

Rollercoaster Ride

Wrestlers' lead at state duals slips, but team makes history

While wrestling S.E. Polk's senior Cody Batterson at state duals, senior Ethan Ksiazek heard his ankle pop about four times. "The side of my foot just planted into the mat and it just rolled the wrong way and the muscle that supports that ankle just kind of gave way a little bit because of the awkward position," Ksiazek said. He then looked down to ensure that his ankle was not broken. Although it was not broken he suffered a high ankle sprain.

Ksiazek was the last person to wrestle in the meet. The team was down 28 points before Ksiazek's match. "At the time we had a significant enough deficit that even if Ethan wrestled it would have taken some crazy moves to get up there," head coach Aaron Tecklenburg said. Tecklenburg pulled him from the match.

The team was up by 16 points until the 182 weight class wrestled; then slowly the lead began to decline.

Going into state duals the wrestling team's goal was to beat S.E. Polk and to move on to the next round of duals. "We decided to put our best lineup out there cause that's what they were going to do," Tecklenburg said.

Senior Alec Ksiazek started the meet in the 145 weight class. He scored the first team points by pinning his opponent. The lead continued for four matches giving them the 16-point advantage. However, the team began to fall. "We lost matches that we thought we were going to win," Tecklenburg said.

After the first loss of the meet, the team still felt they had a chance. Senior Ben Wilson won the next match with a pin. "We were in good shape after that 195 match (Wilson's match)," Tecklenburg said. "We felt like we had an advantage but we knew that 220 and heavyweight would be tough."

In the heavyweight portion of the meet, sophomore Jake Ryan went into his match against S.E. Polk senior Daniel Ramirez with no plan of attack. "He was very strong, and he was definitely stronger than me," Ryan said. "He is a senior and I am a sophomore and he has more experience than me and I would say he just wrestled harder that day." Ryan made a mistake and went for his opponent's strengths. "I ended up in a headlock and that's how that match ended," Ryan said.

Further down in the lineup the point

gap continued to grow. Sophomore Zach Price was the only person to win his match for the rest of the meet. After Price's match it became apparent that the team could not recover.

Even before, Ksiazek was injured the team knew the meet was over. However the injury was another discouragement for himself and the team. "I was pretty bummed out right after it happened," Ksiazek said. "I wanted to win the match for my team because we were down, but I was just more frustrated and afraid because I didn't know if I could even compete the next day. I mean we worked the whole season for that tournament."

The team lost the meet 40-24, but they placed third overall in the class 3A dual tournament, which earned them the highest placing at duals in school history.

Even though the loss was a disappointment for the team, they saw good in it. "We had to change gears as a team and get ready for the next one," sophomore Zach Price said. "It was a great win for me in the dual and a great effort by the team, but moments like this just make us even more hungry."

Background Photo: After a 6-point win against Ames, the referee raises sophomore Zach Price's hand to symbolize his victory. "Match went very well," Price said. "(I) got a quick pin in and it boosted the team's score." (Photo by Kyle Kane)

Captions by: Ashley Long
Spread by: Helen Moritz
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2. Sophomore Sterling Brunk keeps his Urbandale opponent in a double bar arm as the referee looks for both shoulder blades to touch the mat before calling a pin.
(Photo by Makenzie Hill)

3. Competing against Dowling Catholic player Jake Watters, sophomore Elliot Pohlmeier scrambles with Watters. Competing in the weight class 126, Pohlmeier had 26 pins total over the season.
(Photo by Ashley Long)



1. Senior Blake Anderson scrambles to make a take down on Urbandale player to receive two points. Anderson won the 113 class match with three points.
(Photo by Makenzie Hill)



4. Restraining his opposer with a leg ride, senior Austin Garica has an advantage over Iowa City West in the State competition. Garica was ranked 8th at 160 pounds in Class 3-A by The Predicament in the season. "After all the time I put into wrestling I got recognized," Garica said. "It shows if you put a lot of work into it great things will happen."
(Photo by Kyle Kane)



5. While senior Ethan Ksiazek was getting "blood time," a pause in the match due to blood, senior Alec Ksiazek leans in close to his brother and gives him advice. "We both help each other out a great amount," Alec said. "During a match we are usually just instructing minor technique and match strategy, but for the most part just encouraging each other."
(Photo by Jordan DeRoos)



6. In an effort to gain the upperhand, senior Reese Stahlbaum takes a shot against Dowling Catholic competitor. Finishing the last match of the season in the 170 weight class, Stahlbaum won with three points.
(Photo by Ashley Long)



7. As the referee starts to count down, senior Drew Singbush holds Mason City opponent with a turk. "I figured out that he would let me put legs in so I was able to turk him over," Singbush said. "There was no way I could pin him, but it was an easy three points."
(Photo by Riley Tuon)



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