

2019 State Wrestling Team Tournament

Team Recap

Long Prairie-Grey Eagle/Browerville, Simley, Shakopee capture team championships

Three team championships were earned during the annual Minnesota State High School League wrestling state tournament held Thursday, Feb. 28, 2019 at the Xcel Energy Center in downtown St. Paul. Here is a recap of the team tournament:

Class A

Long Prairie-Grey Eagle/Browerville was tapped as the team to beat in the Class A field prior to the state tournament, and the Wolves proved worthy of the distinction. Long Prairie-Grey Eagle/Browerville, making its second consecutive state tournament appearance as this co-op, captured the Class A crown following a 35-27 victory over Kenyon-Wanamingo in the title dual.

The Wolves (27-1), whose only dual loss this season was to Detroit Lakes on Jan. 22, bolted from the start, winning six of the first seven matches en route to a 23-4 lead. Sophomore Mason Gode had a pin at 132 during the spree. Later, Long Prairie-Grey Eagle/Browerville extended its lead to 20 points with two weights remaining. Kenyon-Wanamingo, who lost in the quarterfinals and consolation semifinals during the 2018 state tournament, had four pins among its five victories in the dual.

In the third-place match, Tracy-Milroy-Balaton/Westbrook-Walnut Grove displayed its dominance through the middle weights in a 38-26 victory over Atwater-Cosmos-Grove City. The Panthers (31-5) trailed 14-3 after losing three of the first four matches in the dual. But Tracy-Milroy-Balaton/Westbrook-Walnut Grove stormed back with eight consecutive victories for a 38-14 lead with two weights remaining. During the spree, the Panthers had pins from senior Derek Ellingson (132), senior Anthony Axford (145), and junior Trevor Einfeld (182). Atwater-Cosmos-Grove City (29-4) had pins from freshman Travys Lawver (220) and junior heavyweight Tanner Berghuis to close out the dual.

In the consolation final, Goodhue, the Section 1AA champion, posted a 38-23 victory over Bertha-Hewitt-Verndale. Goodhue (27-9) erased an early 10-3 deficit with a 23-point run that started with a decision from senior Carson Morken at 126 and ended with a pin from senior Kelby O'Reilly at 160. Bertha-Hewitt-Verndale (20-5) had two victories in the final four weights.

Kenyon-Wanamingo earned a berth in the semifinals with a 40-20 victory over Tracy-Milroy-Balaton/Westbrook-Walnut Grove. The Knights opened the dual with three victories in the first four weights to build a 9-4 lead. But TMBW rallied to within 12-11 when Anthony Axford recorded a decision at 145 pounds. Kenyon-Wanamingo extended its lead, however, to 28-11 with three consecutive victories in the next three

weights. That spree included pins from senior Nathan Bauer at 152 and senior Tyler Ryan at 170.

Long Prairie-Grey Eagle/Browerville completed the championship pairing with a 31-22 victory over Atwater-Cosmos-Grove City in the other semifinal. The Wolves won nine of the first 11 matches in the dual to build what would be an insurmountable 31-6 lead with three weights remaining.

Class AA

After a three-year hiatus, Simley returned to the winners circle following a 60-7 victory over Marshall in the Class AA championship match. The Spartans (29-2) dropped the first two matches of the dual to create a seven-point deficit, but that was quickly erased in a dominating 60-point spree over the final 12 weights of the dual. In those 12 victories, Simley had six pins, four major-decisions and a technical fall. Senior heavyweight Daniel Gregory Kerkvliet capped the domination with a 24-second pin in the final match.

The Class AA championship is the eighth for Simley during the three-class era. In 2017, the Spartans were the Class AA runner-up to Kasson-Mantorville, who would go on to repeat in 2018. The past two seasons, Simley and Kasson-Mantorville have both been in Section 1AA. Simley ended Kasson-Mantorville's hopes for a three-peat with a 30-23 victory in the Section 1AA final on Feb. 2. Simley also won four Class AA championships during the two-class era.

Marshall (20-2), the Section 3AA champion, was making its first state tournament appearance.

