

# West wrestlers take second in regionals; North's Besaw second

By Brad Hartmann  
HERALD CONTRIBUTOR

Overlooking your opponent is one of the biggest mistakes a wrestler can make. For Oshkosh West 106-pound sophomore Alec Hunter, he learned a valuable lesson in that aspect while winning his weight class in Saturday's Division 1 WIAA wrestling regionals at Oshkosh North.

"He surprised me. He got me in those ties and I couldn't get out," said Hunter. "It was one of those matches that I haven't had in a long time that went into the third period."

For some wrestlers the night before a big match can lead to insomnia. For Hunter (35-1) you wouldn't think it would affect him after being West's first freshman state qualifier last year.

"I had troubles sleeping. I woke up at 4 a.m. and just couldn't go back to sleep. Maybe it was regional pressures," said Hunter. "Last year I felt the pressure and I didn't do very well. This year I did a lot of off-season stuff to overcome it."

Hunter finished the day earning two victories with a pin on Kyler Neuberg of Beaver Dam/Wayland Academy in 3:30 and a 10-0 major decision over Tyler Klein of Hartford Union to earn back-to-back regional titles as West (8-1) finished second as a team with 178 points while Slinger won the regional tournament at 241 points.

Oshkosh North (2-7) finished seventh out of the eight teams competing at 76.5 points.

Last year at 145 West's Conner Collins placed second, but as a senior he (29-9) moved up to 152 and placed first with a pin over Adrian Rodriguez of North in 1:53, a 6-1 decision over Adam Sterman of Hartford Union, and a 12-6 decision over Josiah Streblow of Fond du Lac.

"I have taken second at four tournaments this year so going into that match I was sick and tired taking second," said Collins. "I wrestled really well in the finals and pulled it out. I wrestled him six times in the last year and I knew him really well. I knew if I got to my attacks I would be fine."

Wildcats senior Edgar Heredia (31-4) won back-to-back regional titles at 170. This year his biggest challenge was overcoming the adversity of the flu. Heredia defeated Jeremiah Chmielewski of North 10-5, won by major decision 10-2 over Ian Wendt-Utrie of Beaver Dam/Wayland Academy, and hung in for a last-second victory over Isaiah McCormick of Neenah as Heredia forced a takedown with 2 seconds left on the boundary line for the 12-11 victory.

"My game plan was to take things easy. I didn't want to use all my energy right away. I didn't expect him to take me down in the first period," said Heredia. "I thought my

leg sweep was the most important shot to win the match.

"I kept my toes in. All I was thinking was that I didn't want to go into overtime. My opponent has nowhere to run. Otherwise he would be fleeing the mat and I'd be giving up a point."

The Wildcats had two second-place finishers at 182 with Blake Framke (28-13) and Avery Martell (30-8) at 285.

"I never expected myself to be here. Freshman year was a hard year for me. I went almost winless," said Martell. "Sophomore year I was mediocre on JV. Last year I thought I was mediocre on varsity. I never saw this coming, but I put in a lot of work in the offseason and it's showing, and qualifying for state would be the dream."

The Wildcats would have three wrestlers place third: JR Brown (18-13) at 113, Logan Grota (29-10) at 132 and Kevin Loos (22-11) at 195,

"My semifinals match didn't go completely the way that I wanted it to go. For me it was an overcoming-adversity moment that I knew I had to get it done especially with the home crowd that was awesome," said Loos. "Being a senior it makes me realize how everyone makes the sacrifice for me."

Freshman Max Carlin (18-16) would place fourth at 120 pounds for the Wild-

cats as they send nine wrestlers to sectionals Saturday in Hartford and the Spartans will be represented with four qualifiers.

Sophomore Dylan Besaw (20-12) would lead the Spartans to a second-place finish in the 120-pound weight class courtesy of a takedown and reversal in a 4-2 decision over Gavin Skinner of Slinger.

A pair of North juniors placed third: Cade Schmitz (33-9) at 126 and Landon Spanbauer (21-20) at 138.

Senior Travon Lee (22-17) started out on fire winning his first two matches with a pin of Dayton Smith of West in 2:23 and by decision over Jared Stark of Hartford Union 8-4, but then felt the fatigue of the tournament and lost his final two matches for a third-place finish at 145.

Even though she won't qualify for next week's sectionals, 113-pound junior Carley Ochoa (16-20) pinned Matthew Hendrix of Beaver Dam/Wayland Academy in 5:37 to place fifth as you could hear the building roar with her grandmother in the stands.

Ochoa led 4-0 after the first period then ran into trouble in the second as she was gasping for air. She had trouble breathing as Hendrix received the near-fall but didn't surrender as time expired in the second period.

"I started to get really light-headed. My body was feeling numb like I was going to pass out," Ochoa said.

"The goal was to keep a shoulder up as long as I could and focus on getting into the next round."

In the third period Hendrix gained control with an escape and takedown, but it was Ochoa's aggressive agility that flipped Hendrix over for the pin.

"I kept putting him in cow catchers and then my head was too low. So he kept hooking my head and I tried it again and he did the same thing so I had to change it up a little bit," said Ochoa.

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