



TIGERS PICK UP CONFERENCE WIN

Tigerton rolls to road win over Gresham

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Tigerton's Asher Michaelis, left, takes a contested shot as Gresham's Bryson Nelson, center, and Seth Marks defend during a conference game on Dec. 19 in Gresham.

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HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL

Tigerton boys ease past Gresham

Tigers start fast, cruise to conference win

By **MORGAN RODE**
Sports Editor

The Tigerton High School boys basketball team rolled to a 72-9 victory over Gresham in a Central Wisconsin Conference-North Division clash on Dec. 19 in Gresham.

Tigerton scored the game's first 16 points and never looked back after that. The Tigers had nine different players score in the contest and used a balanced attack to run away with the game.

Early on in the game, Tigerton attacked the basket. Ryder Graham led that charge, scoring 10 of the first 16 points.

"A lot of movement," said Graham on what led to the strong offensive night for the team. "We've realized in the past few years, sitting around on the outside of the 3-point line doesn't do anything. So we kind of put it together — screens, run around the court, get open — you're not going to score if you sit still, pretty much."

Graham continued to power Tigerton, tallying 16 of the opening 31 points before sitting the final three-plus minutes of the half. At that point, Tigerton was ahead 31-3.

With Graham on the bench, Maverick Maas took over, knocking down five of his six first-half 3-pointers in the final 2:45 of the half.

After Maas hit the first couple triples, his teammates and the visiting crowd took notice. By the time Maas hit the final 3-pointer — right before the halftime buzzer — he sent the team and fans into a frenzy.

"When our big guys moved out, we had a lot of smaller guys in," said Maas. "That really set the tone for our 3-pointers..."

The sophomore added that he hadn't hit that many shots in a game this season and that it, "felt really, really good. It gave me a lot of confidence to keep letting it fly."

After deploying a full-court press that rattled a young and inexperienced Gresham team, Tigerton backed off in the second half, but



Tigerton's Joey Zimdars, left, holds the ball as Gresham's Blade Hoffman defends him during a CWC-North contest on Dec. 19 in Gresham.

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still continued to stifle the hosts.

The team's starters played the first seven-plus minutes of the half, at which point Tigerton led 60-7, before turning to its bench players for the remainder of the contest.

"Our defense pushed them to the point where they just started throwing up random passes, and they weren't sure what they were doing with it," said Graham, who finished with 22 points, 11 rebounds and three assists. "It opened up opportunities for fastbreak layups, it opened up opportunities for postups and simple 3-point shots."

Maas added that it was all effort that led to the defensive showing, highlighting boxing out, hustling and continuing to play hard all game.

Maas finished the contest with 18 points, while Logan Wanta

had eight points and six rebounds. Ethan Carlson grabbed five boards for the Tigers.

Colby Wanta set things up for the Tigerton offense and finished the night with nine assists and six steals.

Gresham had just two players score in the contest, Bryson Nelson and Blade Hoffman.

Nelson hit a couple field goals and also got to the free-throw line several times on his way to a seven-point showing. Hoffman had the Wildcats' third and final field goal in the game.

Hoffman, a senior, said that being a team that plays sophomores and freshmen, the full-court press put on by Tigerton isn't something those guys have faced many times yet.

The senior complimented Tigerton, saying it, "has one of the best

rotations I've seen on defense from the press to (half-court) defense. They do it seamlessly. Everyone knows where to go, so it works out perfect for them."

Being a leader on a young team that's struggled a bit to this point of the season, Hoffman is focused on keeping things positive.

"I really just try and teach them and mentor them as much as I possibly can," said Hoffman.

Tigerton 46 26 — 72

Gresham 3 6 — 9

Tigerton (72): Maverick Maas 0-0 18, Seneca Cooper 0-0 4, Colby Wanta 0-1 3, Logan Wanta 0-0 8, Ethan Carlson 0-0 4, Sam Anheuser 0-0 4, Joey Zimdars 0-0 4, Ryder Graham 0-0 22, Asher Michaelis 1-2 5.

Gresham (9): Bryson Nelson 3-5 7, Blade Hoffman 0-2 2.

