

5 wrestle in Rocky Mountain Nationals

Written by Brenda Johnson Brandt

A first-time national championship was earned by HHS Dragon wrestler Chad Stroh when he won the 18 and under, 125-lb. class in the Rocky Mountain Nationals Who's That Tournament Saturday, Jan. 3.

In the same tourney, HHS freshman Mark Edmonds finished fifth in the 15 and under, 102-lb. class. Also competing in nice fashion was sixth grader Nick Ortner, who wrestled at 106 lbs., 12 and under.

Approximately 1,100 wrestlers competed last Saturday at the National Western Complex in Denver.

Stroh finishes first

Stroh, an HHS junior, went 4-0 for the day in a fine showing for the 125-lb. championship.

In a tough bracket, he won his first two matches fairly easily, one by a pin and the other an 11-4 decision.

In a very close semifinal match, Stroh was trailing by one point with 10 seconds remaining. Starting from the center, Stroh stood up and threw his opponent to the mat for a two-point reversal and a thrilling 6-5 match win.

He went on to defeat a tough nationally-ranked wrestler from Broomfield, 11-3. Coach Duane Stroh said the match was actually closer than the final score showed. He said it was a two-point match until the final 20 seconds when Chad put his opponent on his back.

Edmonds finishes fifth

Edmonds had an outstanding day, earning six wins and two losses for his fifth-place medal.

Coach Stroh noted the first 30 seconds of Edmonds' first match of the day hurt him, as he wasn't quite ready to wrestle. His opponent got up 5-0 right away and ended up winning 10-6. Stroh said he feels Edmonds could have won in the third period. He was headed towards pinning combinations, only to have the match stopped for his opponent's nosebleed.

But the determined Dragon freshman won five straight matches to get into the medals. Coach Stroh cited the significance of winning five straight in such a tough tournament, or any time.

In his seventh match of the day, Edmonds lost a close one to see if he would go for third or for fifth place. His opponent in that match ended up challenging, to place second overall.

In his fifth-place bout, Edmonds took his sixth victory of the day. He finished higher in the placings than his opponent who defeated him in the first match of the day.

Ortner looks good

Ortner went 1-2 for the day and had a real good weekend, noted coach Stroh. He looked especially good in the match he won.

In his last match, he just got caught, which resulted in a loss. Stroh commended Ortner's desire and said he should be a good Dragon competitor by the time he reaches high school.