

Butler Eagle

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BUTLER



WRESTLING
PRESS RELEASES

Taking on a whole new look

Pa. high school athletes must wear masks in games, maybe as early as soccer finals

[John Enrietto - Eagle Staff Writer](#) - November 19, 2020

To mask or not to mask. That is the question.

High school athletes — particularly those involved in state championship play this weekend — anxiously await the answer.

Gov. Tom Wolf issued a strict mandate Tuesday that athletes across the state must now wear masks during competitions indoor and outdoor.

Seemingly, that would include the state championship events this Friday and Saturday involving four Butler County soccer teams.

Mars girls and boys both play in PIAA Class 3A title games Friday. North Catholic's girls and Seneca Valley's boys are involved in state championship games Saturday at Hershey park Stadium in Hershey.

"I don't have much of a comment on this right now because I'm not sure what's going on," Seneca Valley athletic director Heather Lewis said. "We're awaiting word from the WPIAL or PIAA.

"We're counting on them to get clarification on this."

Lewis said the Raiders will be prepared either way.

"If we get there and they tell us we can't take the field unless our team is wearing masks, our team will take the field wearing masks," she said. "We'll do whatever we have to do."

WPIAL executive director Amy Scheuneman could not be reached for comment late Wednesday afternoon. She has been quoted in other news reports as "requesting further clarification" on the matter.

Mars boys soccer coach Chris Knauff said his team will wear masks during practice Thursday.

"I don't know if we'll have to wear masks Friday or not," Knauff said. "But we want the kids to get a feel for wearing them on the field in case we do.

"We're not going to exert ourselves (in practice Thursday). But my concern is having kids wearing masks in a game while exerting themselves.

"This is just another thing in a season like no other. It's been one thing after another, a constant mental challenge," Knauff added.

The mask mandate will also be in effect during the upcoming winter sports season — for all sports but swimming.

“It is hard picturing it,” Slippery Rock athletic director Dan Follett admitted about athletes being masked up during competitions. “I don’t know how it’s going to work.”

“Sports like basketball, wrestling, running sprints or distances in indoor track, kids could lose their wind, pass out ... I question it from a health perspective.”

“I mean, a two-minute period in a wrestling match, that’s a sprint. Breathing can be an issue,” Follett added.

Butler girls basketball coach Mark Maier described the mask mandate as “an adjustment we’re all going to have to make.”

“But it’s a privilege to play sports, to be a part of it. If we have to wear a mask to play and practice, that’s what we’ll do,” he said.

Maier acknowledged the mask mandate could change the game to a degree.

“Basketball is a lot of running and kids have to catch their breath,” he said. “This may favor teams with a deeper bench, teams in better physical condition to handle it.”

“We’re still three weeks away from playing. Mandates change. Orders change. But for now, we’re doing this.”

Breathing issues are the biggest concern of Butler athletic director Bill Mylan.

“In any sport involving high cardio activity, this (masking) could create health problems the other way,” he said. “Bowlers can wear a mask while competing. That’s not a problem. Wrestlers or basketball players? That’s a whole different animal.”

“We all know the answer to this question, but are they going to make the Steelers wear masks when they play? The Pitt teams? A lot of these mandates and rulings show up out of the blue. There’s no rhyme nor reason to a lot of this stuff.”

Mylan is particularly concerned for schools that still have teams competing in fall sports.

“These teams have been playing all season without wearing masks,” he said. “All of a sudden, with virtually no time to adjust, they have to wear them during championship games? That’s crazy.”



Momentum On The Mats

Teams look to build off last year's success

John Enrietto - Eagle Staff Writer - December 8, 2020 High School Wrestling



Seneca Valley's Hunter Swedish, right, grapples with Butler's Levi Donnel in a match last season. Swedish and Donnel are among the top returning wrestlers in Butler County this season.

EAGLE FILE PHOTO

Masks will be worn and few spectators will be permitted in the stands, but the high school wrestling season begins this weekend as scheduled.

And Butler County teams have high hopes on the mat this winter.

- **Seneca Valley** finished second in the WPIAL Class AAA team dual match tournament for the second successive season. The Raiders return another strong

lineup this year.

"These kids are anxious to get going," 10th-year coach Kevin Wildrick said. "We believe we have what it takes to make another run at it."

The Raiders return six wrestlers who posted at least 30 wins last year. Alejandro Herrera-Rondon (149 pounds) is a two-time state champion who was 42-5 a year ago. Dylan Chappell (132) is a two-time state runner-up who was 48-5 last season.

Chanz Shearer (152) was 37-11, Antonio Amelio (160) 37-18, Hunter Swedish (120) 31-13 and Liam Volk-Klos (189) 30-14 last season.

Seneca Valley was 18-4 in dual meets and finished among the top six in the PIAA Dual Championships.

"We have a lot of experienced, tough wrestlers," Wildrick said. "We don't know what the future holds in terms of (COVID-19) affecting our season, but these kids will appreciate everything we get in."

- **Butler** was 18-6 last year and 28th-year coach Scott Stoner is closing in on 400 career dual match wins. He enters this year with 379 victories.

Top returnees for the Golden Tornado include Levi Donnel (35-5) at 132, Cooper Baxter (33-8) at 189, Steven Green (30-13) at 160 and Nate McMaster (26-14) at 145. Clayton Dressler (138) and Nick Schaukowitzsch (126) both won 22 matches a year ago.

"I feel like we can put together a pretty good dual match team," Stoner said. "There is one fewer weight class this season and that's actually going to help us."

“We're in a tough bracket in our season-opening (Mat Madness) tournament in Monroeville and that's going to be a challenge.”

Butler will compete against the likes of Seneca Valley, Waynesburg, Burrell and Derry in that event.

“We always get better as the season goes on,” Stoner said. “But that is a tough opening weekend.”



Mars wrestler Christian Scheller gets leverage on a Knoch opponent during a match last year. Scheller returns this season with more than 50 career wins.

EAGLE FILE PHOTO

- **Mars** returns a 20-plus win wrestler in Brandon Krul at 126 pounds. Christian Scheller, a senior at 152, is a two-time WPIAL qualifier with more than 50 career wins.

“Christian is the best wrestler we have coming back from last year,” Mars coach Bob Jox said. “We have a lot of newcomers to the

lineup. This is a young team.”

The Planets may possess a surprise package in senior Keith Brubach at 172 pounds. He has not wrestled since his freshman year.

“He had some injuries back then and gave up the sport for a while,” Jox said. “Now he's back. He's put in a lot of time at the South Hills Wrestling Academy and has a chance to be very good.”

Mars has three freshmen at the higher weights: Enzo Grieco at 189 pounds, Riley Lefcakis at 215 and Aydin Brink at heavyweight.

Butler

Key Graduation Losses: Colton Spohn, Nate McDonald, Hunter Neff, Caleb Hartung (Apprentice School, Norfolk, Va.)

106-113 pounds: Ana Malovich (freshman), Kelly Schaukowitsch (freshman), 120-Aiden Plopi (soph), 126-Nick Schaukowitsch (soph), 132-Dom Vivirito (junior) or Levi Donnel (soph), 138-Clayton Dressler (senior), 145-Nate McMaster (senior), 152-Cade Savochka (junior), 160-Sтивен Green (senior), 172-Mickey Kreinbacher (soph), 189-Cooper Baxter (junior), 215-Nolan Mosher (soph), 285-Jake Pomykata (junior) or Greg Schultz (junior)

Seneca Valley

Key Graduation Losses: Patrick Johnson (Millersville), Davin Beahm, Nick Funovits (Washington & Jefferson), Drew Vlasnik (Chicago State), Conor Hayes

106 pounds-Connor Smith (freshman), 113-Tyler Chappell (soph), 120-Hunter Swedish (senior), 126-N/A, 132-Dylan Chappell (senior), 138-N/A, 145-Alejandro Herrera-Rondon, 152-Chanz Shearer (senior), 160-Antonio Amelio (senior), 172-N/A, 189-Liam Volk-Klos (junior), 215-N/A, 285-Seneca Harney (senior)

Best Of 3 Worlds

Butler's Hartung paid to work while extending school, wrestling

[John Enrietto - Eagle Staff Writer](#) - December 23, 2020 High School Wrestling



Butler graduate Caleb Hartung, right, looking to power through a move in this high school match, is building a welding career while furthering his wrestling career at The Apprentice School in Newport News, Va.

EAGLE FILE PHOTO

NEWPORT NEWS, Va. — Leave it to big brother. With his family gathered around the dinner table one night, Caleb Hartung was talking about his wrestling future.

His older brother and former college football player Nate came up with his destination. “Nate knew someone who attended The Apprentice School (in Virginia) and he thought they had a wrestling program there,” said Caleb, a 2020 Butler graduate. “He checked into it and they did offer wrestling.”

The pieces fell into place for Hartung from there. He was in the welding program at the

Butler Vo-Tech. Butler competed at the Virginia Duals last season — a high school and college event The Apprentice School also attended.

“We were able to take a look at Caleb on the mat and visit with him as well,” Apprentice School coach Micah Amrozowicz said. “We were highly impressed with him as a wrestler and with his character.” Despite not getting started in wrestling until junior high, Hartung found a home in the sport — among other things — for the next four years.

The Apprentice School competes in the National Collegiate Wrestling Association, an organization with as many teams, if not more, than NCAA Division III. The Apprentice School is one of 36 NCWA Division I wrestling programs — Washington, Toledo, Florida, Arizona, Temple and Colorado State among them — and there are 50 Division II programs in the organization.

Hartung was among a 12-wrestler recruiting class this year that included matmen from North Carolina, Delaware, Georgia and Texas. “There are no pushovers here,” Hartung said of The Apprentice School team. “There is a lot of talent in the room.” That room is empty for the time being as The Apprentice School pulled the plug on its 2020-21 wrestling season in mid-October. “That was a company decision,” Amrozowicz said. “There are 20,000 employees in this company. We are a business first, a school second and wrestling comes third.”

Hartung has no problem with the pecking order. "I feel like I'm getting the best of three worlds," he said. By attending The Apprentice School, Hartung becomes a paid employee of Newport News Shipbuilding. He works from 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. three days a week and goes to welding school two days a week. He is in a four-to-seven year program and still has four years of wrestling eligibility after this year.