HIGH SCHOOL HIGHLIGHTS

By NEW MEDIA STAFF

GIRLS BASKETBALL

Shawano 58

Green Bay East 22

Shawano rolled to a Bay Conference win over Green Bay East on Dec. 20 in Green Bay.

Leah Nordin scored 15 points to lead Shawano offensively.

Abby Bystol chipped in eight points for the Hawks, while Brynlie Boyles and Rylee Trochil had seven each.

Witt-Birn 71

Northland Pines 19

Wittenberg-Birnamwood dominated Northland Pines in a nonconference clash on Dec. 20 in Eagle River.

Reese Rogowski led Witt-Birn with 22 points, seven steals and six assists. Rory Salvesen added 17 points and five rebounds, while Melaina Granquist had 13 points, 12 rebounds, six steals and three blocks.

Allison Linke recorded seven points and three steals for the Chargers. Faith Resch added seven points and four steals. Jami Wendler finished with three steals.

Lena 49

Wausaukee 31

Lena picked up a Marinette & Oconto Conference win over Wausaukee on Dec. 20 in Lena.

Eva Brooks scored 11 points to lead a balanced Lena attack. Whitney Potter chipped in 10 points.

Claire Brooks tallied nine points for the Wildcats. Chaela Rabas contributed seven points, while Natalie McNurlen had six.

Bonduel 60

Sevastopol 52

Bonduel handed Sevastopol its first loss of the season during a nonconference clash on Dec. 20 in Sturgeon Bay.

Ella Hischke scored 19 points to power Bonduel to victory. Hailey Zernicke and Tatum Sporisky added 11 points each, while Audrey Weier had 10.

Zernicke also grabbed seven rebounds for the Bears. Hischke and Weier each dished out three assists, with Hischke also finishing with four steals.

Niagara 53

Suring 43

Suring dropped an M&O contest to Niagara on Dec. 20 in Suring.

Bunny Cramer scored 15 points for Suring, while Christine Sleeter had 12. Emma Kristof totaled seven points for the Eagles.



Pulaski's Morgan Vertz, left, leaps up to try and grab the ball during a conference game against Sheboygan North on Dec. 20 in Pulaski.

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ONLINE

More high school highlights, college highlights and this week's recreation scoreboard can all be found at www.newmedia-wi.com.

Sheboygan North 52

Pulaski 39

Pulaski lost a Fox River Classic Conference clash against Sheboygan North on Dec. 20 in Pulaski.

Madeline Christenson scored 11 points for Pulaski, while Ella Wiese had nine.

Taylor Olson tallied seven points for the Red Raiders. Morgan Vertz and Ellie Mangold chipped in six points each.

BOYS BASKETBALL

Bonduel 71

Marinette 50

Bonduel eased past Marinette in a nonconference contest on Dec. 19 in Marinette. Ten Bears scored in the lopsided win.

Ryan Westrich scored 20 points to lead Bonduel offensively. Noah Weier added 13 points, while Cade Johnson had 12.

Colin Margelofsky was credited with nine assists in the win.

HIGH SCHOOL SOCCER

Pulaski boys team earns WIAA/Rural Insurance Sportsmanship Award

The Pulaski High School boys soccer team earned the Sportsmanship Award for the 2022 fall state tournament.

The Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association, in cooperation with Rural Mutual Insurance Co., revealed the team winners on Dec. 20.

The WIAA/Rural Insurance Sportsmanship Award is presented to one school program and community – or communities in the case of cooperative programs – in each of the state team tournaments that demonstrates outstanding sportsmanship.

Award winners are determined by the conduct and sportsmanship displayed by athletes, coaches, cheer and support groups, mascots, bands and spectators. Additional consideration is given for the effort of school administrators and chaperones to

ensure support for their teams are positive and that the highest ideals of sportsmanship are demonstrated.

Pulaski receives the honor in boys soccer with its display of sportsmanship both on and in the stands during the state tournament at Uihlein Soccer Park in Milwaukee on Nov. 3. The Red Raiders fell to Whitefish Bay in their semifinal match, 4-2.

It marks the second time Pulaski has received the award overall. Award winners receive a trophy and banner in recognition of the honor.

The selection process includes contributions and evaluations from contest officials, tournament management, police and security personnel, crowd control and ushers, WIAA staff members, and area hotels and restaurants on occasion.

