

MEETING ON THE MAT

Head through the main gym, walk past the boys varsity locker room, climb the stairs to the second floor, take a right and pull open the heavy door. Heat practically suffocates you. On a typical day, the temperature might be 15 to 20 degrees warmer than the rest of the school. The room smells like 40 guys who have sweated profusely for the past three hours.

Welcome to the wrestling room. “We have seven to ten sophomores and freshmen in the lineup each meet,” Coach Mark Reiland said. “Usually the seniors carry the load, but with only having five seniors, the younger guys are getting a lot more experience.”

And seniors like Ben Bertell felt the need to step up. “There’s a lot more pressure being a senior because there’s so few this year and everyone looks up to you as a leader,” he said.

The team started out with early season wins against Cedar Rapids Xavier (53-23) on Dec. 3, Linn-Mar (44-24) on Dec. 10, Cedar Rapids Jefferson (44-26) on Dec. 10 and winning the Bettendorf Invite on Dec. 5.

“After a win, we move on and continue to improve our skills and performance,” Nelson Brands ‘18 said.

Throughout the season, the team dealt with cutting weight by using it as an excuse for team bonding.

“Sometimes a couple of us go saunaing at Carver, which makes [cutting weight] more fun,” Hunter Davis ‘18 said. “It’s hard to maintain your weight during the season though.”

On Jan. 7 against City High, West got some early match points, but ended up losing 28-42, which broke a 16-year winning streak.

“Everyone was very disappointed and upset, especially the coaches because beating City had become a tradition,” Ashton Stumpf ‘18 said.

But two days later, the team wrestled their way to second place at the Lepic Duals at home.

“When we lose, we break down the match by weight class and see how we can win the next time we see that team,” Nate Kelsay ‘16 said. “Every wrestler on JV or varsity is expected to step up when they need to.”

Bouncing back, the wrestlers beat Dubuque Wahlert (49-22) on Jan. 21. Then on the way home, an unexpected surprise made it a memorable trip.

“The bus caught on fire not even halfway home, and we ended up getting a normal school bus,” Tyler Yoerger ‘17 said. “We joked about it a lot, but the team is very entertaining and goofy overall. It’s a lot of fun to be on.”

—By Ally Bauer

ALL PHOTOS BY ALLY BAUER



OUTCOMES		
CR Xavier		53-23
Burlington Invite		1 st
Linn-Mar/CR Jefferson	44-24/44-26	
Five Seasons Duals		5 th
Cedar Falls/Dub. Sr.	46-27/56-19	
Battle of Waterloo		9 th
Dvorak Manchesney		9 th
City High		28-42
Lepic Duals		2 nd
CR Washington		56-18
Bettendorf Invite		9 th
CR Ken./Dub. Wahlert	34-39/49-22	
Urbandale Invite		7 th
MVC Tournament		7 th
CR Prairie		13-51
Regional Dual		19-57
Districts		3 rd
State		13 th

seven Tyler Yoerger ‘17 flips his opponent from Albia during the Lepic Duals on Jan. 9. “I try to stay on the offense and attack whenever I can,” Yoerger said. **eight** Nelson Brands ‘18 flips his opponent from CR Washington on Jan. 14. “I prepare for every meet the same and try to wrestle the same,” Brands said. **nine** Carter Rohweder ‘17 twists his Alburnett opponent Jan. 9. “The hardest part is being patient,” Rohweder said. “So much can happen in six minutes that you have to know how to wait for the biggest opportunities.” **ten** The wrestling team stands for the national anthem before their meet against City on Jan. 7. “I try to always get a good warm-up in that gets my body loose,” Ashton Stumpf ‘18 said.



one Ben Bertell ‘16 wrestles his opponent from CR Washington on Jan. 14. “You can’t slack at all in practice,” Bertell said. “You have to continually push yourself during drills at a high pace to get better.”

two Hunter Davis ‘18 pins his opponent from Albia at the Lepic Duals. “I have to prepare myself physically and mentally before every meet or match so I can get perform my best,” Davis said. **three**

Donovan Doyle ‘16 wrestles his opponent from Dubuque Senior on Dec. 17. “When you get on the mat, it’s just you and the other guy and that’s all that matters,” Doyle said. “You have to focus on all your attacks to win.” **four** Joe Briddle ‘18 takes down his opponent from City High on Jan. 7. “I like how you can be down and then come back to win and, unlike other sports, it shows just your hard work,” Briddle said. **five** Aaron Stumpf ‘16 wrestles his City High opponent. “It’s an individual sport and I like how it can show how competitive you are,” Stumpf said. **six** Guy Snow ‘18 gets the first West pin of the meet against City High. “It felt great to get such a big win, especially at home,” Snow said.

