

# Young Bethalto student Vinny Zerban takes national stage in wrestling

by Dan Brannan, Content Director  
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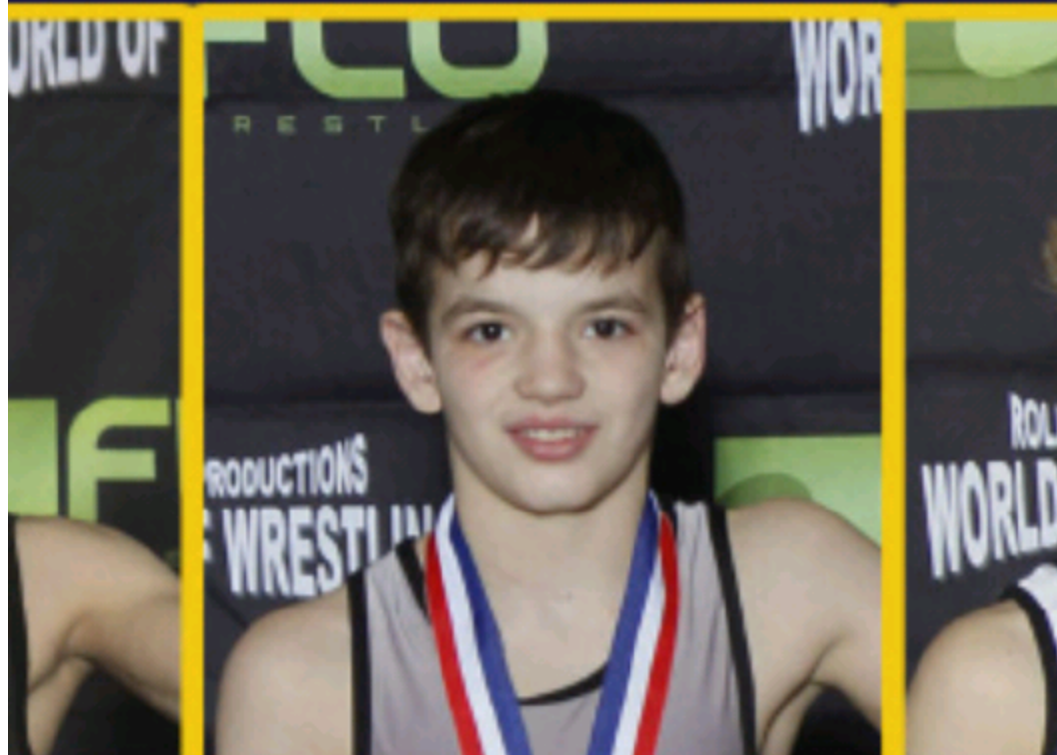
**BETHALTO** - Bethalto's **Vinny Zerban** had the biggest match of his young wrestling career Saturday when he was on the card of the Texas School Of Wrestling All-Star Match in North Richland Hills, Texas.

Vinny wrestled in the 87-pound category against Cullan Schrieffer, representing Iowa. Schrieffer and Vinny are two of the top ranked World of Wrestling competitors in their

weight category. The two started the night off in Texas. The match was extremely tight Saturday, with Schriever winning 4-2.

“The match was watched by college coaches and definitely lived up to the hype,” his stepfather Howard Couch. said. “It was a great match.”

Vinny just turned 13 and attends Trimpe Middle School in Bethalto. Vinny has a 102-4 lifetime career wrestling record. Schriever is undefeated at 106-0.



80 lbs

Vincent Zerban  
Bethalto, IL.

HONORABLE MENTION

Tristan Lujan  
Selma, CA.

Before Vinny left Bethalto for the national appearance, Trimpe Middle's marquee said in bold letters: Good luck to Vinny.

"It made me feel good that my school was on my side," he said.

Vinny's long-term goal is to be NCAA and Olympic champion. He said he loves wrestling because "it is a competitive sport and something he likes to do."

Todd Laux at Pride Fitness in Bethalto has been a big influence on Vinny with his training.

"Todd helps me a lot with my cardio and my strength," Vinny said.

Several on his mom's side of the family were wrestlers and the Bethalto boy said they all help him and provide him inspiration.

Vinny's extended family is extremely supportive of him with his wrestling and attend many of his matches.

Ryan King of King's Select Wrestling Academy in Belleville is one Vinny's coaches and he made the trip with him to Texas. King's Wrestling has produced several state and national champions. Luke Odom is a local wrestler who trains frequently with Vinny and has also helped moved him up the ranks. Odom is a two-time state champion. Vinny wrestles in the Illinois Kids Wrestling Federation (IKWF).

Vinny's step dad Howard Couch said the Bethalto wrestler lives and breathes wrestling.

"We are extremely proud of him," his step dad said for the family. "He is so humble. He doesn't talk about it much and sometimes at school his teachers don't even know he wrestles. He goes about his business and gets on honor roll.

"He is just a good kid."