The Apprentice School has won the USCAA National Invitational Tournament three straight years. The Builders finished second in the Mid-Atlantic Conference Championships last year, trailing only Liberty. "We have a national finalist coming back at 235 pounds," Amrozowicz said. "I can see Caleb taking the 197-pound spot, though he'll have the chance to compete for the No. 1 spot at whatever weight class he desires. "Either way, I see Caleb being a four-year starter for us."

Hartung's high school career got off to a slow start as he tore a tendon in his thumb during his sophomore year. He was 7-9 that season. He followed that year up with a 25-14 mark as a junior before blossoming his senior season with a 33-10 record. "He had no real talent coming in (to high school)," Butler coach Scott Stoner said of Hartung's wrestling ability. "He was a crazy, off the wall kind of kid. "But in the practice room, he really took focus. He stayed after it, learned some moves that worked for him."

The Apprentice School accepts roughly 220 out of every 4,000 applicants, an acceptance rate comparable to Yale and Harvard. Eighty-two percent of the school's graduates stay on with Newport News Shipbuilding for at least 10 years. "I don't have to do as much work recruiting wrestlers as other schools do," Amrozowicz said. "People find us. No other school has this type of set-up. Our graduates don't have to go out and look for a career. They already have one if they choose to stay." Hartung plans to weigh his options once he completes his schooling.

"If I like it down here, I'll just stay here," he said. "Otherwise, I may go back to Pennsylvania and start my own business there. "It's a nice situation to be in." He still has wrestling ambitions as well. "I want to get on the podium before I'm done here," Hartung said, referencing the NCWA Championships. "The ultimate, of course, is getting to the top."

Not bad for a guy who had seven wrestling wins halfway through his high school career. "Caleb found the perfect fit," Stoner said. "He knew what he wanted to do and went after it. He's put himself in a great situation."

Road to 100 wins becomes bumpy

Delayed wrestling season may cost Green, McMaster

John Enrietto - Eagle Staff Writer - December 26, 2020 High School Wrestling



Butler's Nate McMaster scores a takedown during a match against Mars last season. The Golden Tornado senior needs 22 wins to reach 100 in his wrestling career.

EAGLE FILE PHOTO

BUTLER TWP — Opportunity is knocking for Steven Green and Nate McMaster. Problem is, they may not be permitted to answer the door. The Butler senior wrestlers are closing in on the 100-win plateau in their high school careers. Green needs 13 more

wins and McMaster needs 22. Only 10 wrestlers in the program's history have reached 100 wins. With the high school wrestling season currently shut down by Gov. Tom Wolf's COVID-19 mandate, quests to attain records on the mat remain in limbo.

"I don't know when we're coming back, how many matches we're going to have," Green said. "If I fail to get to 100 because I lost some matches this year, that's one thing. "If I don't even get to wrestle 13 matches ... that would be disappointing." Green has been wrestling since fifth grade. He will not be wrestling after this season as he plans to pursue a civil engineering degree at Slippery Rock University. "That part of my life will be behind me," Green said of wrestling.

He is 87-37 in his career. Green is fifth all-time in Butler history with 188 takedowns. Garrett Boarts is the program's career leader with 231. Green also ranks among Butler's career top 10 in pins, reversals and two-point near-falls. "The 100 wins and the takedown record are what I've had my eye on," the two-time WPIAL qualifier admitted.

McMaster is 78-43 in his high school career. He did not enter the sport until junior high. McMaster is 11th on the Golden Tornado's all-time pin list and ranks seventh with 89 escapes. He needs 12 escapes to move into fourth on Butler's list. "I worked hard all summer long for this season, just praying there would be one," McMaster said. "Yeah, 100 wins is important to me. But at this point, I just want us to have a season."

McMaster's wrestling career got started by Tornado mat coach Scott Stoner seeing him in gym class. "I like being around these guys when they're younger. I've found a number of wrestlers that way," Stoner said. "I can see the potential in them."



Butler Steven Green gets a reversal on Armstrong Hunter Turner in the 145lb match during a wrestling match at Butler Intermediate High School on Wednesday January 2 .2019.

JUSTIN GUIDO PHOTO

Stoner admitted that he's struggling with the delay to the start of the wrestling season. "It keeps me awake at night sometimes," the coach said. "It crushes me to see these kids not being able to do this. "All of these wrestlers put so much work in, so much effort. It's difficult because there's so much heartbreak out there right

now and this is another part of it." Stoner added that he takes the time to compile Butler wrestling's career and single-season accomplishments because "leaving their mark means a lot to these kids."

McMaster hopes to wrestle at Waynesburg University at some point — maybe after spending a year at Butler County Community College. He remains hopeful of getting a full wrestling season in for his senior year, so he can take a shot at 100 wins. "If the season's cut short, it would really sting because I've worked for it," he said.

Stoner has been sending out workout videos — some featuring Olympic mat great Cary Kolat — to his team during the shutdown. In the meantime, the wrestlers have been trying to stay in mat shape on their own. "Following the videos, going down in the basement and making room to work out. running sprints, whatever I can do," McMaster said. "I've been doing workout videos on YouTube and a lot of running," Green said, "and trying to play as few video games as possible."

Both want to qualify for the PIAA Tournament this year. Neither has gotten there yet and with the possibility of only eight wrestlers per weight class qualifying from across the state in a likely revised season, both are facing long odds. "It's going to be a grind," Green said. "But wrestling prepares you to deal with such barriers in life. I'll always appreciate this sport for that."

McMaster is a three-time WPIAL qualifier. "Place among the top three in the section, get back down there (WPIAL tournament) and get after it," McMaster said. "I want this year to be my best year."

Stoner has that same goal for the duo. "Their backgrounds in the sport are so different, but they've worked for everything they've gotten," the coach said.

Butler wrestlers pin 6 in victory over Mt Lebanon 52-17

January 11, 2021 - High School Wrestling

High School Roundup

Butler recorded six pins — including one in overtime — on its way to a season-opening 52-17 wrestling win Saturday at Mt. Lebanon. The Golden Tornado's Clayton Dressler won by pin-fall 24 seconds into overtime at 145 pounds. Other Butler pins were scored by Kelley Schaukowitzsch at 113 pounds, Domenic Vivirito at 138, Cade Savochka at 152, Steven Green at 160 and Jake Pomykata at heavyweight.

Butler hosts West Allegheny at 7 p.m. Wednesday. The Golden Tornado will host their Junior High Duals at noon Saturday in the high school gym. That will be followed by varsity dual meets against Beaver and Gateway at 5 p.m., also in the high school gym.

Butler 52, Mt. Lebanon 17 (Match started at 215 pounds)

106-Ana Malovich (B) by forfeit; 113-Kelley Schaukowitzsch (B) pinned Grant Elder, 3:05; 120-Joseph Gamble (ML) pinned Aiden Plopi, 1:30; 126-James Duffy (ML) pinned Mark Kovokoski, 4:37; 132-Nick Schaukowitzsch (B) dec. Sean Coffman 13-3; 138-Domenic Vivirito (B) pinned Nick Basalacchi, 2:39; 145-Clayton Dressler (B) pinned Louis Pietrangelo in OT, 6:24; 152-Cade Savochka (B) pinned Nathan Sala, 3:00; 160-Steven Green (B) pinned Mustafa Ismael, :50; 172-Mickey Kreinbucher (B) dec. Patrick Dunn 6-1; 189-Maclane Stout (ML) tech. fall over Cooper Baxter, 19-4; 215-Nolan Mosher (B) dec. Alex Tambourakis, 6-4 in OT; Hwt.-Jake Pomykata (B) pinned Ben Streiff, 1:36

Butler 45, Hampton 23 — The Golden Tornado (2-0) received pins from Nick Schaukowitzsch and Steven Green in this road match. Butler will host Franklin Regional, Burrell and Greenville in a round-robin junior high duals match at 11 a.m. Saturday in the high school gym. The Golden Tornado varsity will follow with matches against Beaver and Burrell at 5 p.m.

Butler 45, Hampton 23 (Match started at 215 pounds)

106-Kelley Schaukowitzsch (B) by forfeit; 113-Ana Malovich (B) by forfeit; 120-Aiden Plopi (B) by forfeit; 126-Caleb Rhin (H) tech. fall over Mark Kovokoski, 5:54 (17-2); 132-Nick Schaukowitzsch (B) pinned Alan Danner, 1:00; 138-Domenic Vivirito (B) by forfeit; 145-Nate McMaster (B) by forfeit; 152-Cade Savochka (B) dec. Jon Maguire 10-7; 160-Steven Green (B) pinned Seamus McLaughlin, 3:38; 172-Jayden Resch (H) dec. Mickey Kreinbucher 5-0; 189-Justin Hart (H) pinned Cooper Baxter, 1:06; 215-Conrad Herold (H) dec. Nolan Mosher 7-3; Hwt.-Dawson Dietz (H) pinned Jake Pomykata, 1:09

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Butler County's great daily newspaper

Wrestling

Cooper Baxter won matches by technical fall and pinfall while Jake Pomykata won by pinfall and injury default Saturday as Butler split a pair of dual matches in the high school gym.

The Golden Tornado defeated Beaver, 70-6, getting pins from Nick Schaukowitsch, Domenic Vivirito, Baxter and Pomykata. Butler then dropped a 36-35 decision to WPIAL Class AA power Burrell.

Nate McMaster and Steven Green had pins in that match.

Butler travels to Seneca Valley Wednesday night and will compete in the Southmoreland Duals Saturday.