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ATHLETE PROFILE: CADEN YOUNG

Shawano senior wants to make last season his best

Shawano Community High School senior wrestler Caden Young already knows he'll be wrestling at the collegiate level, but first he's focused on making his final high school season his best one yet.

Young signed his letter of intent to Southwest Minnesota State University on Nov. 17. Since then, he's won a bunch of matches and turned in some strong finishes at tournaments.

Young finished 5-0 for the Hawks during the Catbird Duals on Dec. 3.

He earned a technical fall win in the team's dual win over Bonduel on Dec. 8.

The senior, who qualified for state as a junior, placed second at the Battle on the Bay on Dec. 10. Young also placed second at the Shawano Holiday Classic on Dec. 17, winning by technical fall and two decisions.

Coming into the season, Young was already a three-time all-conference first team performer and had never lost a conference match. He also has two regional titles and a sectional title to his name.

Q: When did your interest in wrestling begin?

A: I started wrestling in third grade, but I really started to get interested in wrestling in middle school after making youth state a few times.

Q: What is your favorite part about the wrestling season?

A: My favorite part of the wrestling season is the tournaments. I love competing and actually going out there and competing with my friends.

Q: What has wrestling taught you over the years?

A: Wrestling has taught me determination. You're met with all types of struggles throughout everyone's wrestling career, whether



Shawano's Caden Young, top, wrestles during the Shawano Holiday Classic on Dec. 17.

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it's injuries, losses or something else. But you learn to just keep pushing and keep improving.

Q: Talk about the work you've put in to become the wrestler you are today.

A: To become the wrestler I am today, it's literally taken years. I train all year-round, and the only sport I do is wrestling. It's really taken a lot of hard work and time to get where I am today.

Q: Do you have any individual goals you hope to accomplish this season, and what will it take to achieve those?

A: My goal is to win a state title. It's going to take a lot of hard work, but I think with a little fine tuning, I'm at the level.

Q: Many seniors will have their wrestling careers come to an end after the season ends. How special is it knowing you

will get to continue wrestling at the college level?

A: It's really special, and I'm very grateful to be able to continue my wrestling at the college level. I love this sport and can't wait to continue to chase my goals at the college level.

Q: As a senior, how do you try to lead the rest of your team?

A: I try to lead by example and help out with the other wrestlers when I can.

Q: What's your favorite memory of competing on the Shawano wrestling team?

A: My favorite wrestling memory was the Green Bay United dual last year. It was a crazy dual with some very interesting matches. That was probably the most fun I've had at a dual.

Q: Favorite movie, TV show and musical artist?

AT A GLANCE

Athlete: Caden Young
Sport: Wrestling
Weight class: 170 pounds
School: Shawano Community High School
Year: Senior

A: Movie — "Jurassic Park 2."
TV show — "The Office." Musical artist — Juice WRLD.

Q: Name one thing about yourself that not many people know.

A: I have been to Sweden and Denmark for wrestling.

Q: What are some things you hope to accomplish after graduating high school?

A: I hope to become an NCAA All-American and then become a teacher. Hopefully, one day I can coach high school wrestling.



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ATHLETE PROFILE: MACKENZIE BAILEY

Suring senior willing to do whatever it takes

Basketball teams tend to turn in better seasons when a player on the roster can do it all on the court. Senior Mackenzie Bailey is a player who can do it all for Suring, and she's a big reason why the girls team is near the top of the Marinette & Oconto Conference standings.

Through the team's first 10 games, Bailey was averaging 7.2 points, a team-leading 11.1 rebounds and 4.5 assists and also 2.4 steals per game.

Bailey scored a season-high 15 points in a conference win over St. Thomas Aquinas Academy on Dec. 2. She's grabbed 10-plus rebounds in every game but the season opener.

Q: When did your interest in basketball begin?

A: My interest in basketball began when I started going to Saturday morning basketball in third grade. I loved Saturday morning basketball and was up early for it every morning. Since then, I have looked forward to every season.

Q: What is your favorite part about the basketball season?

A: My favorite part is the games themselves. I love practicing with my team to get ready for each game. Playing with some of my best friends is truly amazing, and it is nice to see how far we have come.

Q: What has the game of basketball taught you over the years?

