

BRAVE BRAWLERS



21 - 22 STATE CHAMPIONS

FLATHEAD

2021 - 2022 FLATHEAD WRESTLING

SEASON RECAP

17 - 0 DUAL MEET RECORD

BOYS

Flathead 48 – Belgrade 23
Flathead 42 – Billings West 30
Flathead 72 – Browning 6
Flathead 42 – Butte 27
Flathead 69 – Missoula Big Sky 0
Flathead 72 – Hamilton 3
Flathead 69 – Big Sky 0
Flathead 77 – Hellgate 0
Flathead 63 – Glacier 9
Flathead 60 – Belgrade 18
Flathead 43 – Billings Senior 18
Flathead 48 – Billings West 23
Flathead 59 – Bozeman 12
Flathead 74 – Sentinel 0
Flathead 73 – Helena High 0
Flathead 44 – Helena Capital 25
Flathead 54 – Butte 24

GIRLS

Flathead 54 – Glacier 12
Flathead 51 – Butte 36

SEEDING RESULTS

24 Boys and 30 Girls Qualified for State

STATE TOURNAMENT RESULTS

1st Place - AA Boys and Girls State Champions!

1 Boys Champion / 1 Girls Champion

(14 Boys / 8 Girls State Placers)

BOYS 2022 STATE RESULTS

1. Flathead	289.0
2. Billings Senior.....	270.5
3. Billings West.....	199.0

GIRLS 2022 STATE RESULTS

1. Flathead.....	205.0
2. Billings Senior	157.0
3. Billings Skyview	115.5

2021-2022 FLATHEAD WRESTLING

“REPEAT 2X”

ACADEMIC ALL-STATE

***3.5 OR ABOVE GPA FOR QUARTER TWO**

Isabella Arriaga

Gabe Lake

Rylee Barnes

Fin Nadeau

Mackenzie Brandt

Alivia Rinehart

Kyler Christy

Elaina Stern

Augustyn Cox

Anders Thompson

Aiden Downing

Gunnar Thompson

Kyrie Gislason

Diesel Thompson

Hania Halverson

Eliska Tornerova

Dane Lake

Gannon Wisher

2021-2022 FLATHEAD WRESTLING

LETTER WINNERS - BRAVES

BRAVE WRESTLERS / FLATHEAD ONLY

Name	Grade	Letter	Name	Grade	Letter
Augustyn Cox	9	1	Logan Stansberry	10	2
Aiden Downing	9	1	Austin Schabel	10	1
Justin Gelormino	9	1	Gunnar Thompson	10	2
Walter Hammett	9	1	Anders Thompson	10	2
Jackson Heino	9	1	Sawyer Troupe	10	2
Dane Lake	9	1	Xan Winter	10	2
Ethan MacDonald	9	1	Cade Gardner	11	3
Michael Mahar	9	1	Forest Howell	11	3
Blaine Olson	9	1	Tynan Krause	11	1
Ian Smith	9	1	Gabe Lake	11	2
Diesel Thompson	9	1	Noah Poe-Hatten	11	3
Jarett Tweet	9	1	Jayden Sanford	11	1
Daniel Williams	9	1	Cade Troupe	11	3
Gannon Wisher	9	1	Mason Doran	12	4
Raenan Allumbaugh	10	2	Laremy Ernsberger	12	1
Will Barnes	10	2	Nicholas Harvey	12	1
Kyler Christy	10	2	Asher Kemppainen	12	4
Colton Kuka	10	2	Logan Lang	12	3
Ben McConnell	10	2	Fin Nadeau	12	4
Davin Naldrett	10	2	Chase Youso	12	4
Joey Pardue-Bernabe	10	1			

2021-2022 FLATHEAD WRESTLING

LETTER WINNERS - BRAVETTES

BRAVETTE WRESTLERS / FLATHEAD ONLY

Name	Grade	Letter	Name	Grade	Letter
Eliska Tornerova	9	1	Reina Koehler	11	1
Mackenzie Brandt	9	1	Lily McMahon	11	1
Kyrie Gislason	9	1	Skye Shelmerdine	11	3
Sage Hafer	9	1	Peyton Walker	11	1
Paige Hermann	9	1	Isabella Arriaga	12	2
Raimy Hull	9	1	Rylee Barnes	12	4
Alivia Rinehart	9	1	Astoria Beckstrom	12	1
Meadow Smith	9	1	Alexus Cislo	12	2
Elaina Stern	9	1	Lily Conover	12	2
Isabelle Brewer	10	2	Alisa Leimkuehler	12	1
Boston Howell	10	2	Anna Morrison	12	3
Dakota Keller	10	1	Hania Halverson	12	2
Olivia Keller-Pulse	10	1	Alliyah Stevens	12	1
Mykel Lee	10	1			
Lucie Libby	10	2			
McKenna McCarthy	10	2			
Ryenne Schoknecht	10	1			
Trinity Boivin	11	2			
Hannah Buckner	11	1			
Emma Gambino	11	3			
Mikayla Iten	11	1			

2021-2022 FLATHEAD WRESTLING

BRAVES STATS

	Wins	Fall	Takedown	Escape	Reversal	Nearfall (2)	Nearfall (3)	Caution	Stalling
Aiden Downing	30	21	36	8	10	10	5	13	3
Anders Thompson	38	22	44	12	13	9	29	0	5
Asher Kemppainen	31	5	83	21	12	16	16	22	3
Austin Shabel	8	6	7	1	0	2	0	0	0
Ben McConnell	6	3	8	2	2	0	1	1	0
Blaine Olson	10	5	7	7	3	0	1	1	0
Cade Gardner	27	21	22	2	3	3	11	0	0
Cade Troupe	27	16	40	11	0	2	7	3	3
Chase Youso	37	30	36	12	9	10	15	6	1
Colton Kuka	28	17	23	19	6	8	7	4	3
Dane Lake	29	10	36	15	4	6	6	7	10
Daniel Williams	5	2	6	2	0	2	0	0	0
Davin Naldret	26	14	21	5	5	6	5	2	3
Diesel Thompson	28	5	67	30	2	12	13	13	20
Ethan MacDonald	14	3	6	2	5	4	1	4	0
Fin Nadeau	40	18	83	19	6	7	5	5	6
Forest Howell	32	19	19	11	12	2	5	1	0
Gabe Lake	37	18	57	9	10	17	21	1	9
Gannon Wisher	31	21	28	5	3	1	6	2	2
Gunnar Thompson	31	18	23	11	14	8	7	7	5
Gus Cox	3	2	4	1	0	0	0	0	0
Ian Smith	3	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
Jackson Heino	6	4	11	3	7	5	1	1	1
Jarett Tweet	4	1	4	0	2	3	1	0	0
Jayden Sanford	7	7	11	0	0	0	1	0	0
Joey Pardue-Bernabe	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Justin Gelemino	5	2	4	1	1	0	0	1	0
Kyler Christy	8	4	8	1	3	1	5	0	2
Laremy Ernsberger	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Logan Lang	3	3	4	1	0	0	0	0	0
Logan Stansberry	24	13	48	5	4	2	2	23	14
Mason Doran	36	19	69	11	16	14	15	1	2
Michael Mahar	7	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nicholas Harvey	3	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	0
Noah Poe-Hatten	38	22	47	14	2	9	20	0	11
Raenan Allumbaugh	27	18	22	16	9	10	7	3	8
Riley Atchinson	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Sawyer Troupe	34	25	51	9	11	12	8	6	8
Tynan Krause	24	16	31	14	5	6	7	2	0
Walter Hammett	13	8	13	4	1	3	4	0	0
William Barnes	36	24	31	7	7	9	21	5	0
Xander Winter	31	24	27	14	2	1	4	1	0

2021-2022 FLATHEAD WRESTLING

BRAVETTE STATS

	Wins	Fall	Takedown	Escape	Reversal	Nearfall (2)	Nearfall (3)	Caution	Stall Warning
Alexus Cislo	11	9	20	3	4	1	4	1	0
Alisa Leimkuehler	15	8	12	0	3	0	0	1	0
Alivia Rinehart	20	13	23	10	2	1	3	1	0
Alliyah Stevens	16	13	15	5	4	2	0	2	0
Anna Morrison	4	1	5	6	1	1	1	0	1
Astoria Beckstrom	2	0	3	0	0	1	0	0	0
Bella Arriaga	21	15	28	4	2	1	5	0	3
Boston Howell	16	11	11	4	6	1	1	1	3
Dakota Keller	7	4	6	2	1	0	0	0	0
Eliska Tornerova	8	4	4	4	0	2	0	0	0
Emma Gambino	20	12	25	12	2	3	3	0	1
Hania Halverson	31	29	25	0	4	8	7	1	0
Hannah Buckner	6	2	5	0	0	0	1	0	0
Isabella Shinn	4	2	7	2	2	0	2	0	0
Isabelle Brewer	9	1	10	8	0	1	0	0	1
Isabelle Shinn	4	3	4	2	1	0	0	0	0
Lily Conover	19	14	33	4	3	4	10	2	1
Lily McMahon	23	15	29	3	5	4	6	1	0
Lucille Libby	23	13	23	1	6	0	2	4	2
Mackenzie Brandt	7	3	4	4	1	0	1	0	0
McKenna McCarthy	17	10	13	1	8	1	5	2	0
Meadow Smith	3	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0
Mikayla Iten	3	0	1	6	0	0	0	0	1
Myah Attard	2	1	3	3	1	0	0	0	0
Mykel Lee	17	13	18	12	7	5	5	0	1
Olivia Keller-Pulse	4	1	6	2	0	2	2	0	0
Paige Hermann	7	2	1	0	2	0	0	0	0
Peyton Walker	6	3	12	8	0	1	1	1	1
Raimey Hull	8	7	5	2	4	0	3	1	0
Reina Koehler	7	4	3	7	6	1	1	0	5
Sage Hafer	4	0	5	3	0	0	0	1	2
Skye Shelmerdine	21	16	22	9	5	5	9	3	2
Trinity Bolvin	11	10	14	5	1	2	1	0	1

2021-2022 FLATHEAD WRESTLING

DEPTH CHART - BRAVES

WEIGHT	NAME	GRADE	RECORD	2022 DIVISIONALS	2022 STATE
103	Davin Naldrett	10	13 – 6	2 nd	3 rd
	Ethan MacDonald	9	14 – 9	4 th	
113	Aiden Downing	9	30 – 10	1 st	4 th
	Will Barnes	10	36 – 10	4 th	
120	Diesel Thompson	9	29 – 17	2 nd	6 th
	Gannon Wisher	9	31 – 10	3 rd	
	Gus Cox	9	3 – 6		
126	Dane Lake	9	30 – 15	5 th	
	Walter Hammett	9	13 – 14		
	Michael Mahar	9	7 – 4		
	Ian Smith	9	3 – 3		
132	Logan Stansberry	10	25 – 17	4 th	
	Raenan Allumbaugh	10	27 – 10	5 th	5 th
	Jackson Heino	9	6 – 7		
	Jarrett Tweet	9	4 – 10		
	Justin Gelormino	10	5 – 12		
	Joey Pardue-Bernabe	10	1 – 1		
	Daniel Williams	9	5 – 12		
138	Asher Kemppainen	12	31 – 10	2 nd	4 th
	Cade Gardner	11	28 – 13	4 th	
	Riley Atchinson		2 – 1		
	Larmey Ernsberger	12	2 – 12		
145	Fin Nadeau	12	41 – 2	1 st	1 st
	Jayden Sanford	11	7 – 1		
	Colton Kuka	10	27 – 13	5 th	
152	Cade Troupe	11	29 – 10	1 st	6 th
	Gunnar Thompson	10	31 – 9	3 rd	
	Kyler Christy	10	8 – 6		
160	Gabe Lake	11	38 – 5	1 st	2 nd
	Tynan Krause	11	22 – 18	7 th	
170	Anders Thompson	10	41 – 5	1 st	2 nd
	Mason Doran	12	35 – 9	4 th	5 th
182	Noah Poe-Hatten	11	39 – 3	2 nd	2 nd
	Sawyer Troupe	10	34 – 7	3 rd	5 th
	Ben McConnell	10	6 – 6		
205	Chase Youso	12	38 – 3	1 st	2 nd
	Xander Winter	10	31 – 15	3 rd	
	Blaine Olson	9	10 – 10		
HWT	Logan Lang	12	3 – 1		
	Forest Howell	11	31 – 11	5 th	5 th
	Austin Schabel	10	8 – 7		
	Nick Harvey	12	3 – 2		

2021-2022 FLATHEAD WRESTLING

DEPTH CHART - BRAVETTES

WEIGHT	NAME	GRADE	RECORD	2022 STATE
103	Anna Morrison	12	4 – 4	
	Reina Koehler	11	7 – 9	
113	Skye Shelmerdine	11	21 – 11	
	Mykel Lee	10	17 – 11	
120	Hania Halverson	12	27 – 1	1 st
	Isabella Arriaga	12	21 – 10	6 th
	Trinity Boivin	10	11 – 9	
	Dakota Keller	10	7 – 8	
126	Lily McMahon	11	23 – 6	3 rd
	Peyton Walker	11	6 – 9	
132	Lily Conover	12	19 – 8	6 th
	Raimey Hull	9	8 – 8	
	Meadow Smith	9	3 – 12	
	Mackenzie Brant	9	7 – 13	
138	Alexus Cislo	12	11 – 11	
	Alivia Rinehart	9	20 – 11	5 th
	Eliska Tornerova	9	8 – 9	
	Hannah Buckner	11	6 – 7	
145	Emma Gambino	11	20 – 7	
	Isabelle Brewer	10	9 – 16	
	Mikayla Iten	11	3 – 9	
152	McKenna McCarthy	10	17 – 8	
	Olivia Keller-Pulse	10	4 – 10	
205	Lucie Libby	10	23 – 8	5 th
	Alyssa Leimkuehler	12	15 – 11	
	Paige Hermann	9	7 – 7	
285	Boston Howell	10	16 – 8	5 th
	Alliyah Stevens	12	16 – 6	3 rd

2021-2022 FLATHEAD WRESTLING

SCHEDULE

DATE		OPPONENT	RESULTS
DECEMBER	11	MINING CITY DUALS	1 ST
	11	FLATHEAD INVITE	1 ST
	14	MISSOULA BIG SKY	69 – 0
	17 – 18	TRI-STATE	2 ND
	17	BEST OF THE WEST – DUAL	3 RD
	18	BEST OF THE WEST – INDIVIDUAL	3 RD
JANUARY	4	HELLGATE	77 – 0
	7 – 8	ROLLIE LANE	1 ST
	7 – 8	WESTERN MONTANA INVITATIONAL - BOYS	4 TH
	7 – 8	WESTERN MONTANA INVITATIONAL - GIRLS	2 ND
	13	GLACIER	63 – 9
	13	GLACIER – GIRLS	54 – 12
	14 – 15	ROCKY MOUNTAIN CLASSIC	1 ST
	15	JOHN FISHER	7 TH
	15	HELLGATE GIRLS TOURNAMENT	1 ST
	22	AA DUALS	1 ST
	22	VAN TUINSTRA DUALS	2 ND
	24	SENTINEL	74 – 0
	27	CASCADE GIRLS MIXER	
	28	HELENA HIGH	73 – 0
	28	HELENA CAPITAL	44 – 25
	29	BUTTE	54 – 24
	29	BUTTE – GIRLS	51 – 36
FEBRUARY	4	DIVISIONALS	24 Boys / 30 Girls
	10 – 11	STATE	1 ST PLACE 1 Boys Champion / 1 Girls Champion (14 Boys / 8 Girls State Placers)

2021-2022 FLATHEAD WRESTLING

HUSTLE AWARD WINNERS

OPPONENT	BRAVES	BRAVETTES
Kellogg	Ethan MacDonald Raenan Allumbaugh	
Mining City Duals Flathead Invite	Noah Poe-Hatten Fin Nadeau Anders Thompson Chase Youso	Alliyah Stevens Emma Gambino Hania Halverson
Big Sky	Dane Lake Braden AuClaire	Skye Shelmerdine
Pasco	Mason Doran Forest Howell Sawyer Troupe	McKenna McCarthy Boston Howell Alivia Rinehart
Tri-State	Gabe Lake Aiden Downing	
Hellgate	Gunnar Thompson Diesel Thompson	Lily McMahon
Ronan	Mason Doran Colton Kuka	Izzy Brewer Mykel Lee Lily Conover
Rollie Lane	Chase Youso Asher Kemppainen	Lucy Libby
Hellgate Tourney		Hania Halverson Peyton Walker
Fisher	Gannon Wisher Kyler Christy	
Rocky Mountain Classic	Davin Naldrett Cade Troupe Dane Lake	
Spirit Lake, ID	Jayden Sanford Will Barnes Blaine Olson Tynan Krause	
AA Duals	Asher Kemppainen Noah Poe-Hatten Aiden Downing Logan Stansberry	
Sentinel / Cascade	Xan Winter Walter Hammett	Reina Koehler Trinty Bovin Raimey Hull
Helena Duals	Gannon Wisher	Emma Gambino
Butte	Dane Lake Diesel Thompson	Anna Morrison Bella Arriaga

2021-2022 FLATHEAD WRESTLING

ALL-CONFERENCE

ALL CONFERENCE

BOYS

103.....	Davin Naldrett
103.....	Ethan MacDonald
113.....	Aiden Downing
113.....	Will Barnes
120.....	Diesel Thompson
120.....	Gannon Wisher
126.....	Dane Lake
132.....	Logan Stansberry
132.....	Raenan Allumbaugh
138.....	Asher Kemppainen
145.....	Fin Nadeau
145.....	Cade Troupe
152.....	Gunnar Thompson
160.....	Gabe Lake
160.....	Tynan Krause
170.....	Anders Thompson
170.....	Mason Doran
182.....	Noah Poe-Hatten
182.....	Sawyer Troupe
205.....	Chase Youso
205.....	Xander Winter
285.....	Forest Howell

GIRLS

103.....	Anna Morrison
103.....	Reina Koehler
113.....	Skye Shelmerdine
113.....	Mykel Lee
120.....	Hania Halverson
120.....	Isabella Arriaga
120.....	Trinity Boivin
120.....	Dakota Keller
126.....	Lily McMahon
126.....	Peyton Walker
132.....	Lily Conover
132.....	Raimey Hull
132.....	Meadow Smith
132.....	Mackenzie Brandt
138.....	Alexus Cislo
138.....	Alivia Reinhart
138.....	Eliska Tornerova
138.....	Hannah Buckner
145.....	Emma Gambino
145.....	Isabelle Brewer
145.....	Mikayla Iten
152.....	McKenna McCarthy
152.....	Olivia Keller-Pulse
205.....	Lucie Libby
205.....	Alyssa Leimkuehler
205.....	Paige Hermann
285.....	Boston Howell
285.....	Alliyah Stevens

2021-2022 FLATHEAD WRESTLING

ALL-STATE

ALL STATE

BOYS

103	Davin Naldrett / 3 rd
113	Aiden Downing / 4 th
120	Diesel Thompson / 6 th
132	Raenan Allumbaugh / 5 th
138	Asher Kemppainen / 4 th
145	Fin Nadeau / 1 st
152	Cade Troupe / 6 th
160	Gabe Lake / 2 nd
170	Anders Thompson / 2 nd
170	Mason Doran / 5 th
182	Noah Poe-Hatten / 2 nd
182	Sawyer Troupe / 5 th
205	Chase Youso / 2 nd
285	Forest Howell / 5 th

GIRLS

120	Hania Halverson / 1 st
120	Isabella Arriaga / 6 th
126	Lily McMahon / 3 rd
132	Lily Conover / 6 th
138	Alivia Rinehart / 5 th
205	Lucie Libby / 5 th
285	Alliyah Stevens / 3 rd
285	Boston Howell / 5 th

2021-2022 FLATHEAD WRESTLING

FLATHEAD WRESTLING RECORDS - BOYS

CATEGORY	RECORD	NAME	YEAR
SEASON WINS	48	Brendan Barnes	2018
	48	Tucker Nadeau	2018
	47	Cade Troupe	2020
	45	Brendan Barnes	2020
	45	Tanner Russell	2019
	44	Tanner Beaman	2008
	44	Payton Hume	2018
	44	Asher Kempainen	2020
	44	Fin Nadeau	2020
	43	David Lau	2008
	42	Luke Fischer	2008
	42	Noah Poe-Hatten	2020
	42	Zaybin Stewart	2020
	41	Brian Ham	2008
	41	Tyler Thomas	2008
	40	Shawn Lau	2007
	40	Fin Nadeau	2022
	40	Tucker Nadeau	2017
	40	Tyler Wells	2008
	39	Brian Ham	2005
	39	Mikey Kuehne	2005
	38	Brendan Barnes	2019
	38	Matt Gash-Gilder	2017
	38	Tiger Harris	2003
	38	Payton Hume	2017
	38	Michael Lee	2017
	38	Fin Nadeau	2019
	38	Anders Thompson	2022
	38	Chris Thompson	2005
PINS	36	Tanner Russell	2019
	35	Cade Troupe	2020
	31	Shawn Lau	2009
	30	Larry Johnson	2004
	30	Chase Youso	2022
	29	Tyler Thomas	2008

	28	Devin Eystad	2002
	28	Michael Lee	2018
	28	Michael Lee	2017
	28	Chris Thompson	2005
	27	Caleb Allen-Schmid	2008
	27	Brendan Barnes	2018
	27	Payton Hume	2017
	27	Shawn Lau	2007
	26	Garett Rieke	2018
CONSECUTIVE WINS	74	Burke Tyree	1986-1988
	64	Trae Vasquez	2015-2016
	50	Tucker Nadeau	2018
	29	Noah Poe-Hatten	2022
	26	Luke Fischer	2008
	25	Tyler O'Meyer	2001
	24	Cade Troupe	2020
	19	Fin Nadeau	2020
	18	Mikey Kuehne	2005
	17	Brendan Barnes	2018
	17	Ethan Freund	2021
	16	Gabe Lake	2022
	16	Fin Nadeau	2022
	15	Brendan Barnes	2020
	15	Shawn Lau	2007
	15	Tanner Russell	2020
	15	Chase Youso	2022
	15	Chase Youso	2021
CAREER WINS	155	Tanner Russell	2016-2020
	154	Payton Hume	2015-2018
	151	Brendan Barnes	2016-2020
	138	Brian Ham	2005-2008
	138	Tucker Nadeau	2015-2018
	137	Shawn Lau	2007-2011
	135	Fin Nadeau	2018-2022
	132	David Lau	2005-2008
	126	Tyler Wells	2005-2008
	118	Burke Tyree	1985-88
	117	Devin Eystad	2001-2004
	115	Paxton Boyce	2016-2020
	113	Luke Fischer	2005-2008