Burrell 36, Butler 35

(Match started at 152 pounds)

106-Ana Malovich (B) by forfeit; 113-Cooper Hornack (Bur) pinned Kelley Schaukowitsch, 2:27; 120-Nicholas Ferra (Bur) pinned Aiden Plopi, 1:05; 126-Mark Kovokoski (B) by forfeit; 132-Nick Salerno (bur) dec. Nick Schaukowitsch, 10-4; 138-Ian Oswalt (Bur) pinned Clayton Dressler, :44; 145-Aaton Edwards (bur) dec. Domenic Vivirito, 9-2; 152-Nate McMaster (B) pinned Adam Gimbel, 3:39; 160-AJ Corrado (Bur) pinned Cade Savochka, 1:54; 172-Steven Green (B) pinned Colby Christie, 1:02; 189-Dylan Slahovsky (Bur) pinned Mickey Kreinbacher, 3:55; 215-Cooper Baxter (B) tech. fall over Cole Clark, 5:32 (16-1); Hwt.-Jake Pomykata (B) injury default over Aiden Black

Butler 70, Beaver 6

(Match started at 106 pounds)

106-Kelley Schaukowitsch (B) by forfeit; 113-Ana Malovich (B) by forfeit; 120-Aiden Plopi (B) by forfeit; 126-Nick Schaukowitsch (B) pinned Dalton Summers, 3:28; 132-Nick Thompson (Bea) pinned Mark Kovokoski, 2:41; 138-Domenic Vivirito (B) pinned Josh Gilliam, 4:52; 145-Nate McMaster (B) by forfeit; 152-Cade Savochka (B) by forfeit; 160-Steven Green (B) by forfeit; 172-Mickey Kreinbacher (B) dec. Alex Snowden, 11-3; 189-Cooper Baxter (B) pinned Liam Gibson, 2:24; 215-Nolan Mosher (B) by forfeit; Hwt.-Jake Pomykata (B) pinned Mark Ramer, 1:55



Jake of all trades

Pomykata more than a wrestler at Butler High

John Enrietto*Eagle Staff Writer* - January 20, 2021 High School Wrestling



BUTLER TWP — When it comes to multi-tasking, Jake Pomykata is a seasoned veteran. The Butler junior has been involved in band since elementary school. He's played football for nine years, been a wrestler for seven. He also has the third-longest throw in the discus in Butler Junior High history. "That's my claim to fame," he said, smiling.

For now. The 6-foot, 245-pound Pomykata carries a 4.18 grade point average. He participates in academic games at school as well, competing in cube and trivia games. A third-year starter in wrestling, he is off to a 3-1 start as the Golden Tornado's heavyweight. Pomykata was 16-12 his freshman year, 18-15 last season.

"We move him into different spots against different opponents and Jake just handles it," Butler wrestling coach Scott Stoner said. "He attacks everything he does." "He simply wears down his opponents. He wills himself to wins."

Pomykata throws the shot put and discus for the Tornado track team. He is a two-way lineman in football, playing guard, center and tackle at times offensively, tackle and end on the defensive side of the ball. He was named a team captain in football last fall. "Jake can play so many positions. He's versatile on both sides of the ball," Butler football coach Eric Christy said. "Jake epitomizes what we look for in a high school kid. "He carries a full plate all the time, yet never complains. He's all about the team, all about the school."

He even performs at halftime. While his football teammates and coaches are in the locker room discussing strategy and adjustments at halftime, Pomykata scoops up his tuba and takes the field with the marching band.

"I don't do the pregame show," he said. "But when the first half ends, I take off the shoulder pads, slip my jersey back on and go out there with the band." The band practices each Wednesday at 4 p.m. Pomykata never misses. "We do a lot of special teams work on Wednesdays during the season," Christy said. "Jake's not really involved with that. When we do work on plays that day, it gives us an opportunity to work in another lineman. "Jake's an intelligent kid. He picks up on things quickly. After halftime, we relay any adjustments pertinent to him. He just gets it."

Pomykata says he gets about a five-minute break between the end of the band's performance and the start of the second half. "I have enough time to grab a water or Gatorade, gather myself a little bit," he said. He played tenor saxophone for a couple of years before switching over to the tuba. "The band director asked me to switch — and I always wanted to play the tuba," Pomykata said.

A few years ago, he figured he'd have to choose between playing in the marching band and playing football. As soon as he learned he could do both? "If I don't have to choose ... why choose," Pomykata said. Being involved in so many activities may open up college options for Pomykata. At least, that's his plan. He's hoping to either play football or compete in track and field at the next level. Butler boys track coach Mike Seybert said Pomykata will be the Tornado's No. 1 discus thrower this spring.

He suffered a knee injury that required surgery last year "and probably would have missed the outdoor season anyway," Seybert said. The season was canceled by the COVID-19 outbreak regardless. "Jake lifted (weights) on his own and pushed hard to make it back in time for football," Seybert said. "If anything, that kid works too hard and that's a good problem to have." In terms of football, "the Ivy League may be available to him, or Division II or III," Christy said.

Stoner hopes he doesn't rule out wrestling. "When it comes to high school heavyweights, a lot of them choose football as their college sport," Stoner said. "Collegiate wrestling coaches often go searching for heavyweights. Jake could fill a void there for somebody. "That option will be on the table for him." As will others.

"Jake Pomykata is using his high school years to experience a lot of things," Christy said. "With that work-ethic comes versatility and opportunity. That's what I love about the kid.

"He should serve as an example to others."



Rich get richer

Santos adds to powerful Seneca Valley wrestling squad's 46-18 win over Butler

Derek Pyda - Eagle Staff Writer - January 21, 2021 High School Wrestling



Seneca's Valley's Manuel Santos holds Butler's Mickey Kreinbacher in check during his 12-2 decision Wednesday night. The Raiders defeated Butler, 46-18, in their dual wrestling match.

SEB FOLTZ/BUTLER EAGLE

JACKSON TWP — Manuel Santos had wrestled for eight years in Puerto Rico prior to his move to the Seneca Valley School District six months ago. It was not surprising he joined the Raiders' team, but what could he offer a program that has become one of the best in the state in recent years?

A lot, as it turns out.

A junior competing at 172 pounds, Santos improved his record to 8-1 this season with a 12-2 major decision Wednesday night over Butler's Mickey Kreinbacher. The bout was part of SV's dominant 46-18 triumph.

"I'm really close with Alejandro (Herrera-Rondon, SV's senior star) and he told me before the season that the team is really good," Santos said through his translator, Diego Ochoa. "I felt some pressure joining the team, but I've enjoyed it. I like the team and the environment."

Raiders' coach Kevin Wildrick has been impressed with the effort turned in by Santos. "He had to get used to being on top and bottom because in international wrestling, you're always on your feet to start," Wildrick said. "There's a few other little things he needs to pick up, but he's done well and wrestles an exciting style."

The Raiders had already clinched the team win by the time Santos took the mat. The night began at 106 pounds and SV opened up a 24-3 lead after five bouts, including forfeit wins at 113 and 120.



Seneca Valley's Antonio Amelio attempts a takedown on Butler's Steven Green during the Raiders' 46-18 wrestling victory Wednesday night. Amelio won by a 3-0 decision.

SEB FOLTZ/BUTLER EAGLE

"We have some guys who are battling injuries," said Butler coach Scott Stoner. "Plus, there's a lot of talent on Seneca's roster."

Earning pins for the Raiders (9-0) were Connor Smith at 106 pounds and Herrera-Rondon at 152.

SV finished second in the WPIAL Class 3A team tournament the last two years, including a 3-point loss to Waynesburg in last year's final.

Wildrick's squad has also reached the state quarterfinals twice and the semifinals once over the last three seasons. He likes the make-up of this team and believes it can add to the program's recent run of success. "Only the (WPIAL) team champion will probably make it to states, if that tournament is even held, so who knows about that," said Wildrick. "But this is a great group of guys who have wrestled together for a long time."

One of Butler's four victories came from junior Cooper Baxter at 189 pounds, where he earned a 5-1 decision over Liam Volk-Klos. Two years ago, Baxter was two wins away from making it to the state tournament. Last year, he was just one win shy. "He's putting in the work, doing the little things to make himself better," said Stoner. "He's really pushing himself."

"The ultimate goal is to win a state championship," said Baxter, who held a slim 2-1 edge on Volk-Klos after two periods before earning an escape and takedown in the final period. "This year, it would be great to get on the podium (top eight) at states."

Baxter is also a star quarterback for the Golden Tornado's football team. "Back in the spring and early summer, I really didn't get much work in specific to a sport," he said. "I just tried to get bigger, stronger and faster."

Domenic Vivirito (138 pounds) and Jake Pomykata (285) both had pins for Butler (3-2). Both teams will be busy this weekend. Seneca Valley will compete at the Kiski Area Duals and Butler will be at the Southmoreland Duals.

Seneca Valley 46, Butler 18

(Match started at 106 pounds)

106-Connor Smith (SV) pinned Ana Malovich, 5:45; 113-Tyler Chappell (SV) won by forfeit; 120-Hunter Swedish (SV) won by forfeit; 126-Nick Schaukowsch (B) dec. Jacob Eubanks, 4-0; 132-Dylan Chappell (SV) won by forfeit; 138-Domenic Vivirito (B) pinned Wayne Pirt, 1:49; 145-Chanz Shearer (SV) dec. Nate McMaster, 9-2; 152-Alejandro Herrera-Rondon (SV) pinned Cade Savochka, 1:51; 160-Antonio Amelio (SV) dec. Steven Green, 3-0; 172-Manuel Santos (SV) major dec. Mickey Kreinbacher, 12-2; 189-Cooper Baxter (B) dec. Liam Volk-Klos, 5-1; 215-TJ Border (SV) won by forfeit; 285-Jake Pomykata (B) pinned Sennaca Harney, 4:45

Butler wrestlers win duals at Southmoreland

Baxter named top matman for the event

January 25, 2021 High School Wrestling

Cooper Baxter put together an efficient performance Saturday as Butler's wrestling team won the Southmoreland Duals.

The Golden Tornado's 189-pound junior pinned all five of his opponents while earning the event's Most Outstanding Wrestler Award. Levi Donnel at 132 pounds and Nick Schaukowitsch at 126 also won all five of their matches for the Tornado.

Butler (8-2) won all five of its dual meets, defeating North Star 41-26, Elizabeth-Forward 43-18, Beth-Center 44-24, Derry 53-16 and Greensburg Salem 51-18.

Ana Malovich, at 106 pounds, went 4-1 and picked up her first two varsity wins as an active wrestler. She has a few wins by forfeit this season. Domenic Vivirito, Steven Green and Nate McMaster also went 4-1 for the Tornado.

