

OHS seniors lead seven local wrestlers to Div. 3 state meet

Written by MITCH MAERSCH
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Ozaukee seniors Ethan Brouillette and Logan Smith are headed to the WIAA state individual wrestling tournament for a combined seventh time this week.

That's not a typo. Brouillette qualified for the Madison finals for the fourth straight year by winning a Division 3 sectional title at 152 pounds in Cedar Grove-Belgium last Saturday, and Smith (138) earned his third consecutive state trip by placing second.



This year, the pair will be accompanied by three teammates — juniors Colton Kraus (113), Cole Large (120) and Kevin Beckmann (160).

Among the other local state qualifiers are Cedar Grove-Belgium's Alex May (285) and Greg Wenzel (170).

The top three finishers in each sectional weight class advanced to the state level.

Brouillette, who missed most of this season due to a shoulder injury, shook off the rust to claim his title. He improved his season record to 17-2 by winning three matches, including a 17-5 major decision over Johnson Creek's Garret Gross in the first-place final.

Smith (38-7) won his first matches before losing to Random Lake's Brady Schmidt, 3-1, in the first-place final. Smith won a second-place wrestleback by injury default over Princeton's Ivan Hebbe.

His loss to Schmidt evened the rivals' head-to-head records at 2-2 this season.

Ozaukee coach Luke Gundrum was quick to sing the praises of his two seniors, calling them "two of the better kids that I've ever coached."

Wrestling may not even be the duo's forté. Gundrum said both are top-notch academically, well-behaved, respectful, disciplined and hard workers.

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"They're pretty outstanding kids. They're everything you want to coach," he said.

Smith, who placed third at state at 126 pounds last year, has 125 career wins, among the most in school history. Brouillette has 116 career wins and is undefeated since returning from his injury.

Smith opened the sectional by pinning Johnson Creek's Bret Sellnow in one minute and Martin Luther's Cody Lang in 1:13 before facing Schmidt.

On his way to the final, Brouillette scored a 15-0 technical fall over Martin Luther's Ben Horn and a 15-5 major decision over Horicon's Justin Schmauz.

Kraus (37-7) had no trouble winning his weight class. After a first-round bye, he scored an 8-0 major decision over Oakfield's Ross Ellison and an 11-0 major decision over Random Lake's Kohl Sanders.

Large (36-9) won twice before losing to Random Lake's Brandon Depies (40-10) in the first-place final, 6-4.

Large opened the day with a 5-1 win over Hustisford's Jarred Vaughan and scored a 22-4 technical fall over Laconia's Quinn Lasecki in the semifinals.

After losing to Schmit in the closing seconds, Large was awarded second place by rule because he already defeated the third-place finisher.

Beckmann (40-6) cruised to first place. He pinned Dodgeland's Nick Goeman in 56 seconds and Princeton's Taylor Sina in 1:10 and scored a 21-5 technical fall over Laconia's Mason Lind (33-14). The latter win exacted some revenge after Lind pinned Beckmann in last year's sectionals.

"That was a big, emotional win for him coming back, beating the kid he got stuck by last year," Gundrum said. "When Kevin is wrestling at a high level, he can be very outstanding."

May placed second in his weight class, and Wenzel took third.

May (35-8), a senior, pinned Palmyra-Eagle's Lucas Houk in 3:12 before being pinned by Markesan's Matt Stensrud in 1:10 in the semifinals.

However, May regrouped to win his next three matches, including a 5-2 decision over Laconia's Nick Zimmerman in the second-place wrestleback.

Wenzel (27-19), a junior, won his first two matches, including a 8-1 decision over Nathan Schettle of Lourdes Academy and an 8-6 victory over Dodgeland's Greg Oemig.

Wenzel was pinned in his next two matches, including a 3:11 fall against Random Lake's Adam Risse in the second-place wrestleback.

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Although team scores didn't matter because the meet was an individual tournament, Ozaukee finished second to Random Lake for the third straight week.

The Rams topped the 21-team standings with 174.5 points, and Ozaukee had 107.5. Cedar Grove-Belgium was 11th with 30 points.

The Division 3 state tournament at the Kohl Center in Madison will begin Thursday with preliminary matches at 7:15 p.m.

Large will face Cumberland's Trey Lundequam (35-5), and Smith will take on Arcadia's Spencer Bisek (34-15).

Kraus, Brouillette and Beckmann received first-round byes.

In second-round matches at 11:15 a.m. Friday, Large will face the winner of a match between Clear Lake's Cody Shafer (38-8) and Black Hawk's Colin Novak (24-10); Brouillette will take on the winner of a match between Whitehall's Tim Ferdon (40-7) and Cody Willis of Weston/Ithaca (38-5); and Beckmann will wrestle the winner of a match between Mason McCauley of Weston/Ithaca (29-12) and Florence's Cole Dollar (35-4).

At 7:15 p.m Thursday, Wenzel will face Lancaster's David Chadd (43-7) while May takes on Spencer's Kyle Andreae (44-2).

First-round winners will advance in the winner's bracket to Friday morning matches. First-round losers will move into the consolation round at 2:45 p.m. Friday.

The tournament runs through Saturday night.

Image Information: ETHAN BROUILLETTE (left) was one of five Ozaukee High School wrestlers who qualified for this week's WIAA Division 3 state individual tournament with top-three finishes at the Cedar Grove-Belgium Sectional Saturday. Brouillette won the 152-pound title. Photo by Sam Arendt