



Pen City Current

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Hounds place at J-Hawk Invite

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

CEDAR RAPIDS - Seven wrestlers on the FMHS varsity squad got a good look at some of the best wrestlers in the state Saturday. And two came away with medals.

Junior Harlan Steffensmeier ran up against the top-rated Class 2A wrestler at 138 lbs. in Keaton Geerts of New Hampton and suffered his first pin of the season at Saturday's J-Hawk Invitational at Cedar Rapids Jefferson.

The loss put Steffensmeier, who is now 28-2, on the season in the 3rd-4th place match with Class 3A 5th-ranked Nathan Feldman of Dubuque Hempstead. Steffensmeier held on in the match for a 4-2 win to take the Hounds' highest placing at the Invite. It was the second time in less than a week that Steffensmeier got the best of Feldman. He scored a 9-2 win at the Lancer Duals in North Scott on Jan. 7.

Harlan had a bye in the first round and then scored a 12-1 major decision over Grant Ohlsen of Moline before running into 38-1 Geerts. Geerts went on to win the championship at 138 after defeating Class 3A's top-ranked Tristen Lara.

Ryan Steffensmeier also came away with a medal at the invite placing 5th at 113 lbs. Steffensmeier is now 16-7 on the year and scored a 10-6 decision over Ellex Williams of Moline in the 5th-6th place match. The

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Hounds lose 8th straight despite Dilsaver's 35

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - Junior Amber Dilsaver set a new FMHS 5-on-5 scoring record Saturday night, but the Hounds dropped their eighth straight.

Monmouth-Roseville came into the Hound Dome Saturday night and handed Fort Madison a 61-52 loss in non-conference girls varsity action.

Dilsaver hit on 14-of-24 shooting including 7 of 9 from the free throw line on her way to 35 points, 28 of which were layups within two feet of the basket. Monmouth-Roseville switched to a 2-3 zone to try and get the six-foot junior off track but the inlet passes kept coming and Dilsaver kept dumping them in. However she wasn't aware she was at the 30 point mark until pulled from the game in the fourth quarter.

"When I came over to the bench they told me I was over 30, but I didn't know," she said.

Dilsaver was averaging right at 10 points per game but didn't play in Friday's game against Keokuk due to an injury and missed another game this year. But she got right to the point about how this game was different.

"I don't know...they were kinda shorter than me," she said. "It's more of a team thing really. I felt like the way they were guarding me, my team realized that and that's when they were like, 'Get the ball to her, she knows she's open.'"

Head Coach Charlie Knipe told Dilsaver in the lockerroom that she had set the school record.

"She did a great job, but we missed a lot of shots at the end," Knipe said. "I thought we did what we wanted to do, we just didn't take care of business."



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

School record

Amber Dilsaver (33) set a new 5-on-5 FMHS school record Saturday with 35 points in the Hounds loss to Monmouth-Roseville 61-52.

Knipe said the opening three minutes kind of set the stage for the game.

"We came out and missed three layups right off the bat. We had eyes on the bucket and we just missed them. Then I think we got a little gun-shy and apprehensive about what we can do," he said.

The Lady Hounds didn't score until the 5-minute mark in the first quarter and trailed 10-5 at the end of the period. Monmouth pushed the lead to six at halftime 31-24 highlighted by about 3 minutes in the second quarter where the Hounds didn't take a shot

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Former FMHS standout sets Coe record

PCC STAFF

DUBUQUE, Iowa - Cassie Hocker, a former Fort Madison High School track standout and 2013 graduate, broke a 16-year old school record Saturday for the Coe College KoHawks, as the Coe College track and field teams opened the season at the Sol Butler Classic.

Hocker, a senior on this year's squad won the 55-meter dash in 7.28 seconds, breaking the previous record of 7.33 by Luyre Hupfer in 2001. Hocker's time is the best in the Iowa Conference and currently ranks second in the nation.



Photo courtesy of Coe College Athletic Dept.