	113	Brandon Mitchell	2002-2005
	111	Mikey Kuehne	2003-2006
	110	Scott Cassel	2003-2006
DIVISIONAL TITLES	4	Shawn Lau	2007, 2008, 2009,2010
	4	Fin Nadeau	2019, 2020, 2021, 2022
	3	Devin Eystad	2002, 2003, 2004
	3	Mikey Kuehne	2004, 2005, 2006
	3	Bryce Stacy	2008, 2009, 2010
	3	Cade Troupe	2020, 2021, 2022
	3	Trae Vasquez	2015, 2016, 2017
STATE TITLES	3	Shawn Lau	2007, 2009, 2010
	3	Burke Tyree	1986, 1987,1988
	2	Bruce Ewing	1971, 1973
	2	Vic Green	1961, 1962
	2	Brian Ham	2007, 2008
	2	Tiger Harris	2003, 2004
	2	Ashley Keltner	1989, 1990
	2	John Lee	1962, 1963
	2	Jim Miller	1958, 1959
	2	Bryce Stacy	2008, 2010
	2	Trae Vasquez	2015, 2016
TAKEDOWNS	202	Greg Thompson	2004
	161	Mikey Kuehne	2005
	133	Trae Vasquez	2016
	131	Tucker Nadeau	2017
	126	Mikey Kuehne	2006
	126	Greg Thompson	2003
	124	Tucker Nadeau	2018
	116	Tyler Wells	2008
	115	Mikey Kuehne	2004
	111	Jeff Tafoya	2003

2021-2022 FLATHEAD WRESTLING

FLATHEAD WRESTLING RECORDS - GIRLS

CATEGORY	RECORD	NAME	YEAR
SEASON WINS	31	Hania Halverson	2022
	23	Lucy Libby	2022
	23	Lily McMahon	2022
	22	Skye Shelmerdine	2022
	21	Bella Arriaga	2022
	20	Emma Gambino	2022
	20	Alivia Rinehart	2022
	19	Lily Conover	2022
	17	Mykel Lee	2022
	17	McKenna McCarthy	2022
PINS	29	Hania Halverson	2022
	16	Skye Sherlmerdine	2022
	15	Lily McMahon	2022
	15	Bella Arriaga	2022
	14	Lily Conover	2022
	13	Lucy Libby	2022
	13	Alivia Rinehart	2022
	13	Mykel Lee	2022
	13	Alliyah Stevens	2022
	13	Emma Gambino	2022
CAREER WINS	42	Hania Halverson	2020 - 2022
	39	Emma Gambino	2019 - 2022
	38	Skye Shermerdine	2019 -2022
	31	Lucy Libby	2020 - 2022
	30	Bella Arriaga	2020 -2022
	27	Lily Conover	2020 - 2022
	23	Lily McMahon	2020 - 2022
	20	Alivia Rinehart	2020 - 2022
	20	Boston Howell	2020 - 2022
TAKEDOWNS	33	Lily Conover	2022
	29	Lily McMahon	2022
	28	Bella Arriaga	2022
	25	Emma Gambino	2022
	25	Hania Halverson	2022
	23	Alivia Rinehart	2022

	23	Lucie Libby	2022
	22	Skye Shelmerdine	2022
	20	Alexus Cislo	2022
	18	Mykel Lee	2022
	15	Alliyah Stevens	2022

2021-2022 FLATHEAD WRESTLING

STATE CHAMPS - INDIVIDUAL

YEAR	NAME	YEAR	NAME
1956	Jack Sanders	1993	Mike Ballard
1958	Bill Lee	1993	Steve Balla
1958	Jim Miller	1996	Trent Gardner
1959	Jim Miller	1998	Corbin Eystad
1961	Bill Olson	2000	Eric Richeson
1961	Vic Green	2002	Tyler O'Myer
1962	Vic Green	2003	Tiger Harris
1962	John Lee	2004	Tiger Harris
1963	Allen Johnson	2005	Brandon Hoffenbacker
1963	John Lee	2005	TC Decker
1964	Bernie Olson	2007	Shawn Lau
1966	Rich Jacobson	2007	Bryce Stacy
1967	Roger Fincher	2007	Brian Ham
1970	Bill Carr	2008	Brian Ham
1970	Dan Fischer	2008	Tanner Beaman
1971	Jim Mann	2008	David Lau
1971	Bruce Ewing	2008	Tyler Wells
1973	Dave Crone	2008	Luke Fischer
1973	Bruce Hawk	2009	Shawn Lau
1973	Wayne Hall	2009	Bryce Stacy
1973	Don Clapper	2009	Ryan Thiel
1973	Bruce Ewing	2010	Bryce Stacy
1980	Derek Tyree	2010	Shawn Lau
1982	Jeff Anderson	2010	Caleb Allen-Schmidt
1982	Greg Pisk	2012	Larry Francis
1986	Burke Tyree	2015	Trae Vasquez
1986	Jim Poe	2016	Trae Vasquez
1987	Burke Tyree	2018	Payton Hume
1987	TJ Campbell	2018	Tucker Nadeau
1987	Tim Minghini	2018	Michael Lee
1988	Burke Tyree	2021	Ethan Freund
1989	Ashley Keltner	2022	Hania Halverson – Girls
1989	Dan Troupe	2022	Fin Nadeau
1990	Ashley Keltner		

2021-2022 FLATHEAD WRESTLING

STATE CHAMPS - TEAM

TEAM	YEAR	TEAM	YEAR
Missoula	1962	Billings Skyview	1993
Missoula	1963	Billings West	1994
Missoula	1964	Butte	1995
Sentinel	1965	Billings Skyview	1996
Sentinel	1966	Butte	1997
Sentinel	1967	Billings Skyview	1998
Sentinel	1968	Great Falls High	1999
Sentinel	1969	Butte	2000
Great Falls	1970	Billings Skyview	2001
CM Russell	1971	Billings Skyview	2002
Great Falls	1972	Butte	2003
Flathead	1973	Flathead	2004
Billings West	1974	Billings Skyview	2005
CM Russell	1975	Flathead	2006
CM Russell	1976	Flathead	2007
CM Russell	1977	Flathead	2008
Hellgate	1978	Flathead	2009
CM Russell	1979	Flathead	2010
Butte	1980	Bozeman	2011
Butte	1981	Glacier	2012
Butte	1982	Great Falls High	2013
Butte	1983	Great Falls High	2014
Butte	1984	Great Falls High	2015
Butte	1985	Billings Senior	2016
Butte	1986	Flathead	2017
Butte	1987	Flathead	2018
Butte	1988	Bozeman	2019
Butte	1989	Great Falls High	2020
Butte	1990	Flathead	2021
Butte	1991	Flathead	2022
Butte	1992		

2021-2022 FLATHEAD WRESTLING

IN THE NEWS

FLATHEAD SEES RARE PAIR HEAD TO DIVISION I

By FRITZ NEIGHBOR

Daily Inter Lake | November 10, 2021 10:53 PM

It is once again Signing Day Ceremony Season, and Flathead High had a nice one Wednesday to celebrate two future Division I athletes in swimmer Lily Milner and wrestler Fin Nadeau. It's not unusual to do these photo-ops by twos or threes or more, especially for a bigger school like Flathead. So one obvious setup was to have Nadeau, who's headed to Binghamton University in New York, pose with Milner, who's bound for the University of Utah. It is rare enough to have two D-I signees, and probably rarer still when they sit that close. "They're dating," confirmed Flathead wrestling coach Jeff Thompson.

The photos continued, to where it felt like half the student body and family trees were getting in the frame.

"I wasn't expecting that," said Milner, a two-time defending State AA champion in both the 100-meter freestyle and the 100 backstroke. "Well, I half-mentioned it to a lot of people — 'Oh, my signing is today' — but a lot of people showed up and it was really cool and special. It was really fun to see all these people support us."

Milner's future school seems almost a given. For starters she spent several years being coached in club and high school by Missoula product Major Robinson, who had a standout collegiate career for the Utes. "I've been to swim camps there, love the program, love all the staff," Milner said. "As soon as I hit those goals I needed to hit, in order to go there? I was immediately reaching out."

Milner impressively lowered her state times in the freestyle from 52.05 seconds in 2020 to 50.98 this past February; her backstroke time went from 57.42 down to 56.58. This is a byproduct of countless kicks and turns.

"Oh, my gosh," she said. "Five thousand yards a day, and a mile is 1,650 so that's three miles a day, for probably 300 days a year. ..." She smiles. "It adds up."

For Nadeau, Binghamton wasn't on his mind until Christa Nadeau found it out. "My mom just said, 'Hey, there's this pretty cool college. You should reach out to them,'" the younger Nadeau said. "I started contacting the coaches and texting them and really liked them. Then I went out for a visit and really felt like that was the place I should be.

"It's a pretty good wrestling school."

Binghamton in fact is ranked No. 9 in the National Wrestling Coaches Association/NDS Mid-Major poll. Wrestling for the Bearkats is a reward earned with hours in the Brave Brawlers' wrestling room. "It's been a lot of hard work, over the past few years especially, in the room," said Nadeau, who has been State AA runner-up three times. "There's been a lot of good partners, a lot of good coaching."

Partners like Asher Kemppainen, Gabe Luke, Chase Youso and Anders Thompson give credence to the saying, Steel sharpens steel. Nadeau figures to study business in New York. It's fitting that the duo excel in a sport that takes a lot of self-discipline.

"You kind of become who you surround yourself with," said Milner, who is leaning toward political science or pharmacy in college. "I consider both of us to be really dedicated athletes. We push each other to be better people, better athletes. It's worked really well."

By next July the two will be preparing for campus life, or already have begun it. Binghamton, in case you wondered, sits 2,000 miles from Salt Lake City as the crow flies. Or 667 days as the Lily Milner swims.



By 406mtsports.com December 3, 2021



Flathead High School's Cade Troupe wrestles Glacier High School's Hunter Magness at Flathead High in Kalispell on Jan. 10, 2020. Hunter D'Antuono | Flathead Beacon

Billings will once again be home to the all-class state wrestling tournament at First Interstate Arena at MetraPark in 2022.

And come this February, the action will intensify as the girls classification will be added to the Metra mix. Last year because of the coronavirus pandemic, the State AA tournament was at Kalispell Flathead High School, State A was held at Custer County District High

School in Miles City, State B-C was at Shelby High School, and the inaugural girls state tourney was at Lockwood.

"We are planning on moving forward with the all-class tournament and included in that will be the girls as well, and the girls will be wrestling at the tournament," said Brian Michelotti, associate director of the Montana High School association and the state wrestling tournament manager. The state tournament dates are Feb. 10-12, 2022. The Thursday date was added because all the girls who wrestle in the regular season will qualify for state and wrestle in a single-classification state tourney. Like last year, there won't be any girls divisional tourneys. At state, girls will only wrestle against girls. Girls can wrestle against boys and girls in the regular season. The high school wrestling season begins Friday for Classes A, B and C, and on Dec. 10 for Class AA, which voted to start its season a week later to allow a longer break between seasons and to give student-athletes and coaches more time together over Thanksgiving.

Last year, Michelotti said there were 144 girls who competed at the state tourneys. The number of girls who come out for the sport this year won't be known until the weight certification is completed around the beginning of the new year. The 6 p.m. Thursday evening start for the girls would be in case any of the girls weight divisions have more than 16 wrestlers. A traditional bracket has included 16 wrestlers. The boys wrestlers will start Friday, Feb. 11.

"We'd wrestle down until there were 16 in the brackets," Michelotti said of the girls competition beginning Thursday, Feb. 10, noting the girls would then break for the day and continue Friday. With the Thursday competition added, practice at the Metra would be from 1 to approximately 3:30 p.m. Thursday, and then the arena would be cleared. Girls wrestlers would then weigh in and any bracket with more than 16 competitors would begin.

The Friday schedule will look much like normal years. Weigh-ins would be at 8 a.m. Friday, the parade of athletes would begin at approximately 10 a.m. and the first round at 10:20 a.m. The big difference would be instead of Classes AA, A and B-C each competing on four mats, the divisions would take place on three mats. The girls would also have three mats, for 12 total mats for AA, A, B-C and girls. Thus, Michelotti said competition Friday will probably run an hour or so later than normal.

"If a class finished early, we'd move over to that other mat to keep with our round schedule," he said. On Saturday, officials don't foresee any schedule changes. Weigh-ins would be at 8 a.m., the semifinal round starting at 9:30 a.m., the consolation semifinals at 11:30 a.m., the consolation finals at 1:30 p.m. and the finals at 3:30 p.m.

"We are excited about the girls side of things and incorporating the girls into the boys wrestling tournament," Michelotti said. Girls wrestling is in the second year of a two-year pilot program and will be reviewed at the end of the season. The MHSAA could look at adding divisionals to the girls wrestling schedule. "Most likely in the future, we'll institute a divisional and bring 16 per class, like in the boys side of things," Michelotti said. While Michelotti is unsure of how many girls wrestlers will compete this year, he does expect to see growth from last season. "We are expecting good numbers and expecting them to go up quite a bit," he said. "We just don't know how much at this point."

SECOND SEASON OF GIRLS WRESTLING STARTS SATURDAY

By KATIE BROWN

Daily Inter Lake | December 9, 2021 10:57 PM



The second season of Montana girls wrestling kicks off Saturday with the Flathead Invite, which is looking like it will have a huge turnout. Around 17 teams from across the state and more than 150 wrestlers will hit the mats at Flathead High School. Matches get going at 10 a.m. "It'll give everybody a pretty good look for what's out there and who they're gonna be up against a little bit," Flathead co-head girls coach Amber Downing said.

There's a full slate of competitions for Flathead and Glacier this season, a significant improvement from the inaugural year of the sport in Montana. Neither school had full schedules, but that is no longer an issue. "It was really hard last year with the lack of matches," Glacier head coach Ross Dankers said. "This will be really beneficial. It's just a great opportunity for a lot of girls."

Flathead won a state championship with its girls last year and has 12 wrestlers returning from that team, including four state placers: Lucille Libby, Trinity Bolvin, Boston Howell and Hania Halverson. McKenna McCarthy, who wrestled for Glacier last year, is a new addition, as well as Lily McMahon, who was third at state in Oregon last year.

Interest remains high — there are about 30 girls who have turned out for practices thus far, some trying out the sport for the first time as seniors or because of cuts from other sports.

"Our calendar is quite full and so our girls have their work cut out for them as far as trying to learn the techniques and quickly go apply it," Downing said. "But they're excited for that challenge as well."

Glacier placed 15th at state and though no state placers return, there are 17 wrestlers coming back from last year. "A ton of girls hit it really hard during the summer and put in the mat time," Dankers said. "I'm looking forward to watching them hit their stride this year. It's a vastly different experience this first week than it was all of last year."

After this weekend, both schools head to the CMR Holiday Tournament on Dec. 18 before winter break. Flathead has the Rollie Lane Tournament in Boise Jan. 7 and Glacier hosts Missoula Hellgate on Jan. 4.

"I'm just excited to get this season started and to see how all of the teams come out to see really, quite frankly, the growth that girls wrestling is making here in Montana," Downing said. "Making sure that everybody's needs are being met is always an adventure. But we're up for the challenge and it kind of makes this sport fun and quite unique for the competitors, as well as the coaches."

BRAVES START 3-0 AT MINING CITY DUALS

By The Daily Inter Lake
| December 10, 2021 10:40 PM

BUTTE — The Flathead Brave Brawlers got off to a flying start at the Mining City Duals, winning three matchups on Friday. “It was a solid performance to start the season,” Flathead coach Jeff Thompson said. “We felt like our boys really competed well and were on the attack for six minutes. We wrestled two teams that we just never see, so that was a plus.”

Flathead beat Missoula Big Sky 69-0, Browning 72-6 and Hamilton 72-3. Probably the most impressive individual win came from Fin Nadeau at 145 pounds, who scored a 15-8 decision over Big Sky’s Israel Moreno, the defending 132-pound State AA champion. “Dane Lake had a great match against Big Sky to start his high school career,” Thompson added of Flathead’s 126-pounder. “Davin Naldett is going to be a solid 103 pounder to get the momentum going each dual meet.”

The competition kicks up a level Saturday, when the Braves head into the championship bracket alongside AA powers Billings West and Billings Senior.



Flathead 69, Big Sky 0

103 — Davin Naldret, F, won by forfeit; 113 — Aiden Downing, F, pinned Gavin Lemmon, 1:53; 120 — Diesel Thompson, F, dec. Wyatt McCorkle, 11-5; 126 — Dane Lake, F, dec. Isaac Ayers, 3-0; 132 — Logan Stansberry, F, pinned Ladence Running Crane, 3:47; 138 — Cade Gardner, F, won by forfeit; 145 — Fin Nadeau, F, dec. Israel Moreno, 15-8; 152 — Gunnar Thompson, F, p. Shaun Billingsly, 1:05. 160 — Gabe Lake, F, pinned Charlie Wats, :41; 170 — Anders Thompson, F, won by forfeit; 182 — Noah Poe-Hatten, F, won by forfeit; 205 — Chase Youso, F, pinned Hunter Curtis, 1:13; 285 — Forest Howell, F, won by forfeit.

Flathead 72, Browning 6

103 — Naldret, F, pinned Pita Fish, 2:59; 113 — Downing, F, pinned Prestin Connolly, :11; 120 — Chris Hall, Brw, pinned Diesel Thompson :14; 126 — Lake, F, won by forfeit; 132 — Stansberry, F, pinned Snow Momberg, 1:01; 138 — Asher Kemppainen, F, won by forfeit; 145 — Nadeau, F, pinned Jesse Racine, :54; 152 — Gunnar Thompson, F, won by forfeit; 160 — Lake, F, won by forfeit; 170 — Anders Thompson, F, pinned Isaac Flamand :39; 182 — Poe-Hatten, F, pinned Wind Augare, 1:06; 205 — Youso, F, pinned Brendyn Whiteman, 4:49; 285 — Howell, F, won by forfeit.

Flathead 72, Hamilton 3

103 — Naldret, F, pinned Colton Morgan, 1:27; 113 — Downing, F, won by forfeit; 120 — Diesel Thompson, F, won by forfeit; 126 — Dane Lake, F, won by forfeit; 132 — Jessie Anson, Ham, dec. Stansberry, 5-2; 138 — Cade Gardner, F, won by forfeit; 145 — Nadeau, F, pinned Andrew Carmody 1:47; 152 — Gunnar Thompson, F, pinned Adam Loveless, 1:49; 160 — Gabe Lake, F, won by forfeit; 170 — Anders Thompson, F, won by forfeit; 182 — Poe-Hatten, F, pinned Noah Guisinger, :28; 205 — Sawyer Troupe, F, pinned Trevor Lewis, :43; 285 — Howell, F, won by forfeit.

FLATHEAD FIRST, PACK THIRD AT FLATHEAD GIRLS INVITE

By The Daily Inter Lake
| December 11, 2021 9:55 PM

The Flathead Girls Invitational wrestling meet had a local feel to it Saturday, with host Flathead finishing first in the team race and crosstown rival Glacier tying for third. Hania Halverson (120 pounds), Emma Gambino (145) and Alliyah Stevens (heavyweight) won individual titles for the Bravettes, who scored 254.5 points to win the team title in the Boyle Gym. Billings Senior was second at 209. Glacier, with Jessalyn Hewitt winning the second 132-pound bracket, tied with Billings Skyview at 147.



Hewitt beat Flathead's Raimey Hull in her final; other top Wolfpack finishers were Audrey Goodsell, who was third at 170, and Paishance Haller, third at heavyweight. Gambino led a 1-3-5 finish for Flathead at 145 with Isabella Shirin and Alivia Reinhardt; Glacier's Madisyn Frazier lost to Gambino in the final. The Bravettes had plenty of depth points, with Lily Conover taking third in 132B; Lucia Libby third at 205; and Lily McMahon losing in the 132A final. Sage Hafer finished third in the 103-pound bracket as well.

Flathead Girls Invitational

Team scores — 1, Flathead 254.5, 2, Billings Senior 209; 3 (tie), Glacier and, Billings Skyview, 147; 5, Butte 65; 6 (tie), Billings West and Cut Bank, 58; 8, Plains/Hot Springs 56; 9, Gallatin 49; 10, Ronan 46; 11, Browning 42; 12, Missoula Big Sky 36; 13, Missoula Hellgate 34; 14, Chester-JI 11; 15, Bozeman 6.

103 - 1, Saellah Hugs, Ronan; 2, Kaylee LaPier, Butte; 3, Sage Hafer, Flathead.

113 - Championship: Gracelyn Hanson, Senior, pinned Justa Curtiss, Big Sky, :44. / Third-fourth: Aydin Gonzalez, Butte, won by forfeit over Skye Shelmerdin, Flathead; / Fifth-sixth: Joslyn Grissnell, Browning, won by forfeit over Leah Smith, Big Sky.

120 - Championship: Hania Halverson, Flathead, pinned Emily Pedron, Glacier, 1:15. / Third-fourth: Brynn Browser, Big Sky, T. Fall over Trinity Bolvin, Flathead, 2:54. / Fifth-sixth: Jersey Berg, Senior, pinned Isabel Hansen, Big Sky, 2:57.

126 - Championship: Bella Hernandez, Billings West, pinned Tierra Hoffert, Big Sky, 2:47. / Third-fourth: Taylor Angle, Plains, and Cheyenne D'aigneau, Senior, double bye. / Fifth-sixth: Avalon McCuen, Big Sky, and Savannah Riggins, Chester-JI, double bye.

132 - Championship: Lily Schultz, Gallatin, pinned Lily McMahon, Flathead, 2:34. / Third-fourth: Brynn Courville, Plains, d. Evija Cagle, Big Sky, 4-3. / Fifth-sixth: Katie Dolence, Ronan, and Nora Halliday, Glacier, double bye.