"Five matches in a day is pretty taxing," Butler coach Scott Stoner said. "I was pleased with how well we wrestled against Greensburg Salem in the finals. Their kids are always tough.

"Levi Donnel was a force ... he was a motor for us. Cooper had an outstanding day, but Levi was right there, too. This was the best overall wrestling we've done as a team so far this season."

Butler hosts New Castle at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday in the Intermediate High School gym.

The Butler Junior High wrestling team has gotten off to a great start this season. The squad opened the season with a 67-6 win over Mount Lebanon. The Golden Tornado then hosted their 15th annual Junior High Duals, defeating Burrell 60-18, Franklin Regional 60-10, and North Allegheny 49-18. Last week, they traveled to Kiski for a quad-dual. They defeated Kiski 53-30 and Franklin Regional 45-30.

This past weekend, Butler traveled to the Monroville Convention Center for the Junior High Matt Madness' Tournament. The Golden Tornado scored 230 team points to win the 22-team tournament. Canon McMillan was second with 191 points. Santino Sloboda at 80 pounds, Dawson Davis 1st at 130 and Diamond Cantera at 210 all took home first place. Nicanor Andrada was the runner-up at 170. Kase Chop at 108, Matt McCombs 145, Ethan DeLess 170 and Eli Prentice at 250 lbs earned third place. Sutton Stoner at 101, Jaydon Mattingly 155, Layne Zmijowski 170 and Braylon May at 190 all placed fifth. Billy Makepeace at 122 and Gavin Rush at 115 placed sixth. The Junior High GT have a busy week ahead of them. They wrestle New Castle Tuesday, Moon Wednesday, and Mars Friday.

Mat Moment

Plopi nets 1st career win in Butler's 57-9 romp

John Enrietto *Eagle Staff Writer* - January 27, 2021 High School Wrestling



Butler's Aiden Plopi versus New Castle's Noah Spencer in the 120-pound class Tuesday at Butler.

SEB FOLTZ/BUTLER EAGLE

BUTLER TWP — Victory was automatic Tuesday night for the Butler varsity wrestling team. For sophomore 120-pounder Aiden Plopi, victory was quite welcomed.

Plopi, who did not join the sport until last year, scored an 8-6 decision over New Castle's Noah Spencer during the Golden Tornado's 57-9 dual match win over the Red Hurricane.

New Castle, winless in duals this season, surrendered five matches to forfeit. Butler's Ana Malovich at 106 pounds, Kelly Schaukowitzsch at 113, Nate McMaster at 145 and Cooper Baxter at 189 won their matches by pin.

Plopi's win was “the highlight of the evening,” Butler coach Scott Stoner said. He had been winless in five matches this year and did not have his hand raised in approximately 20 bouts last season. “It's always fun to see someone get his first win,” Stoner said. “Aiden did what he had to do to pull it out.”

Plopi wiped out deficits three times during the match, scoring the tying takedown to force overtime during the final minute of the third period. He secured the winning takedown less than a minute into overtime. “Yeah, that felt pretty good,” Plopi said of the winning takedown. “I know I have a long way to go, though.”

“My goal is to eventually become a .500 wrestler. Just win as many as I lose.” Plopi said he became a wrestler “when they pulled me out of gym class.” “We still get a few of our kids that way,” Stoner said, smiling.

Malovich and Schaukowitzsch got the night started by securing their pins for the Tornado. “It's always important to get the team off to a positive start when you're involved in one of the first matches,” Schaukowitzsch said. “Even if you lose, you want to at least wrestle well to help set a tone.” Butler hasn't been doing much losing lately.

The Tornado are 9-2 in dual matches this year and are coming off winning the Southmoreland Dual Tournament championship over the weekend. “We wrestled so well in the finals of that

tournament, I almost expected somewhat of a letdown tonight,” Stoner admitted. “But overall, I thought we wrestled well. “Without the stellar competition, there wasn't a whole lot of action happening on the mat. That makes it tough to gauge things.”

New Castle weighed in only nine wrestlers. Seven of them competed. “Our numbers are down,” New Castle coach Bruce Allen said. “COVID has really hurt our team this year. Not many kids came out for the team.”

“I feel like this team has a lot of potential,” McMaster said. “Our lineup is deep and we've been wrestling consistently well. “I don't pay attention to the (team) score when it's my turn to. It's me against the other guy. That's how I look at it. “This is Western Pennsylvania. You know you're going to run into quality opponents and you have to be ready for them.”

Butler wrestles at Moon Wednesday night, then at Mars on Friday. The Tornado host West Allegheny next Tuesday. Moon and West Allegheny are the Tornado's final two section meets. Butler is 2-1 in section competition.

Butler 57, New Castle 9

(Match started at 106 pounds)

106-Ana Malovich (B) pinned Kortel Marshal, 3:16; 113-Kelley Schaukowitzsch (B) pinned Lakim Petronelis, 2:46; 120-Aiden Plopi (B) dec. Noah Spencer, 8-6 in OT; 126-Nick Schaukowitzsch (B) by forfeit; 132-Levi Donnel (B) by forfeit; 138-Jonah Miller (NC) dec. Domenic Vivirito, 10-4; 145-Nate McMaster (B) pinned Giovanni Carlucci, 1:44; 152-Cameron Hooks (NC) pinned Cade Savochka, 4:24; 160-Steven Green (B) by forfeit; 172-Mickey Kreinbacher (B) by forfeit; 189-Cooper Baxter (B) pinned Noah Shields, 1:52; 215-No match; Hwt.-Jake Pomykata (B) by forfeit



Butler Eagle

Butler County's great daily newspaper

Wrestling January 29, 2021

Domenic Vivirito at 138 pounds, Nate McMaster at 145, Cade Savochka at 152 and Steven Green at 160 had pins as Butler defeated Moon, 55-15.

The Golden Tornado (10-2) travel to Mars Friday.

Butler 55, Moon 15

(Match started at 172 pounds)

106-Kelly Schaukowitzsch (B) by forfeit; 113-Ava Malovich (B) by forfeit; 120-Charles Trimber (M) pinned Aiden Plopi, :35; 126-Nick Schaukowitzsch (B) by forfeit; 132-Khyvon Grace (M) dec. Levi Donnel, 5-4 in OT; 138-Domenic Vivirito (B) pinned Ryan Trimber, :57; 145-Nate McMaster (B) pinned Azady Tachmuhammedov, 2:13; 152-Cade Savochka (B) pinned Josh Bladel, 2:43; 160-Stevfen Green (B) pinned James Spellman, 2:53; 172-Mickey Kreinbucher (B) by forfeit; 189-Cooper Baxter (B) dec. Dalton Dobbs, 15-4; 215-Connor Linsey (M) by forfeit; Hwt.-Jake Pomykata (B) dec. Andrew Sampson, 7-0

Butler Eagle

Butler County's great daily newspaper

Wrestling January 30, 2021

Domenic Vivirito (138 pounds) earned a pin in 52 seconds to highlight a combined six falls and major decisions by Butler in a 66-9 win over Mars.

Clayton Dressler (145), Steve Green (160) and Jake Pomykata (heavyweight) also earned pins for the Golden Tornado.

Levi Donnel (132) and Nate McMaster (152) had major decisions.

Butler 66, Mars 9

(Match started at 132 pounds)

106-Kelley Schaukowitzsch (B) by forfeit; 113-Ana Malovich (B) by forfeit; 120-Griffin Frazier (M) pinned Aiden Plopi (B) 1:53; 126-Rocco Darocy (M) dec. Nick Schaukowitzsch (B) 5-4; 132-Levi Donnel (B) maj. dec. Braden Krul 15-2; 138-Domenic Vivirito (B) pinned Jonathan Grieco :52; 145-Clayton Dressler (B) pinned Connor Hartzel 3:11; 152-Nate McMaster (B) maj. dec. Christian Scheller 12-3; 160-Steve Green (B) pinned Eli Wright 2:38; 172-Mickey Kreinbucher (B) by forfeit; 189-Cooper Baxter (B) by forfeit; 215-No match; Hwt.-Jake Pomykata (B) pinned Riley Lefcakis 2:17

Butler's lone girl grappler is eager to compete

Freshman Malovich has held her own on mat this season

[John Enrietto](#) Eagle Staff Writer - January 30, 2021 High School



Butler's Ana Malovich squares off against Seneca Valley's Connor Smith in their 106-pound bout Jan. 20. Malovich is 11-2 this season, but winning isn't what it's all about for the freshman varsity wrestler and lone girl on the team. Competing is.

SEB FOLTZ/BUTLER EAGLE

BUTLER TWP — Winning isn't what it is all about for Ana Malovich. Competing is.

Malovich, a freshman Butler varsity wrestler and the lone female on the team, is 11-2 this

season. Wrestling at 106 or 113 pounds, seven of her wins are by forfeit. "It's very frustrating," Malovich said. "I want to wrestle." Opponents aren't forfeiting to Malovich because of her gender. Two of her four on-mat wins this season have come by pin-fall. "Ana is very competitive. She can hold her own out there," Butler coach Scott Stoner said. "It's just that a lot of teams don't have wrestlers to fill those lighter weight classes."

Malovich has been wrestling since the age of 5. She got into the sport through watching her older brother, Donovan, wrestle for the Golden Tornado a few years back. Without a girls team in the Butler system, she's grown up wrestling with the boys. She was 21-8 in seventh grade, 14-11 last year. As she gets older, Malovich admits taking on male opponents on the mat is getting more challenging.

"The strength difference is getting bigger," she said. "I have to rely on my fundamental skills a lot more. There are moves I can do against another girl that I have to avoid when I'm wrestling a guy. "I'm still confident. I still believe I can win."

So does her partner in the Butler wrestling room, Kelley Schaukowitsch. Those two battle in wrestle-offs during practice to see who wrestles where in the matches. The winner wrestles at 106 pounds, the loser at 113. "She's a good wrestler," Kelley said. "She's got technical skills and knows how to execute her moves. She knows what she's doing on the mat. "Ana is a serious wrestler. Everybody on the team respects that."

