

January 9, 2009

West dominates rival

*Andy Hamilton
Iowa City Press-Citizen*

There were five wrestling matches that took place before Thursday night's dual meet between City High and West High that were billed as exhibitions.

The real exhibition, though, came a little later when the second-ranked Trojans put on a pinning clinic.

The Trojans won 11 matches, racking up nine falls, a forfeit and another victory over a returning state place-winner in a 63-12 demolition of City on Thursday night at West.

"That's good stuff," top-ranked West 152-pounder Nick Moore said. "We want to see that. It makes you happy and gives you something to go home and sleep to."

Unless, of course, you're a Little Hawk.

City (5-2, 2-1 MVC) endured its ninth straight loss to the Trojans (15-2, 3-0), and the gap during West's recent run has never been wider than it was Thursday.

The highlight for the Little Hawks came in the second match when junior Cameron Tucker caught Tracy Bowers trying to sit out for an escape, pulling him to his back for a first-period fall at 135.

"After that, it just kind of snowballed," City coach Brad Smith said. "We knew we were going to be in trouble -- '45, '52, '60. ... We had a lot of guys who just didn't have fight. It's real disappointing from that aspect because (the Trojans) are good, but they're not that good. They're not (51 points better)."

West sophomore Garrett Hathaway scored a takedown with seven seconds remaining in the second period to seize the lead against City senior Stephen Blayer and then rode the returning state place-winner out in the third period for a 5-4 victory at 130.

After that, it was all falls and a forfeit for the Trojans.

"We knew that tonight could go one of two ways -- it could be really lopsided or it could be close," West coach Mark Reiland said. "If the team that wrestled first round last weekend (at the Clash) wrestled tonight, it would've been a close meet. We didn't perform very well in a lot of situations, and if you don't perform well, you're in trouble. We came out and performed."

Justin Koethe, Dylan Carew, Moore, David Solis, Berkley Strand, Matt Behnami, Jack Hathaway, Jon Skarda and Gradey Gambrall won by fall for the Trojans. City forfeited to Iowa recruit Derek St. John at 160 for West's other win.

The falls came in virtually every fashion -- whip-overs, cradles, headlocks and upper-body throws.

"A lot of our kids have a knack," Reiland said. "We've been this way for quite a few years where you find a way to get them to their back and put them away. Tonight was one of those nights where we actually put them away."

St. John's forfeit victory came in the middle of six straight pins for the Trojans.

Solis was trailing 1-0 late in the second period against Alex Sullivan at 171 when he hit a lateral drop for a pin.

"He shot into my legs and came up too fast," Solis said. "All I did was a throwby and ended up lateral dropping him. It was nice, I was excited. I hit a lot of them."

Behnami's pin at 215 put West ahead 45-5. Second-ranked City heavyweight Kevin Harp ended the string of 42 unanswered points for the Trojans when he won a 9-0 major decision against Dan Downing. The Little Hawks got their other win at 119 when Jimmy Lazaro held off Hunter St. John for a 9-5 victory.

Otherwise, it was mainly all West, all night.

"It's going to be a mental thing for a while," Smith said of how his team recovers. "They're going to have to step up because we've got a lot of stuff coming up right now. If they keep their dobbers down, it's going to be a long season."

WEST HIGH 63, CITY HIGH 12

130 -- Garrett Hathaway (W) dec. Stephen Blayer 5-4.

135 -- Cameron Tucker (C) pinned Tracy Bowers :56.

140 -- Justin Koethe (W) pinned Ryan Africa 5:20.

145 -- Dylan Carew (W) pinned Brent Hamm 1:48.

152 -- Nick Moore (W) pinned Kody Dailey :27.

160 -- Derek St. John (W) won by forfeit.

171 -- David Solis (W) pinned Alex Sullivan 3:45.

189 -- Berkley Strand (W) pinned James Temeyer 1:32.

215 -- Matt Behnami (W) pinned Brad Gingerich 4:57.

Hwt. -- Kevin Harp (C) major dec. Dan Downing 9-0.

103 -- Jack Hathaway (W) pinned Mike Hunter 1:38.

112 -- Jon Skarda (W) pinned Alex Jensen 2:32.

119 -- Jimmy Lazaro (C) dec. Hunter St. John 9-5.

125 -- Gradey Gambrell (W) pinned Ben DeVos 4:40.

City was docked one team point after the 189-pound match.
