

Holtzen notches 100th career win as Wildcats take third at Parsons



PARSONS – The Louisburg wrestling team gained a little more traction on its season Friday when the Wildcats traveled to the Parsons Invitational.

The Wildcats racked up 78 points to finish in third place out 12 teams and had five wrestlers finish in the top four. Among those five was junior Cade Holtzen, who had a special night of his own.

Holtzen won the 126-pound division and made a little history in the process. After winning his championship match, he recorded his 100th career victory as he finished the day 3-0.

He opened the tournament with a 7-0 decision on Lebanon's (Mo.) Austin Johnson and then earned a 9-1 major decision over Lebanon's Bo Rosen in the semifinals. Holtzen (21-1) later pinned Labette County's Evan Flatt in 54 seconds in the championship.

"Cade's

bracket was pretty unusual," Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. "His first match was against a JV kid from Lebanon, but that kid could have started on many other teams. His second match in the semifinals was against the varsity Lebanon kid, who was pretty tough. In the finals, he saw a returning state qualifier from Labette County.

"It's challenges like these that shape the rest of the season, and I'm proud of how Cade stepped up and competed. Seeing him join the 'Century Club' by getting that 100th win was a great way to cap off the tournament."

Three other Wildcats also placed in the top four as junior Ryan Owens (120 pounds) finished second. Freshman Kaven Bartlett (113) and sophomore Brandon Doles (160) took third, while sophomore Aiden Barker (170) finished in fourth. Overall, Bovaird liked what he saw from his team.

"Coming away with another team plaque was a nice touch as the team has been working so hard throughout the month of January," Bovaird said. "In the bigger picture of the season, January is always a tough month. It's a long sprint, week-to-week. We have tournaments each weekend and a dual each week. There's the regular problems due to inclement weather, and it's also the time of year that everyone seems to get sick. These guys have been working their tails

off, and something like a team plaque is a nice reward to let them know that their hard work is paying off."

Owens (21-2) had a good start to his tournament as he pinned Lebanon's Andrew Dent in the second period and then won a tough 9-7 decision over Independence's Cooper Anderson to advance to the championship. It was there where he was pinned by Lebanon's Cole Patten and ended in second place.

As for Doles (18-5), who is currently ranked No. 6 in the state at 160 pounds, he opened with a pin of Cherryvale's Brad Morris, but ran into Independence's Ian Lawson in the semifinals and was pinned in the second period. Lawson is currently No. 5 in Class 4A.

Doles bounced back to pin Lebanon's Connor Brand in the consolation semifinals and then won a 5-1 decision over Santa Fe Trail's Stephan Roberts in the third-place match.

Bartlett (19-4) won his first match in the 113-pound bracket after he pinned Cherryvale's Dalton Morrill, but was pinned by Lebanon's Davis Joiner in the semifinals. Bartlett responded to pin Erie's Nate Thompson in the consolation round and then won a tough 2-0 decision over Lebanon's Taydem Johnson.

At 170 pounds, Barker (12-7) is filling in for junior Ben Wiedenmann who is injured. After losing his first match, he responded with back-to-back pins to advance to the third-place round, where he was pinned by Lebanon's Gabriel Schiller.

As much success as the Wildcats had, it was a difficult start to the day as school was canceled on that morning, but the meet went on as

scheduled. It left the
wrestlers with a different start to their day.

“When the kids woke up Friday morning to learn that school was canceled, that really made things challenging,” Bovaird said. “It was up in the air as to whether or not we’d be able to compete in the tournament, and thanks to the due diligence and planning of our administrators, we were given the go ahead to travel. I’m very proud of how the team was able to hold their weight, refocus in the face of uncertainty, and get the job done. We had a lot of opens at Parsons, but they still arose to the challenge.”

Louisburg
is back in action at 5:30 p.m. Thursday when it hosts Ottawa in a league dual on Senior Night. The Wildcats will then travel to the Baldwin Invitational on Saturday.