A: It has taught me how to be a better leader, work with my teammates and get out of my comfort zone. I have developed so many different leadership skills throughout my years. I love working with my teammates during practices and games.

Q: What is your favorite thing to do out on the basketball court, and why?

A: My favorite thing to do is face

guard. I love when I am able to face guard because not many teams/fans really understand why we do this. Most people assume that I'm just not a good defensive player, but really it's because we respect that player for their ability, and we need to stop them from scoring.

Q: Do you have any individual goals you hope to accomplish this winter season, and how do you plan on achieving those?

A: I want to become a better shooter and a player all around. I have been working with my confidence in order to get more shots up. I also want to have a great last season with my team, and I know we are and will continue to if we all work to achieve the most.

Q: Being several games into the season, what are some aspects of the game in which your team wants to improve?

A: There are some games where our team is fantastic with our defense and being where we are supposed to, but there are other games where we are slacking. I think our team needs to become more consistent while playing. We are doing amazing for only this far in the season, and I'm excited to see how much better we are able to get.

Q: As a senior, how do you try to lead the rest of your team?

A: As a senior, I try to make everyone know that I believe in their ability and what they are capable of doing. I believe in every single person on our team, and I hope they build up the confidence to realize what they are able to accomplish.

Q: Before a game starts, do you or the team have any routines or rituals you go through?

A: Before every game, I listen to a motivational speech that was introduced to me my freshman year from a



Suring's Mackenzie Bailey looks for an open teammate during a conference game against Lena on Dec. 5 in Suring.

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senior at the time. It's called "Make it count," and it's by Team Fearless.

Q: What's your favorite memory of competing on the Suring girls basketball team?

A: My favorite memory is my sophomore year when we got conference and regional champions. We didn't get recognized for conference, but we did for regionals. That was a very special year for our team, and we all worked so hard for everything.

Q: Favorite movie, TV show and musical artist?

A: Favorite movie: "Love & Basketball." TV show: "Criminal Minds." Musical artist: Drake Milligan or Canaan Cox.

Q: Name one thing about your-

AT A GLANCE

Athlete: Mackenzie Bailey

Sport: Girls basketball

Position: "All of them; I get put wherever I am needed."

School: Suring High School

Year: Senior

self that not many people know?

A: For the last two years, I have competed in the demolition derby that is held in Suring during Labor Day weekend.

Q: What are some things you hope to accomplish after graduating high school?

A: I hope that I continue to be successful within college at UW-Stevens Point, along with serving in the Army National Guard.

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Whiting's 4th title the top area sports story

Witt-Birn volleyball, Pulaski boys soccer state appearances take No. 2-3 spots

By NEW MEDIA STAFF

The past year has produced plenty of memorable sports accomplishments.

There were impressive individual moments, like Oconto Falls' Clayton Whiting winning his fourth state title, which was unanimously voted the top sports story of 2022. Wittenberg-Birnamwood's Reese Rogowski and Pulaski's Taya Schmidt, along with several area wrestlers, also had strong state showings to earn spots among the top-10 stories.

There were also plenty of area teams that shone, like the Witt-Birn volleyball and Pulaski boys soccer teams qualifying for state. Other teams, like Lena volleyball, Bonduel softball and girls basketball and Lena football, didn't quite make it to state, but each had memorable seasons for other reasons to earn spots in the top 10 sports stories.

Here's a closer look at the top area sports stories for 2022:

Whiting caps monster career with 4th title

The high school wrestling career for Oconto Falls' Clayton Whiting was one most wrestlers only dream of.

Whiting finished 3-0 in his state matches at 182 pounds as a senior to win a fourth title on Feb. 26, becoming only one of 22 wrestlers ever to win four titles. All 15 of the points he gave up at state came on free escapes.

"It means a lot that my work is paying off," said Whiting after winning his fourth title. "All those years of blood, sweat and tears finally came to reality, and I ended up getting my fourth one tonight."

He capped his senior year with a 50-1 record. His high school record finished at 163-5, with only two losses after his freshman season. Whiting's first three titles came at 152, 170 and 182 pounds.

Only four of the 22 four-time champs have a title over 152, and Whiting is the only one to have a title over 160 pounds.

Whiting graduated high school as one of four Panthers to ever win multiple state titles and was the only four-time champ.

