



PIN IT To Win It

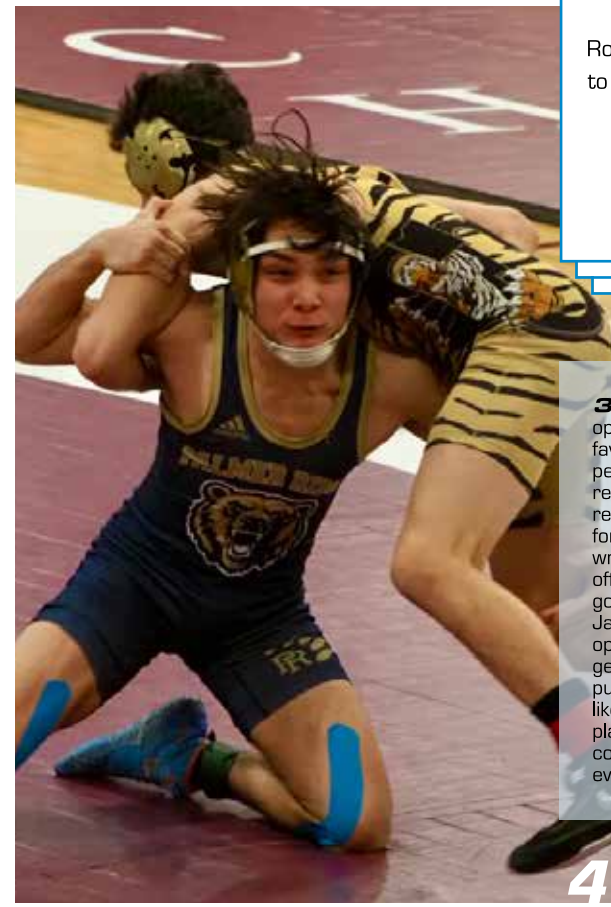
BOYS AND GIRLS
WRESTLERS TAKE ON THE CHALLENGE TO GET TO STATE

Two more steps forward, and you're in the wrestling ring. You think to yourself, how could anyone stay inside that tiny circle? As you try to pin down your opponent, the minutes become agonizingly long. But not long after, you are now a state qualifier! Both the boys and girls wrestling teams hit a large milestone this year through tough wins.

With the support of their team and an incredible coach, the Bears had several wrestlers qualify for the state championship. "I started wrestling in fifth grade, but stopped after that until freshman year," **James Baumert, 12**, said. "I've always loved sports, and to me wrestling is the ultimate sport. I mainly started because I love the competition. Out on the mat, you don't have any backup from your team. It's just you."

The team made history this season with ten wrestlers, seven boys and three girls, qualifying for the state tournament. Getting to State is not an easy task, but the team was willing to put in the work. **William McCoy, 11**, said, "As a whole we just work harder than everybody else. We do more conditioning and hard work compared to other teams. We go that extra mile."

Also as the girls wrestling team has grown, the program has flourished and is now getting recognition at the state level too. "This season I did better than anyone expected me to do. It was my first year ever and I made it to State, so I don't think I could be any prouder of myself," **Angel Arends, 11**, said. *story by lily dozier.*



"Wrestling really helps me be organized and put as much effort into work as I do wrestling. I definitely look up to Coach Romero. He's the one who encouraged me to wrestle and he really inspires everyone."

Logan Webb
Logan Webb, 12

3. Will McCoy, 11, uses a pinning combination to beat his opponent. McCoy starting wrestling in the seventh grade. "My favorite memory was probably at regionals. We had so many people qualify for state, and in the last like five years we haven't really had anybody get close. Seeing the growth of the team is really good," McCoy said. *photo courtesy of lorna horton.* **4.** Going in for the take down, **Henry James, 11**, throws a fireman's carry, a wrestling technique. James likes to be able to compete and show off his skills. "My favorite memory was watching our heavyweight go to finals because he did really well. Our team is like a family," James said. *photo courtesy of lorna horton.* **5.** Keeping his opponent on his toes, **Tyson Stahlecker, 10**, works towards getting a takedown. Wrestling helps Stahlecker know he can push through both physical and mental barriers in life. "I really liked going to State this year; it was a really fun experience. I placed somewhere between ninth and twelfth. I love the wrestling community because we all love and support each other in everything," Stahlecker said. *photos courtesy of lorna horton.*

Lady Bear Wrestlers

GIRLS ON THE WRESTLING TEAM SHARE THEIR THOUGHTS ON SEASON

"My favorite thing about wrestling is how encouraging everyone is and how they push you to be a better version of yourself. I loved how close we got as a family during the season. Girls wrestling is really its own thing. I feel like we connected more to each other than the guys," **Sakari David, 9**, said.

"I started wrestling this year and because I got tired of being the manager and so I could learn to beat my brother up. It was my first year ever and I made it to state so I don't think I could be any prouder of myself. The girls team has its own special bond," **Angel Arends, 11**, said.

"The girls team has a bond that is more of a 'sisterhood' rather than teammate relationship. We're together for morning runs, practice after school, and all day on Saturdays for tournaments. My favorite memory was Senior Night. It was sentimental to see the growth our team has made," **Kaila O'Neil, 12**, said.



PLAY YOUR OWN WAY



Tyler Akers, 11

"Before a match I like to listen to really loud music like the Suicide Boys. The music kind of amps me up and gets me angry."



Cooper Havenar, 10

"Before the matches I jump up a lot. Honestly, I don't know how to wrestle so my version of wrestling is just football tackling them. I just body slam them."



Kellan Hageman, 11

"I tackle differently by incorporating a lot of different techniques rather than one."

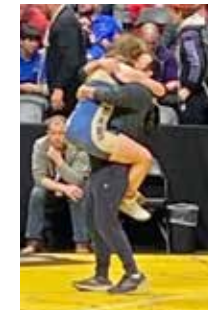


Shaelyn Selph, 10

"I've gotten good at running power halves and snap downs when I wrestle."

All About ASPEN

ASPEN BARBER, 12, TALKS ABOUT HER WRESTLING CAREER



"I started wrestling when I was in fourth grade. Wrestling both helps and hinders my mental health. It helps me ease and really helps me with my complex ADHD. But it does add a lot of pressure to my life and stress at times. I got third at State this

year. Third is worse than last year so that kinda sucks, but I was in the hardest bracket this year. It feels cool to place and stand on the podium in front of everyone. I really look up to Tamyra Mensah Stock and Jenna Burkert," Barber said.