132B - Championship: Jessalyn Hewitt, Glacier, pinned Raimey Hull, Flathead, 1:07. / Third-fourth: Lily Conover, Flathead, pinned Payton Johnson, Glacier, :37. / Fifth-sixth: Anne Baldwin, Gallatin, pinned Allison Liwosz, Skyview, :31.

138 - Championship: Mariah Wahl, Cut Bank, d. Makenzee Neal, Billings West, 4-1. / Third-fourth: Yasmine Talsey-McKay, Browning, won by forfeit over Paige Gershmel, Senior. / Fifth-sixth: Avery Bailly, Skyview, forfeit over Kadence Rose, Glacier.

145 - Championship: Emma Gambino, Flathead, pinned Madisyn Frazier, Glacier, 2:18. / Third-fourth: Isabella Shirin, Flathead, pinned Emerson Eckhardt, Senior, :25. / Fifth-sixth: Alivia Reinhardt, Flathead, pinned Dynesty Peak, Senior, :34.

152 - Championship: Kendal Tucker, Senior, pinned Lillian MacDonald, Plains, 2:04. / Third-fourth: JJ Carter, Cut Bank, forfeit over Nataalka Rolfson, Senior. / Fifth-sixth: Haven Ferguson, Skyview, pinned Isabelle DeLeo, Big Sky, 2:00.

170 - Championship: Rylee Kogolshak, Senior, m.dec. Hayla Hoffman, Butte, 9-0. / Third-fourth: Audrey Goodsell, Glacier, pinned Chaeli Scown, Butte, :35. / Fifth-sixth: Paisley Jaeger, Senior, pinned Leah Esser, Glacier.

205 - Championship: Kassidee Savaria, Skyview, pinned Kenna Schmaus, Hellgate, :37. / Third-fourth: Lucia Libby, Flathead, forfeit over Tirza Two-Teeth, Ronan. / Fifth-sixth: Alisa Leimkuehle, Flathead, pinned Ceia Jaeger, Senior, :32.

Hwt - 1, Alliyah Stevens, Flathead (3-0); 2, Haylee Feters, Cut Bank; 3, Paishance Haller, Glacier; 4, Marika Bonner, Billings West.

FLATHEAD WRESTLERS OFF TO STRONG START

Bravettes won home tournament featuring more than 150 girls, Braves won Mining City Duals for second time

By 406mtsports.com December 13, 2021



Flathead High School's Cade Troupe wrestles Glacier High School's Hunter Magness at Flathead High in Kalispell on Jan. 10, 2020. Hunter D'Antuono | Flathead Beacon

Defending state champion Kalispell Flathead won the Mining City Duals with a 42-27 victory over Butte on Saturday. The Flathead girls program also had a strong showing, winning the Flathead Invitational on Saturday. Flathead, which won the inaugural girls wrestling state championship in February at Lockwood High School, finished first over the weekend with 254.5 points. Billings Senior, the state runner-up last season, was second with 209. Billings Skyview and Kalispell Glacier tied for third with 147, Butte was fifth with 65 points, and Billings

West tied for sixth with Cut Bank at 58 points.

Overall, approximately 150 girls were entered in the tourney at Flathead said Braves boys coach Jeff Thompson, who also oversees the girls program at Flathead. There were 15 schools that tallied team points at the event. "It was a great weekend for Flathead wrestling and it was just a great place to start," said Thompson. "We have some things to work on and a lot of pieces of the puzzle to put together. We are very proud of this team."

In two stints as head coach, Thompson has guided the Flathead boys to seven state championships and last year the girls team claimed the state title. One thing that stands out for Thompson is the difficulty in winning the MCD team championship. "For Flathead, we have had a lot of success, but the Mining City Duals has always been a challenge for us for so many reasons," he said. "For all the years I've been coaching, this is only the second time we've won the Mining City Duals. It means a lot to me, the program and the kids. It's neat to start the season and do well in a team aspect instead of an individual tournament. That's really special."

While Thompson was coaching the boys team in Butte along with two other Braves coaches, he said Amber Downing, Sully Sullivan and AJ Burnham were at the Flathead gym coaching the girls. Another two Braves Brawlers coaches were in Kellogg, Idaho, coaching the JV boys team. The sport of girls wrestling continues to grow said Thompson.

"The numbers were just outstanding. It just shows the growth of girls wrestling in the state of Montana," he said. "It was ran really smooth. A lot of the old-time wrestling fans came out of the woodworks from the Flathead Valley to go watch. It's an amazing sport, being enjoyed by not just the boys but girls now. It was a lot of exciting matches and a touch of what the state tournament will be. A lot of teams were there. It was very, very cool." As for the boys competition, Thompson said, the Braves, state-runner-up Senior, West and Butte all appear to be early-season favorites.

West was fourth at state last year and Butte fifth. "It will be a super fun state tournament and we look forward to the competition. And Butte, they were the big surprise. Not many people besides Butte fans and the Butte wrestling program anticipated them to be in the finals. They are solid and go to battle and are a very well-rounded team.

"It has been so many years since you had two West-side teams in the finals of the Mining City Duals. Historically, some people might say the East side is more wrestling tough in the state, but this showed the West side can compete, too." The Kalispell boys will compete in the Tri-State in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, Friday and Saturday and the girls team and JV boys will go to the Best of the West in Pasco, Washington, this weekend. On Jan. 7-8, 2022, the Brave Brawlers will compete in Boise, Idaho.

"We are going to go find the competition," Thompson said. "We fundraise a lot of money and want our kids to get beat and find the competition. That is the only way to learn and get better. ... We need to find a way to get those battles in before the state tournament."

WINTER PREP SPORTS PREVIEW 2022

Basketball, wrestling and swimming seasons have started competitions with local teams again aiming for statewide notoriety

By Micah Drew December 15, 2021



Hunter D'Antuono | Flathead Beacon

After Class AA officials pushed back the start of the winter season an extra 10 days, all classifications are now well into the start of competitions.

Wrestling will once again be a dominant storyline this winter after Flathead won both the inaugural girl's tournament as well as the boy's tournament. This year, the all-class wrestling tournament will return to MetraPark in Billings in February. Like last year, the girls tourney will be single-classification.

Here's an overview of what to watch with each team in the Flathead.

WRESTLING

FLATHEAD BRAVES

Head coach: Jeff Thompson

2020-21 postseason (boys): 1st at state

2020-21 postseason (girls): 1st at state

Key Wrestlers: Fin Nadeau, Sr., Noah Poe-Hatten, Jr., Ethan Freund, Jr., Hania Haliverson, Jr., Emma Gambino, Jr., Alliyah Stevens, Sr.

The seven-time state champion Brave brawlers are looking to continue their Class AA dominance. The 60-person team boasts its usual depth and started the season with a strong win at the Mining City Duals, the second time winning the meet under coach Thompson. On the girls side, the Bravettes started the season with a solid win at the Flathead Invitational, showing no signs of giving up the inaugural state title won last year.

BRAWLERS, BRAVETTES TOP BIG SKY IN DUALS



FLATHEAD'S DANE LAKE TRIES for an early pin against Missoula Big Sky's Isaac Ayers at 126 pounds at Flathead High School on Tuesday, Dec. 14. (Casey Kreider/Daily Inter Lake)

By Daily

Inter

Lake

| December 15, 2021 6:00 PM

Flathead's wrestling teams started off their dual season nicely Tuesday, beating the Missoula Big Sky girls 42-12 and the boys 69-0. It was the second time in four days that the Brave Brawlers beat the Eagle boys by that score; one difference was Fin Nadeau's match at 145 pounds against Big Sky standout Israel Morena went to overtime before Nadeau prevailed, 6-4. "Dane Lake also had a big win at 126," Flathead coach Jeff Thompson said. "Diesel Thompson looked good at 120, with constant motion."

Skye Shelmerdine led the Bravettes' efforts with two wins at 113, while Coach Thompson also singled out Trinity Bolvin (120), McKenna McCarthy (152) and Hania Halverson (120). "Hania Halverson just does what she does, and that is win," Thompson said. "It was fun to wrestle at home in front of the Braves fans and put on a show."

GIRLS

Flathead 42, Big Sky 12

113 — Mykel Lee, F, p. Alainna Whillhite, 2:57; 113 — Skye Shelmerdine, F, p. Justa Curtiss, 1:45; 113 — Curtis, MBS, p. Lee, :04; 113 — Shelmerdine, F, p. Willhite, :04. 120 — Trinity Bolvin, p. Emma Traider, :29; 120 — Hania Halverson, F, p. Traeder, :20; 152 — McKenna McCarthy, F, p. Isabelle DeLeo, :50; 152 — Mya Allard, F, p. DeLeo, 1:16; 152 — DeLeo, MBS, p. Olivia Keller-Pulse, 3:06.

BOYS

Flathead 69, Big Sky 0

103 — Ethan MacDonald, F, won by forfeit; 113 — Aiden Downing, F, p. Gavin Lemmon, :40; 120 — Diesel Thompson, dec. Wyatt McCorkle, 11-4; 126 — Dane Lake, F, dec. Isaac Ayers 7-4; 132 — Logan Stansberry, F, p. Ladence Running Crane 3:36; 138 — Cade Gardner, F, p. Joey Sandberg, 1:13; 145 — Fin Nadeau, F, d. Israel Morena 6-4 OT; 152 — Gunnar Thompson, F, p. Shaun Billingsley, 2:46; 160 — Gabe Lake, F, won by forfeit; 170 — Anders Thompson, F, won by forfeit; 182 — Sawyer Troupe, F, won by forfeit; 205 — Noah Poe-Hatten, F, p. Hunter Curtis, 2:44; 285 — Forest Howell, won by forfeit.

BACK ON THE ROAD: GLACIER, FLATHEAD WRESTLERS IN TOP TOURNAMENTS

By FRITZ NEIGHBOR

Daily Inter Lake | December 16, 2021 12:00 AM

Glacier has a two-time state champion amid a burgeoning team. Flathead has the makings of a repeat. Now both boys teams get another early test, heading to high-profile tournaments this weekend, the last before Christmas break. The Wolfpack boys and girls head to the Great Falls Invitational, while Flathead competes in both the Tri-State Invitational in Coeur d'Alene and the Best of the West meets in Pasco, Wash.

A 14-0 dual record for the boys, a state championship for the boys (not to mention the girls), and a promising start to the 2021-22 season all has Flathead thinking big. Eleven

"Brave Brawlers" are among the top six in their weight classes, in the first Class AA rankings that were released this week. That includes Noah Poe-Hatten and Fin Nadeau, ranked first at 182 and 145 pounds. Both finished second at state in March, as did Asher Kemppainen. The Braves, coming off their Mining City Duals championship, also claimed the No. 1 ranking among AA teams this week.

Flathead coach Jeff Thompson had 45 boys competing and is counting on seniors Nadeau, Kemppainen (ranked fourth at 138) and Chase Youso (ranked second at 205) for leadership. "There is a lot of mat time on this team, with most of these wrestlers on mats 10 or 11 months a year," Thompson said. "A lot of these wrestlers are getting well over 100 matches a year."

Thompson took his boys to the Western States Championships over the summer, where they finished fifth among 20 teams. Poe-Hatten went to the Junior Nationals where he finished third in Greco. Thompson noted encouraging early performances from Diesel Thompson (no relation), Aiden Downing, Dane Lake, as well as returnees Sawyer Troupe and Davin Naldrett.

Most of the ranked wrestlers are headed to Tri-State, along with Flathead's girls – the second-ever team of Bravettes will get a dose of higher competition, with Washington having embraced high school girls wrestling for a longer time. Glacier has three ranked wrestlers, and it'd be tough to find anybody more accomplished than two-time state champion Teegan Vazquez. The junior is wrestling at 132 pounds this year.

"He's really stepped into a leadership role," Glacier coach Ross Dankers said. "He's one of the older guys, and brings in that wealth of knowledge and technical background. The kids obviously look up to him, for what he does in the classroom and on the mat."

Dankers has 40 boys (and 15 girls) competing, and the list includes ranked wrestlers Royce Conklin (170) and Kaleb Shine (138). Conklin had his junior season cut short by injury; now he's a vocal leader for the Pack. Dankers otherwise has a pretty young team that includes sophomores Aiden Krause and TJ Gannon, who both wrestle 182 and Garrett Bosch at 113.

Together they helped the Pack beat powerful Great Falls High at the Mining City Duals. "Garrett went up against some of the top guys at 113, and we're looking to see if he can make 103 maybe later on," Dankers said. "Josh Melton, he's moved up a couple weights but he's working into the weight class well. He's just real smooth."

Wrestling cross-town, Glacier was ninth at the State AA in March. "Gosh, we only lost a couple guys from that lineup last year," Danker said. "Everyone comes back and has gotten a little better. I would love to be in that top five, in that conversation. We have one senior. We could have a lot of growth happen this year. In March Flathead had the luxury of hosting the State AA boys



tournament to close a pandemic-affected season. The Braves prevailed over salty opponents Billings Senior (by 7.5 points) and Great Falls High, while Glacier finished ninth out of 15 teams.

This year's tournament is back to being All-Class, and back at the Billings Metra Feb. 11-12. Senior, Great Falls and Billings West will be pushing again, but the Brave Brawlers may not let the door open. They will be used to those long road trips; on Thursday Flathead's buses had to stop and chain up Fourth of July pass. "We just have dudes that know how to wrestle," Thompson said. "Everyone in our room is tough."

AA Wrestling rankings

Here are the State AA wrestling rankings, compiled from voting coaches across the class. Team rankings are based on the individuals, with points awarded being 16-12-9-7-5-3 based on ranking 1 through 6:



Team — 1, Flathead 103, Billings West 88, 3, Great Falls High 80, Billings Senior 78; 5, Belgrade 73; 6, Butte 63.

Individual

103 — 1, Nolan Brown, Belgrade; 2, Zach Morse, West; 3, Davin Naldrett, Flathead; 4, Reid Whitlock, Butte; 5, Eli Frisino, Bozeman; 6, Tristan Vlastic, Senior.

113 — 1, Keyan Hernandez, West; 2, Colton Gutenberger, Belgrade; 3, Aiden Downing, Flathead; 4, Logan Younkin, CMR; 5, Trey Whitlock, Butte; 6, Cole Krustfeldt, Senior.

120 — 1, Mason Gutenberger, Butte; 2, Jase Van Pelt, West; 3, Kyler Raiha, Butte; 4, Gage Clothier, GFH; 5, Daylon Forshee, Senior; 6, Diesel Thompson, Flathead.

126 — Carter Schmidt, Belgrade; 2, Kale Baumann, GFH; 3, Demetrius Saliaris, Senior; 4, Dane Lake, Flathead; 5, Hunter Rahn, Capital; 6, Karson Pumnea, Butte.

132 — Teegan Vasquez, Glacier; 2, Idren Peak, Senior; 3, Kip Pumnea, Butte; 4, Hunter Ketchum, Skyview; 5, Grant O'Neill, Great Falls; 6, Talen Barrington, Skyview.

138 — 1, Carson DesRosier, Capital; 2, Jesse Aarness, West; 3, Jalen Vlastic, Senior; 4, Asher Kemppainen, Flathead; 5, Kaleb Shine, Glacier; 6, Talen Barrington, Skyview.

145 — 1, Fin Nadeau, Flathead; 2, Irish Furthmyre, GFH; 3, Israel Moreno, Big Sky; 4, James Roan, Senior; 5, Connor Konda, Butte; 6, Cooper McGovern, Gallatin.

152 — 1, Avery Allen, Bozeman; 2, Dylan Block, GFH; 3, Calvin Carroll, CMR; 4, Cole Graham, Capital; 5, Logan Linn, Belgrade; 6, Trey Hanson, Butte.

160 — 1, Drake Rhodes, West; 2, Gabe Lake, Flathead; 3, Felix Peterson, Gallatin; 4, Gabriel Price, CMR; 5, Conner Kovick, Capital; 6, Trevor Tucker, Sentinel.

170 — 1, Paolo Salminen, Skyview; 2, AJ Lafurge, CMR; 3, Anders Thompson, Flathead; 4, Shawn Miller, Senior; 5, Cooper Freitag, West; 6, Royce Conklin, Glacier.

182 — 1, Noah Poe-Hatten, Flathead; 2, Mason Christian, Butte; 3, Chris Garcia, West; 4, Hayden Allie, Senior; 5, Riley Downey, Butte; 6, Bed Rodger, Belgrade.

205 — 1, Bradnan Lockart, GFH; 2, Chase Youso, Flathead; 3, Charlie Desmarias, Senior; 4, Dillen Barrington, Skyview; 5, Xaden Cunningham, Belgrade; 6, Sawyer Troupe, Flathead.

285 — 1, Raven Hensley, GFH; 2, Oakley Woody, Gallatin; 3, Paul Mousel, Capital; 4, Max Lee, Senior; 5, Kade Schleeman, Butte; 6, Brock Goff, West.

CLASS AA BOYS WRESTLING RANKINGS, DEC 17: BRAVES START ON TOP

Flathead shows returning strength on top of first weekly rankings

By Micah Drew December 17, 2021



Flathead's Fin Nadeau walks off the mat after his final's match loss to Drake Rhodes of Billings West at the AA state wrestling tournament at Flathead High School Kalispell on March 6, 2021. Rhodes won by decision. Hunter D'Antuono | Flathead Beacon

Flathead started the year off strong with a win at the Mining City Duals, only the second time the Braves have won the meet under coach Jeff Thompson.

Team Rankings:

1. Flathead — 103
2. West — 88
3. Great Falls — 80
4. Senior — 78
5. Belgrade — 73
6. Butte — 63

FLATHEAD WRESTLERS SCORING BIG IN IDAHO, WASHINGTON

By Daily Inter Lake
| December 18, 2021 12:00 AM



Flathead's wrestling teams continued to find success Friday, both in Couer d'Alene and Pasco, Wash.

The Brave Brawlers are sitting second at the Tri-State Invitational in Idaho after the first day, with 110 points. Spokane Mead leads the way at 120, and Post Falls (108) is among five teams to break the century mark. All 10 boys Flathead took are still wrestling, with six in the semifinals: Aiden Downing (113 pounds), Asher Kempainen (138), Gabe Lake (160),

Anders Thompson (170), Noah Poe-Hatten (182) and Chase Youso (195).

Fin Nadeau (145) is among those in the wrestlebacks after an overtime loss. Over in Pasco, Flathead's girls surged to the first-day lead in the Best of the West. The Bravettes have 160 points; Othello is next with 143, followed by Chiawana with 124. Mykel Lee won two matches at 110 to get things started for Flathead; Skye Shelmerdine won twice before falling in the semifinals at 115. She's still in the wrestlebacks.

Trinity Bolvin posted three wins at 120, putting her in the semifinals; Lily McMahon advanced to the 130 final with a semifinal pin; teammate Emma Gambino went 2-0 and advanced to the 140 final as well. McKenna McCarthy won twice to advance to the semifinals at 155, and Boston Howell and Alliyah Stevens are both in the 235 semifinals.

Meanwhile the Best in the West Duals were going on for the boys, and Flathead's boys went 4-1 to take third. They beat Ki-Be 78-6, Spokane West Valley 48-33; Walla Walla 60-24; and Ellensburg 45-30 and fell to Selah 53-18. Cade Gardner at 138, Sawyer Troupe at 195 and Williams Barnes at 113 provided the wins against Selah. Barnes and Troupe picked up four pins and a forfeit in the five duals. The girls tournament concludes Saturday, while the Best in the West individual boys brackets take place. The Tri-State also concludes Saturday.

Rollie Lane Invitational

Where the Best Come to Meet

By Al Fontes

After experiencing a down year in team participation during the 2021 season due to the COVID pandemic, the Rollie Lane Invitational held in the Gem State of Idaho is back in full capacity in 2022. Spanning the large floor of the Ford Arena in the city of Nampa is twelve full size mats fielding teams (80 plus teams – boys/40 plus teams – girls) from the greater western United States, which include the home state of Idaho, California, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, and Washington. Founded in 2001, the tournament is named after well-respected National Hall-of-Fame Coach, Rollie Lane, who spent 28 years coaching in Colorado, New Mexico, and Idaho. The tournament's humble beginnings began in the gymnasium at Skyview High School in Nampa, which for several years ran a two day format where on day one wrestlers were placed in small group pods to compete for the opportunity to enter the day 2 bracket (16-man bracket) where the top six received medals. The tournament consisted primarily of local teams from the greater Treasure Valley, but today has expanded to a 64-man bracket format consisting of high level wrestlers from the greater Western United States. In the more recent past, prep standouts, such as Hayden Tuma (4x State Champ/Fargo Champ) and Ridge Lovett (4x State Champ/Fargo Champ) to name a couple, each won respective titles at Rollie. Additionally, the girl's division enters its fourth year and continues to grow exponentially.

This year's wrestling tournament left no doubt that it's among the top high school tournaments in the Western region of the United States. Throughout the two days of competition, the rubber met the road very early from the preliminary to semi-final match-ups. Overall, the medal matches in both the

boys and girl's divisions consisted of several state champions, state medalists, and consisted of 20 wrestlers with national All-American honors (i.e., Fargo, NHSCA, and Folkstyle) to their credit. The first match of the finals in the boy's division consisted of freshman standout Billy Jackson of Redmond, Oregon where he won a hard fought decision against returning state medalist Christian Kelly of Coeur d'Alene. At 106s, Fargo National Champion Kolter Burton of American Falls battled three hard rounds against Central Valley's Bennett Beard of Washington, winning by a takedown, 5-3 in sudden victory. Freshman standout Matthew Martino of Bishop Kelly (Folkstyle National Champ/Fargo All-American) made it very clear that he is among the top young wrestlers in the country at 113s. With three falls and one tech-fall entering the championship finals, Martino dominated returning state champion Talen Eck of Thunder Ridge, Idaho by a major decision, 13-3. The 120 pound final featured returning state champions Tanner Frothinger (Eagle, ID) and Tyson Barnhart of Post Falls, Idaho. Earning All-American honors at Fargo, Frothinger dominated the final by fall. The 126 weight group was among the most competitive in the tournament. The championship final consisted of sophomore standout Joshua Neiwert of Gonzaga Prep in Washington versus three-time Idaho state placer Simon Graeber of Columbia. With Fargo All-American honors and placing at the nation's top high school tournament Walsh Ironman to his credit, Neiwert battled Graeber for three solid rounds to win by decision 6-3. Among the most anticipated finals of the tournament, 6x All-American Christopher Martino (Bishop Kelly, ID) battled Cadet All-American Kyle Rice of New Plymouth, Idaho for a hard fought decision, 9-5.

