HHS senior Mark Edmonds took the long way to the top, but when the final buzzer sounded on four overtimes, he claimed the 132-lb. 2A Colorado State Wrestling championship.

The long way started when Edmonds finished as regional runner-up to Alex Klopp of Yuma. Even though Edmonds was a two-time returning state champ, the regional finish seeded him sixth in this year's state tourney.

He had a tough quarterfinal match which he pulled off with a narrow 1-0 win over eventual third-place finisher Clay Seeman of Baca County.

Edmonds went on to take a second-period pin in the semis to set the stage for a rematch with Klopp.

It wasn't a new scenario. In fact it was the exact same scenario from a year ago. Klopp defeated Edmonds in regionals, then the Dragon grappler came back for the state win.

Mark Edmonds is in control over Alex Klopp of Yuma in the 2A 132-lb. championship match.—Enterprise photo

But this year Klopp had been wrestling at 126 all season and bumped up a weight class for regionals to pair up the two Northeast Colorado seniors. Klopp finished on top 3-1 to claim the number-one seed in the state tournament bracket.

Under the big lights Saturday night at the Pepsi Center, Edmonds scored first on an escape in the second period and almost got takedown points as the period ended.

Klopp tied it with an escape midway through the third and final regulation period, and the 1-1 tie withstood three overtime periods.

Scoring first was key to the win, as it gave Edmonds the choice of top or bottom in the fourth overtime. Coach Jack Garrison planned it that way, according to Edmonds.

Opting for the top, all Edmonds had to do was ride out the final 30 seconds for the 2-1 win. He mastered that with confidence and the Dragon fans erupted with emotion.

Edmonds admits he just wasn’t on top of his game at regionals. It was tough because he really wanted those regional titles.

“I know when I have to get things done and how to do them,” said Edmonds as he described his path from number six seed to state champion.

He said he always wrestles his best at the state tournament, and that, of course, is where it counts most.