

LET'S TAKE A FEW WORDS FROM
JUST DJ

DJ Rock '23 takes home fifth at State
story & design by e.rolfs
photos by r. weidemann



HOW DID IT FEEL TO GET ON THE MAT AT STATE?
"I was super nervous to get on the mat, but I felt very prepared with all the work I had put in this year. I was mainly overwhelmed with excitement and joy. I was very proud to make it to State."

WHAT DID YOU DO TO PREPARE FOR STATE?
"This year I was very determined to place and win something at State. So to prepare, I conditioned every day that I was able to. I also trained my mind to be the best that it could be, so I was mentally prepared for my opponent."

WHAT IS YOUR MAIN GOAL FOR NEXT YEAR?
"My goal for next year is to get a third placing or higher. I will get to this goal by working as hard and

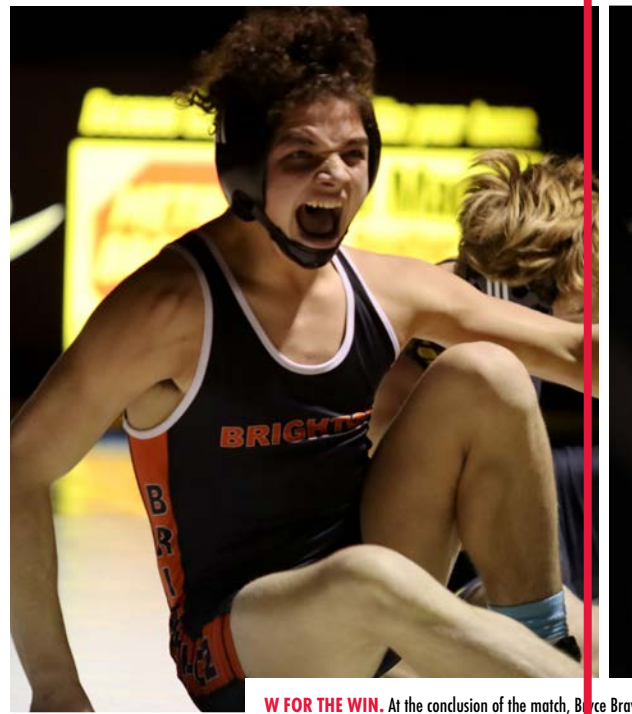
even harder than I did this year. I am proud of my showing this year, but I know that I can do better."

WHO HAS HELPED YOU THE MOST IN ACHIEVING YOUR GOALS?
"My coaches - Coach Heinz and Coach Garcia were a huge help this year. They were very focused on my training. My family also contributed to a lot of my self conditioning."

WHAT WAS YOUR REACTION TO YOUR FIFTH PLACE FINISH?
"I was definitely a little disappointed because I had gotten fifth place last year. However, I am very thankful that I got the opportunity to place and even make it to State in the first place. I just have to work hard next year."



DOWN TO THE GROUND. Bringing down his opponent from Prairie View, Izaiah Schoepp '24 takes his opponent's arm to bring him toward the mat for a pin. "It was pretty nerve-racking when first started the match, but toward the end, my thoughts were that I had to pin this kid to win this match. If I lost this round it would count toward my ability to make it to State," Schoepp said.
photo by e.rolfs.



W FOR THE WIN. At the conclusion of the match, Bryce Bravo-Packer '25 screams toward the crowd after pinning his opponent from Prairie View High School on Feb. 3. After the win, Bravo-Packer got on the ground and posed for a photo with a family member. "I was one of the first ones on the mat, and I was kind of nervous. I went for a shot and got it. I had him in a pin and that won me the match. I had a lot of adrenaline coming off the mat after that," Bravo-Packer said. **TAKING HIM DOWN.** Toward the beginning of the second round, Soloman Smouse '23 picks up his opponent from Prairie View to throw him down back on the mat. Smouse was able to pin his opponent and the Brighton team won the Rivalry duel against Prairie View. **KEEPING AN EYE ON THE PRIZE.** Looking at the referee, Daxton Hruby '23 tries to roll his opponent from Prairie View over so he can get the pin. Moments later, Hruby won the match by pin. "During the match, I was thinking that I didn't want to let the crowd down. I was trying to pin my opponent so that I could win the match. I did end up winning that match which felt like another step toward State," Hruby said. **PEP TALK.** Jakoeb Romero '23 listens to junior varsity head coach Brandon Ferguson as he prepares to take the mat against his opponent from Prairie View on Feb. 3. "I remember thinking that this match mattered, and I was nervous being new to Brighton High School. Talking with Coach before the match really got me motivated and prepared for this match," Romero said. photos by e.rolfs