2022 Rollie Lane Invitational Boy Results

Team Scores

1. Flathead (MT)	231.0
2. Meridian (ID)	206.0
3. Coeur d' Alene (ID)	152.0
4. Crook County (OR)	148.0
5. Post Falls (ID)	129.0
6. Minico (ID)	127.5
7. Columbia (ID)	118.0
8. Caldwell (ID)	116.0
8. New Plymouth (ID)	116.0
10. Wasatch (UT)	111.0

Individual Champions

98 - Billy Jackson (Redmond, OR)
106 - Kolter Burton (American Falls, ID)
113 - Mathew Martino (Bishop Kelly, ID)
120 - Tanner Frothinger (Eagle, ID)
126 - Joshua Neiwert (Gonzaga Prep, WA)
132 - Christopher Martino (Bishop Kelly, ID) *OW LOWER WTS
138 - Jason Mara (Meridian, ID)
145 - Fin Nadeau (Flathead, MT)
152 - Tayten Gillette (Gooding, ID)
160 - Seth Glenn (Sherwood, OR)
170 - Noah Poe-Hatten (Flathead, MT)
182 - Chase Youso (Flathead, MT)
195 - Carson Gooley (Meridian, ID)
220 - Brash Henderson (Silverton, OR)
285 - Nico Rodriquez (Columbia, ID) *OW UPPER WTS



Both Martino and Rice are three-time state champions and in position to earn a fourth. Much like 132s, the competition at 138s was solid. Among the top young wrestlers to watch in the country, Meridian's Jason Mara (Folkstyle National Champ/Fargo All-American) left no doubt in his ability to compete in high level competition with a convincing 7-4 decision over Orting's Owen Cline in the final. The 145 pound weight group did not disappoint where several returning state champions did not make it to the championship finals. Winning this weight by a major decision over Redmond, Oregon's Junior Downing in the final was three-time Montana state finalist and NHSCA All-American Fin Nadeau of Flathead High School. Nadeau is committed to attend Binghamton University in New York. At 152s, Idaho State Champion (3x finalist) Tayten Gillette of Gooding pinned two-time Montana state placer Gabe Lake, while Washington state placer Seth Glenn (Sherwood HS) won by decision of Idaho placer Joe Watson of Centennial, 3-2 at 160s. Moving up to 170s, Flathead's Noah Poe-Hatten, a two-time Montana state placer and Fargo All-American defeated three-time Idaho State Champion Gunner Giulio of Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, 6-3. Perhaps the match of the night was the final at heavyweights. Entering the tournament as the top seed, two-time State Champion and NHSCA All-American Nico Rodriguez (Centennial, ID) and Borah's Aden Attao (Fargo All-American) battled for three hard rounds with Rodriguez winning the tie-breaker, 5-3. Rounding out the remaining individual champions include Chase Youso (Flathead, MT, 182s), Carson Gooley (Meridian, ID, 195s), and frosh standout Brash Henderson of Silverton High School in Nevada, who defeated Idaho state placer and All-American Shilo Jones of Mountain View, 5-2 at 220s. The "Outstanding Wrestler" awards went to Bishop Kelly's Christopher Martino at 132s (Lower Weights) and Nico Rodriguez of Columbia at 285s (Upper Weights).

The girl's division finals featured several outstanding wrestlers ranked within their respective states and in the nation. The lightest weight group at 106s featured three-time Idaho State Champion and All-American Lita Cruz of Minico High School, who registered four pins leading up to the final and another against Idaho State Champion Allistar Dillow of American Falls. Moving up to 126s, Alyssa Randles (Coeur d'Alene), a two-time Idaho State Champion and Fargo All-American dominated her competition throughout and pinned Idaho state placer Liv Wieber of Eagle in the second period. At 132s, Caldwell's Marissa Jimenez also pinned her way into the finals and wasted no time by pinning returning Idaho State Champion Frankie Graham of Minico. Ranked no. 3 in the nation, Jimenez is a two-time state champ,

Fargo All-American, and Cadet Pan American Gold medalist. Following Jimenez is returning state champion and Fargo All-American Mia Furman of Rocky Mountain High School in Idaho at 138s. Entering the championship finals with three pins and a major decision, Furman wasted no time and pinned two-time Nevada State Champion Celina Cooke (Reed HS) in only 22 seconds of the first period. Other champions include Skyla Zimmerman (Moscow, ID, 113s), Katie Ward (McQueen, NV, 120s), Cara Brown (Coeur d'Alene, ID, 145s), Brooke Boyle (Thunder Ridge, ID, 160s), Christina Padilla (Nampa, ID, 182s), and Yvette Martinez (Nyssa, OR, 285s). The "Outstanding Wrestler" awards went to Marissa Jimenez of Caldwell at 132s (Lower Weights) and Mia Furman of Rocky Mountain at 138s (Upper Weights).

In the overall team competitions, Flathead High School of Kalispell, Montana won titles in both the boys and girl's divisions. In the boy's division, Flathead outdistanced defending 5A Idaho State Champions Meridian by 25 points, producing three individual champions and eight medalists overall in the top six. In the girl's division, Flathead squeezed by Eagle, Idaho by only a few points with four placers overall. Led by standout coach Jeff Thompson, an accomplished high school wrestler that competed the University of Minnesota, Flathead won state titles in 2021 in both the boys and girl's



2022 Boile Lane Invitational - Flathead High School from Kalispell, Montana wins the team championship in both the boys and girls divisions. Photo by Al Fontes.

By: Alexa Belcastro

Posted at 2:32 PM, Dec 24, 2021



KALISPELL — Kalispell Flathead senior Finn Nadeau committed to Binghamton University in New York for wrestling. Not only will he have to adjust to competing at the Division I level, but he will also have to adjust to his dad not being his coach for the first time in his wrestling career. It is hard for every coach to lose a senior class they have coached for the past four years, but it will be exceptionally hard for coach Nadeau, as his son will be graduating this year.

"I have thoroughly enjoyed it. I've traveled with him extensively, you know, in the last few years, but I've coached him since he was five years old. And so I've totally enjoyed it and I'm going to miss coaching him for sure," said Flathead wrestling coach Marc Nadeau.

"Sometimes it can get a little heated but most of the time it's pretty good," Finn said. That is not to say, having your dad as your coach also comes with its challenges. Find the right time to call your dad, dad, and when to call him, coach. "It just depends where we are at. Usually, in the room, he's my coach, and usually at home he's my dad. I mean, we kind of keep those two things separate most of the time," Finn said. "Definitely have to compartmentalize the difference between being a father and a coach. I love coaching him but also it's a bit stressful because he's out there you know in a fight with another athlete basically," added Marc.

Although it can be challenging separating dad and coach, having someone who knows Finn on and off the mat, has helped him decide where to compete at the next level. "Kind of just gave me you know, some advice on what he thinks. Like where I kind of need to be as a wrestler and then what programs would probably fit me the best and helped me with some of that research and everything like that," said Finn. And Finn says the advice he has received from his dad and the Flathead wrestling program as a whole has prepared him to play at the highest level.

"I mean, it's been the perfect place for me to reach the next level," said Finn. "I've got great coaches great, great partners. Just a great atmosphere. I mean, it's been the perfect place."

FLATHEAD GRAPPLERS SWEEP TEAM TITLES IN BOISE

By Daily Inter Lake
| January 8, 2022 11:49 PM

BOISE, Idaho — Flathead's girls and boys wrestling teams swept the team titles Saturday at the Rollie Lane Invitational.

"Just unbelievable," Flathead coach Jeff Thompson said. "We are just so proud of this team. They just keep stepping up and improving each and every weekend. This is arguably one of the toughest tournaments in the Western United States and they just found ways to win the tough matches."



Braves Fin Nadeau (145), Chase Youso (182), and Noah Poe-Hatten (170) were all winners Saturday, with Anders Thompson third at 160 and Asher Kemppainen (132) among several Flathead wrestlers who placed fifth. Gabe Lake (152) battled to a second-place finish. "The quarterfinals were just loaded with undefeated records and state champions and the Brave Brawlers went toe to toe with the best," Thompson said. "Super fun watching the Brawlers compete at this level. No question that Flathead wrestling is on the map. Fin Nadeau beat an All-American in the semifinals on the road to the championship."

Flathead's girls had four placers, including Lucille Libby (182) whose third place finish clinched the title for the Bravettes. Hania Halverson was pinned in the 120 final to place second. Lily McMahon (126) was fourth and McKenna McCarthy (160) was sixth. "The Flathead girls might have only had 4 girls place but Bella Arriga, Emma Gambino, and Boston Howell all won some matches and lost in the blood round," Thompson said. "Hania Halverson made it into the finals at 120 with some super slick techniques this weekend. Lucy Libby got a pin for 3rd which won the tournament for our girls. Fantastic win for her and the team."

Rollie Lane Invitational / Saturday

Girls

Team scores — 1, Flathead 101; 2, Eagle (ID) 98; 3, Reed (NV) 94; 4, Caldwell (ID) 76; 5, La Pine (OR) 68; 6, Kuna (ID) 67; 7, Columbia (ID) 65; 7 Coeur d'Alene (ID) 65; Minico (ID) 65; 10, Moscow (ID) 58.

Individual results

120 - 1st Place Match - Katie Ward (McQueen) pinned Hania Halverson (Flathead), 2:53.
126 - 3rd Place Match - Jordan Barrett (Payette) dec. Lily McMahon (Flathead), 4-1.
160 - 5th Place Match - Alyssa Mabey (Kuna) pinned McKenna McCarthy (Flathead), 4:56.
182 - 3rd Place Match - Lucille Libby (Flathead) pinned Jordan LeBeau (Eagle) 4-3, 2:49.

Boys

Team scores — 1, Flathead 231; 2, Meridian (ID) 206; 3, Coeur d'Alene (ID) 152; 4, Crook County (OR) 148; 5, Post Falls (ID) 159; 6, Minico (ID) 127; 7, Columbia (ID) 118; 8, Caldwell (ID) 116; 8, New Plymouth (ID) 116; 10, Wasatch (UT) 111.

Individual results

106 - 5th Place Match - Draven Johns (Caldwell) pinned Aiden Downing (Flathead), 2:15.
132 - 5th Place Match - Asher Kemppainen (Flathead) won by inj. def. over Ryder Robinson (Wasatch), Inj. 0:00.
145 - 1st Place Match - Fin Nadeau (Flathead) maj. dec. Junior Downing (Redmond), 11-3.
152 - 1st Place Match - Tayten Gillette (Gooding) pinned Gabe Lake (Flathead), 3:32.
160 - 3rd Place Match - Anders Thompson (Flathead) dec. Trent Myers (New Plymouth), 5-0.
170 - 1st Place Match - Noah Poe-Hatten (Flathead) dec. Gunner Giulio (Coeur d'Alene), 6-3.
182 - 1st Place Match - Chase Youso (Flathead) pinned Luke Arthur (Minico), 1:24.
195 - 5th Place Match - Sawyer Troupe (Flathead) pinned Whyatt Larson Phelen (Orting High School), 2:41.



Flathead's Chase Youso gets a hug from a Braves assistant coach after placing third at 170 lbs. at the State AA wrestling tournament at Flathead High School on Saturday. (Casey Kreider/Daily Inter Lake)

By FRITZ NEIGHBOR

Daily Inter Lake | January 12, 2022 8:33 PM

To hear him and his coach tell it, wrestling was not a duck-to-water sport for Flathead 205-pounder Chase Youso. It's going swimmingly now. He's 16-1 going into tonight's Crosstown Duals at Glacier High School. A non-placer as a freshman, Youso took fifth at state at 160 pounds as a sophomore, then third at 170 last season, when the Brave Brawlers won the State AA championship on their home mats.

Now he's ranked No. 2 at his weight class and coming off an impressive weekend: He went 4-0 and took the 182-pound title at the Rollie Lane Invitational tournament in Boise. "This is arguably one of the toughest tournaments in the United States," Flathead coach Jeff Thompson said. "And Chase was on the mat about four minutes." "I didn't get a point scored on me all weekend," Youso said, a bit of surprise in his voice. "Success in wrestling didn't come natural to Chase," Thompson noted. "He's one of those kids that had to put the time in. He maybe wasn't a natural, and maybe didn't win a lot of matches early. But he always had the passion for it, always loved the sport.

"You can come a long way with that." Youso describes getting hooked on wrestling about age 5, when his brother Shade started in the sport in Bigfork. By 2015 Bigfork was restarting its high school program, but Chase opted to head for Kalispell Middle School and more year-round opportunities. The natural next step was Flathead. "Coming from Bigfork into KMS was a pretty big jump," Youso said. "Coming into the Flathead wrestling room, it was way more intense. I didn't know what I was getting into.

"But everything worked out. Made me jump the steps I needed to, to become a better wrestler." Thompson struggles to describe Youso's style. "He's one of those artistic wrestlers," Thompson said. "He really studies the art, the form. It's like a game of chess to him. He has long limbs and kind of does this funk and always ends up on top, putting people on their back and getting a pin.

"I don't know how you put it all into words, but it is really cool." Youso gives credit to his brother grappling with him as a youngster, and to current wrestling partners Sawyer Troupe (ranked No. 6 at 205), Gabe Lake (No. 2 at 160) and Noah Poe-Hatten (No. 1 at 182). "I would say my success came later," he said. "All through my life, I wasn't a very good wrestler. But then I started wrestling all year-around and getting on the mat as much as I could. It started coming to me. I started seeing improvement."

It's worth noting that both Youso and Poe-Hatten moved down a weight in Boise and won (as did Fin Nadeau, who stayed at 145). They'll be back at 205 and 182 the rest of the year, most likely.

"We are light for our weight," Youso noted. "I'm like usually, 186, 188. I have to wrestle 205 for state, because it's about the amount of wins." There's also a lot to be said about not having to cut weight. "First off, you can eat," Youso said. "You can stay hydrated. Not having to watch your weight is nice."

Youso has signed a letter of intent to wrestle at the NAIA University of Providence in Great Falls, probably at 197 pounds. He figures to study business administration, but also wants to go to lineman school after that, following in the footsteps of his electrician dad.

Right now, though, there's about a month of high school season left. State is Feb. 11-12 back at the MetraPark in Billings, where West and Senior High will be formidable obstacles to a repeat. Individually, Great Falls' Brendan Lockart is ranked No. 1 at 205. Lockhart pinned Youso in the 170 semifinals at state last year ("He caught me," Youso said), but Youso beat him later at the State Greco-Freestyle meet in Butte. "So we've been going back and forth," he said. The two could well meet this weekend at the Rocky Mountain Classic in Missoula.

"I'm excited to wrestle him again. I feel I've improved," he said, then adds: "This year is looking good for us. We're so stacked, in all the weights. And we've all improved from last year. Hopefully we'll win the boys and girls again."



CROSTOWN WRESTLING ON DECK THURSDAY IN GLACIER'S GYM

By FRITZ NEIGHBOR

Daily Inter Lake | January 12, 2022 8:36 PM

Glacier wrestling coach Ross Dankers would like to have a better lineup ready for the crosstown rivals, but with open dates short and four weeks left in the season, tonight will have to do. "We are pretty well decimated with illness and injury," said Dankers, ahead of the Crosstown Duals set for 4 p.m. (junior varsity), 5:30 p.m. (girls varsity) and 6:30 p.m. (boys varsity) at Glacier High. "But we're going to go out and battle." There are some marquee matches, such as at 126 pounds with Josh Melton for Glacier and Logan Stansberry. At 132, Flathead's Asher Kempainen is ranked No. 2 in AA behind two-time state champion Teegan Vasquez of Glacier.



"We would love to see him wrestle Teegan," Dankers said. "That would be an exciting match." Dankers notes with interest that

his heavyweight, Ethan Dimaio, wrestles at 215 pounds and could be giving away 70 pounds to Flathead's Logan Lang. At 205 TJ Gannon is banged up for Glacier, so freshman Cody Vergeront will battle Flathead standout Chase Youso.



Glacier's girls are coming off a team title at the Ronan Invitational, while Flathead's girls won the Rollie Lane Invite last week. The Wolfpack's Emily Pedron won at 120 in Ronan, and the Bravettes can counter with Hania Halverson, who is 16-1 after her second-place finish in Boise. There will be open weight classes mixed in, Dankers said. "But we're

going to go out and battle like we know how to, in the matches we have," he added.

BRAVES, BRAVETTES WIN CROSTOWN DUALS

By FRITZ NEIGHBOR

Daily Inter Lake | January 13, 2022 10:32 PM

The top-ranked Flathead Braves and highly touted Bravettes lived up to their roles as favorites Thursday at the crosstown wrestling dual held at Glacier High, yet the Pack had its moments. The marquee match under the spotlight went Glacier's way, in fact: Teegan Vasquez, the two-time State AA champion, met Flathead's Asher Kempainen and scored a 7-0 decision at 132 pounds.

On a night when Flathead won the boys dual 63-9 and the girls dual 54-12, this was highly satisfactory for the Wolfpack fans present. It was also the first time this season that Vasquez, a junior, had to go the distance. "We used to wrestle when we were younger, a lot," Vasquez said of Kempainen, who came in with a 13-4 record, mostly at 138 pounds. "Like when we were 6 or 7.

"This is the first time in high school. He's always been bigger. But I definitely grew a little bit over the last year. I was 120, now I'm weighing 132. So I get some of those tougher guys, bigger guys now." Three takedowns, one in each period, and an escape paved the way. Vasquez had trouble turning the Flathead senior, who was second at state last year. But it's a win. "Overall, it was a pretty dominant performance," Wolfpack coach Ross Dankers said.



Just eight matches were contested in the boys dual, which started at 205 with Noah Poe-Hatten wrestling up a weight class and scoring a pin. Then Chase Youso did the same, scoring a fall at 285. A week ago the duo had cut down for the Rollie Lane tournament in Boise. "This week we just want matches," said Flathead coach Jeff Thompson, who takes his wrestlers to the Rocky Mountain Classic today. "It maybe didn't work out exactly as planned, but it was fun. We had a heavyweight get hurt this morning, Logan Lang. Hopefully it's not too bad. But we just decided to move those two guys up."

Gabe Lake (160), Anders Thompson (170) and Aiden Downing (113) also scored pins

for Flathead. "Aiden Downing wrestled really well," Coach Thompson said. "He's really coming on as a freshman. And Diesel Thompson (a 9-2 winner at 120), he's just so much fun to watch. So much finesse, so much style in his wrestling, it's pretty good. That's a pretty tough kid (CJ Johnson) that he had." Glacier's Caleb Shine followed Vasquez by scoring a fall over Cade Gardner, who was fourth at state a year ago, at 138.

"Caleb Shine wrestled a great match," Dankers said. "We've been working with him a lot on top, and he did a great job there getting his bar, and getting him turned there." The girls dual had its share of forfeits as well, though Hania Halverson (120), Trinity Bolvin (126), Lily McMahon (132), Lily Conover (138) and Emma Gambino (152) scored pins for Flathead.

Jasmine Cartwright held the spotlight for Glacier, getting a fall at 145. "I felt like we had good intensity," said Amber Downing, coach of the Flathead girls. "They had a little bit of nerves about them today, but they were able to work through that and really deliver a nice performance for the crowd. "We're obviously finding things that still need to be worked on, but that's all part of the process." Sully Sullivan, co-coach of the girls, singled out Gambino for her work Thursday.



"None of them shocked me," he said of the Bravettes, while also noting the improvement of Glacier's program over the past year. "Some were maybe questionable as far as outcome, but were there shockers? No. Emma Bambino did some nice transition stuff. We felt solid with her." Vasquez was in Ronan last weekend when he heard that Kemppainen had moved down a weight.

"And we thought, 'OK, we'll probably see him Thursday,'" he said. "Teegan is arguably one of the best wrestlers in the state of Montana," Jeff Thompson said. "And Asher, he's cutting down for the team. It's a team-first philosophy in our wrestling room, and I think it was a tough cut for him, but he'll get used to that lower body weight and won't have to cut so hard later in the season. It'll be some great battles, at divisional, at State, and maybe at Rocky Mountain. Asher is looking forward to it. He loves the competition, and there's no better than Teegan Vasquez."

Flathead boys 63, Glacier 9

103 — Davin Naldret, Flathead, won by forfeit; 113 — Aiden Downing, Flathead, p. Garrett Bosch 1:08; 120 — Diesel Thompson, Flathead, dec. CJ Johnson, 9-2; 126 — Dane Lake, Flathead, won by forfeit; 132 — Teegan Vasquez, Glacier, dec. Asher Kemppainen, 7-0; 138 — Caleb Shine, Glacier, p. Cade Gardner, 3:50; 145 — Fin Nadeau, Flathead, won by forfeit; 152 — Gunnar Thompson, Flathead, won by forfeit; 160 — Gabe Lake, Flathead, p. Grayson Barkus, 1:46; 170 — Mason Doran, Flathead, won by forfeit; 182 — Anders Thompson, Flathead, p. Aiden Krause, 2:30; 205 — Noah Poe-Hatten, Flathead, p. Cody Vergeront, :39; 285 — Chase Youso, Flathead, p. Ethan Dimaio, 1:00.

Flathead girls 54, Glacier 12

103 — Reina Koelher, Flathead, won by forfeit; 113 — Skye Shelmerdine, Flathead, won by forfeit; 120 — Hania Halverson, Flathead, p. Emily Pedron, 1:40; 126 — Trinity Bolvin, Flathead, p. Temree Payne-Taylor, 4:10; 132 — Lily McMahon, Flathead, p. Jesslyn Hewitt, :46; 138 — Lily Conover, Flathead, p. Kadence Rose, 2:42; 145 — Jasmine Cartwright, Glacier, p. Bella Shinn, 1:39; 152 — Emma Gambino, Flathead, p. Madisyn Frazier, 3:15; 170 — Audrey Goodsell, Glacier, won by forfeit; 205 — Lucille Libby, Flathead, won by forfeit; 285 — Boston Howell, Flathead, won by forfeit.

