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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

State Team Wrestling Tournament

BROOKLYN CENTER, Minn. --- A team champion in wrestling has been crowned at the Minnesota State High School League's state tournament since 1938. The annual tradition continues Thursday, March 1 with 24 teams in three enrollment classifications chasing a championship. Here is a look at the team tournament:

FAST FACTS

The schedule:

Thursday, March 1, at Xcel Energy Center

Class A

Quarterfinals

Atwater-Cosmos-Grove City (26-7) vs. No. 2 Frazee (21-6), 9 a.m.

Blackduck/Cass Lake-Bena (20-1) vs. No. 3 Long Prairie-Grey Eagle/Browerville (23-1), 9 a.m.

Ottertail Central (18-7) vs. No. 1 Zumbrota-Mazeppa (24-6), 9 a.m.

No. 5 Kenyon-Wanamingo (19-9) vs. No. 4 Tracy-Milroy-Balaton/Westbrook-Walnut Grove (28-2), 9 a.m.

Championship semifinals, 1 p.m.

Consolation semifinals, 11 a.m.

Consolation final, 5 p.m.

Third place, 5 p.m.

Championship, 7 p.m.

Class AA

Quarterfinals

Grand Rapids (25-6) vs. No. 2 Scott West (14-2), 11 a.m.

South St. Paul (22-2) vs. No. 3 Fairmont/Martin County West (25-0), 11 a.m.

Totino-Grace (20-4) vs. No. 1 Kasson-Mantorville (22-0), 11 a.m.

No. 5 Foley (28-3) vs. No. 4 Perham (27-1), 11 a.m.

Consolation semifinals, 1 p.m.

Championship semifinals, 1 p.m.

Consolation final, 5 p.m.

Third place, 5 p.m.

Championship, 7 p.m.

Class AAA

Quarterfinals

Hastings (21-12) vs. No. 2 Anoka (24-3), 9 a.m.

Stillwater Area (18-8) vs. No. 3 St. Michael-Albertville (24-4), 9 a.m.

Minnetonka (16-11) vs. No. 1 Shakopee (24-2), 9 a.m.

No. 5 Albert Lea Area (25-4) vs. No. 4 Willmar (15-1), 9 a.m.

Consolation semifinals, 11 a.m.

Championship semifinals, 1 p.m.

Consolation final, 5 p.m.

Third place, 5 p.m.

Championship, 7 p.m.

Webcast: Charges for the live webcast on Prep45.com: \$10.95 per day; three-day pass \$23.97.

Tickets: Single session --- \$14 adults, \$9 students. Daily pass --- \$26 adults, \$17 students.

Gates open: The Xcel Energy Center opens its gates to fans one hour prior to the first scheduled match of the session.

Match results: Posted on the League's website at www.mshsl.org

Social media: Follow the tournament on the League's Facebook page and on Twitter at @MSHSL and @MSHSLJohn.

State Tournament Preview

Class A

Atwater-Cosmos-Grove City vs. Frazee --- ACGC edged Sibley East 28-25 in the Section 4A final to advance to the state tournament for the first time since 2015 and 11th time overall. The Falcons were the Class A champion in 2007 and the runner-up in 2014. No. 2-ranked Frazee is arguably the most storied program in Class A. The Hornets are in the state tournament for the 25th time since 1987. In that stretch, the Hornets have been a state champion four times and runner-up seven times. Frazee outscored the opposition 197-23 in the Section 8A tournament.

Blackduck/Cass Lake-Bena vs. Long Prairie-Grey Eagle/Browerville --- Unranked Blackduck/Cass Lake-Bena has qualified for the state tournament for the first time since 2000. From 1997-2000, the Bears made four consecutive state tournament trips. In its only other state tournament appearance, Long Prairie-Grey Eagle was an entrant in 2003. The Thunder have won three invitationals this season and enter the tournament on a nine-match winning streak.

Ottertail Central vs. Zumbrota-Mazeppa --- No. 9-ranked Ottertail Central topped defending Section 6A champion West Central Area/Ashby/Brandon-Evansville 30-27 to earn its first state tournament trip. The Bulldogs won three of five invitationals they competed in this season. Zumbrota-Mazeppa is the defending Class A champion and was also the runner-up in 2015. The Cougars have won eight consecutive duals entering their 10th state tournament appearance.

