

WHAT IS YOUR  
FAVORITE  
THING ABOUT  
WRESTLING



“Winning matches is my favorite thing about wrestling. It’s very rewarding when your hard work pays off.”  
–senior David Akao  
*photo by Nikki Bulger*



“Beating [Bishop] Carroll was my favorite thing about wrestling. The whole team stepped up and wrestled against our rival.”  
–junior Travis Phelps  
*photo by Jillian Schmitz*



“My favorite part about wrestling is hanging out with everybody and being around the coaches.”  
–sophomore Logan Jimenez  
*photo by Sophia Glasgow*



“My favorite thing about wrestling is that I compete individually but also have a team for support.”  
–freshman Joe Walter  
*photo by Sophia Glasgow*



“My favorite part of wrestling is growing as a team, forming bonds together and making our own path to success.”  
–freshman Mario Perez  
*photo by Sophia Glasgow*

**1. Putting his opponent in a single leg,** senior Sam Muir wrestles his opponent Dec. 15. Muir won by major decision 13-2 in the 152-pound weight class. “It was the first duel of the season,” Muir said. “We all felt prepared and it really set the tone for City League.”

This was the first time in 25 years that the team went undefeated in City League duels and won the City League Tournament. Muir qualified for state and finished his season with a 25-16 record.

**2. Pinning his opponent,** junior Nick Lowe wrestles in the Heights duel at KMC Dec. 15. Lowe pinned his opponent and the team won 55-18 overall. Lowe qualified for state and placed fifth in the 285-pound weight class.

**3. Regaining control,** senior Franklin Le wrestles in the duel vs. Heights in the 113-pound weight class at KMC Dec. 15. Le won his match with a 5-3 decision in overtime. “Our first duel of the season was a good start to winning City League undefeated,” Le said. “I was not as prepared as much as I thought I was, but I still took the ‘dub.’” Le qualified for state and finished his season with 24-16 record. *photos by Nikki Bulger*



**1. After winning his first match,** senior Anthony Metler raises his arm in victory at the Derby Tournament Jan. 7. Metler won by pin in his first match at 29 seconds vs. a wrestler from Desoto. Metler took sixth in the tournament and the team took fifth overall. “Working out with a partner like [senior] Sam [Muir], who took second, definitely helped me in this tournament,” Metler said. Metler qualified for state and finished his season with a 21-19 record.

**2. Trying to take over his opponent,** senior Daniel McAuliffe wrestles his first match vs. his Derby opponent in the Derby Tournament Jan. 7. McAuliffe won by decision 6-2 in the 182-pound weight class and took fifth overall at the tournament. “This match really set the tone for the Derby Tournament, where I took fifth,” McAuliffe said. “I felt really prepared through my conditioning.” McAuliffe finished his season with a 27-13 record. *photos by Nikki Bulger*



**Putting his opponent in a chicken wing,** senior Nicky O’Neil wrestles his Northwest match in the 145-pound weight class at the Northwest and Southwest double duel at Northwest Feb. 2. O’Neil won his match with a 4-2 decision. “It was a difficult match for me because I’m a defensive wrestler and so was he,” O’Neil said. “I used my offensive skills that I learned in practice and I took a shot against him and took him down.” O’Neil finished his season with a 28-16 record. *photo by Nikki Bulger*

PAGE BY NIKKI BULGER

FINISHING  
UNDEFEATED

The wrestling team finished its season undefeated in City League duels and won the City League tournament, a feat it had not accomplished in 25 years. Post-season was capped with a second consecutive state championship by junior Michael Spangler, who won his second title in the 106-pound weight class.

In addition to Spangler, seven other wrestlers also qualified for state including seniors Franklin Le, Anthony Metler, Sam Muir, Braden O’Donnell and juniors Nick Lowe, Kevin Mills and Travis Phelps.

“[The team’s] greatest strength was probably the one focus of the whole team to win the league while going undefeated in duels and win the league tournament,” said coach Tim Dryden, City League coach of the year. “We did that. [The] big difference was the depth we had that allowed us to adjust our lineup during duels to give us the best chance to win. This team was a very hardworking team at practice and that showed in competition.”

Along with one state title from Spangler, three other wrestlers placed at the state

championship at Hartman Arena Feb. 25. Lowe placed fifth in the 285-pound weight class, O’Donnell placed sixth at 132 pounds, and Phelps placed fifth in the 195-pound weight class. The team placed fifth overall.

“My goal was to go undefeated this year and obviously win another state title,” Spangler said. “I lost one match but it was two weight classes above me, so it doesn’t really count. But, I did achieve my goal of going undefeated at my weight class and [I] won another state title.”

The team’s success was driven by their coaches and personal dedication, Spangler said. “We all had the determination to win,” Muir said. “Coach [Dryden] just pounded it into our heads every day, every practice. Once the season started going, we started figuring things out.”

Metler said he was proud of the results of the season.

“A lot of our seniors did not expect it to be our year to be undefeated,” Metler said. “I think it definitely sets a standard for us to where we have to continue to do well.”



**At the state tournament,** junior Michael Spangler wrestles in the championship match vs. Ark City’s Gabe Buckbee, winning by decision 8-2 at Hartman Arena Feb. 25. In his first match, Spangler pinned his opponent from Lansing at 1:19. In the quarterfinals, Spangler pinned his opponent from Goddard at 4:01. Spangler won with a major decision of 12-1 in the semifinals vs. Blue Valley Southwest. With his win in the finals, Spangler won the state title in 106-pound weight class for the second year in a row. *photo by Jillian Schmitz*

**In his match vs. South,** senior Braden O’Donnell wrestles his South opponent in the 132-pound weight class Jan. 26. O’Donnell won his match with a 6-4 decision. “I think we did pretty great and it was awesome that we won on Senior Night, the last home duel of the season,” O’Donnell said. O’Donnell qualified for state and placed sixth, finishing with a 32-8 record. *photo by Anna Craig*



**At KMC,** junior Kevin Mills wrestles his South opponent in the duel vs. South in the 170-pound weight class Feb. 26. Mills won his match 5-2 even after tearing his pectoral muscle in the second period. KMC had a team victory of 39-31. Mills qualified for state and finished his season with a 32-5 record. “[My opponent] finished second in state last year so I knew he was going to be good,” Mills said. “We had a celebration in the wrestling room after [the duel]. It was a good victory because we knew South was going to be our best competitor.” *photo, video by Anna Craig*

THINKING ABOUT THE BEST PART OF THE SEASON: “Spending time in the hotel for the Raytown tournament was my favorite part.” –freshman Sean Klein