BRAVE BRAWLERS LEAD AT ROCKY MOUNTAIN CLASSIC

by Daily Inter Lake
| January 15, 2022 2:15 PM

MISSOULA — Eleven Flathead wrestlers advanced to the semifinals at the Jug Beck Rocky Mountain Classic Wrestling tournament Friday at Sentinel High School. "This team is just really loving to compete and are not just wrestling to win but to push for pins," Flathead coach Jeff Thompson said. "It's a winning culture right now for Flathead wrestling. When you see all your teammates winning, it pushes you even harder because you want to be part of that circle. Winners win."

The Brave Brawlers also sit atop the team standings with 176.5 points, 51 more than University High (WA) in second. Glacier is in sixth with 85 points, and Columbia Falls and Ronan are ninth and tenth. Glacier has two wrestlers in Saturday morning's semifinals — Kaleb Shine at 138 pounds and Teegan Vasquez at 132, which sets up a possible rematch with Flathead's Asher Kemppainen, whom Vasquez defeated Thursday.



In the semifinals for Flathead are Davin Naldret (103), Aiden Downing (113), Dane Lake (126), Kemppainen (132), Fin Nadeau (145), Cade Troupe (152), Gabe Lake (160), Anders Thompson (170), Noah Poe-Hatten (182), Chase Youso (205) and Forest Howell (285). Dane Lake pinned Glacier's Joshua Melton in the quarterfinals. Columbia Falls' only wrestler in the semis is Justin Windauer, who scored a quarterfinal win against Mason Keough of Coeur d'Alene. Two Libby grapplers advanced to semis — Jace DeShazer (182) and Marley Erickson (120). Polson's Riley Knutson (103) was defeated by Cashton Spolar in a 10-8 decision in the quarterfinals.



Jug Beck Rocky Mountain Classic

Friday

Team scores — 1, Flathead 176.5; 2, University High (WA) 125.5; 3, Butte 125; 4, Coeur d'Alene 109; 5, Helena Capital 87; 6, Glacier 85; 7, Havre 83; 8, Belgrade 78; 9, Columbia Falls 64; 10, Ronan 62; 11, Powell (WY) 59.5; 12, Gallatin 57; 13, Ferris (WA) 56.5; 14, Missoula Sentinel 56; 15, Lake City (ID) 54; 16, Libby 49; 17, Corvallis 47.5; 18, Bozeman 40.5; 19, East Valley (WA) 37.5; 20, Hamilton 36.

Individual results

103 - Champ. Round 2 - Davin Naldret (Flathead) pinned Riley Osborn (Libby), 0:32; Quarterfinal - Naldret pinned Wyatt Nicholson (Powell), 1:17, Cashton Spolar (Helena Capital) dec. Ryley Knutson (Polson), 10-8.

113 - Champ. Round 2 - Aiden Downing (Flathead) pinned Asa Wood (Helena), 1:46, Trey Whitlock (Butte) dec. Garrett Bosch (Glacier), 5-0; Quarterfinal - Downing pinned Cohen Sassano (Helena Capital), 1:43; Cons. Round 3 - Bosch pinned Braedon Iliff (Polson), 0:31, Cons. Round 3 - Luke Nuttall (Corvallis) won by inj. def. over Winslow Peter (Columbia Falls), 0:00.

120 - Champ. Round 1 - Connor Johnson (Glacier) maj. dec. Grady Caton (Missoula Hellgate), 14-0; Champ. Round 2 - Diesel Thompson (Flathead) tech. fall Steven Yargo (Helena), 2:58 (19-3), Mason Gutenberger (Belgrade) pinned Johnson 1:03; Cons. Round 3 - Johnson pinned Darren Fuller (Missoula Sentinel), 0:19, Dylan Delorme (Columbia Falls) pinned Chris Hall (Browning), 3:33; Quarterfinal - Kyler Raiha (Butte) dec. Thompson, 4-3, Max Dillon (University High) dec. Landree Aurund (Whitefish), 5-3, Quarterfinal - Marley Erickson (Libby) dec. Fabian Torres (Ferris), 11-5.



126 - Champ. Round 2 - Dane Lake (Flathead) pinned Alyssa Randles (Coeur d'Alene), 3:05, Joshua Melton (Glacier) pinned Evan Hafliger (Missoula Sentinel), 1:59; Cons. Round 3 - Blake Hoerner (Columbia Falls) pinned Seth Allen (Corvallis), 4:19; Quarterfinal - Dane Lake dec. Melton, 12-6.

132 - Champ. Round 2 - Asher Kemppainen (Flathead) tech. fall Vinny Timmons (Powell), 3:38 (17-2), Teegan Vasquez (Glacier) pinned Kameron Amende (Gallatin), 0:34; Quarterfinal - Kemppainen maj. dec. Xzavier Elgee Sanders (University High), 13-3, Vasquez pinned Dax Larsen (Coeur d'Alene) 3:44, Jesse Anson (Hamilton) dec. Josiah Kilman (Columbia Falls), 4-2.

138 - Champ. Round 2 - Cade Gardner (Flathead) pinned Connor Benson (Libby), 1:38, Shine maj. dec. Fortino Silva (Ronan), 12-4; Quarterfinal - Maverick McEwen (Butte) pinned Gardner, 1:27, Shine maj. dec. Jason Davis (Corvallis), 11-1, Justin Windauer (Columbia Falls) won by tech fall over Mason Keough (Coeur d'Alene), 5:25 (17-2).

145 - Champ. Round 1 - Cooper McGovern (Gallatin) pinned Mark Ahner (Glacier), 1:07; Champ. Round 2 - Fin Nadeau (Flathead) pinned Kaiden Cooke (Missoula Hellgate), 1:10; Cons. Round 2 - Ahner pinned Caleb Cruz (Powell), 3:21; Cons. Round 3 - Ahner pinned Bradie Rodriguez (Missoula Sentinel), 1:28; Quarterfinal - Nadeau pinned Rowdy Crump (Columbia Falls), 2:19.

152 - Champ. Round 1 - Logan Swanson (East Valley (Spokane)) pinned Walker Janetski-Biggs (Glacier), 3:12; Champ. Round 2 - Cade Troupe (Flathead) pinned Bodee Davis (Corvallis), 1:12; Cons. Round 2 - Kale Schonsberg (Butte) pinned Janetski-Biggs, 2:57; Quarterfinal - Troupe pinned Cole Graham (Helena Capital), 1:26.

160 - Champ. Round 1 - Grayson Barcus (Glacier) pinned Wyatt Gregg (Libby), 1:40; Champ. Round 2 - Gabe Lake (Flathead) pinned Kendall Pleninger (Havre), 2:30, Felix Peterson (Gallatin) pinned Barcus 1:59; Cons. Round 2 - Morgan McClellan (Butte) pinned Barcus, 2:50; Quarterfinal - Gabe Lake 22-2 won by forfeit over Trey Torpen (Columbia Falls), (For.).

170 - Champ. Round 2 - Anders Thompson (Flathead) tech fall James Warner (Libby), 3:28 (19-2); Quarterfinal - Anders Thompson pinned Alexander Beck (Missoula Sentinel), 2:12, Tristan Fisher (Ronan) dec. Brandon Role (Columbia Falls), 7-3.

182 - Champ. Round 1 - Aiden Krause (Glacier) pinned Jamison Webster (Ronan), 1:25; Champ. Round 2 - Noah Poe-Hatten (Flathead) pinned Tuff Adams (Helena Capital), 0:51, Stetson Davis (Powell) pinned Krause, 5:02; Quarterfinal - Poe-Hatten pinned Derrick Saltzman (Hamilton), 3:13, Jace DeShazer (Libby) pinned Hunter Curtis (Missoula Big Sky/Loyola Sacred Heart, 3:38.

205 - Champ. Round 1 - Randy Tommerup (Havre) pinned Cody Vergeront (Glacier), 1:02; Champ. Round 2 - Chase Youso (Flathead) pinned Randy Tommerup (Havre), 0:49; Cons. Round 2 - Vergeront won in sudden victory - 1 over Josh Price (Columbia Falls), 11-9; Cons. Round 3 - Vergeront pinned Xander Sarbacher (Missoula Sentinel), 1:36; Quarterfinal - Youso pinned Jimmy Dees (Powell), 2:27.

285 - Champ. Round 2 - Forest Howell (Flathead) pinned Dimaio, 4:00; Quarterfinal - Howell pinned Max Morency, 2:18; Cons. Round 3 - Hudson Weins (Bozeman) maj. dec. Dimaio, 13-2.

FLATHEAD WINS MONTANA AA DUALS, GLACIER FIFTH

by Daily Inter Lake
| January 22, 2022 10:52 PM

GREAT FALLS — The Flathead Brave Brawlers won yet another boys wrestling tournament Saturday, thumping Billings Senior 43-18 for the championship of the Montana AA Duals. The win, a first for the program, capped a solid Saturday at Great Falls High for top-ranked Flathead, which beat No. 2 Billings West 48-23 in the semifinals. Senior was ranked No. 3 in this week's AA Coaches Poll, but saw Flathead win the first eight matches, from 138 pounds through 285, in the final to lead 37-0.



"This is something we really wanted this year," Flathead coach Jeff Thompson said. "We've had a lot of success as a program, but we have never won the AA Duals. We wanted to prove that we are the best dual team in the state in 2022. "We are going to soak this in, this weekend, but this team wants more." Several Brawlers had excellent tournaments, starting with Anders Thompson, who scored four pins at 170 pounds. Chase Youso had three pins — two at 285 and one at 205 — while Noah Poe-Hatten had two pins at 182 and an 8-5 decision over Senior's Charlie Desmarais at 205 in the final.

Sawyer Troupe added a couple pins at 182 when Poe-Hatten moved up. Gabe Lake had three pins at 160 for Flathead; Fin Nadeau had a fall and a major decision to go with two forfeit wins at 145. Asher Kempainen, back wrestling at 138, scored a 3-2 win over Billings West standout Jesse Arness (ranked No. 2) in the semifinals to go with a technical fall against Bozeman and an 8-3 decision over Senior's Idren Peak (No. 2 at 132). "Asher made the jump back to 138 and showed the rest of the state that he is a title contender," Coach Thompson said. "He beat a returning state champion from West and a state finalist the very next match. "Fin Nadeau just wore out the competition, getting two takedowns in 9 seconds in the finals against Senior, to get a major (decision, 12-4 over Jalen Vladic)."

Thompson noted that Aiden Downing went 3-0 Saturday, including his first win against Cole Krutzfeldt of Billings Senior. "Chase Youso wrestled great at both 205 and heavyweight, and Forest Howell beat two ranked kids today at heavyweight," he added. Flathead's dual record is 13-0.



Championship Bracket

First round: Flathead 59, Bozeman 12; Belgrade 51, Missoula Sentinel 24; Billings Skyview 43, Helena Capital 28; Billings West 66, Big Sky 11; Butte 54, Gallatin 21; Great Falls 66, Helena 12; Glacier 42, Great Falls CMR 33; Billings Senior 72, Hellgate 6.

Quarterfinals: Flathead 60, Belgrade 18; Billings West 46, Billings Skyview 18; Butte 46, Great Falls 18; Billings Senior 58, Glacier 9.

Semifinals: Flathead 48, Billings West 23; Billings Senior 55, Butte 14.

Championship:

Flathead 48, Billings West 23

103 — Zach Morse, BW, p. Davin Naldret 2:58; 113 — Keyan Hernandez, BW, won by forfeit; 120 — Jase Van Pelt, BW, t. Fall Diesel Thompson, 18-3; 126 — Dane Lake, Flathead, p. Carson Blaschak 5:09; 132 — Logan Stansberry, Flathead, d. Dash Nugent 5-2; 138 — Asher Kemppainen, Flathead, d. Jesse Aarness, 3-2; 145 — Fin Nadeau, Flathead, won by forfeit; 152 — Cade Troupe, Flathead, p. Anthony Garcia, 1:10; 160 — Drake Rhodes, BW, p. Gabe Lake, 1:23; 170 — Anders Thompson, Flathead, p. Cooper Freitag, 1:35; 182 — Noah Poe-Hatten, Flathead, p. Chris Garcia, 1:20; 205 — Chase Youso, Flathead, p. Reece Higgins, :44; 285 — Forest Howell, Flathead, p. Brock Goff, 3:01.

Flathead 60, Belgrade 18

103 — Naldret, Flathead, won by forfeit; 113 — Downing, Flathead, p. Sam Nevin :49; 120 — Mason Gutenberger, Bel, p. D.Thompson, 1:42; 126 — Carter Schmidt, Bel, won by forfeit; 132 — Stansberry, Flathead, p. Blake Eastman 3:06; 138 — Kemppainen, Flathead, won by forfeit; 145 — Nadeau, Flathead, p. Oden Currier 2:42; 152 — Logan Linn, Bel, p. C.Troupe 3:44; 160 — G.Lake, Flathead, p. Hunter Rowan 1:33; 170 — A.Thompson, Flathead, p. Colter Lindsley 1:01; 182 — S.Troupe, Flathead, p. Ben Rodgers, 5:04; 205 — Poe-Hatten, Flathead, won by forfeit; 285 — Youso, Flathead, p. Raiden Krespin, :56.

Championship

Flathead 43, Billings Senior 18

103 — T.Vladic, Senior, d. Naldret, 5-2; 113 — Downing, Flathead, p. Krustfeldt, 2:36; 120 — Howe, Senior, p. D.Thompson 3:40; 126 — Forshee, Senior, d. Stansberry, 10-9; 132 — Saliaris, Senior, p. D.Lake, 1:44. 138 — Kemppainen, Flathead, d. Peak, 8-3; 145 — Nadeau, Flathead, md. J.Vladic, 12-4; 152 — C.Troupe, Flathead, d. Cole, 9-6; 160 — G.Lake, Flathead, p. Roberts :27; 170 — A.Thompson, Flathead, p. Allie, 3:20; 182 — S.Troupe, Flathead, p. Damien LaVe, 2:33; 205 — Poe-Hatten, Flathead, d. Desmarias, 9-4; 285 — Youso, p. Lee, 1:29.

Flathead 59, Bozeman 12

103 — Naldret, Flathead, p. Eli Frisino, 2:00; 113 — Downing, Flathead, p. Christian Steele, 3:00; 120 — D.Thompson, Flathead, d. Elijah Carroll, 10-3; 126 — Jack Montoya, Boz, p. D.Lake 1:37; 132 — Stansberry, Flathead, d. Dawkin Schmidt, 10-4; 138 — Kemppainen, Flathead, t.fall Pi Taylor 19-4; 145 — Nadeau, Flathead, won by forfeit; 152 — Avery Allen, Boz, p. C.Troupe 1:25; 160 — G.Lake, Flathead, p. Jake Adams :19; 170 — A.Thompson, Flathead, p. Danny Cloward, 1:02; 182 — Poe-Hatten, Flathead, p. Gavin Millard, 1:00; 205 — Youso, Flathead, won by forfeit; 285 — Forest Howell, Flathead, p. Hudson Weins, 2:43.

BRAVE BRAWLERS ROLL OVER MISSOULA SENTINEL



The Daily Inter Lake
| January 24, 2022 8:00 PM

Daily Inter Lake

MISSOULA — The Flathead Braves moved to 14-0 on the wrestling season on Monday with a 74-0 mauling of host Sentinel.

The Braves recorded 10 pins in the dual. The fastest was Chase Youso's 31 second match at 205.

Flathead 74, Missoula Sentinel 0

103: Ethan MacDonald, F, p. Cauldin White, 3:23; 113: William Barnes, F, pinned Bryton Lenz, 2:28; 120: Diesel Thompson, F, p. Darren Fuller, 2:46; 126: Dane Lake, F, p. Joel Vermillion, 1:14; 132: Logan Stansberry, F, dec. Luke Widman, 8-3; 138: Raenan Allumbaugh, F, p. John Hire, 3:18; 145: Asher Kemppainen, F, TF Bridger Rose, 25-10; 152: Gunnar Thompson, F, p. Colin Lerback, 1:06; 160: Gabe Lake, F, p. Trevor Tucker, :49; 170: Anders Thompson, F, p. Alexander Beck, 1:22; 182: Noah Poe-Hatten, F, p. Kristopher Musick, 3:46; 205: Chase Youso, F, p. Xander Sarbacher, :31; 285: Forest Howell, F, won by forfeit.

FLATHEAD BRAWLERS SCORED TWO MORE DUAL WINS

by Daily Inter Lake
| January 28, 2022 11:12 PM

If the Flathead Brave Brawlers weren't perfect Friday, their record still is.

Getting two wins each from William Barnes, Diesel Thompson, Noah Poe-Hatten and Chase Youso, Flathead swept duals with the Helena schools, 44-25 over Capital and 73-0 over Helena High. The Capital Bruins have some good wrestlers, led by 138-pounder Carson DesRosier, who scored an 11-2 major decision over Asher Kempainen, and Conner Kovick, who scored a late pin over Gabe Lake at 160.



"On a positive note, we were super proud of senior Mason Doran," Flathead coach Jeff Thompson said of one of his 170-pounders, who scored a pin against Capital's Tyler Crum. "Mason put so much work into the program, and showed that can be on that podium come State. "Will Barnes stepped in at 113 and looked very aggressive on his feet. Logan Stansberry at 132 just keeps improving every week." Fin Nadeau had a forfeit win against undermanned Helena, then pinned his Capital opponent at 145. Stansberry did the same: Forfeit win over a Bengal, and a pin of a Bruin. Diesel Thompson scored two technical falls at 120. Flathead's dual record is now 15-0, and the Brawlers put it on the line today at always-strong Butte High.



Flathead 44, Helena Capital 27

103 — Cashton Spolar, Cap, p. Ethan MacDonald :54; 113 — William Barnes, Fla, d. Cohen Sassano 6-0. 120 — Diesel Thompson, Fla, tech. fall Dustin Campbell 16-0. 126 — Dane Lake, Fla, p. Dawson Peterson, 1:30. 132 — Logan Stansberry, Fla, p. Boston Lay, 3:21. 138 — Carson DesRosier, Cap, maj. dec. Asher Kempainen, 11-2. 145 — Fin Nadeau, Fla, p. Nick Flies 1:17. 152 — Cole Graham, Cap, d. Gunnar Thompson, 5-3. 160 — Conner Kovick, Cap, p. Gabe Lake 5:02. 170 — Mason Doran, Fla, p. Tyler Crum, 1:25. 182 — Noah Poe-Hatten, Fla, p. Tuff Adams, Cap, 1:34. 205 — Chase Youso,

Fla, p. Josh Petersn, 1:05. 285 — Talon Marsh, Cap. p. Forest Howell, 1:21.

Flathead 73, Helena 0

103 — Ethan MacDonald, Fla, won by forfeit. 113 — William Barnes, Fla, p. Asa Wood, 4:37. 120 — D. Thompson, Fla, tech. fall Steven Yargo, 15-0. 126 — D. Lake, Fla, won by forfeit. 132 — Stansberry, Fla, won by forfeit. 138 — Kempainen, Fla, tech. fall JT Gehring, 20-5. 145 — Nadeau, Fla, won by forfeit. 152 — Cade Troupe, Fla, d. Ian Mehrens, 2-0. 160 — G. Lake, Fla, p. Dhestin McKinnis, 1:26. 170 — A. Thompson, Fla, won by forfeit. 182 — Poe-Hatten, Fla, p. Charles Fox, 1:09. 205 — Youso, Fla, p. Ruger Young, 1:32. 285 — Howell, Fla, p. David Luby, 4:00.

FLATHEAD GRAPPLERS SWEEP BUTTE, END REGULAR SEASON UNBEATEN

By Daily Inter Lake
| January 30, 2022 12:04 AM

BUTTE — Flathead wrestling finished the season undefeated in duals on both the boys and girls sides with a sweep of duals in Butte Saturday. The Bravettes topped Butte 51-36 and won every tournament they entered this season. Anna Morrison (103 pounds) won an exciting match against Butte's Kaylee LaPier that ended in a 13-11 decision. At 120, Hania Halverson continued her stellar season with a pin of Taylor Burke, and Bella Arriaga also earned a pin of Burke in 20 seconds.

Lily McMahon and Payton Walker both pinned Maria Hanson of Butte at 126. Also earning wins were Alliyah Stevens at 285, Mykel Lee at 113, and Reina Kohler at 103. "We are super proud of our Flathead girls team,"

Flathead head coach Jeff Thompson said. "Our girls were undefeated in duals and our varsity girls won every tournament they entered this season." The Braves went 17-0 in duals this season by beating Butte in their last one of the season, 54-21.



Flathead won nine of 13 matches Saturday against a tough Butte squad. It's been a great regular season but now it's time to put it all behind us and get ready for Divisionals," Thompson said. Davin Naldret started off the dual with a pin at 103, and Diesel Thompson (120) got his third pin in three days. Dane Lake (126) also won by pin.

"Dane Lake wrestled lights out tough today," Thompson said. "He is one tough freshman." Noah Poe-Hatten (182) lost his first match of the year in a 2-1 decision against Mason Christian. "Noah will be better prepared for him come state," Thompson noted. At 132, Logan Stansberry lost a heartbreaker by pin after leading by six points. Cade Troupe (152) bounced back from sickness to win by pin over Butte's Connor Konda.

Girls - Flathead 51, Butte 36

103: Reina Koehler (Flathead) p. Jessie LaPier (Butte), 3:31; Anna Morrison (Flathead) dec. Kaylee LaPier (Butte), 13-11.
113: Aydin Gonzalez (Butte) p. Mykel Lee (Flathead), 1:49; Skye Shelmerdine (Flathead) p. Bella Real (Butte), 0:27; Mykel Lee (Flathead) p. Madyson LaPier (Butte), 2:15.
120: Hania Halverson (Flathead) p. Taylor Burke (Butte), 0:38; Bella Arriaga (Flathead) p. Taylor Burke (Butte), 0:27.
126: Peyton Walker (Flathead) p. Maria Hansen (Butte), 2:43; Lily McMahon (Flathead) p. Maria Hansen (Butte), 0:22.
132: Teya Edwards (Butte) p. Raimy Hull (Flathead), 4:29.
205: Makenna Bazo (Butte) p. Alisa Leimkuehler (Flathead), 0:34, Hayla Hoffman (Butte) p. Lucille Libby (Flathead), 2:44; Makenna Bazo (Butte) p. Paige Hermann (Flathead), 0:48.
285: Alliyah Stevens (Flathead) p. Ashlee Wilcox (Butte), 0:31; Ashlee Wilcox (Butte) p. Astoria Beckstrom (Flathead), 0:42.

