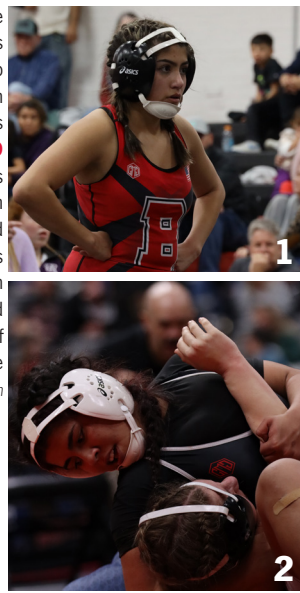


1. EYES ON MY OPPONENT. Juliana Sandoval '26 stares down at the wrestler from Denver North as they prepare to wrestle on Nov. 30. "I'm always really nervous before a match. You are basically fighting some other girl so you definitely have to hype yourself up before going out there," Sandoval said. *photo by r. doherly* **2. PROVE THEM WRONG.** Olivia Fuentes '26 smirks down at her opponent as she wrestles in the consolation round at State wrestling. "I know that my hard work is paying

off and that it proves to people that I am someone who shows dedication and is determined to do a sport that people don't often see as meant for girls," Fuentes said. *photo by r. doherly* **3. IN IT TO WIN IT.** Taylor Madsen '24 smiles as she keeps a rival wrestler from Adams City down. Madsen ended up pinning the wrestler. "I was feeling the thrill of the win even though I was exhausted. I wanted nothing but the sweet feeling of the referee putting my hand in the air," Madsen said. *photo by n.duran*



WHO RUNS THE WORLD? *(girls, that's right)*

High school students join women's sports teams

story by a.flancher photos by a.flancher & a.quammie



RUGBY
ALANNA QUAMMIE '27
"I play for Monarch because we don't have a team at Brighton. I'm happy I still get the chance to play, but playing isn't everything. The only way to really win is to be tough enough to push through the pain and channel it to be stronger. You use your aggression to take down the other team and it is so rewarding in the end when your strength overpowers theirs. There is always the risk of getting hurt but it also comes with that

thrill of the chance of winning."
JUJITSU
SOPHIA CESPEDES '27
"I've done jujitsu for a long time. The sparring at the end of each practice has always been the highlight. It's the only way you get to test out your ability in an environment without the pressure of a tournament. I enjoy getting to learn how to fight with people who want to learn just as much as me. Especially with the girls, it's like we have solidarity with each other."



AIRSOFTING
SKY TATMAN '26
"I've done airsofting since I was a kid. It's always been fun because I do it with my brother. We always took it very seriously because it was an excuse to get to rough-house with each other without getting in trouble. I've gotten some pretty big welts and bruises from it so it really is no joke. A lot of people assume I won't be as fast or skilled as the guys. It's nice to see their faces after I destroy them."

yeah, WE SHOW NO MERCY

Seven girls wrestling athletes compete at Colorado High School Activities Association State Duel

story by l.carmichael, s.cespedes, a.flancher & s.granado design by g.poliard

WITH AN UNDEFEATED TEAM SEASON, THE GIRLS WRESTLING

TEAM LEFT REGIONALS with one thing on their mind: making school history with a girls State champion.

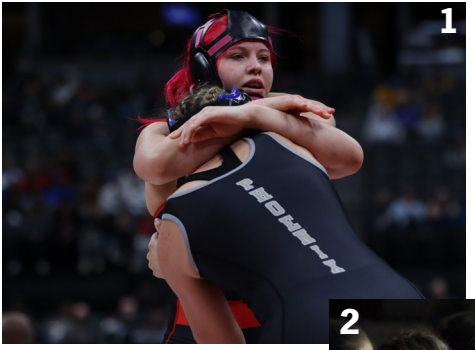
conditioning fed into this sport. It was everything combined into the perfect sport. The team is strong and we just wanted to see some State champs come out of the season."

exhilarating when you do," Spellman said. "With State, it was no different. It was up to me to make it happen."

By the end of the three day tournament, Smouse placed 5th in her weight class and Hruby won first, making her the high school's first girl State champion.
"Anyone who does a sport will know that all of your preparation turns the sport into something you want to excel at. You want to do your best and you will do anything to get yourself to be the best you can be. It takes on its own role in your life," Smouse said. "I am proud of myself, Tilly, and all the other girls who wrestled this season. We will not stop."

"I love the opportunity to be competitive in this sport because Brighton girls didn't always have that," Graciela Eisman '25 said. "Honestly, I didn't think I wanted to do it at first, but once I started I couldn't resist. Everything I love, like lifting, running and strength

"It's all a big mental game with myself. Of course, I'm fighting someone else, but my biggest opponent is the girl I see in the mirror. It's hard to push yourself past your limits, but it's



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1. IT'S A GRIP. Matilda Hruby '27 takes her opponent into her arms to prepare to pin her in her second match at State on Feb. 16. **2. LINE UP.** Bailey Husman '24, Taylor Madsen '24 and the rest of the varsity girls wrestling team put their hands over their hearts during the national anthem before the Prairie View duel. "Your body is a mess with anticipation before you wrestle," Husman said. *photos by r. doherly*



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4. A MOMENT OF GLORY. Isabella Smouse '25 has her arm raised by the wrestling referee as she is declared the winner of her match while competing at the Colorado High School Activities Association Girls Wrestling State Tournament on Feb. 16. Smouse ended up placing 5th in her weight class. "It feels like a big accomplishment. We've been working for this tournament the whole year. It is such an amazing payoff of all of my hard work even though it is bittersweet for it to end," Smouse said. "I wanted to be a State champion, but it just gives me something to work toward as we move forward into next season." *photo by r. doherly* **5. HEAD DOWN.** Kianna Spellman '26 stares directly at her opponent as she waits for the referee to blow his whistle at the State championship round in her weight class. "When I am in the match, everything else goes blank and all I can think about is taking my opponent down to the pin," Spellman said. "I am proud that I made it to State, and I will keep pushing forward." *photo by r. doherly*



6

6. TRYING TO GET A GRIP. Abri Renteria '26 attempts to grab her opponent from Prairie View to try to get her on her back to pin her. "During a match my mind almost goes blank. For those six minutes the world around goes quiet and the only thing that matters is the match. All I think is that this is my mat and there is no way I'm losing my mat to my opponent without a fight," Renteria said. *photo by d.hunt*

yeah, WE CAN DO THAT BECAUSE... 052

WE SHOW WHAT GIRLS CAN DO 053 Girls Wrestling, Women's Sports