Butler Junior High coach Donnie Geibel said Malovich is “as an intense a wrestler as I've ever coached. She competes in the sport year-round and that experience shows.” During the spring and summer, Malovich competes in female wrestling tournaments and often leaves the state to do so. She's participated in tournaments in Texas, Wisconsin and Virginia, among other states. She placed at the Body Bar Nationals — a girls tournament in Texas — in 2019 and was a prime contender to do so again in 2020 before that event fell victim to COVID-19.

“My goal is to wrestle Division I in college,” Malovich declared. How she gets there remains a mystery. A movement is under way to form a girls wrestling team at Butler. North Allegheny formed such a team recently. The Golden Tornado could field a girls team as soon as next year. “With all the COVID stuff going on, our efforts are on hold right now,” Stoner said. “But, yeah, that's still possible.”

“If we had a girls team and wrestled (as part of a dual match doubleheader) with the boys team, could Ana wrestle for the girls, then come back out and wrestle for the boys team? Details like that still have to be worked out.”

Malovich claims Butler would have little trouble putting together a roster for a girls wrestling team. “I know six or seven girls personally who would definitely do it,” she said. “They'd be wrestling for the school right now ... they just don't want to wrestle against the boys. “I'll do whatever I have to do. If I have to wrestle on the boys' team all four years ... I'm going to keep wrestling. This team is like my second family.”

Geibel described the potential formation of a girls team as a “double-edged sword” where Ana is concerned. “Any wrestler improves through good competition,” Geibel pointed out. “As these girls wrestling teams are formed (in Pennsylvania), a lot of those kids are going to be first-year wrestlers with very raw skills. Ana could dominate, but that may not help her development as a wrestler.”

Malovich pinned New Castle's Kortel Marshal in the second period last week after building a sizable lead. “I think it's great,” New Castle coach Bruce Allen said of her wrestling. “I wish there were more of them. That girl is good. “She may go a long way in this sport.”



Trib HSSN WPIAL wrestling team rankings for Feb. 2, 2021

By: [Paul Schofield](#) - Tuesday, February 2, 2021 | 11:22 AM



Nate Smallwood | Tribune-Review

Seneca Valley's Chanz Shearer wrestles Waynesburg's Wyatt Henson in the 145-pound weight class final of the Powerade Wrestling Tournament on Jan. 30, 2021, at Monroeville Convention Center.

[Here's a look at the latest Trib HSSN wrestling team rankings through Feb. 1, 2021:](#)

Class AAA Team Rankings (48 teams) Rank, Team Record, Previous Rank

1. Waynesburg, 8-0, 1
2. Seneca Valley, 14-1, 2
3. Hempfield, 9-0, 3
4. Franklin Regional, 16-3, 4
5. Norwin, 4-1, 7
6. North Allegheny, 11-1, 5
7. Butler, 11-2, 8
8. Canon-McMillan, 7-4, 6
9. Thomas Jefferson, 8-1, 10
10. Penn-Trafford, 10-6, NR

Out: Latrobe (4-4, 9)
Paul Schofield is a Tribune-Review Staff Writer. You can contact Paul by email at pschofield@triblive.com or via Twitter .

Butler's Green notches 100th career win

Tornado senior becomes 10th wrestler in program history to reach milestone

John Enrietto Eagle Staff Writer - February 16, 2021 High School Wrestling



Butler senior wrestler Steven Green, left, shares a moment with coach Scott Stoner after notching his 100th career win with the Golden Tornado Saturday.

JOHN ENRIETTO/BUTLER EAGLE

BUTLER TWP — An iconic senior day, to be sure.

Butler 160-pound senior wrestler Steven Green recorded his 100th career victory Saturday in the high school gym, scoring an 18-3 technical fall against Bethel Park's Anthony Zaborowski.

He followed that up with a 3-2 decision of Indiana's Jack Turner, scoring an escape with a minute remaining to decide that match. Turner took a 10-1 record into that bout.

Green is 14-2 on the season. His career record is 101-37. He became the 10th Butler wrestler to secure 100 wins.

"It all came together perfectly," Green said. "To get the 100th on Senior Day and to do it in our high school gym, where we rarely get to wrestle ... I'll always remember this."

Butler (15-2) won both duals, defeating Bethel Park, 55-17, and Indiana, 55-9. But this day was about the seniors.

"I'm just thankful to have the opportunity to wrestle this year," Green said. "Everything's been so crazy. We just took one day at a time. We're still doing that. "I learned a long time ago not to worry about things that are out of my control."

Nick Schaukowitsch, Clayton Dressler, Nate McMaster and Green have combined to start for 15 years at the varsity level, tallying 327 wins in the process. Helana Graham, a senior statistician-manager with the team for three years, was recognized as well. "We've never had a senior class contribute to the varsity for as long as these guys have," Butler coach Scott Stoner said. "This is a special group, to be sure." All four picked up two wins on Saturday. Schaukowitsch (64-26 in his career) recorded a pin in 20 seconds. McMaster (90-46) won by pinfall and technical fall. Dressler (72-49) won by pinfall and major decision.

Only McMaster plans to wrestle in college. He will attend Butler County Community College for a year before pursuing a wrestling career at Waynesburg University. McMaster needs 10 wins to reach the 100-mark. Butler wrestles in the sub-section tourney Thursday at Seneca

Valley with the host Raiders, West Allegheny, New Castle, Moon and Beaver. The top two placers in each weight class advance to the section finals Saturday at North Allegheny.

"It may come down to the wire for Nate," Stoner said of his quest to reach 100. "It's going to be close. "He and Steven have different backgrounds. We pulled Nate out of gym class in seventh grade. Steven came up through our elementary program." McMaster said of 100 wins: "If it's meant to be, it's meant to be." He's happy, regardless.

"I'm going to have more than 90 wins and I'm proud of that," he said. "I'm grateful for the time we've gotten on the mat this year. "Steven is my practice partner in the room. I'm so happy for him. He's such a hard worker, so driven. No one deserves this (100 wins) more than him."

Butler 55, Bethel Park 17

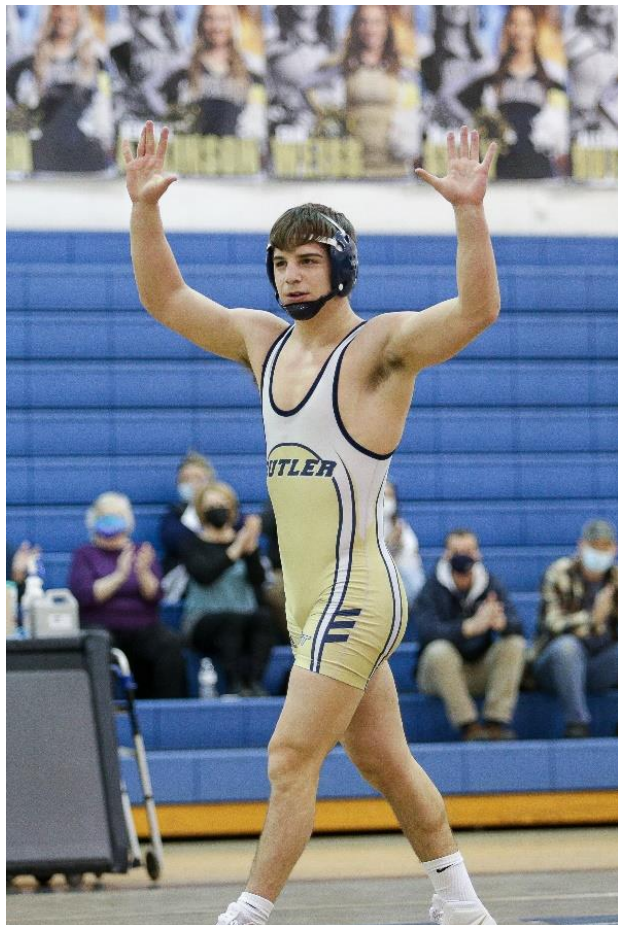
(Match started at 106 pounds)

106-Aiden Bench (BP) pinned Kelley Schaukowsch, 3:14 ; 113-Mason Kernan (BP) by forfeit; 120-Rocc Del Greco (BP) tech. fall over Aiden Plopi, 15-0 ; 126-Nick Schaukowsch (B) pinned Kevin Collins, 1:38; 132-Levi Donnel (B) by forfeit; 138-Domenic Vivirito dec. Bryson Bench, 6-3; 145-Clayton Dressler (B) pinned AJ Tomaino, 3:25; 152-Nate McMaster (B) tech. fall over Dylan Wentz, 15-0; 160-Steven Green (B) tech. fall over Anthony Zaborowski, 18-3; 172-Mickey Kreinbucher (B) by forfeit; 189-Landon Christie (B) pinned Aidan Puskas, 1:06; 215-Cooper Baxter (B) pinned Logan Pettigrew, 1:54; Hwt.-Jake Pomykata (B) by forfeit

Butler 55, Indiana 9

(Match started at 126 pounds)

106-Kelley Schaukowsch (B) by forfeit; 113-No match; 120-Aiden Plopi (B) by forfeit; 126-Nick Schaukowsch (B) pinned Chris Norton, :20; 132-Levi Donnel (B) pinned Brock Petras, 3:11; 138-Domenic Vivirito (B) pinned Liam McFarlane, 3:23; 145-Clayton Dressler (B) dec. Will Turner, 14-3; 152-Nate McMaster (B) pinned Danny Turner, 2:33; 160-Steven Green (B) dec. Jack Turner, 3-2; 172-Brody Kunselman (I) pinned Mickey Kreinbucher, 3:33; 189-Landon Christie (B) pinned Jonathan Dietz, 1:19; 215-Cooper Baxter (B) pinned William Methven, :15; Hwt.-Tanner Smith (I) dec. Jake Pomykata, 3-0



Busy postseason begins on mat

Even more difficult for wrestlers to reach PIAA tourney

John Enrietto Eagle Staff Writer - February 17, 2021 High School Wrestling

Welcome to the year of the sub-section and Super Regions, wrestlers, brought to you courtesy of COVID-19.

The individual portion of Pennsylvania's high school wrestling postseason begins this week with matmen having to get through four (Class 3A) or five tournaments (2A) just to get to the PIAA Tournament.

