

An even dozen for Port wrestlers

Written by STEVE OSTERMANN
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Four individual champions help Pirates slip past Cedarburg to win 12th consecutive league team title

That Port Washington won its 12th straight team championship in North Shore Conference wrestling last Saturday was no great surprise.

The Pirates' slim margin of victory in the eight-team tournament at Homestead High School was a bit eye-opening, though.



"It was definitely tight all day," said Port coach Angelo LaRosa, whose squad scored 201.5 points to slip past second-place Cedarburg (195).

"We were without several guys and needed every point we got. Everyone else had to step up."

Port had four individual championships, with freshman Manny Rosado (106 pounds) and seniors Nate Schnell (145), Josh Meins (170) and Tyler Brown (182) taking top honors.

However, injuries robbed the Pirates of standouts Zach Smith (120), Eli Rosado (138), Brandon Fleischman (152) and Quentin Lueck (160) and forced LaRosa to juggle his lineup.

"We moved some guys around and did the best we could. It all worked out," LaRosa said.

Germantown placed third with 162 points, followed by Whitefish Bay (145), Milwaukee Lutheran (97), Grafton (94), Homestead (89) and Nicolet (88).

Each of Port's champions won both of his matches after receiving a first-round bye.

Rosado capped his day by pinning Whitefish Bay's Cooper Fergus in 1 minute, 15 seconds.

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Schnell secured first with a 1:53 pin of Homestead's Jake Mueller.

In his final match, Meins outlasted Grafton's Justin Rapp, 7-5.

Brown wrapped up his title by pinning Homestead's Gage Zupke in 3:15.

Port's other top-five finishes included seconds by Nick Michalowski (113), Noah Rosado (126), Tyler Madden (138) and Andy Fidler (275); a third by Jordan Clark (160); fourth by Alex Masters (152); and fifths by Jesus Aguila (120) and Brandon Willms (220).

"It was the closest conference meet in my seven years as coach," La Rosa said.

"We had a lot of pins, which really helped. Every one of those was an extra two points."

Cedarburg made things close by winning four weight classes.

Grafton was led by Billy Depies, who earned the 152-pound title. After a first-round bye, the senior won twice, including a 12-5 victory over Whitefish Bay's Ben Lehrmann in the final.

Placing second for Grafton was Rapp, a senior. He won twice by pin before losing to Meins.

The Black Hawks got a third from Alex Marshall (220) and fifths from Jason Gustafson (132) and Ian Olivas (195).

Port and Grafton both begin the quests for postseason honors in WIAA regional meets Saturday, Feb. 9.

The Pirates will participate in a Division 1 meet at Manitowoc Lincoln, with matches starting at 10 a.m.

The first-place squad will advance to a team sectional at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 13, at Port Washington.

The top four finishers in each regional weight class qualify for an individual sectional at 10 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 16, in Fond du Lac.

Grafton will wrestle in a Division 2 regional meet in Kewaskum at 10 a.m.

The first-place squad qualifies for a team sectional at 6 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 13, in Pewaukee.

The top two finishers in each regional weight class advance to an individual sectional at 10 a.m.

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Saturday, Feb. 16, in Waupun.

Image Information: OZAUKEE'S LOGAN SMITH tightened his grip before pinning Dylan Jentink of Oostburg in a match at Saturday's Central Lakeshore Conference wrestling tournament. Smith placed second in the 138-pound weight class, and his team grabbed runner-up honors in the overall standings.

Photo by Sam Arendt