Top-seeded Perham rebounded from its semifinal loss to edge Waconia 27-24 for the third-place trophy. The Yellowjackets (31-2) took control early with five victories in the first seven matches. Sophomore Jack Fudge capped the run with a decision at 145. Later, Perham captured three of the final four weights, including a decision from junior 220-pounder Dawson Kellogg that gave the Yellowjackets a 27-18 lead with one weight remaining. Waconia, the Section 2AA champion, finished 17-6 in its first state tournament trip since 1999,

Mora used four pins and two technical falls to account for 34 points en route to a 40-30 victory over Totino-Grace in the consolation final. Totino-Grace (17-7) raced to a 17-5 lead after the first four weights, but Mora (20-10) bounced back with bonus-point victories in four of the next six matches. Senior Ryan Nosbush (132), senior Austin Voss (160) and senior Danny Schroeder (170).

Simley plowed into the championship dual for the 19th time in program history following a 47-15 victory over Waconia. The Spartans surrendered the first two weight classes as the Wildcats built a 9-0 advantage. But Simley responded by winning the next six weights to turn that deficit into a 26-9 lead. In those six victories, the Spartans scored bonus points in four of them.

Marshall upended top-seeded Perham for a thrilling 27-25 victory in the other semifinal. Marshall junior Jaiden Bahr gave the Tigers a 27-22 lead with one weight remaining after a 3-1 decision over Perham junior Dawson Kellogg at 220 pounds. With one weight remaining, all Marshall senior heavyweight Zack Felcyn had to do was to prevent being pinned. A pin is worth six points and would have given Perham a comeback victory. Instead, Felcyn became a hero by losing 5-3 to Perham junior heavyweight Rowdie Lindquist.

Class AAA

Top-seeded Shakopee captured a state championship for the first time in three title-berth appearances following a 35-22 victory over No. 2 Stillwater in the Class AAA championship dual. The Sabers (40-3) completed its season undefeated against Minnesota teams en route to claiming the title in their fifth state tournament appearance. Shakopee's three losses this season were to outstate competition.

Sophomore Joey Johnson clinched the historic championship with a 2-0 decision over Stillwater senior Will Gleason in the 220-pound match. His victory gave Shakopee an insurmountable 29-22 lead with one weight remaining. Sophomore heavyweight Tommy Johnson punctuated Shakopee's season with a pin of Stillwater senior Collin McCarth to end the dual. Stillwater (25-1), making an appearance in a state championship match for the first time in seven trips, erased an early 13-point deficit with five consecutive wins from 126 pounds through 152. Sophomore Reid Ballantyne started the run with a pin at 126.

The victory was the first at Shakopee for head coach Jim Jackson, who is in his fourth season at the school. In 17 seasons as Apple Valley's head coach, Jackson won 14 championships.

St. Michael-Albertville, the defending Class AAA champion entering the state tournament, bounced back from a semifinal setback to record a 38-24 victory over Bemidji in the third-place dual. The Knights (22-6) won six of the first seven matches in building a 28-3 lead over the Lumberjacks (21-11). Freshman Jimmy Heil (103) and senior Brandon Psyk (113) sent the Knights on the way with pins in the first two weights.

In the consolation final, Northfield defeated East Ridge for the second time this season, this time a 40-25 win in the Class AAA third-place match. The Raiders (28-6) won five of the first six matches en route to building a 22-3 lead. Freshman Jack Messner (113) and junior Drew Woodley (138) had pins in the run. In early January, Northfield recorded a 43-22 win over East Ridge (19-13), a Woodbury-based District 833 school making its state tournament debut.

Stillwater advanced to the state championship dual for the first time in seven tournament trips following Michael-Albertville in the upper-bracket semifinal. STMA, the defending big-school champion, bolted to first two matches, but the Ponies answered with six consecutive wins to turn that deficit into a 20-10 lead. Stillwater scored bonus points in the first three matches to build an early 16-0 lead en route to a 40-24 victory over

semifinal. Seventh-grader Pierson Manville started the run with a technical fall victory at 106 pounds. with a pin at 113 and, at 120, junior Ben Lunn recorded a technical fall.