Boys - Flathead 54, Butte 24

103: Davin Naldret (Flathead) p. Aden Kleinhenz (Butte), 1:30.
113: Trey Whitlock (Butte) p. William Barnes (Flathead), 1:25.
120: Diesel Thompson (Flathead) p. Cole Worley (Butte), 4:56
126: Dane Lake (Flathead) p. Kyler Raiha (Butte), 3:13
132: Will Stepan (Butte) p. Logan Stansberry (Flathead), 2:35
138: Maverick McEwen (Butte) p. Cade Gardner (Flathead), 1:33.
145: Fin Nadeau (Flathead) p. Trey Hanson (Butte), 1:34.
152: Cade Troupe (Flathead) p. Connor Konda (Butte), 5:17
160: Gabe Lake (Flathead) p. Morgan McClernan (Butte), 3:10
170: Anders Thompson (Flathead) p. Riley Downey (Butte), 1:48.
182: Mason Christian (Butte) p. Noah Poe-Hatten (Flathead), 4:00.
205: Chase Youso (Flathead) p. Cohen Grunhuvd (Butte), 0:46.
285: Forest Howell (Flathead) p. Kade Schleeman (Butte), 3:58.

SCOREBOARD: BOYS HIGH SCHOOL WRESTLING COACHES POLLS (FEB. 3)

Feb 3, 2022

Coaches polls

Class AA

Teams: 1. Kalispell Flathead 121; 2. Billings Senior 102; 3. Billings West 88; 4. Butte 67; 5. Helena Capital 53; T6. Belgrade 49, T6. Great Falls 49.

103: 1. Zach Morse, West 2. Tristan Vladoic, Senior 3. Davin Naldrett, Flathead 4. Reid Whitlock, Butte 5. Cashton Spolar, Capital 6. Tyrese LeProwse, Butte.

113: 1. Keyan Hernandez, West 2. Aiden Downing, Flathead 3. Logan Younkin, CMR 4. Trey Whitlock, Butte 5. Cole Krutzfeldt, Senior 6. Isaiah Christensen, Gallatin.



120: 1. Mason Gutenberger, Belgrade 2. Jase Van Pelt, West 3. Holden Howe, Senior 4. Kyler Raiha, Butte 5. Daylon Forshee, Senior 6. Diesel Thompson, Flathead.

126: 1. Carter Schmidt, Belgrade 2. Demetrios Saliaris, Senior 3. Kale Baumann, Great Falls 4. Hunter Rahn, Capital 5. Isaac Ayers, Big Sky 6. Karson Pumnea, Butte.

132: 1. Teegan Vasquez, Glacier 2. Idren Peak, Senior 3. Kip Pumnea, Butte 4. Hunter Ketchem, Skyview 5. Logan Stansberry, Flathead 6. Dash Nugent, West.

138: 1. Carson DesRosier, Capital 2. Asher Kemppainen, Flathead 3. Jesse Aarness, West 4. Jalen Vladoic, Senior 5. Maverick McEwen, Butte 6. Talen Barrington, Skyview.

145: 1. Fin Nadeau, Flathead 2. Israel Moreno, Missoula Big Sky 3. Irish Furthmyre, Great Falls; 4. James Roan, Senior 5. Cooper McGovern, Gallatin 6. Oden Currier, Belgrade.

152: 1. Avery Allen, Bozeman 2. Calvin Carroll, CMR 3. Logan Linn, Belgrade 4. Cade Troupe, Flathead 5. Logan Cole, Senior 6. Dylan Block, Great Falls.

160: 1. Drake Rhodes, West 2. Gabe Lake, Flathead 3. Conner Kovick, Capital 4. AJ LaFurge, CMR 5. Trevor Tucker, Sentinel 6. Felix Peterson, Gallatin.

170: 1. Paolo Salminen, Skyview 2. Shawn Miller, Senior 3. Anders Thompson, Flathead 4. Cooper Freitag, West 5. Riley Downey, Butte 6. Royce Conklin, Glacier.

182: 1. Mason Christian, Butte 2. Noah Poe Hatten, Flathead 3. Chris Garcia, West 4. Gavin Millard, Bozeman 5. Sawyer Troupe, Flathead 6. Damien LaVe, Senior.

205: 1. Brendan Lockart, Great Falls 2. Chase Youso, Flathead 3. Dillen Barrington, Skyview 4. Charlie Desmarias, Senior 5. Xaden Cunningham, Belgrade 6. Cody Vergeront, Glacier.

285: 1. Talon Marsh, Capital 2. Raven Hensley, Great Falls 3. Max Lee, Senior 4. Forest Howell, Flathead 5. Kade Schleeman, Butte 6. Oakely Woddy, Gallatin.

FLATHEAD WRESTLERS GEAR UP FOR AA DIVISIONAL

By FRITZ NEIGHBOR

Daily Inter Lake | February 3, 2022 9:57 PM

The Western AA Divisional wrestling meet is set for today and Saturday at Missoula Big Sky, with Flathead and Glacier taking a combined 49 boys and 45 girls into competition. The top eight out of each weight class qualify for the State All-Class meet next week at Billings MetraPark, though for the girls the seeding — after a five-hour Zoom meeting Wednesday — has been decided.

Flathead is the defending State AA champion for both the girls and the boys, and is taking 31 girls and 26 boys to Big Sky High. The aspirations have not changed. “We always have really high goals for our team and our wrestlers,” Flathead coach Jeff Thompson said Thursday. “We’ve done a great job this week in practice. They’re hungry. We’ve been pulling back a little bit on the “live,” the combat, and they want to open up the gate and get running.”



Eight returning state-placers lead the Brave Brawlers, including Asher Kemppainen (25-7) at 138, senior Fin Nadeau (32-2) at 145, junior Noah Poe-Hatten (32-1) at 182 and senior Chase Youso (30-2) at 205. All were second at state in 2021.

Intriguing possible matchups this weekend include Kemppainen battling Helena Capital’s Carson DesRosier at 138 and Noah Poe-Hatten getting another shot at Butte’s Mason Christian at 205, with Christian winning their last battle in a dual last week, squaring their series at 1-1. Among the Flathead girls are three that placed at state last year: Junior Lily McMahon was third, senior Hania Halverson was fourth and sophomore Trinity Boivin was sixth for the Bravettes.

Flathead Boys

103 — Davin Naldrett (19-7) and Ethan MacDonald (10-5).
113 — Aiden Downing (23-8) and Will Barnes (30-7).
120 — Diesel Thompson (23-13) and Gannon Wisher (24-7).
126 — Dane Lake (24-11) and Walter Hammett (1-0).
132 — Logan Stansberry (20-13) and Raenen Allumbaugh (19-6).
138 — Asher Kemppainen (25-7) and Cade Gardner (22-10).
145 — Fin Nadeau (32-2) and Colton Kuka (22-9).
152 — Cade Troupe (21-7) and Gunnar Thompson (25-6).
160 — Gabe Lake (30-4) and Tynan Krause (19-15).
170 — Anders Thompson (34-4) and Mason Doran (29-5).
182 — Noah Poe-Hatten (32-1) and Sawyer Troupe (25-4).
205 — Chase Youso (30-2) and Xander Winter (26-12).
285 — Forest Howell (25-8) and Austin Shabel (7-5).

Flathead Girls

103 — Anna Moorrison (2-2), Reina Koehler (5-7) and Sage Hafer (no record).
113 — Skye Sheldermine (18-9) and Mykel Lee (12-9).
120 — Hania Halverson (24-1), Isabella Arriaga (16-7), Trinity Boivin (8-7) and Dakota Keller (no record).
126 — Lily McMahon (18-5) and Payton Walker (no record).
132 — Lily Conover (16-5), Raimey Hull (7-7), Meadow Smith (no record) and Mackenzie Brandt (no record).
138 — Alexis Ciso (10-9), Alivia Reinhart (17-9), Eliska Tornerova (7-7) and Hannah Buckner (no record).
145 — Emma Gambino (16-5), Bella Shin (3-3), Isabelle Brewer and Mikayla Iten (no records).
152 — McKenna McCarthy (15-6) and Olivia Keller-Pulse (nr).
205 — Lucie Libby (19-6), Alisa Leimkuhler (14-9) and Paige Hermann (6-4).
285 — Boston Howell (13-6), Alliyah Stevens (12-5) and Astoria Beckstrom (nr).

VETERAN COACHES JEFF THOMPSON OF KALISPELL FLATHEAD AND CORY JOHNSTON OF BUTTE LOOKING FORWARD TO METRA REUNION

[JOHN LETASKY 406mtsports.com](http://JOHN.LETASKY.406mtsports.com)

Feb 7, 2022



Kalispell Flathead wrestling coach Jeff Thompson has achieved success as both a wrestler and coach at the Metra. He won a state championship at the very first all-class tourney. Pictured next to Thompson is his son, Braves wrestler Gunnar Thompson.

BILLINGS — Kalispell Flathead wrestling coach Jeff Thompson will forever cherish the Braves and Bravettes' state wrestling championships last season. Now, the Braves are focused on this year and the opportunities that await this weekend at First Interstate Arena at MetraPark. Thompson is more than ecstatic that the All-Class State Wrestling Tournament is returning to the Metra in 2022 after a one-year absence.

The wrestling extravaganza will feature all three boys classifications — AA, A and B-C — along with the girls division. It will be the first time the girls division has been a part of the wrestling lineup at Metra. Girls action begins on Thursday at 4 p.m. and the boys tourney starts Friday, when all four classifications will be competing. The tourney will conclude on Saturday. "I love the energy of the all-class state tournament," said Thompson. "For someone my age, it's a reunion. I get excited to touch base and see how everyone is doing around the state."

Thompson isn't alone in welcoming the return of wrestling to the Metra. Seventh-year Butte Bulldogs coach Cory Johnston is also looking forward to the weekend. "Oh man, yeah, you can't even describe it to the kids who haven't been there," said Johnston. "They don't understand state isn't state unless it's at the Metra." Both Thompson and Johnston experienced their shares of Metra magic over the years.

Both were successful prep wrestlers in their own rights, with Thompson capturing three State AA titles at Great Falls before graduating in 1991 and wrestling at Minnesota. In fact, Thompson won his very first state title as a sophomore at the first all-class event held in February of 1989 at Metra. Now, all those years later Thompson still counts down the days until state, sharing he finds himself thinking, "two more days, one more day, it's show time!" as the event approaches. "I think it will be so exciting for the fans and action on every mat all the time," he said. "The energy level of the Metra will be off the charts. If you are a fan of wrestling, this is your Super Bowl. How could you not be excited?"



were victorious but because of the location of the victory party. Since the inception of the first all-class state wrestling tournament in 1989, the event has traditionally been held at the Metra. The only exceptions were last year and 2011, when the tourney was held in a different location for each classification because of the damage at Metra from the Father's Day Tornado the year prior.

And while the Bulldogs are in the running for a team trophy for both the boys and girls, Johnston said he's stressed to his team to be ready for the unique atmosphere competing at the Metra provides. "The Metra is kind of a special place," he said. "You get under the lights of the Metra and anything can happen. That's why we wrestle it." Last year the boys state wrestling tourneys were contested at three different sites due to the coronavirus crisis. In 2021, the first state championships were also held for the newly-created girls division and the Bravettes claimed the team title a couple weeks earlier at the Lockwood High School gym.

"That was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to wrestle state at home," said Thompson. "It was one of the highlights of my coaching career and to have my sons (twins Gunnar and Anders Thompson) on the team as freshmen and to wrestle well. It was a great opportunity." The Bulldogs girls were fourth at state last year, seven points away from the third-place trophy. To help his team prepare to wrestle during the high school season, Johnston encouraged them to stay active in the offseason.

"We had a lot of them wrestle at the Montana Open to get some Metra experience and they did some summer wrestling," Johnston said. "It was all in preparation as we knew state would be at the Metra and we are looking forward to how the preparation works for them." Thompson has been the Braves coach for 14 seasons over two stints (2000-01 season through 2007-08 before returning to lead the Braves at the start of the 2016-17 season). During that time the Braves have won state titles in 2004, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2017, 2018 and 2021. All but last year's boys titles were at the Metra.

Now, the Brave Brawlers have a chance to add to their already impressive resume by winning the boys and girls team titles at the Metra as Flathead is among the favorites in both divisions. There will be 24 Brave Brawlers boys in competition and 30 girls.



Johnston won two State B-C titles for Glasgow before graduating in 2003. Johnston, a four-time state placer for the Scotties, also was on two state championship teams for Glasgow before achieving All-American honors at Dickinson State. Johnston is looking forward to this weekend. "It's a yearly reunion for a lot of us. We don't get to see a lot of the state," Johnston said. "I'm looking forward to watching the B race with the Scotties. I'm super excited for all of it and hopefully we can make a little noise for Butte." Last year's State AA tournament had a storybook ending for the Kalispell Flathead boys wrestling team.

The Braves won the team championship at their home gym in early March, unusual not because the Braves



Thompson said he and his staff will do what they can to help their wrestlers compete to the best of their abilities. "At almost 50 years old, I feel like I wrestle every single one of those matches with the kids," said Thompson. "I'm out there with them. I don't know if that's a good thing or a bad thing, but I love every one of those kids. I will be absolutely drained at the end of the day and will be exhausted with that many kids on the mat." After all, at the state tournament you have to cherish the opportunities, enjoy the moment, and hope to make lasting memories.

"I'm at the age where I have to enjoy the ride and journey. I won't be around forever," Thompson said. "When you get that opportunity, you better enjoy it."

AMONG THE BRAWLERS, POE-HATTEN DISTINGUISHES HIMSELF

by FRITZ NEIGHBOR

Daily Inter Lake | February 9, 2022 11:18 PM

People around the Flathead Valley hear Noah Poe-Hatten, a junior standout for the Flathead Brave Brawlers, and think, "That's a great wrestling name." Which is wrong, because it's two great wrestling names. "One of my uncles was a state champion," Poe-Hatten, who wrestles at 182 pounds for Flathead, said last week. He glanced over at the wall in the Brawlers' wrestling room. "Nineteen eighty-six. Jim Poe."

His dad, Jason Hatten, also wrestled at Flathead, as did another uncle, and his sister Alyssa was third at state last year when girls wrestling was a brand new MHSA sport. Naturally, Noah Poe-Hatten was going to do what he does.

"I've done it since I was 6," he said. "Born in Kalispell. Been in the same house all my life. Same wrestling room, all my life." The rewards have been impressive: He was third at state as a freshman, when Flathead finished second in the team race to Great Falls High. He was second last year, when the Brave Brawlers won their eighth State AA title, and seventh since 2008.

This season he began 32-0, before a tough 2-1 loss in a dual to Butte's Mason Christian. Docked a point for a (disputed) stall call, Poe-Hatten saw Christian get an escape to win. At the Western AA Divisional seeding tournament Christian prevailed again, in sudden death, 5-4. So as the AA portion of the all-class State Wrestling Championships approaches, a possible rematch looms big. "I beat him 1-0 the first time," Poe-Hatten noted, then added: "I'm honestly kind of glad that I lost, because I've been working that much harder in practice."

"When you look at any athlete, any team, you want to go undefeated," Flathead coach Jeff Thompson said. "But I think you learn so much from a loss." The dream is adjusted, but mostly intact. Poe-Hatten is part of a team that has won every dual and tournament it has contested this season. He's built a 35-2 record on a stoic approach. "When he was a freshman," Flathead assistant Dallas Stuker began. "We went to the Best in the West tournament in Pasco, and one of the matches I sat in the corner. I hear somebody say, 'Hey,

guys, come here and watch this kid.' The match started, and whoever it was said, 'Watch this kid's face. It never changes. He's like — he's like an assassin.' "

"Silent Assassin" — another great name — stuck, or at least did for the coaches. "He's calm, he's collected, and that's what makes him so good," Thompson said. "And he never gets tired. He doesn't let his emotions take control of the match." Poe-Hatten points toward a tough wrestling room as key. He can go up and battle 205-pounder Chase Youso, take on the speed of 145-pounder Fin Nadeau, or battle the other guy at his weight, the talented (and ranked) in Sawyer Troupe.

"Fin, he just has that speed and pure skill," Poe-Hatten said. "He's a nationally ranked wrestler I get to go against, which

is nice (both Nadeau and Poe-Hatten are rated in the top 50 in their classes by Wrestling USA). And Sawyer, he has a size advantage too." "He's a small 182-pounder," Stuker said of Poe-Hatten. "He could have gone down and wrestled (at 170, which he did for the Rolli Lane Invitational in Boise, which he won). But he kind of filled in that spot for that team, because we were better off with him in that spot."

The objective now is to get another chance at Christian. Thompson hopes it happens, and that Poe-Hatten gets the early takedown that escaped him before. "It was just a grind of a match," Thompson said of the latest battle, which lasted through two 1-minute overtimes and into a 30-second sudden death period — over eight minutes. "Noah had some great opportunities, and got some great shots in on Mason, and just couldn't finish them. "We hope to get a takedown early and take that luck aspect out of the match — when you get to overtime, double overtime, it can come down to a little bit of luck."

Luck is the byproduct of hard work, or so they say. The tide can certainly turn, and either way he's already made a name for himself. Or two, or three. "We had a bunch of seconds last year," Poe-Hatten noted. "I'd really like to have that state championship this year."



GIRLS WRESTLING: KALISPELL FLATHEAD, BILLINGS SENIOR THE FAVORITES FOR STATE CROWN

[JOHN LETASKY 406mtsports.com](http://406mtsports.com)

Feb 9, 2022

BILLINGS — Defending state champion Kalispell Flathead and state runner-up Billings Senior appear to be the favorites for the team title with the girls state wrestling tournament beginning Thursday at 4 p.m. at First Interstate Arena at MetraPark.

Competition on Thursday will include seven weight classes that feature more than 16 girls competing. The boys will begin their state tournament on Friday with the first round at 10:20 a.m. The girls also are scheduled to start at 10:20 a.m. on Friday. Overall, there are 242 girls entered in the state competition this year. Like last season, there are no qualifiers for girls to compete at state as the sport is in the second-year of implementation as a pilot program. Thus any girl who wrestled this year is eligible.



Some of the brackets have more wrestlers than the traditional 16-person bracket at the state tournament, so that's why the tourney begins a day early for the girls. For the girls portion of the event, two rounds will be contested on Thursday night in weight classes 103, 113, 120, 126, 132, 145 and 170 pounds. Competition in weight classes 138, 152, 205 and 285 pounds for the girls will begin Friday. Brian Michelotti of the Montana High School Association, the state wrestling tourney manager since 2006, earlier told The Billings Gazette and 406mtsports.com that by the time the 2:30 p.m. session begins on Friday, the boys and girls will both be in the same spots of the bracket with quarterfinals and third-round consolation matches.

The parade of finalists for the boys and girls is slated for 4 p.m. Saturday with the championship matches to follow. For the girls competition, teams can enter as many wrestlers as they have per weight class, but only their top two scorers will count in the team scores. Kalispell Flathead will have a total of 30 girls entered in the tournament. At 120 pounds, No. 1 seed Hania Halverson is 24-1. Last year in the first girls state championships, Halverson was fourth at 113 pounds.



Flathead coach Jeff Thompson expects a "close, close team race with the girls." Senior has a team of 20 assembled for the state tourney, which includes defending state champion sophomore Kendal Tucker (20-0). Tucker, a sophomore, is once again entered in the 152-pound bracket. Other top wrestler for the Broncs are junior Gracelyn Hanson (113), sophomore Jersey Berg (120), senior Cheyenne Daigneau (126), senior Gracy Jones (145) and junior Rylee Kogolshak (170).

Broncs coach Mickey Mahlmeister said the message he's tried to stress to his team is to stay focused on the task at hand. "Go out there and wrestle every match and win by pin," he said, "and if unfortunately you end up on the back side of the bracket, those matches are important too; try to do well to score points for the team." And while 20 wrestlers is an amazing number for a team to have in a second-year sport, Mahlmeister said "all of us have to get through Flathead's numbers. Thirty is a huge number."

Mahlmeister said Butte, Skyview and Glacier are other teams he thinks are in the trophy hunt. "My thought is the same as last year. All the matches have to be wrestled," he said. "Any team with over 11 wrestlers is in the running for a state title. There is a lot of talent peppered across the state that can dilute us and Flathead." Butte is hoping to contend for a team trophy as well. The Bulldogs, fourth in the team race a year ago, have 13 girls entered in the tourney.

Junior Hayla Hoffman, who was second last year at the state championship meet at Lockwood High School at 170 pounds, is wrestling at 205 this year. Junior Kaylee LaPier (103) wrestled at state for the Bulldogs last year. Sophomore Aydin Gonzalez (120) has a listed record of 21-4 on trackwrestling.com. The Billings Skyview Falcons have 10 girls entered in the tournament.



Leading the Falcons is junior Kassidee Savaria, who was 13-0 with 13 pins last year en route to the 205-pound title. This year Savaria (205) is 21-0 with every win coming by pin, according to Skyview girls coach Bryan Emborg. "She's looking great and wrestling really aggressively and wrestling at a high level," said Emborg. Junior Evija Cagle, sixth last year at 126, is set to compete at 132 pounds. Freshman Brynn Brower (120) is also one to watch for the Falcons. Emborg thinks the Falcons have a chance to win a team trophy, saying, "We'll be battling for a place and won't know until the very end."

Flathead and Senior are the favorites said Emborg, who said he thinks Butte, Glacier, and Gallatin are among the other top teams Skyview will be battling. "It will be a dogfight for third place," he said. "It's a numbers game with Senior and Kalispell Flathead having the numbers, they'll be tough to knock off." Billings West will have five wrestlers at state. Junior Bella Hernandez (126) has been the Bears' top wrestler with a record of 18-3. Hernandez was fourth at state last year at 120 pounds wrestling for Lockwood. Another standout for West is freshman Makenzee Neal (138), who is 14-2.

Coach Gabe Hernandez, the father of Bella, is in his first year guiding West. "I just want the girls to have fun and enjoy the experience," Gabe Hernandez said. "If they all do that, I'll be satisfied. "We definitely have a shot at getting some girls in the medal rounds, but so do a lot of other teams." Great Falls sophomore Kaylin Taylor, who last year won the 103-pound division to become the first Treasure State girls wrestling individual titlist, is entered at 113 pounds.



