

Edwardsville showcases area junior varsity talent at meet

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer
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EDWARDSVILLE – While important in their own right, for the most part, junior varsity teams generally don't get the spotlight their varsity brethren do.

Not at Edwardsville's Jon David Wrestling Center Friday night.

The Tigers hosted an eight-team JV wrestling tournament to give wrestlers a chance to compete under tournament conditions and to give their coaches a chance to see how their younger wrestlers are progressing in their programs.

The teams involved included the host Tigers, Alton, Roxana Collinsville, Highland, East St. Louis, Triad and Sparta. Depending on the number of entrants in each of the 14 weight classes, competition took place in a traditional knockout tournament format or in three- or four-man round-robin brackets, where best records determined the winners. No team scores were kept in the competition.

“We wrestled well,” Edwardsville coach Kevin Matarelli said. “We've got some young kids get to the finals, and in some cases, we had two of our kids wrestling each other in the finals. That was great to see; we've got a lot of good kids in our program.

“We're a freshman-sophomore dominated group on our JV, so this provides some good competition for them.”

“We did well,” said Redbird coach Albert Shafer. “Several of our kids placed and everyone got to see some good competition. At this level, that's what it's about; you want to see kids get the work in and see how they perform. That's why it's a good tournament to be in.”

Roxana's JV team has been hard-hit with injuries this season; the Shells only brought three wrestlers to the tournament, but one of them – Michael Cherry – finished second at 138. Still, the experience was a good one.

“They went hard all night, and that's all you can ask,” said Shells coach Nathan Miles. “It's why I liked what I saw. We got to take on some great competition and we got to see the kids perform.”

The top four placers in most weight classes were recognized at the end of the evening. At 106, Edwardsville's Dylan Wright downed teammate Jackson O'Leary to claim the championship, with East St. Louis' Essex Crutcher defeating the Tigers' Andrew Jones for third. At 113, Edwardsville's Deante Yancey defeated teammate Rashaun Mosely for the title, while Brevin Brown of Edwardsville defeated Destin Hollen of Collinsville for third.

The Kahoks' Derek Selden claimed honors at 120 by defeating Nick Evans of Edwardsville in the final, with Scott Story of Alton finishing third over Chancey Lampkin of Collinsville. The 126-pound class championship went to Chase Bauer of Edwardsville over D'Mario Trice, also of Edwardsville, while third place was claimed by Will Autenrieth of Collinsville over Mason Gieger of Highland.

At 132, Ben Manibusan of Edwardsville upended Isaiah Harris of East St. Louis for that weight class' crown, while Matt Guenther of Triad took third over Chris Taylor of East St. Louis, while the 138 championship went to Zach Fensterman of Edwardsville over

Cherry; Franky Romano of Edwardsville defeated Edgar Jones of East St. Louis for third.

The 145-pound class went to Baylor Montgomery of Edwardsville, who won two of his matches in the round-robin format; he defeated Chase Vichman of Edwardsville in the final round. At 152, the Tigers' Markell DeBerry claimed the crown when he defeated Mark Tucker of Triad; Rylee Sheldon of Sparta took third by defeating Noah Martin of Collinsville.

Connor Burk of Edwardsville took the 160-pound class with a win over Grady Womack of Alton; Juan Garth of Collinsville took third over Jaice Price of Sparta. Steele Clement of Collinsville took honors at 170 with a win over Dillon Dixon of Edwardsville; third place was taken by B.J. Merrifield of Alton over Russel March of Edwardsville.

The Tigers' Drew Johnson emerged as the champion at 182 with a pair of wins in a three-man round-robin competition, defeating Highland's Christian Zuccarelli in the final match. At 195, Clayton Sheldon of Sparta swept all three of his matches in a four-man round-robin format to take the title at that class.

Mike Webber of Edwardsville took top honors at 220 with a win over Zach Thompson of Sparta, with Chris Walker of Collinsville taking third over Christian North of Triad. McIntosh of Collinsville swept all three of his four-man round-robin bouts at 285 to take honors at that class.



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