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced wrestling to limit the size of postseason tournaments this season.

"It's harder to get there now than it ever has been," Butler coach Scott Stoner said of the state tourney. "Some of these kids are going to have to go through a lot of matches in a very short time."

Each team begins postseason action with a sub-section tournament — whereas each section is basically split in half. The top two placers in each weight class advance to the section tournaments this weekend.

Seneca Valley hosts a sub-section Thursday, joining Butler, Moon, New Castle, West Allegheny and Beaver. Sub-sections will use a round-robin format.

"If your weight class has a full bracket, you could be wrestling five times Thursday, then come back and wrestle three more times on Saturday," Stoner said. "That's rough."

Mars is in a sub-section with host North Allegheny, Pine-Richland, North Hills and Shaler.

"It's not an ideal set-up, but it beats the alternative — not wrestling at all," Mars coach Bob Jox said. "Every kid has a shot. Our goal is to get all of our kids through to the section tournament.

"The best high school wrestling in the country is in the WPIAL. There is no easy place to turn. You have to grind it out no matter what format they use. That's what we do every Wednesday night."

Knoch competes in Class AA and will be in a sub-section at Burrell that includes the Bucs, Valley, Riverview and South Allegheny. Class AA wrestlers need to get through the sub-section (top 2), section (top 2), WPIAL tournament (top 3), Southwest Regionals (top 5) and West Super Region (top 4) to reach the PIAA tourney.

"We've had to deal with adversity all year," Knoch coach Bob Waldron said. "But our guys have the opportunity to compete. That's what's most important.

"(Knoch senior) Eli Reese has been a heavyweight his entire high school career. He's dropped down to 215 for the postseason because that's his best shot at success. A number of wrestlers may be shuffling around like that."

Butler's Steven Green is bumping up to 172 pounds while Nate McMaster is moving up to 152.

The WPIAL Class AA tourney is Saturday at Canon-McMillan High School. The Class AAA tourney will be at Canon-Mac the following Saturday.

“They want to limit the number of teams and wrestlers at each tournament, so they've spread things thinner,” Seneca Valley coach Kevin Wildrick said. “It does create some interesting scenarios.

“In our sub-section, the 138, 152 and 189-pound weight classes are full brackets. Those kids are going to be busy Thursday.”

And only the top two move on.

“We've got a pretty talented kid in Levi Donnel at 132,” Stoner said. “But the Moon kid is very good at that weight class and there's (Dylan) Chappell at Seneca. Levi has his work cut out for him.”

At 189 pounds, Butler's Cooper Baxter and SV's Liam Volk-Klos could wrestle each other four or five times in the postseason.

“They may see a lot of each other ... and with a lot on the line each time,” Wildrick admitted. “I don't know if that's a good thing.”

The WPIAL Championships will only be an eight-wrestler bracket in each weight class. The AAA West Super Region — slated for March 6 in Altoona — and the PIAA Tournament will feature eight-man brackets as well.

“I know this set-up is designed to give wrestlers more matches and I get that,” Stoner said. “But the matches are against opponents they'll see over and over again.

“This is a one-year thing and it's a by-product of COVID. Everyone has to deal with it. I just hope it doesn't become a permanent change.”





County matmen extend seasons

High School Roundup - February 19, 2021 High School Wrestling

Butler and Seneca Valley got 10 wrestlers through the sub-section 3A wrestling tournament Thursday night at Seneca Valley High School. Mars got four wrestlers through the sub-section 3B tourney held at North Allegheny. The top two wrestlers in each weight class advanced to the section tournament this Saturday at North Allegheny.

Winning sub-section titles for Butler were Nick Schaukowitsch at 126 pounds, Steven Green at 172, Cooper Baxter at 189 and Jake Pomykata at 285. Seneca Valley sub-section champs were Tyler Chappell at 106, Connor Smith at 113, Dylan Chappell at 132, unbeaten Alejandro Herrera-Rondon at 152 and Antonio Amelio at 160. Mars' sub-section champs were Christian Scheller at 152 and Keith Brubach at 172.

Area section tourney qualifiers follow:

Butler-Kelly Schaukowitsch (106), Ana Malovich (113), Nick Schaukowitsch (126), Dom Vivirito (138), Clayton Dressler (145), Nate McMaster (152), Mickey Kreinbacher (160), Steven Green (172), Cooper Baxter (189), Jake Pomykata (285)

Mars-Rocco Darocy (126), Jonathan Grieco (138), Christian Scheller (152), Keith Brubach (172)

Seneca Valley-Tyler Chappell (106), Connor Smith (113), Hunter Swedish (120), Jacob Eubanks (126), Dylan Chappell (132), Alejandro Herrera-Rondon (152), Antonio Amelio (160), Manuel Santos (172), Liam Volk-Klos (189), Sennaca Harvey (285)



11 area wrestlers snare spots in WPIAL tourney

High School Roundup - February 22, 2021 High School Wrestling

Eleven Butler County wrestlers advanced to this weekend's WPIAL Class AAA Championships by placing among the top two in their respective weight classes Saturday at the Section 3 tournament at North Allegheny.

Winning section titles were Seneca Valley's Tyler Chappell at 106 pounds, Dylan Chappell at 132 and Alejandro Herrera-Rondon at 152. Herrera-Rondon is undefeated this season.

Butler's Cooper Baxter — who has not lost a match since beginning the season 0-2 — won the section crown at 189 pounds. The Golden Tornado's Jacob Pomykata won the heavyweight title. Keith Brubach of Mars won the section title at 172.

Finishing second and moving on to the WPIAL tourney were Seneca Valley's Connor Smith at 113 pounds, Liam Volk-Klos at 189 and Sennaca Harvey at heavyweight, Butler's Nick Schaukowitsch at 126 and Nate McMaster at 152.

The WPIAL tourney is Saturday at Canon-McMillan High School.

Triple Threats - SV's Herra-Rondon, Chappell brothers claim WPIAL wrestling championships

John Enrietto**Eagle Staff Writer**- March 1, 2021 High School Wrestling

CANONSBURG — A double trifecta, joined by a brother act. Seneca Valley put on quite a show during the WPIAL Class AAA Wrestling Championships Saturday at Canon-McMillan High School. Sophomore Tyler Chappell at 106 pounds, seniors Dylan Chappell at 132 and Alejandro Herrera-Rondon at 152 all won WPIAL championships for the Raiders. The trio advances to the West Regional this Saturday in Altoona.

They will be joined by Butler junior Cooper Baxter, who rallied from an overtime loss in the semifinals to take third place at 189 pounds. The top three placers in each weight class advanced.

Butler's Baxter took a 4-2 lead over second-seed Brayden Solar-Roscosky in the second period of their 189-pound semifinal, but surrendered a takedown in the third period and was taken down with 24 seconds left in the overtime period. Baxter rebounded to decision Seneca Valley's Liam Volk-Klos and Greater Latrobe's Corey Boerio to take third place and extend his season. "Cooper showed a lot of mental toughness there," Butler coach Scott Stoner said. "It's tough losing in the semifinals. Your whole focus has to shift."

Butler heavyweight Jake Pomykata reached the semifinals, but lost a 3-1 decision there, then got caught and pinned in the second round of consolations. Golden Tornado 152-pounder Nate McMaster was eliminated in the second round of consolations. McMaster ended his high school career with 95 wins.

"That's pretty good for a kid we pulled out of gym class (in junior high)," Stoner said. "I'm proud of him. If this was a normal year (non-COVID), he would have hit 100 easily." Nick Schaukowitz lost both of his matches at 126 for Butler.

Butler assistant Fred Powell was named winner of the WPIAL Assistant Wrestling Coach of the Year Award prior to the finals.

WPIAL Wrestling

Consolation Finals

189-Cooper Baxter (Butler) dec. Corey Boerio (Trinity), 7-2

Semifinals

189-Brayden Solar-Roscosky (Kiski Area) dec. Cooper Baxter (Butler), 6-4 in OT

285-William McChesney (Greensburg Salem) dec. Jake Pomykata (Butler), 3-1

2nd Round Consolations

152-Garrett Thompson (Franklin Regional) dec. Nate McMaster (Butler), 13-1

189-Cooper Baxter (Butler) dec. Liam Volk-Klos (SV), 11-3

285-Tyson Brophy (Trinity) pinned Jake Pomykata (Butler), 2:21

County wrestlers hitting home stretch in district finals WPIAL Titles will be decided Saturday

John EnriettoEagle Staff Writer - February 26, 2021 High School Wrestling

The marathon has become a sprint. The WPIAL Class AAA Wrestling Tournament — normally a three-day event — has been reduced to one day this year and a three-match run to district gold. “It seems like such a strange thing this year,” Butler coach Scott Stoner said. The tournament takes place Saturday at Canon-McMillan High School with eight wrestlers in each weight class. The top three move on to the West AAA Regional next weekend in Altoona.

Seneca Valley has six wrestlers in the tourney, including No. 1 seeds Tyler Chappell (28-2) at 106 pounds, Dylan Chappell (29-2) at 132 and Alejandro Herrera-Rondon (30-0) at 152. Dylan Chappell and Herrera-Rondon are defending WPIAL champions.

“You obviously feel good about having top seeds, but there is some added pressure there because you're expected to win,” SV coach Kevin Wildrick said. “But with this (eight-wrestler) set-up, everyone's in a good spot. “Alejandro has been strong all year. State-placer caliber kids he used to beat by a couple of points, he's beating now by major decision at times. He keeps getting better.” The Raiders' other WPIAL qualifiers are Connor Smith (27-4) at 113, Liam Volk-Klos (23-11) at 189 and Sennaca Harvey (21-10) at 285.

Butler's Cooper Baxter (19-2) is seeded third at 189 after beginning the season 0-2. One of his two losses is to Hampton's Justin Hart, the top seed at that weight class. “Cooper defeated Volk-Klos at the sub-section and section tournament,” Stoner said. “They will likely wrestle again at this tournament and may see each other in the regional and state meets. It's crazy.”