Poplar's Jazmin Gordor, the 113-pound champ last year, looks to conclude her prep career with another title at 113 pounds. Livingston-Big Timber's Jessica Gubler, a junior, was the state champ at 120 pounds last year and is wrestling at 132 pounds this year. Sidney sophomore Amaiya Kim, last year's titlist at 126 pounds, is once again entered in the 126-pound division.

Senior Mariah Wahl of Cut Bank, last year's state tourney Quick-Pin winner, was the titlist last year at 138 pounds and she looks to defend the title in that weight division. Bozeman Gallatin senior Lily Schultz was victorious in the 145-pound championship bout last year at Lockwood and is wrestling at 126 pounds this year. Shepherd senior LeeAnn Hoch, second at state last year at 103 pounds, is once again entered at 103

pounds. Senior Hannah Hurst (113) of Hamilton was the state runner-up at 120 last year.

Senior Lily Grismer (113) of Cascade placed second last year at 126. Wolf Point sophomore Joli Beston (132) placed second last year at 132 pounds. Bozeman Gallatin senior Maria Matosich (138) placed second at 138 last year. Junior Lillian MacDonald (152) of Plains-Hot Springs, was second last year at 152. Belgrade senior Norah Larson (205) placed second at 205 a year ago. Columbus-Absarokee-Park City senior Kali Hood (285) was the runner-up at 285 last year. Cascade finished third as a team last year in Lockwood. Flathead was first with 142 points, Senior followed with 135 and Cascade had 68 points at the inaugural meet. This year, Cascade has two girls entered: Grismer and senior Skye Smith (285).

FLATHEAD TEAMS ARE READY TO DEFEND WRESTLING TITLES



Flathead's Anders Thompson and Glacier's Aiden Krause square off at 182 pounds at Glacier High School on Thursday, Jan. 13. (Casey Kreider/Daily Inter Lake)

By FRITZ NEIGHBOR

Daily Inter Lake | February 9, 2022 10:30 PM

Flathead's Brave Brawlers have another State AA title in sight at Billings MetraPark, but it won't be easy. Not that it ever is. "On paper, looking at our draws and looking at Billings Senior, it's going to be tight," Flathead wrestling coach Jeff Thompson said. "We just have to do our job and compete."

Flathead has done that all campaign, in duals and tournaments. The Brave Brawlers advanced 24 wrestlers to state, including six Western AA champions: Chase Youso (205 pounds), Fin Nadeau (145), Cade Troupe (152), Anders Thompson (170), Aiden Downing (113) and Glacier put 19 wrestlers in the state tournament, led by 132-pound junior Teegan Vasquez, who's gunning for a third state crown. One teammate made the Western AA finals – Royce Conklin at 170 – and five more placed in the top four. The second year of the All-Class Girls tournament looks like a Flathead repeat, given there are 31 Bravettes headed to Billings. Hania Halverson (21-1 at 120) leads the way, along with Lily McMahon at 126, Lily Conover at 132, Skye Shelmerdine at 113, McKenna McCarthy at 152, Lucie Libby at 205 and Boston Howell and Alliyah Stevens at heavyweight.

A year ago, as host of the tournament, the Flathead boys edged Senior by 7.5 points. It would be nice to have a bigger cushion, but the Brawlers can only do so much about how much the Broncs, or Butte Bulldogs, or Billings West Bears score. "Each and every tournament this year, we've felt the same way," Thompson said. "And this team has stepped up and impressed us every time. We have the potential and firepower. We just have to wrestle to our ability."



CLASS AA WRESTLING: KALISPELL FLATHEAD, BILLINGS SENIOR, BILLINGS WEST AND BUTTE ALL IN THE MIX

[JOHN LETASKY 406mtsports.com](http://JOHN.LETASKY.406mtsports.com)

Feb 10, 2022

BILLINGS — The top four teams in the Class AA wrestling rankings appear to be the favorites to capture a team trophy at the State AA boys wrestling tourney at First Interstate Arena at MetraPark Friday through Saturday. Top-ranked and defending state champion Kalispell Flathead has qualified a tourney-high 24 wrestlers for the event, which begins with the first round Friday at 10:20 a.m. No. 2 Billings Senior qualified 22 wrestlers for state, No. 3 Billings West 21, and No. 4 Butte 20.

Great Falls and Kalispell Glacier each will have 16 wrestlers competing this weekend, while Great Falls CMR and Helena Capital both will have 13. Missoula Sentinel advanced 11 wrestlers out of the Western AA divisional, and Billings Skyview and Bozeman Gallatin each qualified nine. Belgrade and Big Sky each have eight and Bozeman and Helena have six apiece. Four Hellgate wrestlers will be competing at Metra.



At the Eastern AA Divisional in Bozeman, team scores were tallied for the first time and Senior topped the field with 364 points. West was second with 314 and Great Falls third with 247.5. Team scores were not kept at the Western AA Divisional at Missoula Big Sky. At the Class AA Duals, Flathead downed Senior 43-18 for first.

"It will be a battle. You look at Senior with their seeds and draws and it will be a war," said Flathead coach Jeff Thompson. "You can't count out Billings West and Butte, they took second at the Mining City Duals (falling to Flathead 42-27). ... Don't forget about the guys in purple. They have a solid team and will be ready at state for sure." West coach Jeremy Hernandez said the top four-ranked teams are the front-runners for state hardware, but he's also been around long enough to know strange things can — and sometimes do — happen at the Metra. "I'm excited to see what happens. Tournaments are different than duals," Hernandez said. "Us four teams are right there in the mix. Don't count out Great Falls; they have some dudes who can knock off anybody."

Following are storylines to watch in Class AA: The Braves claimed six individual titles and had 10 finalists at the Western AA divisional. With 24 wrestlers qualified for state, Thompson said his team is in good position. "Our goal was to qualify 23, so we exceeded our goal and are really happy with that," he said. "We feel we put ourselves in a really good spot. "Pretty much the hay is in the barn. Our kids are ready and excited. Now is the time to take the foot off the gas and peak at the right time."



Senior Fin Nadeau (37-2), the 145-pound divisional titlist, has been a state runner-up three consecutive years. Nadeau (16-0), along with divisional champs senior Chase Youso (205, 34-0, 19-0), and sophomore Anders Thompson (170, 38-4, 17-0) are undefeated in the AA. • For the Broncs, seniors Idren Peak (132) and Jalen Vladic (138) were Eastern AA champions. Vladic is a two-time state finalist and was third at state as a sophomore. Peak placed third the past two years and was fifth as a freshman at state. "I couldn't be prouder of each and every person here," said Broncs coach Josh Beeman of his state team. "You have to earn your way on our team and each of them has done it."

Beeman said the Broncs are focused entering state. He said Senior has 10 state placers entered in this year's field. "We have 22 big first-round matches," Beeman said. "That's all we are worried about. Do what you need to do for your brothers around you." • The Golden Bears have three undefeated wrestlers

on their roster who won divisional titles in lowa-bound senior **Drake Rhodes** (160, 32-0, 26 pins), freshman Zach Morse (103, 31-0), and sophomore Keyan Hernandez (113, 32-0). Rhodes is going for his third state title and he was a state runner-up as a sophomore. Keyan Hernandez won last year's state title at 103 pounds.



The Bears have two other past state champs on their roster. Junior Jesse Aarness (138, 33-5) was second at divisionals and was the **120-pound state titlist in 2020**. Aarness was a state runner-up last season. Senior **Jase Van Pelt** (29-4), who will wrestle at Cornell College (Iowa) next year, was second at divisionals at 120. He was **undefeated a season ago en route to the 113-pound crown**.

Junior Chris Garcia (182) placed second at divisionals and was the state runner-up at 182 pounds last season. "Obviously our goal is to be the state champ," coach Hernandez said. "We don't go in hoping to get fourth or fifth. We hope to make some noise and come out with a team state championship. ... Trust your training and go have some fun."

The Butte Bulldogs have five state placers in this year's competition. Senior Trey Whitlock was second at the Western AA divisional at 113 pounds and was second at last year's state tournament at 103 pounds. Senior Kyler Raiha (120) was the divisional titlist and was sixth at state two years ago. Junior Mason Christian (182) also won the divisional bracket and was third at state at 182 last year. "Just go out and compete with 100% effort and don't be scared to lose," Butte coach Cory Johnston said of his message to the Bulldogs. "Go out and try to impose your will on the guy in front of you and wrestle the Butte High style and know you're ready and prepared. "Don't wrestle the singlet, wrestle the kid. We say that a lot."

Billings Skyview junior Paolo Salminen was the 170-pound Eastern AA champ. He is 36-0 with 29 pins. Last year at state, Salminen was third at 152 and the year prior he finished as state runner-up at 152. "This year we are trying to get him over the hump and place first," said Skyview first-year coach Jon Verlanic. Senior Hunter Ketchem (132) placed second at divisionals. Ketchem is a three-time state placer, placing sixth at 103 in 2019, winning the 103-pound bracket in 2020, and carving out a third-place finish at 120 in 2021. "We slowly improved all year long and got better at every tournament and better at every practice," said Verlanic. "We are peaking at the right time and champing at the bit and ready to get back here to Metra and give the people of Billings a show."

Helena Capital senior Carson DesRosier won the Western AA 138-pound crown to extend his winning streak to 48 matches. This year DesRosier is 34-0 and he enters the weekend hoping for a third state title. If he adds the state 138-pound bracket to the 138-pound one he claimed in 2021 and the 120-pound one he wrestled to in 2019, he would become the first Capital wrestler to capture three state titles. DesRosier was the state runner-up to Bozeman's Avery Allen at 132 pounds in 2020. DesRosier is already Capital's career wins leader with a record of 125-7.

Missoula Big Sky junior Izzy Moreno was second at 145 pounds at divisionals. Moreno won the 132-pound State AA title last year. Bozeman junior Avery Allen was the 145-pound champion last year and was first at 132 pounds in 2020. Allen won the 152-pound Eastern AA divisional.

Eastern divisional individual champions were: 103, Zach Morse, West; 113, Keyan Hernandez, West; 120, Mason Gutenberger, Belgrade; 126, Carter Schmidt, Belgrade; 132, Idren Peak, Senior; 138, Jalen Vladoic, Senior; 145, Irish Furthmyre, Great Falls; 152, Avery Allen, Bozeman; 160, Drake Rhodes, West; 170, Paolo Salminen, Skyview; 182, Gavin Millard, Bozeman; 205, Brendan Lockart, Great Falls; 285, Raven Hensley, Great Falls.

Western divisional individual champions were: 103, Cashton Spolar, Capital; 113, Aiden Downing, Flathead; 120, Kyler Raiha, Butte; 126, Isaac Ayers, Big Sky; 132, Teegan Vasquez, Glacier; 138, Carson DesRosier, Capital; 145, Fin Nadeau, Flathead; 152, Cade Troupe, Flathead; 160, Gabe Lake, Flathead; 170, Anders Thompson, Flathead; 182, Mason Christian, Butte; 205, Chase Youso, Flathead; 285, Talon Marsh, Capital.

On Saturday, action begins with the semifinal and consolation quarterfinals at 9:30 a.m. and the parade of finalists is scheduled for 4 p.m. ... A random draw was held to determine the order of matches for the championship round. Championship matches will begin at the 205-pound weight class Saturday afternoon. All of the other rounds of the tourney begin at 103 pounds.

BRAVETTES, BRAVES LEAD AA RACES AT STATE



Flathead's Cade Troupe, top, wrestles Billings Senior's Logan Cole during the second day of the MHSAA State Wrestling tournament at First Interstate Arena in Billings on Friday, Feb. 11. (Mike Clark/Billings Gazette)

by FRITZ NEIGHBOR
Daily Inter Lake | February 12, 2022
12:55 AM

BILLINGS — Through Friday's action at the all-class State Wrestling Championships First Interstate Arena was the home of the Braves — and Bravettes. The Flathead girls, in fact, have the bigger margin in the team races, with 144 points to 108 to Billings Senior. The lead was 50

before the Broncs closed the gap in Friday's late wrestlebacks; meanwhile the Flathead boys were pushing a slight lead over Senior out to 164-151.

Six Bravettes made Saturday morning's semifinals, including senior Lily Conover, who picked up a pair of pins against Glacier's Jessalyn Hewitt and Ronan's Katie Dolence at 132 pounds. The sport is in its second year of being sanctioned by the MHSAA, and that's about when Conover got started. "I just like wrestling," said the senior with a 20-5 record. "So I thought, why not wrestle." Why not win? Jessica Gubler of Livingston waits in the semis; on the other side of the bracket is Brynn Courville of Plains, who Conover bested a few weeks back at the Ronan Invitational.

Meanwhile five teammates are also in the state title hunt, starting with Lily McMahon, who won a sudden-death quarterfinal at 126 from Lili Schubarth of Simms. Also advancing were Boston Howell at 205, Alliyah Stevens at heavyweight, Alivia Rinehart at 138 (she pinned teammate Alexis Cisco in the quarters), and Hania Halverson, who picked up two more pins at 120. "We would have never dreamed that the girls would be up by 40 or 50 points after day two," said Flathead coach Jeff Thompson, who saw the Braves and Bravettes sweep the state titles a year ago. "They're doing everything they're supposed to do. We're so proud of each and every one of these girls, they put in a lot of hard work, and a lot of them are brand new to the sport."

"(McMahon) is doing really well, Hania Halverson, Boston," Conover said. "I'm excited to see what happens tomorrow." Glacier's girls sit fourth in the team race with 71 points, just 1.5 behind Billings Skyview. Brooke Yeadon picked up two pins on the way to the 103 semifinals, and while three other Wolfpack girls fell in the quarterfinals. Besides Courville, Plains saw Taylor Angle (126) and Lillian MacDonald (152) make the semifinals. Ronan's Tirza Two Teeth is a semifinalist at 205.



Brawlers advance 9

Nine Flathead boys made the semifinals, and it might have been more: Diesel Thompson had to battle teammate Gannon Wisher in the 120 quarterfinals (Thompson scored a late takedown to force overtime, and won 4-3); Noah Poe-Hatten pinned teammate Sawyer Troupe to make the semis at 182. Also, on a less positive note, both Cade Troupe and Gunnar Thompson lost in the 152 quarterfinals. "We would have liked to punch one of those guys through," Jeff Thompson, father to both Gunnar and Anders Thompson (and no relation to Diesel), said. "Both of them have been wrestling lights out. But hey, that's wrestling. Cade just has to come through the back door, and same with Gun Show."



If there was a match of the day it was the 113 quarterfinal where Billings Senior's Junior Madrid caught Flathead's Aiden Downing, and was close enough to a pin that the Broncos' coaches were leaping in the air. Down 7-1, Downing went to work, caught up and then scored a pin in the third period. "That kid (Madrid) took third at state last year; it's not like he was unknown," Thompson noted. "I just love that about Aiden Downing — he just guts matches out. He's never out of a match; he just rolls for six minutes."

Anders (170) and Diesel (120) made it two out of three Thompsons in the semifinals; Davin Naldret advanced at 103, as did Asher Kemppainen at 138, Fin Nadeau at 145, Gabe Lake at 160 and Chase Youso at 205. "You look at that historically, getting nine guys into the

semifinals — that's a great day," Coach Thompson said. "We can't complain. It's a two-horse race between us and Senior. We're just hoping to be hitting on all cylinders tomorrow morning, and win those close matches. There's going to be a lot where we match up with Billings Senior and we're excited for the challenge, and we'll see where our team ends up."

Glacier's boys had one semifinalist: The peerless Teegan Vasquez, who needed less than two minutes total to pin Billings West's Isaiah Morse and Flathead's Logan Stansberry. Vasquez is going for a third straight title; just 37 Montanans have won

Boys AA results

Team scores — 1, Flathead 164; 2, Billings Senior 151; 3, Butte 100; 4, Billings WEst 95; 5, Great Falls High 80; 6, Helena Capital 60; 7, Billings Skyview 49; 8, Great Falls CMR 46; 9, Glacier 45.5; 10, Belgrade 34; 11, Missoula Big Sky 33; 12, Bozeman 32; 13, Gallatin 30; 14, Missoula Sentinel 15, 15, Helena 12.5; 16, Missoula Hellgate 12.5.

Flathead Individuals

103 - First round — Davin Naldret, Flathead, pinned Payton Kuiper, CMR., 1:45; Kyson Baker, Sky, p. Ethan MacDonald, Flathead, 4:49. / **Consolation first round** — Gage Hartnett, GFH, d. MacDonald, 8-3. / Quarterfinals — Naldret, Fla, dec. Reid Whitlock, Butte, 10-8.

113 - First round — Aiden Downing, Flathead, p. Cole Schaub, Skyview, :16; William Barnes; / **Quarterfinals** — Downing p. Junior Madrid, Senior, 4:26; Keyan Hernandez, West, p. Barnes, :50; / **Consolation second round** — Barnes, Fla, p. Grady Winston, Butte, 3:21;

120 - First round — Gannon Wisher, Flathead, p. Samuel Elliott, GFH, 1:23; Diesel Thompson, Flathead, dec. Landon De La Garza, CMR, 10-6; / **Quarterfinals** — Thompson, Fla, d. Wisher, Fla, 4-3 OT. / **Consolation Round 2** — Wisher, Fla, p. Grady Caton, Hgt, :27.

126 - First round — Gavin Cotton, GFH, p. Dane Lake, Flathead, 4:21. / **Consolation first round** — Lake, Fla, p. Casey Bendure, Skyview, 1:39. / **Consolation second round** — Lake, Fla, md. Jack Montoya, Boz, 13-2.

132 - First round — Raenen Alumbaugh, Flathead, d. Kameron Amende, Gal, 14-11; Logan Stansberry, Flathead, d. Grant O'Neill, GFH, 6-3 / **Quarterfinals** — Idren Peak, Senior, p. Allumbaugh, Fla, 1:00; Vasquez, Glacier, p. Stansberry, Fla, 1:06.

Cons. Round 2 — Kameron Amende, Gal, d. Stansberry, Fla, 6-4 OT; Allumbaugh, Fla, d. O'Neill, CMR, 6-0.

138 - First round — Asher Kemppainen, Flathead, p. Quinn Hale, West, 2:26; Cade Gardner, Flathead, p. Brodie Ober, GFH, 1:13; / **Quarterfinals** — Kemppainen d. Talen Barrington, Skyview, 6-1; Jalen Vladic, Senior, p. Gardner, 1:06; Gardner, Fla, p. JT Gehring, Hel, 2:02.

145 - First round — Fin Nadeau, Flathead, p. Teancum Palmer, GFH, :55; Colton Kuka, Flathead, p. Kade Vatsdal, West, :45; / **Quarterfinals** — Nadeau p. Ethan Jarrett, CMR, 1:07; Irish Furthmyre, GFH, p. Kuka, 2:40. / **Cons. round 2** — Kuka, Fla, p. Hansen, Butte, 2:45.

152 - First round — Gunnar Thompson, Flathead, md. Kale Konency 10-1; Cade Troupe, Flathead, p. Tillman Bartholomew 1:14. / **Quarterfinals** — Dylan Block, GFH, p. G. Thompson 3:28; Logan Cole, Senior, p. C. Troupe 5:25. / **Cons. Round 2** — G. Thompson, Fla, d. Cayden Doran, CMR, 5-4; C. Troupe, Fla, p. Cole Graham, Cap, 3:44.

160 - First round — Gabe Lake, Flathead, p. Andrew Schoenen, GFH, 2:41; AJ LaFurge, CMR, p. Tynan Krause, Flathead, 4:36; / Quarterfinals — Lake t.fall Gavin Vetter, Butte, 15-0. / **Cons. Round 2** — Trevor Tucker, Sent, d. Kraus, Fla, 9-6.

170 - First round — Mason Doran, Flathead, p. Landry Cooley, G, 1:37; Anders Thompson forfeit over Logan Sloan, CMR; / **Quarterfinals** — Paolo Salminen, Skyview, p. Doran 2:35; A. Thompson p. Devron Brewer, GFH, :23 / **Cons. Round 2** — Doran, Fla, p. Adian Cuchine, Butte, 3:25;

182 - First round — Noah Poe-Hatten, Flathead, t.fall Ben Rodgers, Bel, 16-1; Sawyer Troupe p. Hayden Allie, Senior, 3:22; Gavin Millard, Boz, md. TJ Gannon, Glacier, 15-4; / **Quarterfinals** — Poe-Hatten, Fla, p. S. Troupe, Fla, 2:31; / **Cons. Round 2** — S. Troupe, Fla, p. Kaleb Kirklin, Hel, :31;

205 - First round — Chase Youso, Flathead, p. Kaden Barrett, West, :27; Jacob Reeves, CMR, dec. Xander Winter, 5-3 OT; / Consolation first round — Winter, Fla, p. Cody Vergeront, Glacier, 2:49. / **Quarterfinals** — Youso, Fla, md. Xaden Cunningham, Bel, 9-0. **Cons. Round 2** — Hunter Curtis, MBS, p. Winter, Fla, 2:45;

285 - First round — Forest Howell, Flathead, p. Oakley Woody, 1:43; / **Quarterfinals** — Raven Hensley, GFH, p. Howell, Flathead, :52. / **Cons. Round 2** — Howell, Fla, d. Noah Campbell, Senior, 9-7.

All-Class State Girls

Team scores — Flathead 144, Billings Senior 108, Billings Skyview 72.5, Glacier 71, Butte 59, Miles City 47, Gallatin 47, Poplar 47, Belgrade 45, Baker 39, Frenchtown 37, Plains 37, Ronan 33, Sidney 33, Billings West 32, Simms 32, Dillon 29, Cut Bank 29, East Helena 26, Cascade 24, Lewistown 24, Harlem 22, Red Lodge 21, Great Falls 20.

103 - First round — Reina Koehler, Fla, p. Chloe Bowen, Lau, 1:00; Leeann Hoch, Shep, medical def. Over Sage Hafer, Fla; Anna Morrison, Fla, dec. Alyvia Ruiz, West, 9-8 OT; / **Second round** — Kiera Davis, Cor, md. Koehler, Fla, 17-3; Kaylee LaPier, Butte, dec. Morrison, Fla, 9-2

113 - Second round — Skye Shelmerdine, Fla, p. Denaya Pretty Paint, Senior, :15; Leah Smith, Skyview, p. Mykel Lee, Fla, 2:57. / **Third round** — Cora Pesanti, Ana, p. Shelmerdine, Fla, 5:45.