"I think my legacy is going to stay in there forever, and I think it means a lot to all the wrestlers that are incoming to my high school," said Whiting. "It's going to motivate them that any-



Oconto Falls' Clayton Whiting, top, wrestles Northwestern's Ian Smith during the Division 2 182-pound weight class first-place match at the 2022 WIAA State Individual Wrestling Tournament on Feb. 26 at the Kohl Center in Madison. Whiting ended his incredible high school career with a fourth state title that weekend.

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The Wittenberg-Birnamwood volleyball team celebrates a point during a Division 3 state semifinal match against Howards Grove on Nov. 4 at the Resch Center in Green Bay. The Chargers qualified for state for the first time in school history this fall.

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thing is possible, and they can become just like me someday."

Whiting now wrestles for the University of Missouri.

Witt-Birn volleyball team makes state for 1st time

The Wittenberg-Birnamwood volleyball program has enjoyed plenty of success over the past few seasons, but the Chargers made history this fall when they qualified for state for the

first time in school history.

Witt-Birn won the Central Wisconsin Conference-East Division title with a 7-0 record. The Chargers then knocked off Coleman and Bonduel to win a regional title. Witt-Birn swept Weyauwega-Fremont before rallying past Edgar in an epic, five-set sectional final.

"It's crazy," said Lilly Betry, one of six seniors on the roster, after qualifying for state. "It's so nice that it's our

last year, too. This is the way we're going to go out. It's just amazing."

"Literally everything, it's crazy," said Kiara Deruchowski, another senior. "Our team has worked so hard for this, and to be a senior and go to state is absolutely amazing."

At state, Witt-Birn was topped 25-13, 25-18, 25-9 by Howards Grove, which went on to win the title for a fourth straight year. That didn't diminish the season in the slightest for the Chargers.

"I'm so proud of all my girls," said coach Becky Rew in a postgame press conference. "They fought the whole way through. They didn't let the nerves of state get to them. They fought and they pushed every point ... I just can't say enough about these girls and how they never give up on each other."

Pulaski boys soccer team returns to state

The same day Witt-Birn's volleyball team punched its first ticket to state, the Pulaski boys soccer team also qualified for state.

The Red Raiders opened the postseason by outscoring its first two opponents 21-1 to win a regional title. Things got tougher in sectional play, but top-seeded Pulaski prevailed, topping West De Pere 4-3 in penalty kicks and then downing Tomah 1-0 in the sectional final to make it to state for the second time in school history.

"It's very special; I honestly couldn't ask for anything better," said senior Ryan Drafz of making state. "We lost last year in the sectional finals, so it feels really nice to even the score and advance to state. We were able to win with confidence, passion and playing the full game. We never let up or gave up; we played our hearts out, and that's why we were able to win and advance to state."

At state, Pulaski put up a great fight against top-seeded Whitefish Bay, but lost 4-2. Corbin Tackmier and Chase Ambrosius scored for the Red Raiders at state.

Pulaski capped the season with an 18-5-2 record, and coach Jeff Schneider believed that season will be just the start of big things for the program.

"For these guys to finally punch through and get it, I think it's going to only help our program, because we do talk about getting to state and it's not a foreign concept," said Schneider. "Now that we've actually been here, we've played a game down here, I think the program in general — it's a bright future. I'm very proud of the team; this was a great opportunity and, I thought, a good showing."

Witt-Birn's Rogowski a star at state

Before helping the volleyball team to state, Witt-Birn's Reese Rogowski capped her junior year with a huge track and field season.

The season culminated at state, where she placed second in the 200- and 400-meter dashes, seventh in the 100 dash and 10th in the long jump.

"It means a lot because I knew I wanted to place higher this year in at least a few of my events, and that's what I did," said Rogowski of her performances at state.

Earlier in the season, Rogowski won CWC-Large titles in the 100, 200, 400 and long jump, doing so in dominant fashion.

Rogowski's big season continued at regionals, where she placed first in the 200 and 400 and was second in the long jump and 100. The junior then placed first in the 200, second in the 400 and third in the 100 and long jump to qualify for state in all four events.