The Tornado's other WPIAL qualifiers are Nick Schaukowitsch (18-3) at 126, Nate McMaster (16-5) at 152 and Jake Pomykata (16-4) at 285. McMaster needs six wins to reach 100 for his career. “We lost a good 13 matches this year because of the shortened schedule or he'd be there now,” Stoner said. “Even if he doesn't get it, Nate is a guy we pulled out of gym class in junior high. He's got a lot to be proud of. “Nick Schaukowitsch is the same way. We pulled him out of gym class and now he's in the WPIAL Tournament, going up against a multi-time state placer.” Schaukowitsch wrestles Carter Dibert (27-0) of Franklin Regional in the first round. “A David and Goliath type match ... but hey, you take your shot,” Stoner said.

The 285-pound division features athletic standouts William McChesney (19-3) of Greensburg Salem and Isaiah Vance (27-1) of Hempfield. “Heavyweight wrestlers are the big swingers,” Stoner said. “They swing for the fence, but sometimes they strike out. “I'll say this ... no one works harder than Jake Pomykata. He's got some moves he may be able to have work for him.”

A lot of quality wrestlers fell short of the WPIAL tournament under this year's format. “I'm not a fan,” Wildrick said of this year's format. “I understand they did what they had to do under the circumstances this year, but some third-place kids didn't get out of the section because their weight class was particularly strong. “Those kids may be able to beat some of the guys in the WPIAL field, but won't get the chance now.”

Gutsy Baxter extends his mat season Tornado junior claims 3rd place at 189 Saturday

John Enrietto - Eagle Staff Writer - March 1, 2021 High School Wrestling



Butler junior Cooper Baxter (top), competing against New Castle here, placed third at 189 pounds at the WPIAL Class AAA Wrestling Championships Saturday.

EAGLE FILE PHOTO

CANONSBURG — 0-2? Butler junior 189-pound wrestler Cooper Baxter wasn't happy with the way his season got started. But he kept it all in perspective. "I wrestled two of the best in the WPIAL," Baxter said. "They showed me I had a lot of work to do."

Baxter's first match of the season was a loss by technical fall to Mt. Lebanon's Mac Stout. Baxter was pinned by Hampton's Justin Hart in his second bout of the year. Hart went on to win the WPIAL championship at 189 pounds Saturday. Stout, the overwhelming favorite to do so, had his season ended recently by an elbow injury.

"Cooper knew the quality of his first opponents," Butler coach Scott Stoner said. "He was never discouraged. Not at all. "He's used to facing pressure through sports." Besides sporting an 85-21 career record in wrestling, Baxter played quarterback and middle linebacker in football, plays shortstop and pitches for the Golden Tornado baseball team. And after losing those first two matches this year, he never lost again. Until Saturday. But he never lost focus.

Baxter began the WPIAL Tournament with a 10-4 decision of Greater Latrobe's Corey Boerio. It marked his 20th consecutive victory. He then faced No. 2 seed Brayden Solar-Roscosky (30-4) of Kiski Area in the semifinals and took a 4-2 lead into the third period. Solar-Roscosky took him down to knot the match in that final frame. Baxter nearly escaped his opponent's grasp in the waning seconds of regulation, which would have given him a 5-4 victory and a trip to the WPIAL Finals. Instead, he wound up dropping a 6-4 decision in overtime.

He was running away from Solar-Roscosky in those closing seconds, the latter desperately hanging on to his waist. "Just ran out of mat," Baxter said. "I was about to break free." Instead, the two went out of bounds with four seconds left and went into overtime. "Mat awareness is a big part of wrestling," Stoner said. "Cooper didn't have enough room and his opponent used that."

One more loss Saturday and Baxter's season was over. And he had to face two familiar opponents. He wrestled Seneca Valley's Liam Volk-Klos for the fourth time this season — third time in postseason — in the second round of consolations and scored an 11-3 decision. He then had a rematch with Boerio, this time winning by a 7-2 count to extend his season to this Saturday's West Regional in Altoona.

"I'll probably get a bad seed there and will face a big challenge early, but I'm looking forward to seeing how I stack up out there," Baxter said. "I'm going to have fun and see what happens." Stoner lauded Baxter's focus in his final two matches. "You lose in the semifinals and your chance of winning it is gone," the coach said. "Now you drop into the consolation bracket where guys have been winning, building steam, trying to extend their year.

"That can be a tough combination." Baxter wasn't having it. "I knew I had to be ready," he admitted. "Those guys were going to be hungry. Everyone always wants to take your spot. "You can't take anything for granted."

Baxter wants to compete in college. He just isn't sure in what sport. Nor is he worried about it. "Football, wrestling, baseball, I love all three sports equally," he said. "Whatever the college I go to wants me to do, I'll do." "I just want the competition at the next level. That's what I'm looking forward to most."

Youth wrestling set for Butler mats

March 6, 2021 - High School Wrestling

Butler Legacy Wrestling, an elementary-age program, takes place from Monday through May 8 at 234 East North Street in Butler.

New and lightweight wrestlers will be worked with from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Mondays and Wednesdays, experienced wrestlers from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays.

The program will take place in a new wrestling facility designed to teach youths the sport.

Contact gtwcoach@gmail.com or call 724-504-5241 for details.

Girl power

Desire grows for female HS wrestling teams

John EnriettoEagle Staff Writer - March 19, 2021 High School Wrestling



Butler's Ana Malovich, right, squares off against Seneca Valley's Connor Smith in a match Jan. 20. Several wrestling coaches in the area are hoping Pennsylvania will offer girls wrestling in the near future. - SEB FOLTZ/BUTLER EAGLE

The COVID-19 pandemic slowed down the SanctionPA movement to bring high school girls wrestling to the Keystone State. By no means was it stopped. "At this time last year, there were zero high schools in Pennsylvania offering girls wrestling as a sport," North Allegheny coach Dan Heckert said. "Despite the pandemic, from March to November, that number reached nine. "We're anticipating a few more next year. It's going to grow. It's a matter of time."

Heckert is on the SanctionPA task force. North Allegheny became the only high school on the western side of the state to have a girls wrestling team this year. The other eight Pa. schools offering the sport are JP McCaskey, Executive Academy, Easton, Central Mountain, Gettysburg, Annville-Cleona, Governor Mifflin and Brandywine Heights.

State senator Scott Martin (R-13), a former PIAA and national heavyweight wrestling champion, recently introduced a resolution designating this Sunday as Pennsylvania Girls Wrestling Day. The first girls state wrestling competition will be held at Spooky Nook in Lancaster County that day. JP McCaskey in that county was the first state high school to introduce girls wrestling as a varsity sport.

“We traveled east to compete this year,” Heckert said. “Roster numbers are low right now, so teams merged with each other to give the girls a feel for what a dual match is like.”

There has been a 30 percent increase in high school girls' participation in wrestling over the past year. Leah Wright, media liaison for the SanctionPA task force, said more than 100 girls will be competing in Lancaster County Sunday.

“It's a landmark event,” she said. “Girls wrestling is the fastest growing high school sport in the state. “We were hoping to have 20 to 25 high schools have teams this year. The pandemic took away that goal. But we know the numbers are climbing.”

Butler and Seneca Valley both hope to get some type of girls wrestling program in place, possibly as soon as next school year. “Sometime in April, I'm planning on seeking board approval to do a survey of our student population to gauge interest in the sport and go from there,” Butler athletic director Bill Mylan said.

Butler has one of the top female high school wrestlers in Pennsylvania in freshman Ana Malovich. She will not be competing Sunday, but two Butler youths — Brin Zehmisch (age 11-12) and younger sister Rowan (9-10) — will be participating in the youth portion of the event.

“We're hoping to introduce it (girls wrestling) as a club sport at first,” Golden Tornado wrestling coach Scott Stoner said. “We're running a wrestling club downtown this summer and we want to teach girls what the sport is all about there. “Once this gains traction ... I know we have girls in this school district who are interested.”

Butler has at least two girls wrestling in its youth program right now, Mylan said. “We've had girls wrestling at the junior high level over the past 10 years,” he said. “They get to the high school level and it tails off. They don't want to wrestle against the boys.”

Seneca Valley wrestling coach Kevin Wildrick agreed. “We've got three girls in our elementary program,” Wildrick said. “If we had a (girls) team right now, I know we'd have more. “It's not a bad possibility we'll be starting a girls program soon. We will never know how many girls are truly interested until we form a team.”

Heckert said that growing high school boys wrestling programs, such as those at Knoch, Mars and Slippery Rock, can benefit by forming girls teams. “The added interest would benefit both teams at the school and they would grow together,” he said. “That has already happened at other places.”

Some elementary and junior high teams in the state are adding separate girl's programs to accommodate interest. “Pennsylvania has a rich wrestling tradition that will only grow stronger with the official recognition of girls wrestling in the near future,” Sen. Martin said in a prepared statement.

“We can all look forward to seeing more girls take advantage of the opportunities associated with this great sport that allow individuals to achieve tremendous success in life.”

Girls high school wrestling long overdue in Pa.

March 27, 2021 - John Enrietto

High school wrestling in Pennsylvania — compared to other states — has been stellar. All one has to do is look at the NCAA national tournament every year and see how well-represented the Keystone State is, almost every time.

Girls wrestling? Different story. And that's a hard one to figure out. Many states across the country are well ahead of Pennsylvania in terms of girls wrestling at the high school level.

A group of concerned parties on this subject organized a year ago and formed SanctionPA, with the goal of getting some girls teams started on the mat. Even in this pandemic year, nine Pa. high schools debuted girls wrestling teams this year.

Many more need to follow suit. Wrestling is such a unique sport. It promotes self-discipline. It emphasizes physical conditioning. It rewards work ethic and teaches responsibility and humility. When you're competing, it's all you.

This is a sport where, undoubtedly, a kid gets out of it what he's willing to sink into it. Valuable life lessons, to be sure. Female athletes deserve to experience wrestling and all that it offers, without having to square off against a boy on the mat.

Butler freshman Ana Malovich is on the Golden Tornado team and deals with male opponents. She readily admits she is at a disadvantage strength-wise in those matches and has to compensate in other ways. Frankly, it's unfair.