120 - First round — Hania Halverson, Fla, p. Taylor Burke, Butte, :22; Bella Arriaga, Flathead, dec. Mayse Fox, MC, 8-3.; Brynn Brower, Skyview, p. Dakota Keller, Flathead, :28; Savannah Riggan, CJI, p. Trinity Bolvin, Fla, 1:55; / **Second round** — Halverson, Fla, p. Iszy McCrea, Dil, 1:08; Karissa Afrank, Baker, p. Arriaga, Fla, 5:27; / **Quarterfinals** — Hania Halverson, Flathead, p. Taelynn Chavez, Cor, 1:24.

126 - First round — Lily McMahon, Fla, p. Karen Rosales, Sid, :53; Ashlynn Kistenmacher, Rou, p. Peyton Walker, 2:27; / **Second round** — McMahon, Fla, p. Kaitlyn Thorn, Boz, 1:33. / **Quarterfinal** — McMahon, Fla, dec. Lili Schubarth, Simms, 9-7 OT.

132 - First round — Evija Cagle, Skyview, p. Meadow Smith, Fla, :42; Jessica Gubler, Liv, p. Mackenzie Brandt, Fla, :39; Raimy Hull, Fla, p. Anne Baldwin, Gal, 5:24; / **Second round** — Joli Beston, WP, p. Hull, Fla, 5:37; Lily Conover, Fla, p. Hewitt, Gla, 1:05; / **Quarterfinal** — Conover, Fla, p. Katie Dolence, Ron, 1:14.

138 - First round — Payton Kale, Senior, p. Elisa Tomerova, Fla, :54.; Maria Matosich, Gla, p. Hannah Buckner, Fla, 2:33; Alivia Rinehart, Fla, p. Hannah Pankratz, Gal, 1:00; / **Quarterfinal** — Rinehart, Fla, p. Cislo, Fla, 1:20

145 - First round — Amilia Blackcrow, Harlem, p. Mikyla Iten, Fla, :40; Libby Clagg, EastH, p. Isabelle Brewer, Fla, 2:29. **Second round** — Emma Gambino, Fla, p. Natalka Rolfson, Senior, 12-8; Dakota Betersen, EastH, medical def. over Isabelle Shin, Fla. / **Quarterfinal** — Petersen, EastH, p. Gambino, Fla, 4:40.

152 - First round — Lillia MacDonald, Pla, p. Olivia Keller-Pulse, Fla, :30.

205 - First round — Norah Larson, Bel, p. Paige Hermann, :23; Lucille Libby, Fla, p. Erica Guerrero, GFH, 1:00; Celia Jaeger, Senior, p. Alisa Leimkuehler, Fla, 3:06. / **Quarterfinal** — Aliyah Stiffarm, Hav, p. Libby, Fla, :51.

285 - First round — Haylee Fetters, CB, medical def. Over Astora Beckstrom, Fla. / **Quarterfinals** — Boston Howell, Fla, p. Skye Smith, Cascade, 3:42; Alliyah Stevens, Fla, p. Haller, Gla, :54.



The Flathead Braves pose for pictures with the Class AA State Championship trophy after the finals of the MHSAA State Wrestling tournament at First Interstate Arena in Billings on Saturday, Feb. 12, 2022.

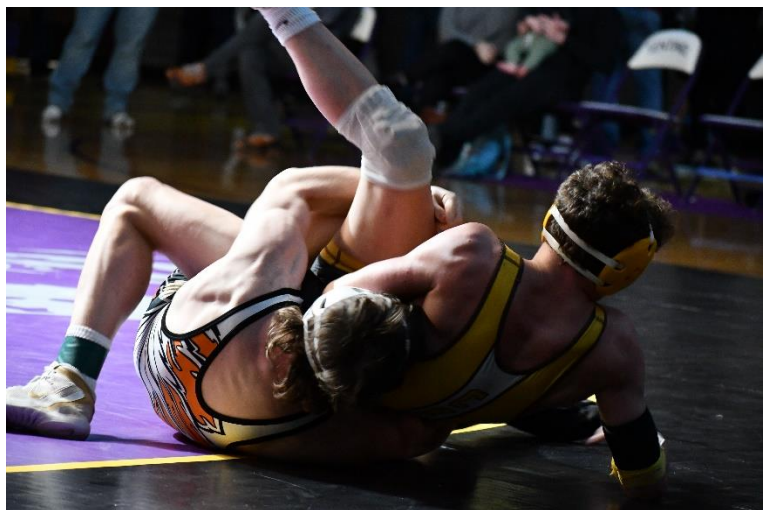
MIKE CLARK Billings Gazette
Feb 12, 2022

BILLINGS — For the Kalispell Flathead Braves, the margin of victory might have been tighter than they'd like but they'll definitely take the team title. The Brave Brawlers repeated as the Class AA champions with 289 points Saturday at the state wrestling tournament at First Interstate Arena at MetraPark. Second-place Billings Senior finished with 270 points and Billings West was third with 199.

Last year, the Braves edged the Broncs 247-239.5 for first. "It was a marathon, just an absolute adrenaline rush," said Flathead coach Jeff Thompson. "It felt like you never knew what would happen. There were a lot of upsets. "We ended up on top. Sometimes there's a little bit of luck in sports. I thought the wrestling gods were looking out for the Flathead boys this weekend."

Fin Nadeau, a three-time state runner-up for the Braves, won his first state championship with a 5-3 victory over Izzy Moreno of Missoula Big Sky at 145 pounds. Nadeau said he was 4-0 vs. Moreno, a junior who won last year's 132-pound state crown, this year. "It's the best feeling ever," said Nadeau of achieving the state title. Said Nadeau of the Brave Brawlers' weekend: "Our team just had some great matches and some guys stepped up and that's what we needed."

While the Broncs wanted to win the state title, coach Josh Beeman said his team has overcome a lot of adversity this year. "There is nothing not to be proud of," Beeman said. "These guys go through adversity every day. "They are an amazing group of kids. I couldn't be prouder. They couldn't have tried any harder." Earning individual championships were: 103, Zach Morse, West; 113, Keyan Hernandez, West; 120, Mason Gutenberger, Belgrade; 126, Carter Schmidt, Belgrade; 132, Teegan Vasquez, Kalispell Glacier; 138, Jesse Aarness, West; 145, Fin Nadeau, Flathead; 152, Avery Allen, Bozeman; 160, Drake Rhodes, West; 170, Paolo Salminen, Skyview; 182, Mason Christian, Butte; 205, Brendan Lockart, Great Falls; 285, Talon Marsh, Helena Capital.





Rhodes, who will be joining the Iowa wrestling team as a preferred walk-on next year, claimed his third state title to tie the school record for most championships with three. The other members of that club are his brother Jace Rhodes, who is now a member of the Montana Tech men's golf team, and West coach Jeremy Hernandez. Rhodes pinned Flathead's Gabe Lake in 3:07 for the championship at 160 pounds. "That feels good. It's a great group of guys," said Rhodes. "It's a good group to be in." Teegan Vasquez of Kalispell Glacier won his third state title with a pin in 1:26 of Senior's Idren Peak. Vasquez, a junior, who finished undefeated this year, will be aiming for a fourth title next year. "I'm definitely already thinking about next year," he said. "I was thinking about three but now I'm definitely thinking how I can better myself."

Avery Allen of Bozeman, a junior, won his third state title with a technical fall 15-5 win over Dylan Block of Great Falls at 152 pounds. "I'll enjoy it for a while," said Allen. "Maybe a week. I've got to keep working for bigger tournaments and bigger things. I've been looking for four. I'm more than halfway there. "This was a great tournament, but there is always learning and things to get better at." Hernandez, a sophomore, won his second straight state title with a 15-7 major decision over Senior's Cole Krutzfeldt at 113 pounds. Hernandez finished 36-0 after last year's 16-0 campaign. "It feels really good right now, especially being in the Metra," Hernandez said. "It was just really loud and exciting."

West freshman Zach Morse pinned Capital's Cashton Spolar in 3:33 for the 103-pound title. Morse finished the year 35-0. "The work we put in at West High is a lot of work," Morse said. "I have to contribute a lot to that." "It was a great and a dream come true. I've been aiming for this since I was little. I started when I was 7." West's Jesse Aarness defeated Jalen Vladic of Senior 1-0 for the championship at 138. Aarness, a junior, was the 120-pound state champ in 2020 and was a state runner-up last year. "It feels great, especially since last year," Aarness said. "Being a runner-up stings. My goal was to make sure that never happened again." To get to the championship match, Aarness defeated Capital senior Carson DesRosier 8-6 in the semifinals. DesRosier was aiming for a third state title and was undefeated entering the match. "I was 0-2 versus him before the season started," said Aarness. "Before the match, I thought I have nothing to lose. If I wrestle my match, I can beat anyone in the state."

Skyview's Paolo Salminen finished the year 40-0 with 32 pins when he downed Anders Thompson of Flathead 17-1 with a technical fall for the 170-pound title. "It feels deserved," said Salminen. "I worked hard this season." Salminen, a junior, earned his first title after placing third at state last year and second as a freshman. "What went well is I focused on wrestling this year," he said. "I trained a lot harder and wanted it."



Christian, a junior, earned a 3-2 victory over Flathead's Noah Poe-Hatten for the 182-pound bracket. "It's crazy. I never thought I'd be here," he said. "I'm so thankful for all the people who helped me. "I was good, but I wasn't quite there. They pushed me in the room and I was able to get there." Marsh defeated Great Falls' Raven Hensley with a pin in 1:50 for the heavyweight crown. "It feels great," Marsh said. "I came out on top as a champ. All sports come down to work ethic. If you have work ethic and heart, you'll win." As for how he was going to celebrate, Marsh said, "I'm going to go give my mom a big hug."

Gutenberger, a sophomore, defeated West's Jase Van Pelt with a pin in 4:30 for the 120-pound title. Van Pelt was a state champion last year. "It felt very good to get that pin for the state championship," Gutenberger said. "I'm really happy right now. "I was able to dominate good this year. I felt good at this weight. Last year I was up at 126 (he placed fourth at state) and I was way too tiny there. It felt good to wrestle kids my size." West coach Jeremy Hernandez was proud of his team for winning a team trophy. The Bears' last state trophy was in 1995 when they were third.

"The kids are the ones you should be talking about," said Hernandez. "They put the time in and the training. They deserve this. They work hard. It's all on them."

GIRLS WRESTLING: KALISPELL FLATHEAD REPEATS AS TEAM CHAMPION; 6 REPEAT STATE CHAMPS



The Flathead Bravettes pose with the girls wrestling state championship trophy Saturday night at First Interstate Arena at MetraPark.

MIKE CLARK, Billings Gazette

Feb 12, 2022

BILLINGS — Hania Halverson provided an individual title for the Bravettes and Kalispell Flathead rolled to its second consecutive team championship at the state girls wrestling tournament Saturday at First Interstate Arena at MetraPark. The Brave Brawlers scored 205 points to earn the championship in the second year of a sanctioned girls wrestling division by the Montana High School Association. For the second year in a row Billings Senior was second with 157 and Billings Skyview improved off its fifth-place showing from a year ago to win the third-place trophy with 115.5.

“Our girls were lights out tough this weekend,” said Flathead coach Jeff Thompson. “Each and every one contributed to the team.” Halverson said it was joyful to win an individual championship and be part of a team state champion. Halverson was the tourney’s quick-pin winner with five pins in 6:36.

“All of the girls, we have been working so hard and it really paid off at the end,” she said. Winning the championship will make the long bus ride back to Kalispell seem to go by quicker. “It will be a good memory to end the season,” said Halverson. The individual girls champions were: 103, Angelina Escarcega, Poplar; 113, Jazmin Gorder, Poplar; 120, Hania Halverson, Kalispell Flathead; 126, Amaya Kim, Sidney; 132, Jessica Gubler, Livingston; 138, Mariah Wahl, Cut Bank; 145, Gretchen Donally, Huntley



Project; 152, Kendal Tucker, Senior; 170, Cabry Taylor, White Sulphur Springs; 205, Kassidee Savaria, Billings Skyview; 285, Kali Hood, Columbus-Absarokee-Park City.



Gorder, Gubler, Kirn, Wahl, Tucker, and Savaria all won titles last season as well. The championship round began at 205 pounds, so Savaria became the very first girl to win two state championships in Montana. "It feels really good. I'm excited to stay wrestling this summer and to go to some out-of-state things and come back next year and hopefully get my third," Savaria said.

Savaria, a junior, finished the season 25-0 with all of her wins by fall. Last year she was 13-0 with 13 pins when she won the 205-pound crown. "Hard work. You have to keep at it, even if you don't feel you are doing your best," Savaria said. "And even on your bad days, you have to keep going." Tucker, a sophomore, won all four of her matches by pin at the tourney

to finish 24-0 on the year. It is the second straight year she has won the 152-pound bracket. "It's hard, you just can't get too cocky," said Tucker of going undefeated. "You have to think the whole time this could change any second." Tucker was proud of the Broncos for their accomplishments. "Being a team and even though we had people get injured left and right, we just worked harder," she said, "and knew we had to lift everyone up."

Gorder had five pins over the three days to win her championship. This one was especially meaningful she said because last year there were COVID-19 restrictions and some of her family and supporters couldn't commute to Lockwood High School for the tourney because of the social distancing efforts. "I feel like all the time I put in all year round has paid off," said Gorder, as she wiped away tears of joy. "It feels amazing to be No. 1 in a sport. I'm really thankful for all the people who came out to support me from my hometown."

Kirn also scored five victories by pin, including a fall in 2:41 over Lily Schultz of Bozeman Gallatin, last year's 145-pound champion, to earn the championship. Kirn, a sophomore, said her goal is to become "a four-timer." The Eagles boys team won the Class A team title. "It was fun being here with my team," said Kirn. Donally, the only girl on Project's team, said winning the title was "surreal. It's amazing. I don't know how to explain it. It doesn't feel like I'm here." Project won the Class B boys team title and Donally said that it was "fun to be a part of that. They are my practice partners."

Hood was a finalist at 285 last year. After winning her title, the senior from Columbus said she felt "over the moon right now. It's crazy. I worked all season for it." It was a season of firsts for Hood. "This year I got to be the first four-year girl for Columbus; no other girl has gone this far," she said. "I'm also the first female state champ for Columbus. I broke a lot this year." Broncos coach Mickey Mahlmeister was proud of his team's efforts, but also credited the Bravettes for their success. "We definitely had high expectations and we had a state championship caliber team, but it did not happen," he said. "KalisPELL brought their big team, wrestled a good tournament, and brought good wrestlers and took first."



BRAVE BRAWLERS BACK TO BACK

Flathead completed a sweep of the Class AA state wrestling team titles for the second year in a row

By Micah Drew February 15, 2022

For the second year in a row, the Flathead Brawlers swept the Class AA boys and all-class girls state wrestling titles. The boys title is the fourth for Flathead in the last six years, which included back-to-back wins in 2017 and 2018 as well, and the program's 11th overall.

"I would be lying if I told you we were not feeling the pressure this year at state due to such a great regular season," said Flathead head wrestling coach Jeff Thompson. "State was the like the ultimate adrenaline ride. This team seemed to really thrive under the pressure and we had some amazing highs but also come challenging lows."



After the first day of competition, Flathead held a 164-151 lead over Billings Senior, last year's runner-up. With a typically strong performance in the consolation rounds and with five wrestlers into the finals, the Braves stretched out their lead enough to hold off the Broncs 289-270, a slightly more comfortable margin than last year's 247-239.5 last match victory. "We had a great placing round to get us the points we needed to just be able to sit back and actually enjoy the finals," Thompson said.

The Braves' lone individual champion was senior Fin Nadau, who won a 5-3 decision over Big Sky's Izzy Moreno at 145 pounds. "I was ready to get that state title finally," Nadau said, after finishing runner-up the last three years. "It's the best feeling ever." "Seeing Fin finally getting the 'W' after all the sacrifice and hard work he has put into this crazy sport was absolutely amazing," Thompson said.

The Braves had four runner-up wrestlers who ended up just short of a title in Gabe Lake (160), Anders Thompson (170), Noah Poe-Hatten (182) and Chase Youso (205).

Flathead's other placers were Davin Naldret (third at 103), Aiden Downing (fourth at 113), Diesel Thompson (sixth at 120), Raenan Allumbaugh (fifth at 132), Asher Kempainen (fourth at 138), Cade Troupe (sixth at 152), Mason Doran (fifth at 170), Sawyer Troupe (fifth at 182) and Forest Howell (fifth at 285).

Last year the Flathead girls team made history by winning the inaugural state championship — this year they made history as the first team to repeat as champions. The team all but had the tournament sealed after Friday night's session.



"Flathead girls wrestling right now is on a different level from the rest of the state," Thompson said. "We felt our girls just got exposed to so much tougher competition throughout the regular season by going to regional and out-of-state competitions, and that helped them dominate at the state meet."

Similar to the boys team, the Flathead girls only had a single individual champion, but had seven wrestlers finish in the top six, scoring 205 points over Billings Senior's 157. Skyview was third in 115.5.

Hania Halverson also made history as the program's first individual champion and was the tournament's quick-pin winner with five pins in 6:36. She needed just 55 seconds of her final

match to secure the title over Sidney's Keela Kary.

"The girls were just flat out tough this weekend with fantastic performances up and down the line," Thompson said. "Seeing this girls team at such a different level was such an endorphin high."

KALISPELL FLATHEAD STATE WRESTLING CHAMPION HANIA HALVERSON HOPES TO INSPIRE NEXT GENERATION

KALISPELL — It's only the second year that girls wrestling has become a sanctioned sport here in Montana and Flathead senior Hania Halverson is helping the Braves set the bar as this past weekend she was the State AA wrestling champion.

"I was pretty excited. I got up and I looked up at all the parents and the supporters and everyone and I was pretty excited. And then I went and gave my coaches a big hug," said Halverson, a senior. Many will look at Halverson seeing a state champion, but what head Flathead wrestling coach Jeff Thompson sees is all the pieces of her story that have helped her get to where she is today.



"You know, when you look at it, a lot of people just kind of think, hey, she's just been a good athlete. She worked really hard for two years. There's just so much more to the story," said Flathead wrestling coach Jeff Thompson. "You know, she's someone that's puts in 12 months, year round wrestling, working out before school in the weight room with her cardio, and then practice and then she stays after practice."

Not only has she been going above and beyond this season to get results, the Flathead wrestling team has been competing out-of-state and Halverson says that has been a huge contributor to her success this season. "It really diversifies what kind of competition you're seeing and how you're going to have to adjust to different matches against kids that are going to be pretty good, from a bunch of different places," said Halverson. "You might not see them at your state tournament but just to get that experience has ultimately helped."

But competing out-of-state is not the only thing that has attributes to her success this year. There is another key component to Halverson's story. Her dad, who has formally began coaching her this year. "He just he knows me at home, he knows me with through wrestling, and he knows how bad I've been wanting to get this," Halverson said. "He was pretty overjoyed."

And that joy she has from her dream turning into a reality leaves Halverson feeling certain that she will leave a pathway for every young girl wrestler at Flathead High School. "I mean, it feels pretty awesome to think that someday there will be some little girls that come in this wrestling room and they they go 'oh, that's a girl wrestler up there. Oh, that's awesome.'" said Halverson. "In the hopes of inspiring the next couple generations of girl wrestlers in the state of Montana, that means a lot to me."

By FRITZ NEIGHBOR
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The goal, coming off an appearance in the 2021 State AA finals, was a state championship in 2022. Flathead's Asher Kemppainen had it in sight and reasons to believe: In January he beat Billings West's Jesse Aarness and Billings Senior's Idren Peak in back-to-back matches at the AA Duals in Great Falls. Kemppainen finished fourth at last weekend's state tournament, at 138 pounds. It was another near-miss, certainly. But the young man — he turns 18 in 16 days — also had some makes.



"It's actually kind of funny that this is the second straight year the state titlist at my weight was someone I beat earlier in the year," Kemppainen said Wednesday. Then he added: "It's kind of annoying to think about." Last year, when the regular season was made up of 14 duals, Kemppainen beat Missoula Big Sky's Izzy Moreno leading up to state. There — the AA tournament was at Flathead — Moreno prevailed 10-3 in the 132-pound championship.

This year it was Aarness who won at 138: the West wrestler beat Capital's Carson DesRosier in the upset of the tournament in the semifinals; then he got Jalen Vladic of Senior, who'd dropped down from 145 (Peak dropped to 132 and was pinned by Glacier's Teegan Vasquez in the finals). Kemppainen lost to Vladic in the semis, then did what Coach Jeff Thompson wants every Brave Brawler to do. He got it going in the blood rounds. He won his consolation semifinal — and his reward was another match with DesRosier, the defending champ at 138, for third and fourth.

DeRosier. Aarness. Kemppainen lost to Bozeman's Avery Allen in the 2020 semifinals at 132, before finishing third. Allen now has three state titles. "I even tried to cut down to wrestle Teegan (at 132)," he said. "And it was a tough cut. I couldn't make it happen." Add it up and Kemppainen battled dudes, including Vasquez, with nine state titles between them. That he didn't break through is no crime.

"He had an incredible high school career," Thompson said. "Three-time state placer, one-time finalist. Team captain. Stepping back, that's a great high school career." Kemppainen tends to agree, and especially after the way it began at Flathead. "Freshman year I didn't wrestle at state because I got kicked off the team," he said. "I got into some trouble in school."

The comeback began when Thompson told a story of a teammate he'd wrestled with at Minnesota. "That kind of related to me," Kemppainen said. "It kind of helped me figure my stuff out." In three years since he's scored 52.5 points at state while the Brawlers were second, first and first. "Now I'm excited about doing the offseason wrestling and continuing to work all the way up until I leave for college," he said. Providence in Great Falls is an option; so is North Idaho JC.

Thompson will tell you that second chances are what coaching is all about. Kemppainen has had some serious highlights since. "I beat RJ Lowdog, who'd beat me three times (sophomore year, when Kemppainen took third)," he said. "State finalist junior year — I can't complain about that. This last weekend you could say I had the toughest weight, and I finished top four. "I can be proud of that."