

## 7 wrestlers place; 5 qualify for state

Written by Brenda Johnson Brandt

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Two regional champs, one runner-up and two fourth-place finishers will represent HHS well at the Colorado 2A State Wrestling Championships this weekend.

First-round action is slated for Thursday afternoon, Feb. 21, with the finals on Saturday night, Feb. 23 at the Pepsi Center in Denver.

Regional action was held Feb. 15-16 at NJC in Sterling.

In addition to the five state qualifiers, Holyoke had two fifth-place finishers, as well.

Jesus Hermosillo and Dylan Kotch claimed regional championships at 195 and 220 lbs. respectively.

Both wrestlers have been performing well all year, said coach Jack Garrison, and he looks for them to do well this weekend as they end their 2012-13 season.



**Spencer Kotch works to put Lyons' Jon Hickman's shoulders on the mat in the 170-lb. regional semifinal. Kotch accomplished the pin in**

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**1:55 to advance to the regional championship and a guaranteed trip to state.**

**—Enterprise photo**



**Nicholas Ortner wrestles smart with Kyler Churchwell of Wray in regional action Saturday at NJC. Ortner won the 5-2 match, sending him to the third-fourth-place match, while Churchwell wrestled for fifth-sixth at 138 lbs. Ortner finished fourth to earn a trip to the state tourney.**

**—Enterprise photo**

Spencer Kotch made it to the regional championship at 170 lbs. He finished as runner-up, wrestling the best tournament of his career, according to coach Garrison.

Nicholas Ortner at 138 lbs. and Astolfo Rojo at 182 both placed fourth at regionals and round

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out the Dragon qualifiers.

Ortner has been nursing a bad shoulder but performed well at regionals, said Garrison.

When he won a 5-2 decision over Kyler Churchwell of Wray to put him in the match for third and fourth, Ortner knew he was going to state.

In the regional tourney, he had already defeated both wrestlers who were competing for fifth and sixth, so neither one would be able to challenge him for the trip to state.

Rojo, on the other hand, had to sweat it out to see who placed fifth at 182 lbs. Wray's Matt Sullivan defeated Rojo for third place, so the Dragon wrestler watched with much interest as A.C. Landrey of Lutheran-Parker and Brody Croy of Highland battled it out for fifth and sixth.

If Croy had won the match, he could have challenged Rojo for the trip to state. It was a relief for the Dragons when Landrey won fifth. Since Rojo had already defeated him earlier in the day, he could not challenge for the state berth.

Rojo filled the heavyweight wrestling slot last year and the first part of this season. He cut to 182s in January, seeing a better chance for making it to state. Coach Garrison said he stepped up and did a good job.

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