

Lessons From The Mat To Real Life



Photos by: Freija Dutton

All-Valley Game



Freija Dutton
—Head Editor—

The Arbys game, is a basketball game that includes all seniors from all over the valley. There is a girls game and a boys game.

Each Senior that played basketball is invited to play and they all get to wear their own jerseys and play with other seniors from the valley.

All seniors get split up into two teams and play a full basketball game with each other.

This is a great time of the year where the whole valley gets to come together and support all seniors as they play their last high school basketball game.

Teams from the valley that get to play are Alamosa, Centauri, Center, Sierra Grande, Del Norte, Creed, Sanford, Sargent, Centennial, and Antonito.

Kasey Jones a senior says "I'm excited to play because I get to play with my senior team one more time, and interact with other teams we didn't get the chance to play with."

Many other seniors feel the same as Kasey.

Charley Higham, a Senior, says "I'm excited to play with some team mates from my old team at Del Norte, plus some other friends at other schools."

This is a perfect event to bring the San Luis Valley together, The valley comes together and cheers on each team.

It is fun to support everyone and see everyone from all over the valley. This will of course be a sentimental but exciting game. It will be held March 16. Come out and support!!

AHS Boys Wrestling Finishes The Season on Page 15



Freija Dutton
—Head Editor—

Alamosa wrestling has a long standing history of being one of the top teams in the state of Colorado.

Like other sports, this cannot be achieved without exceptional coaching.

Coaches not only need to know the sport they coach, but also must dedicate countless hours and build trust and positive relationships with their athletes.

After Hall of Fame coach Gary Ramstetter retired, his long time assistant coach Rusty Johnson took the reigns and has been looking to keep the Alamosa Wrestling Tradition alive.

Coach Johnson, or Rusty to his wrestlers, is the high school and middle school wrestling coach.

He is a man of many accomplishments but to him "there are a few accomplishments like being a part of the coaching staff for 10 team state championships, starting the girls wrestling program, and being inducted into the Hall of Fame."

Rusty says he has "always been connected to the sport" as he has been

a coach at Alamosa High School for 33 years, most notably taking over the program 4 years ago.

He also has been coaching the wrestling team at Ortega Middle School for 6 years, and ran the Pee-Wee wrestling program for 36 years.

"My biggest mentor in wrestling is Gary Ramstetter" who he coached alongside for 29 years when he first started at AHS.

During those 29 years, these two were known as one of the best coaching duos in the state.

Rusty just finished his latest high school wrestling season in which the team qualified nine for the state tournament, however the wrestling accomplishments take a back seat to the life lessons his wrestlers learn from him.

Senior Kyler Liddell has been coached by Rusty since he was four years old. Kyler was a state runner-up this last season and says "Rusty has taught me to be very committed to everything I do. He always pushed me to be the greatest I could be."

Liddell continues "he has shown me what it means to put my all into something and how to work hard and

achieve my goals. He has watched me grow up and helped shape me into the guy I am today."

Rusty's special bond extends to many of his wrestlers as sophomore Dyson Woodward explains that "He has taught me so many life lessons. He is in a way, a father figure to me. I know he is willing to help me or be there for me no matter what." These are just two of many wrestlers that Rusty has impacted over the years. While many wrestlers look at him like family, his granddaughter Presley Gonzales gets to spend extra time with him while being a manager for the team. "He never fails to make me smile, even when I have a bad day. I admire the way he always pushes me to be a better person and always keeps me in check."

Not only does Rusty guide students of AHS and OMS in wrestling, he also assembles a strong coaching staff that look up to him. Long time assistant Nic Dionisio states "Rusty has always been there for me no matter what. When I first started coaching, I wanted to be like him and Ram more than anything. They are respected everywhere they go." Mr. Dionisio is not only an as-

stant but a teacher at AHS and went on to say, "he makes sure that his athletes not only excel on the mat, but I love the way he encourages the team to work hard in the classroom and respect their teachers."

Rusty has been a part of Alamosa wrestling for so long that former wrestler Manuelito Casias is now an assistant coach with him.

Mr. Casias says "He makes me tougher, he really does. He never misses practice. Never. He's been such a good role model for me because he shows me how to be tough with the grind of coaching, and how to work with kids. There aren't enough good things I can say about good ol' Rusty. I guess the biggest thing I can say is I'm glad he's in my life, and there to stay for a long while."

The great Dan Gable once said "once you've wrestled, everything else in life is easy" and this holds true for the wrestlers that come up through Alamosa wrestling.

Wrestling is a hard sport, but the life lessons that Coach Johnson instills in the athletes at AHS help make life a little easier for all.

Upcoming Events

All Valley Game
Thursday March 16

Girls Golf
March 31
@ Swink

Spring Break
March 20-24

Baseball @ La Junta
March 31-April 1

Track in Arizona
March 25

School Play
April 28-29

Soccer vs Durango
@ Home March 28