Malovich has also said she knows other girls in school who would be wrestling right now — or would have gotten into it years ago — had there been a high school girls team awaiting them. Look how far girls basketball, soccer and volleyball have come. Girls lacrosse is getting better and better. Since the pitching circle was moved back in girls softball, that sport has flourished.

No one can expect girls to invest time in wrestling as youths if they know that opportunities aren't there to fairly stay with the sport in high school. Seneca Valley wrestling coach Kevin Wildrick says as much. He believes you have to provide a team before girls will aspire to join it. He's right.

Butler wrestling coach Scott Stoner envisions a time when Golden Tornado girls and boys wrestling teams can compete in duals simultaneously, on mats laid out right next to each other. Even a girls-boys wrestling doubleheader — similar to what you occasionally see in soccer and basketball — would be fun to see.

We need to continue working on gender equity in sports.

SanctionPa's efforts need to be rewarded.

Sooner, rather than later.

John Enrietto is sports editor of the Butler Eagle



Legacy Wrestling Club



The first night of Legacy Wrestling Club practice
March 2021

It Is Time To Pick Up Your
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LEGACY WRESTLING

Currently Enrolling New Members

Elementary Beginners-Mon & Wed 6-7:30

Elementary Experienced-Tue & Thu 6-7:30

Elementary Open Sessions-Sun 4:00-5:30

New: Varsity & Junior High Sessions

Beginning Sunday, March 28th, 6:00-7:30

Staff:

Scott Stoner-SRU Fred Powell-SRU/LHU Troy Letters-Lehigh

Donnie Geibel-Gannon Trevor Gallo-Mercyhurst

Alex Evanoff-Waynesburg Blake Caudill-Eastern Michigan

TJ McCance-Clarion Jason Rivera NCAA Official/USMC

Mike Crawford-KSU Paul Roth Andrew Joseph-SRU

Longtime Butler Coach Starts New Wrestling Club

By: Donnie Geibel



Scott Stoner took over a 2 year old wrestling program at Butler High School in 1993. The team had a total of 2 dual meet wins at the time. 28

years and 393 wins later Stoner has molded Butler into a perennial Section 3 contender, and WPIAL playoff team. Always looking for ways to improve his program, and with the success of wrestling clubs across Western Pennsylvania, Stoner and the Butler Coaching staff decided to start a wrestling club of their own after the end of the 2019 season.

One of the hardest decisions was to come up with a name. The coaching staff and booster club met and brainstormed. Name after name was shot down by the group. After much deliberation they came up with "Legacy". The idea came about based on the unique and close knit coaching network at Butler. Also the Legacy that Butler Varsity Assistant Coach Fred Powell has had not only on the Butler program, but on the sport of wrestling as a whole. Powell a national champ at Lock Haven, was the Head Coach of Slippery Rock University for many years. Stoner and current Butler Athletic Director Bill Mylan (former Butler Varsity assistant coach) wrestled under Powell at Slippery Rock. Of the current coaching staff at Butler, almost all have either wrestled under Powell and/or Stoner. Varsity Assistant Trevor Gallo wrestled under Powell at Slippery Rock High School. Assistants Alex Evanoff and Blake Caudill wrestled under Stoner at Butler. Current junior high head coach (myself) Donnie Geibel wrestled under Stoner/Mylan at Butler, under Don Henry (SRU grad under Powell) at Gannon, and coached Caudill in junior high. To say Coach Powell has created a positive Legacy with Butler Wrestling would be an understatement.

In April 2019 Legacy Wrestling Club began practices out of the Varsity Wrestling room at Butler Intermediate High School. Over the spring and summer of 2019 practices were well attended and things were going well. As we all know Covid-19 put a stop to just about everything starting in the

spring of 2020. With the health and safety protocols in place at the school, it was nearly impossible to hold club practices. No Legacy practices were held for the entire year of 2020.

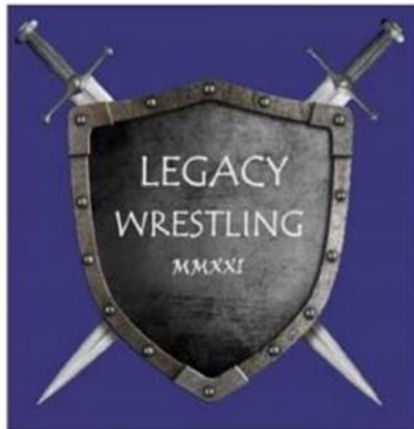
Looking to resume the club and be able to successfully hold practices, Stoner started looking for a site off school grounds. After visiting a few places in the Butler area he came across the former Knights of Columbus building just across the street from the Butler Middle School. The building is currently owned by First United Methodist Church where varsity assistant Alex Evanoff works. After ironing out the details and getting the mats set up, practices were ready to begin. Due to Butler Elementary Wrestling not being able to practice at the school, they basically did not have a season this past year. With that in mind, Stoner decided to run Butler Elementary practices 4 days a week at the new Legacy site. As practices began, families from other school districts began to inquire. Stoner decided to open the practices to youth wrestlers from any school district.

Junior High/ Varsity practices started Sunday March 28th. The attendance was great as there were 40 kids from 5 different school districts. Wrestlers from Knoch, Sharon, Grove City, Slippery Rock, and Butler were in attendance. Legacy is also starting a Fitness program which is slated to begin April 6th. Stoner's vision for the club is to be a teaching atmosphere where technique is stressed. He wants the club to also be affordable for lower income families in the area.

In addition to the Butler coaching staff, a number of other coaches from the surrounding area have committed to join the Legacy staff. These include Wes Phipps (PSU grad & Grove City Head Coach), Troy Letters (NCAA Champ Lehigh), Jason Rivera (USMC & NCAA Big XII referee), and Dave Ciafre (Sharon head coach &

recent PA Wrestling Hall of Fame Inductee).

Stoner's reasons for starting the club have to do with giving back to the sport, helping lower income families, and improving his team. "There is a need for our own kids to wrestle throughout the year. We are north of one of the best regions in the country for wrestling. We want to bring in neighboring schools to help all the area programs improve." Butler is the most Northern school district in the WPIAL. There are lot of great wrestling clubs in the Pittsburgh area, but most are nearly an hour drive from Butler and surrounding school districts. This will make it more accessible to those farther north schools. Stoner also wants to share the sport that has done so much for him personally. "I value so much what wrestling can bring to people. I want to continue to give back to what has been my lifetime of work. I always want wrestling to be part of my life and I can't imagine my life without the sport. When I look back on my lifetime, wrestling has given me almost everything: self-esteem, pride in my team and school, motivation to go to college, and being part of something bigger than myself. Even my family, friends, job, and home all have ties to wrestling." There is no Coach around more committed to the sport he loves than Stoner. This club only will cement his "Legacy" in the wrestling community.



Cementing A 'Legacy'

John Enrietto Eagle Staff Writer - May 8, 2021 High School Wrestling



Nick Savannah comes out of a roll in the ready position during a drill at Legacy Wrestling practice in Butler.

SEB FOLTZ/BUTLER EAGLE

Build it and they will come?

The building was already there, but what Butler varsity wrestling coach Scott Stoner has put inside it is already attracting wrestlers from throughout the region.

Stoner has rented out the old Knights of Columbus Hall on North Street in Butler to establish a spring and summer wrestling camp called Legacy Wrestling. The building belongs to the Butler First United Methodist

Church.

Alex Evanoff, one of Stoner's former wrestlers, is youth director and Director of County Ministries for that church.

"I had been looking around for a facility to get this started," Stoner said. "Alex told me he didn't believe anyone was using this room and it's perfect for us, located right here in town."

Stoner hoped to get the Legacy program up and running last spring, but the COVID-19 pandemic prevented that from happening.

Because the Butler Elementary wrestling program was unable to practice at the school this past season, it technically did not have a season. Stoner wound up running Butler Elementary practices at the Legacy site four days a week.

"We have around 85 kids in our elementary program," Stoner said. "I couldn't stand around and watch their season get taken away entirely. This place has really come in handy."

March 28 marked the first day Legacy hosted junior high and varsity practices. Forty kids from five different school districts showed up.

"There were kids here from Sharon, Slippery Rock, Knoch, Lakeview ... coaches have come in from all over the place," Butler Junior High wrestling coach Donnie Geibel said.

The club is called Legacy because of the connection the coaches have with each other. Geibel, Evanoff, Blake Caudill and Trevor Gallo all wrestled for Stoner. Gallo wrestled for Stoner as a youth.

Butler assistant coach Fred Powell coached Stoner and Butler athletic director Bill Mylan at Slippery Rock University.

"We're all connected in some way," Stoner said. "And we all want to grow the sport."

Other coaches from the region have committed to help out at Legacy as well. They include Grove City High School coach and Penn State graduate Wes Phipps, NCAA champion Troy Letters, NCAA Big 12 referee Jason Rivera and Sharon coach Dave Ciafre.

"Most of the highly successful high school wrestling programs in Pennsylvania have wrestling clubs nearby," Geibel said. "Seneca Valley has come on of late largely because of OMP (wrestling club in Evans City).

"Scott wanted to create a wrestling facility for kids from the northern schools to come and hone their skills."

Stoner bought much of the equipment for the room himself and monetary donations have come in to buy equipment as well. After this week, Legacy will have workouts on Thursdays and Sundays.

"This is not a money-making thing for me," Stoner said. "I want low-income families to be able to afford to send their kids here.

"Other programs will take place here, too. Alex will be doing cross-fit training, the BAMFL (midget football) will do a preseason thing here and other fitness programs will develop here.

"This is about giving back for me. I want to help wrestling. I want to help kids," Stoner added.

Evanoff sees the facility as becoming a long-term venture.

"It's only going to grow," he said. "Our community needs something like this. I know our church is thrilled about it.

"Even non-athletes, people who just want to get fit and in better shape, there's a place for them here."

Stoner has 393 career wins in 28 years as Butler's wrestling coach. The Golden Tornado mat program was two years old — with two wins to its credit — when he took over.

"Life is a battle. Kids have to develop resiliency to be able to deal with adversity and failure," Stoner said. "A big part of what we do is prepare kids for that battle."

"Scott is a very passionate person," Evanoff said. "When he decides to take something on, he totally commits to it. He is all in on this."