

Bulls parade 10 wrestlers to IKWF State Tournament

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BETHALTO - The future is looking bright for Bethalto wrestling with a special group of young wrestlers.

On Saturday, March 4, sectional qualifiers in the Intermediate (8-10-year-old), Novice (10-12) and Senior (13-14) division wrestled at Highland High School for the South Sectional. The South Sectional was comprised of the first- through fourth-place finishers from the East St. Louis, Edwardsville and Carbondale regional tournaments.

For the Intermediate division wrestlers, the sectional tournament is the last Illinois Kids Wrestling Federation (IKWF) tournament this season.

Novice and Senior grapplers competed for a berth to Rockford, Illinois to wrestle in the IKWF State Tournament with the top three at each bracket advancing. The state tournament in Rockford is set for Friday and Saturday, March 11-12 with weigh ins being conducted Thursday night.

Assistant Coach Sean Tyus, former SIUE wrestler, said of the Bulls and all the state qualifiers: "I'm really excited about where we're at right now as a club. The parents are great and the coaches, too. There's so many people involved and invested. We are definitely back on a rise. Hopefully, we can take this momentum into the state tournament."

Following the team regional title last week, the Bethalto Bulls were again near the top of the pack finishing second overall to the Edwardsville club. Edwardsville scored 48 wrestlers to the Bulls 23 and secured the point crown beating the Bulls 438 points to 261 points. O'Fallon finished third overall with 215.5 points. There were 43 different clubs represented at the sectional.

The Bulls were lead by first-place finishes from Vinny Zerban (Senior 89 lbs), Abe Wojcikiewicz (Novice 101) and Dillon Dublo (Novice 108). Also representing the Bulls at the state tournament will be Peyton Bechtold (2nd Senior 122), Brock Barrows (2nd Novice 74), Caleb Tyus (2nd Novice 84), Brady Christeson (3rd Senior 138), Caine Tyus (3rd Novice 89), Colton Carlisle (3rd Novice 95), and Zachary Griffith (3rd Novice 215).

Ty Brooks (Senior 79), Connor House (Novice 138), Bryce Griffin (Novice 79), Ty Brooks just missed the state tournament after losing the third-place match.

The future continues to look bright for the Bulls as Vincent Moore placed second and Zeke Rhodes finished third in the Intermediate division at sectionals.

Coach Tyus said hopefully, the Bulls can bring some hardware to Southern Illinois and add to its collection of state champions.

The club boasts 22 Illinois state champions, 49 state placers, 17 national champions, 60 national place winners and 23 All-Americans and has been around since the 1970s. Many former Bulls wrestlers have gone on to obtain college scholarships.

For more information, visit the club Facebook page or website at www.bethaltobullswrestling.com. Otherwise, you can contact Coach Jeremy Christeson at (618) 779-3296 or Coach Steve Bryant at (618) 973-5168. The program is available for children age 4 to 14 of all skill levels.

Off-season training is starting soon so sign up now and be a part of the Bethalto Bulls Wrestling Club.