Lena volleyball team goes on magical postseason ride

The Lena volleyball team also made some history during the fall, winning



Pulaski goalie Mason Baker prepares to kick the ball after making a save during the soccer team's Division 2 state semifinal match against Whitefish Bay on Nov. 3 at Kohler Engines Stadium at Uihlein Soccer Park in Milwaukee. Pulaski boys qualified for state for the second time in school history.

FILE | NEW MEDIA

its first regional title in 32 years.

The regional title wasn't expected, with the Wildcats coming in as a No. 4 seed and needing a furious rally and a couple upsets to advance.

Lena dropped the first two sets against No. 5 Gillett in a regional quarterfinal, but rallied to win 16-25, 17-25, 25-16, 25-16, 15-5 in five sets.

Against top-seeded Suring, Lena pulled off a 25-20, 16-25, 25-12, 23-25, 15-11 road win. The Wildcats won the regional title over No. 2 Gresham by rallying a couple times, 16-25, 25-16, 19-25, 25-20, 15-10.

Lena's magical postseason run came to a close after a loss to Wabeno/Laona in a sectional semifinal.

"We feel very proud that we came this far," said Lena's Makynna Herald. "It is sad that it has to end this way, but we came this far and it was super fun."

Pulaski's Schmidt caps career on state podium

Pulaski's Taya Schmidt was no stranger to the state scene, making the meet as a diver on three occasions. She saved her best for last.

Schmidt qualified for state as a senior after winning the sectional by

more than 35 points. She placed fifth at state with a score of 428.45.

"This year, I thought I did pretty good at state," said Schmidt. "Although a few dives did not go the way I was hoping, I did my best I could've in the moment, and I'm happy with the way I placed."

Earlier in the season, Schmidt was first in the Fox River Classic Conference to earn the Diver of the Year honor. She also broke the 6-dive school record score, with her mark of 269.15 topping the old mark of 251.6.

Bonduel softball team dominant in spring

The Bonduel softball team arguably had the best regular season showing from any area team in 2022.

The Bears were undefeated during the regular season and went on to win a regional title before eventually falling in the sectional semifinal game.

Bonduel flexed its muscles during CWC-East play, outscoring opponents 99-14 to win the title by three games.

Even more impressive was the fact that the Bears' roster wasn't all that experienced, with just two seniors on the roster.

Heartbreak finish caps positive year for Bonduel girls basketball squad

The Bonduel softball team continued where the Bonduel girls basketball team left off in the winter. The Bears tied Amherst for the CWC-East title and finished the season with a 23-5 record.

Bonduel got past playoff nemesis Crandon to open the postseason and then routed Shiocton to win a regional title.

The Bears then defeated St. Mary Catholic in a sectional semifinal matchup, a round that had dispatched the program from the playoffs several times over the past few years.

Bonduel then played in an instant classic against Westfield in the sectional final. The Bears fell behind early and trailed by 11 points with about 14 minutes to play.

Bonduel slowly clawed back into the contest and eventually tied it with 25 seconds to play. Just when it looked like the game would head to overtime, Westfield hit a one-handed desperation shot at the buzzer to stun Bonduel.

Lena/STAA football co-op enjoys another big season

The Lena/St. Thomas Aquinas Academy football team turned in its second straight big season this past fall.

The co-op went 6-1 in Peninsula Conference play to take second, with a loss to Gibraltar. Lena/STAA avenged that loss by upsetting Gibraltar in the first round of the playoffs. The co-op was eliminated by Wabeno/Laona in a second round game.

Lena/STAA earned 12 all-conference honors and had Sam Marquardt (offense) and Josh Kristof (defense) take home the Players of the Year awards.

Wrestlers rack up top finishes at state

While Whiting was winning his fourth state title, other area wrestlers were also performing well at the state tournament. Sixteen other wrestlers qualified for state last winter.

Pulaski's Trenton Gibbons placed second, while Mason Wells was third and Ethan Eggert fifth. Witt-Birn's David Gauderman also placed third. Lena's Dylan Comins, Oconto Falls' Cole Bozile and Bonduel's Tyson Bogacz all came in sixth place.

Bonduel's Hailey Berg and Maddy Sokolski and Shawano's Piper Novitski all participated in the first-ever girls tournament. Berg and Sokolski each came in second, while Novitski was fifth.

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