Kenyon-Wanamingo vs. Tracy-Milroy-Balaton/Westbrook-Walnut Grove --- Kenyon-Wanamingo won the consolation dual with Kerkhoven-Murdock-Sunburg in the 2017 tournament. The Knights have not lost since a 50-23 setback to Class AA power Kasson-Mantorville. Kenyon-Wanamingo, the 2016 Class A champion, is making its fifth state tournament appearance. Tracy-Milroy-Balaton/Westbrook-Walnut Grove used a 36-22 victory over Minneota, the Class A champion in 2015, to earn a berth for the first time in the state tournament. The last dual loss for the Panthers was a 35-30 setback to Minneota on Jan. 11. Since, the Panthers are on a 14-dual winning streak.

Class AA

Grand Rapids vs. Scott West --- Grand Rapids placed sixth in the eight-team 2017 state tournament field. The unranked Thunderhawks are making their second consecutive state appearance and 13th overall. Grand Rapids hasn't lost to a Minnesota team since a 36-35 edging by Moorhead on Jan. 13. No. 3-ranked Scott West had two significant victories in December: A 29-28 win over Anoka at Champlin Park on Dec. 8 and a first-place finish at the Rumble on the Red on Dec. 29 at the Fargodome. The Panthers have won three other invitationals this season.

South St. Paul vs. Fairmont/Martin County West --- South St. Paul is also a state tournament rookie following its 58-16 victory over Mahtomedi in the Section 4AA final. The Packers have won seven consecutive duals since losing to Hastings, a Class AAA entrant, during the Metro East Conference schedule. No. 6-ranked Fairmont/Martin County West opened December with two invitational victories. The success has continued, the latest victory, a 49-20 win over Marshall/Lakeview in the Section 3AA final for the program's first state tournament berth.

Totino-Grace vs. Kasson-Mantorville --- Totino-Grace is making its sixth consecutive state tournament appearance and 16th overall. The Eagles, ranked No. 11 in Class AA, have won 12 of their past 13 duals. The only setback was a 49-22 loss to Forest Lake of Class AAA. Top-ranked Kasson-Mantorville is the two-time defending Class AA champion. The KoMets had to get past No. 2 Simley 34-25 in the Section 1AA final for a chance at a three-peat. Simley, one of the most successful programs in Minnesota wrestling history, was moved into Section 1AA from 4AA prior to the season.

Foley vs. Perham --- Foley, ranked No. 5 in Class AA, placed fourth in the 2017 tournament. The Falcons are another perennial state tournament entrant, making their 11th consecutive appearance and 25th overall. After a runner-up finish to Forest Lake in the Foley Invitational on Jan. 6, the Falcons have won 16 consecutive duals. Perham won the consolation final during the 2017 tournament with a victory over Grand Rapids. The

Yellowjackets, ranked No. 4 in Class AA, tied Albert Lea for third at the Rumble on the Red at the Fargodome during the holiday break.

Class AAA

Hastings vs. Anoka --- Hastings was fourth in the 2017 state tournament. The unranked Raiders had a second-place finish at the Cambridge-Isanti Invitational, and have won seven of their past eight duals. Hastings is making its third consecutive state tournament appearance and 15th overall. Anoka was the Class AAA runner-up to Apple Valley in 2017. The No. 3-ranked Tornados are making their 21st state tournament appearance. Anoka won the Minnesota Christmas tournament and two other invitationals. Anoka hasn't lost a dual since the Clash Duals at the end of December.

Stillwater Area vs. St. Michael-Albertville --- Stillwater is the Section 4AAA champion and state tournament representative for the second consecutive season. The unranked Ponies have won five duals in a row since a loss to Apple Valley on Feb. 3. St. Michael-Albertville, ranked No. 4 in Class AAA, has added to its wrestling legacy with a 20th consecutive trip to the state tournament. The Knights won three invitationals this season and haven't lost since a setback to Shakopee on Jan. 13.

