

# Edwardsville showcases Tigers, Alton freshmen in wrestling event

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer  
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EDWARDSVILLE – While varsity teams, in any sport, get the biggest part of the limelight, there are other levels of high school sport that sometimes get overlooked.

One of those levels are freshman teams.

The freshman wrestlers at eight area schools, however, got their chance in the spotlight at Edwardsville's Jon Davis Wrestling Center as the Tigers hosted the Edwardsville Freshman Duals, three rounds of dual-meet wrestling.

In addition to the Tigers, teams from Alton, Collinsville, Belleville East, Belleville West and O'Fallon from the Illinois side and Fort Zumwalt West and Francis Howell Central from the Missouri side took part in the evening's activities. Four mats were used for the competition, with each side being drawn to compete against another team.

Edwardsville was drawn to compete against Collinsville, Fort Zumwalt West and Francis Howell Central; Alton drew O'Fallon, Howell Central and Belleville East. Both the Tigers and Redbirds went 3-0 on the day.

“We wrestled pretty well,” said Edwardsville freshman coach Ryan Followell. “We set the tone early and wrestled hard. I'm really proud of them; they all did a great job.”

The Edwardsville freshmen generally take part in three such meets each year to give the young wrestlers experience in dual-meet wrestling. “We wrestle all the Southwestern Conference schools and have three different nights where we have three dual-meet events like tonight,” Followell said. “It gives our kids a lot of practical experience that will help them as they go toward the varsity.”

“We did a good job tonight,” said Redbird freshman coach Albert Shafer. “They've been working hard all year, so it's good to give them a chance to show what they can do. Most of the guys went 3-0 on the night, and the guys who lost matches were in them.

“It's a learning experience for our kids. We hope to see them move up to the varsity very soon.”

The Redbirds opened the night with a 23-21 win over O'Fallon, with Michael Faulkner defeating Courtney Wilson 4-2 at 126, Grady Womack pinning Devin Nathan in 2:36 at 160 and Noah Wozeynski pinning Tyrie Mitchell in 1:25 at 170. Alton then downed Francis Howell Central 31-12, highlighted by Wilson pinning Gabe Huelte in 2:28 in the 126 bout. The Redbirds then blanked Belleville East 24-0, with Scott Story pinning Garrett Stallons in 30 seconds at 120 and Wilson pinning Nick Hill in 1:13.

Edwardsville opened their night with a 54-15 win over Collinsville; Franky Romano, Chase Viehman, Markell DeBerry and Cole Mikulat all won their bouts by pinfall. The Tigers then blanked Francis Howell Central 60-0, with Nick Evans, Tristen Jones, Romano, Viehman, DeBerry, Riley Scheffel and Mikulat all winning by pin. Edwardsville then closed out the night with a 64-6 win over Fort Zumwalt West, with Jordin Lieberman pinning Solomon Bailey in 5:26 to highlight the win.



[Dan Brannan also contributed to this story.](#)