 8 seed in the West region, Northwestern's first March Madness bid since the program opened in 1901.

"It was pure excitement. Especially to come after the Indiana game where we knew we let one slip away," said Freshman Guard Tino Malnati, a New Trier graduate who was redshirted this year.

"We had to win the Michigan game and it happened on such an incredible play," he said.

The team finished with a record of 23-11, led by Pardon, Junior Point Guard Bryant McIntosh, Junior Guard Scottie Lindsey, and Sophomore forward Vic Law. After losing their last regular season game to Purdue, they made waves in the Big Ten tournament by easily defeating Rutgers and pulling off an upset against Maryland, defeating them 72-64.

Wisconsin brought them back to earth by eliminating them from the Conference tournament, but they still go into the Big Dance with some confidence, as Malnati articulates.

"Going into the season we were confident on what we could



Northwestern's basketball team celebrates legendary win. | **NU Athletics**

accomplish. We knew we had the talent and ability to have a record breaking season and we continue to strive to be different. Even though many people projected us to finish low in the conference, that just motivated us to prove everyone wrong," he said.

Proving people wrong is something the Cats will have to do. They had a tough matchup against the Vanderbilt Commodores in the round of 64 (the game was played after this was written and before it was published), and if they got past that, they'll have to face #1 seeded Gonzaga this weekend.

But make no mistake, Northwestern fans are dreaming big. Jim Nantz, a basketball (among other sports) announcer called the team "the biggest story in college basketball," and that only added fuel to the fire.

Northwestern is making waves among the basketball staff at New Trier, especially with an alum on the team.

"Northwestern has had a great season and deserves to be in the NCAA Tournament. Northwestern players had a lot of pressure on them towards the end of the season and they responded really well. Their point guard (McIntosh) has done a great job the entire season," said basketball head coach Scott Fricke.

Another coach, Andy Horne, was even more excited. "For me it's

personally special because my mom went to Northwestern and I was a ballboy for the basketball team in the early 90's, and I've lived and died Northwestern basketball so to actually see them make it to this level has been really exciting for me to just watch, on a personal level," Horne said.

Aside from loving the success of the team, both coaches are proud of their former player Malnati for making it to the collegiate ranks.

"What an honor to be a part of a team that has made history. Tino made great decisions for us last year. He was a team first guy. He had good size for a point guard and is a very capable scorer."

Horne took it a step further, saying Malnati was one of the smartest basketball players he's coached.

"He really blossomed into a solid Varsity player, and he's still got a lot of growing physically still left in him."

Malnati, like the rest of the team, knows what they're capable of as they get set to take on March Madness. However, they know to just take it one game at a time.

"It's really exciting and such a cool thing, but you have to stay focused on what's in front of you," he said. "Every game from here on out is win or go home so you have to be ready for a battle every time you take the floor."

Girls Water Polo makes a splash against Loyola

Girls Water Polo wins 9-8 in game against Loyola

by *Alyssa Pak*

On Mar. 11, New Trier's girls' water polo team proved their strength by overcoming a 4-1 deficit in their first game of the invite against Loyola.

The game was tied until the last eight seconds, with everyone in the bleachers wondering who was going to win.

Senior Sarah Caywood scored the last goal, leaving the game at a score of 9-8. In addition to the last point, Caywood also scored three other goals throughout the game and had two assists.

"We started off really flat, but our team found some internal strength and came back from down 4-1," head coach, Matt Wendt said. Throughout his years, Coach Wendt has led many girls' varsity water polo teams to victories at sectionals and regionals.

He was able to coach his players to a win this time too, despite the team's unlucky start in the first quarter.

Wendt commented on the outstanding performance of senior goalie Elizabeth McKenna, who had a total of eight saves during the game.

Senior Kami Grochowski, the team's lefty for the last two years, also helped out. Grochowski scored two goals and provided a lot of counterattack speed, opening things up for the team.

After the match, sophomore Leah Caywood noted that the team's confidence seemed to be lacking at the beginning of the game, due to this being only the second game in the season.

With several new teammates,

the girls are still getting to know each other, but Leah Caywood said that "as the game went on, we became more unified and everyone was able to come together as a team."

"It was really hard, but everyone really stepped up to their highest potential by the second quarter when we got a bunch of points back," junior Alaina Vivian said.

Sarah Caywood expressed the team's difficulty during the first game of the season against Glenbrook North, saying that they had a hard time clicking, especially since there are several new players on the team.

However, she stated that during this game she felt that all the girls really connected. Teammates came together well in this match to overcome many strong players from Loyola.

"My favorite part was when I was on the defensive end and we had just gotten the ball back. I passed it down to Maddy Aron, a sophomore, new to the team, and she got her first varsity goal. It felt really good to have that kind of connection," Sarah Caywood said.

For Sarah Caywood, a member of varsity since sophomore year, getting passes to some of the younger girls was one of the biggest parts of the game, especially since it was such an important match, as Loyola is one of New Trier's biggest competitors.

"We had some great minutes from our sophomores on the bench," noted Wendt. Aron and sophomore Addy Hillerbrand, both new to the team, scored a goal each.

Although the girls were ultimately able to pull off the win in the last several seconds, the team had to work together to get past a few obstacles during the game.

"We made a lot of mistakes, but still managed to win, and that's a sign of a good team," said Wendt.