Minnetonka vs. Shakopee --- Minnetonka is making its third consecutive state tournament appearance. The Skippers, unranked in the final 2017-18 poll of the regular season, dropped two duals during the 2017 tournament. Minnetonka won the Hopkins Invitational during the season and has won five consecutive duals entering the state tournament. Shakopee has had two signature victories during the 2017-18 season: Both were against Apple Valley. The Sabers, making their first state tournament appearance since 2004, defeated the Eagles 32-30 during the South Suburban Conference schedule and then recorded a 34-30 win over Apple Valley in the Section 2AAA final. That win in the section final snapped Apple Valley's 35-year streak of state tournament appearances. Shakopee finish one point behind champion Anoka at the Minnesota Christmas tournament.

Albert Lea vs. Willmar --- Albert Lea returns to the tournament for the first time since finishing as the Class AAA runner-up in 2015. The Tigers, ranked No. 8, are in the state tournament for the 13th time in program history. Albert Lea tied for third with Perham at the Rumble on the Red tournament. The Tigers reversed a 30-27 loss to Owatonna during the Big 9 Conference schedule with a 33-19 win in the Section 1AAA final. Willmar finished sixth in the eight-team field during the 2017 state tournament. The Cardinals, ranked No. 5, are making their seventh consecutive state tournament appearance and ninth overall. Willmar was runner-up to Scott West at the Rumble on the Red, but has won four other invitationals.

2017 State Tournament Recap

Class A --- Zumbrota-Mazeppa opened the Class A tournament as the No. 4 seed, but then used two victories against higher-seeded teams in capturing the program's first state championship. The Cougars completed their historic feat with a 35-16 victory over No. 2 Pierz in the championship dual. Zumbrota-Mazeppa, the Class A runner-up in 2015, won the final four weights to pull away. Junior Hayden Voxland began the surge with a decision at 182 pounds. That was followed by decisions from junior Caden Steffen (195), sophomore Jacob Bennett (220) and junior Jarret Haglund at heavyweight. Pierz, a two-time Class A champion, was making its first appearance in a championship match since 2005. Top-seeded Frazee rebounded from its semifinal loss to Zumbrota-Mazeppa to claim the third-place trophy with a 40-18 victory over West Central Area/Ashby/Brandon-Evansville. In the consolation final, Kenyon-Wanamingo recorded a 37-18 victory over Kerkhoven-Murdock-Sunburg. Kenyon-Wanamingo, the No. 5 seed to begin the tournament, broke open what had been a 22-19 lead with victories in the final three weights.

Class AA --- Kasson-Mantorville completed its undefeated season by racing past Simley, 45-18, in the title match en route to winning the Class AA crown for the second consecutive season. The KoMets won three of the first five matches to build a 10-9 edge over Simley, a seven-time Class AA champion. But starting at 138 pounds, the KoMets rattled off 31 unanswered points over the next six weights. During the spree, Kasson-Mantorville had three pins and two technical falls. It was the third state championship for top-seeded Kasson-Mantorville, who also won in 2013. Scott West captured the third-place trophy with a 33-24 victory over Foley. The Panthers, the No. 3 seed to open the tournament, won five of the first seven matches to build a 20-6 lead. In the consolation final, Perham recorded a 60-3 victory over Grand Rapids. The Yellowjackets won 13 of the 14 matches.

Class AAA --- Apple Valley added to the richest wrestling legacy in Minnesota high school history with a 25th championship in 36 state tournament appearances. But unlike their two early matches in the 2017 tournament when the Eagles cruised to victories, they needed some late power to get past Anoka. Senior Tanyi Besong lifted Apple Valley into a 24-all tie following a 12-1 major decision over junior Evan DeChene at 220 pounds. Moments later, junior Gable Steveson, the top-ranked heavyweight in the country, applied a quick pin 22 seconds into his match with junior Brandon Frankfurth to give the Eagles another championship. St. Michael-Albertville bounced back from a semifinal loss to record a 36-33 victory over Hastings in the third-place match. St. Michael-Albertville senior Evan Foster completed the victory with a 5-1 decision over junior Drake Guck in the heavyweight match. In the consolation final, Owatonna edged Willmar, 30-29. The Huskies secured a victory in what proved to be the decisive match when junior Parker Holton recorded a 5-0 decision over junior Josiah Swanson in the 195-pound match.