

Five Local Wrestlers Secure Top Six Finish at IHSA State Tournament

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CHAMPAIGN-URBANA - Five Riverbender.com area wrestlers won their first round and quarterfinal matches, guaranteeing them no worse than a sixth-place finish, while other wrestlers split their first two bouts at day one of the IHSA boys wrestling state tournament, held Thursday at State Farm Center in Champaign-Urbana.

There are no team scores kept, as the team champions are determined in dual meets, with the sectionals to be held next Tuesday, and the state finals next Friday and Saturday at Grossinger Motors Arena in Bloomington.

In alphabetical order, here are the results from day one:

Civic Memorial's results in Class 2A saw Avery Jaime lose his opener at 113 pounds to Victor Alvarado of Chicago Kennedy 12-7, while Bradley Ruckman won his first match at 120 pounds, defeating Angel Ramirez of Evergreen Park by fall at 3:41, but lost his quarterfinal bout to Rocky Almendarez of Galesburg 3-1. Caleb Scott also won his opener at 126 pounds, pinning Rock Island's Daniel McGhee at 5:03, but dropped a 5-3 decision in the quarterfinals to Tommy Banas of New Lenox Providence Catholic. At 144 pounds, Nathen Herrin lost his opener to Sean Larkin of Chicago St. Rita Catholic 9-0, while at 157 pounds, Bryce Griffin won his opener over Xander York of Crystal Lake Prairie Ridge by fall at 39 seconds, then won his quarterfinal Harrison Konder of Lombard Montini Catholic 9-2, guaranteeing Griffin no worse than a sixth-place finish. Finally, at 165 pounds, James Wojcikiewicz lost his opener to Nick Mueller of Dunlap 9-



East St. Louis lone representative, Mekhi McDowell, won his Class 2A 285-pound opener over Thomas Klos of Bensenville Fenton 15-1, but lost in the quarterfinals to Jose Del Toro of East Peoria 3-1 in sudden death overtime.



Edwardsville's two wrestlers in Class 3A, Bryson Nuttall at 106 pounds, and Blake Mink at 144 pounds, lost their openers. Nuttall fell to Caleb Noble of Gurnee Warren by fall at 2:52, while Mink lost a close decision to De Kalb's Mekhi Cave 14-12.

For Highland in Class 2A, Tyson Rakers won his 150-pound opener over Steven Marvin of Morton 2-0, but lost the quarterfinal bout to David Mayora of Montini 6-1. Ashton Zobrist won his first match at 215 pounds over Tommy McNeil of Crystal Lake Central 9-2, then won by fall in the quarterfinal bout over Xavier Bitner of Burbank St. Laurence Catholic at 3:45, also guaranteeing him no worse than a sixth-place finish.

Logan Riggs of Roxana, in Class 1A, lost his opener at 126 pounds to Brody Widlowski of Coal City by fall at 3:40, while Brandon Green, Jr. won his 132-pound opener by fall over Shawn Schlickman of Gibson City-Melvin-Sibley at 26 seconds, but lost his quarterfinal bout to Vance Williams of Woodstock Marian Catholic 6-2. Braden

Johnson lost his opener at 150 pounds to Chasen Kazmierczak of West Chicago Wheaton Academy 10-3, while Lyndon Theis lost in the first round at 157 pounds to Daniel Kelly of Sterling Newman Central Catholic 4-2. James Herring won both of his bouts by fall at 285 pounds, pinning William Anderson of Galena at 40 seconds, then doing the same to Nicholas Armour of Chicago Leo Catholic at 3:39, advancing to the semifinals and guaranteeing no worse than sixth place.

Triad, in Class 2A, saw mixed results as well, starting at 106 pounds, where Will Kelly lost an 8-1 decision to Vince DeMarco of Grayslake Central, while Colby Crouch won his first two matches at 126 pounds, winning his opener over Mikey Meade of Prairie Ridge by fall at 58 seconds, then won his quarterfinal match by technical superiority over Tyler Wiedman of Grayslake Central 15-0 at 4:21. Brody Smith lost his 132-pound opener to Gauge Shipp of Galesburg, also by technical superiority 16-0 at 2:16.

Finally, in Class 1A, East Alton-Wood River's Drake Champlin won both of his bouts at 215 pounds, and advanced to the semifinals, also guaranteeing him of no worse than a sixth-place finish. Champlin won his opener over Michael Haas of Lena-Winslow by fall at 5:40, then won in sudden death overtime over Jacob Bischoff of LeRoy 3-1 to advance to the semifinals.

The semifinals for the five advancers, as well as wrestleback matches for the others, will take place during day two of the tournament, starting Friday morning. The finals are set for Saturday night, including the Grand March of the finalists in all three classes.