SOLOMAN SMOUSE '23

"I like the competitiveness of wrestling and how it's a physical sport but also a mental sport. It takes a lot of discipline. My favorite part about wrestling is breaking that mental barrier and winning a match."



WE PUT UP A
REAL GOOD FIGHT

Eight wrestlers earn chance to compete at CHSAA State

story & design by e.rolfs

WITH no seniors on the wrestling team, juniors Dylan Bravo-Packer '23, DJ Rock '23 and Soloman Smouse '23 stepped up to serve as captains for the varsity team.

eight wrestlers advance to the State wrestling tournament. All captains - Dylan Bravo-Packer, Rock and Smouse - made it along with Braaden Heinz '25, Sam Rock '24, Josiah Gallegos '24, Izaiah Schoepp '24 and Kaden Housego '24.

"It was hard stepping up and being captain as a junior. I had to set an example to all of the underclassmen on the team, especially for my brother Sam (Rock '24)," Rock said. "I had to set the tone high for everyone for the season because for most of us our end goal was to make it to State."

"We were really excited to see eight of our boys make it to State and fight for a title," James Garcia, head coach, said.

The team ended the season with a perfect record of 8-0 and had

Heinz, [Sam] Rock and Gallegos made it to the quarter finals. Smouse, Schoepp and Housego made it to the preliminaries. [DJ] Rock won fifth place and Dylan Bravo-Packer '23 won his first State title.

AND IF YOU NEED MORE CONVINCING, CONTINUE TO PAGES 104-105.



PINNED DOWN. Braaden Heinz '25 pins his opponent from Westminster High School down to secure his win during the Jan. 26 wrestling duel. Heinz was one of two wrestlers to win first place at the Regional Tournament and was the only freshman wrestler to make it to State. "At the Westminster duel, I needed to win this match for my team, and I knew that I needed to get some points," Heinz said. "I was one of the only freshmen in my bracket at State, and the only freshman that made it from Brighton, so I felt the pressure of needing to win and place. Though I didn't place, I am proud of my showing and know that I have to work even harder to make it back to State next year and win." photo by r. weidemann

WHAT ARE SOME GOALS YOU HAVE SET FOR YOURSELF?

CHRISTOPHER SCOTT '23

"My goal this year is to just have fun and finish out the year with good grades. I think it's important to enjoy life as much as possible, but keep in mind school does matter."

ELIZABETH DIAZ '22

"My main goal this year is to graduate. I'm going to do this by getting all of my graduation credits done and making sure I have my 20 hours of community service done. I can't wait to be in my cap and gown."

GAVIN ROMERO '24

"I hope that I can end the year with a GPA of at least a 2.5 or higher. I will do this by focusing on my classes and getting the work I need to pass the class."

BRENDEN CONNOR '24

"I've set a goal of keeping a 3.0 GPA all year. This is my goal because I want to start thinking about colleges that I can possibly attend in the future, and I need a good GPA for that."

ALONZO MORALES '24

"I would like to pass all of my classes and get through this year. I'm ready for junior year, and I would like to finish out sophomore year strong with good grades."

SAMANTHA ADAMS '25

"A goal I have set for myself is to study a lot for my tests in my classes, so that I know what content will be on the test, and I can get a good grade on it."

RYAN ELSON '25

"I want to make it to State for the 100 and 200 meter in track. I will be working extra hard every day at practice and putting in the work outside of practice."

CYNTHIA DONLUCCAS '24

"I want to get straight A's during the whole year because I look up to my sister, who gets straight A's."

AND THIS SHOULD CONVINCE YOU
WE PUT UP A GOOD FIGHT
Boys Wrestling, DJ Rock **103**