



Bethalto wrestler Vinny Zerban to take part in three-nation tour in late March, early April

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer
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BULLS
WRESTLING



ZERBAN



BETHALTO – Eighth-grader Vinny Zerban has a great future in wrestling.

Zerban, who wrestles for the Bethalto Bulls Wrestling Club, will be taking part in a three-nation tour in late March and early April organized by the Wrestling World Tours organization to Finland, Estonia and Poland.

“Vinny has been wrestling since he was eight,” his stepfather, Howard Couch, said. “He started out with the Roxana Wrestling Club, then went to the Kings Select club in Belleville before he joined the Bulls.”

Zerban, who attends **Trimpe Junior High in Bethalto**, has won several national championships in his career and is a four-time finalist in the state Illinois Kids Wrestling Federation championship, winning twice. He'll be taking part in this year's IKWF state tournament series in the 108-pound class, beginning Saturday with the IKWF South Regional at the Jackie Joyner-Kersey Center in East St. Louis; the IKWF South Sectional is set March 4 at Highland High School followed by the state tournament in Rockford March 10-11.

“We're very, very proud of Vinny,” Couch said. “He puts in the time and the work to be successful; his ultimate goal is to be a four-time state champion. He works really hard every day and he's a natural.”

Zerban will be part of a delegation of 23 wrestlers heading to Europe on the Wrestling World Tours trip; they'll be taking part in Greco-Roman and Freestyle tournaments in Estonia, as well as training with wrestlers from the region while in Finland and Poland. They'll be coached by Jesse Thielke, who wrestled for the USA at the 2016 Rio Olympics and by Nazar Kulchysky, a three-time NCAA Division III national champion at Wisconsin-Oshkosh.

Zerban will be part of a group of eighth-graders from Trimpe who will be joining Civic Memorial's wrestling team next year as freshmen.

Zerban travels year-round to compete in tournaments, with a trip for a major tournament in Fargo, N.D., on the schedule for later this year. Those interested in helping sponsor the trips for Zerban may contact Couch at (618) 420-8688.