New 55-meter record

Cassie Hocker, a 2013 graduate of FMHS and track standout set a new Coe College record in the 55-meter dash. Her time of 7.28 secs. beat a 2001 mark set by Luyre Hupfer. Hocker is a senior this year for the KoHawks.

Beside the Point

Donning the singlet wasn't my thing

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

I never wrestled in high school. We didn't have it at West Burlington, but even if we did I wouldn't have put on a singlet. It

would have been like that sweaty nightmare where everyone is staring at you laughing with all index fingers pointed at you. This is all in slow motion, my opponent would have been between me and the crowd in his headgear laughing right along. Not only at my skinny high school body but knowing in about 20 seconds he would turn me into a



C. VANDENBERG

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From the Front/Local News

FMHS wrestling program a kick

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pretzel. I think there's a 10 point scoring bonus for turning your opponent into a pretzel.

In more than 10 years of reporting, editing and publishing I've never even covered a wrestling match until this year. I've spoken with murderers, presidential candidates, renowned musicians.

When I first walked into a wrestling match there were four mats on the floor, time clocks everywhere, cheerleaders sitting SITTING and pounding on the floor, wrestlers loosening up all over the place, parents and fans screaming "STAND UP", "Roll him!" "SHOOT!"

....SHOOT????!!!!

I decided I would walk around and look like other photographers. Actually I was just looking for Derek Doherty. I've known him and his family for years and if anyone could save me it would be Derek. FMHS Head Coach Ryan Smith and Derek both remind of that dude in high school that was totally laid back (dude....totally) but if you poked the wrong way would go buck wild.

Anyway, my high school inhibitions aside, I started looking for the pod of FMHS wrestlers so I could keep my eye on them and start getting some pictures. I'm a decent photographer, but I play the odds. If you shoot 200 pictures at an event, the odds are on your side. My wife tells me I'm good and my pictures are great. I tell her the camera she bought me is great.

Anyway, I shot the invitational tournament, had no clue how scoring worked, but I have a sense for when things go well and when they don't. It allows me to ask at least well-formed questions of Smith after the event. They have a great website called TrackWrestling.com. This website virtually tracks all wrestling invitationals and duals and such and you can get scoring and results there shortly after the meet is over. I was able to write a decent story and give some good coverage.

Analyze **Disagree**
DISCUSS Thought
Opinion
 Beside the Point **PUBLIC RESPECT**
Agree **ARTICULATE**

I ventured back to a dual the next week. Much easier to shoot as everything's on one mat. I can just sit at the side and shoot pictures. I'm still not sure of the scoring but I'm getting there. Some of the matches honestly take a while to get going. The two opponents typically take at least few moments to size each other up, at some point somebody gets their opponent on the ground and then training kicks in on how to keep your hands out, base wide if you're under your opponent. Or if you have the advantage and have an upper position, you ride and move with your opponent waiting for an opportunity to roll and possibly pin.

These boys and coaches take this stuff very seriously. They're upset when they lose and happy when they win. Ryan and Derek always shake their wrestler's hand after and do a debrief of sorts on what happened.

It all seemed typical of high school sports until one match in particular where I learned first hand where people get their passion for the sport.

Diego Lozano was in a tough match, in my short time covering it seems Diego has a propensity for last minute heroics. But it was a match full of strategy and positioning and Diego was down 0-2 with about one minute left and he was covered by his opponent. Things turned quickly and Diego began to wiggle his way free. I was shooting heavy because the crowd started making some noise. I didn't really know what was happening or what was about to happen, but I was sitting on the corner of the mat shooting away and then Diego escaped with about 20 seconds left. 2-2. I thought, 'Oh,

this is good.' But then something awesome happened. Ryan and Derek jumped out of their corner chairs and ran to the mat followed by every single member of the FMHS wrestling team yelling and pointing "GET HIM!" "SHOOT, 'RUSH HIM' or something...I don't know, but it was very loud and extremely exciting. Everyone was shouting and I'm on the floor shooting like a madman at whomever and whatever was moving.

Apparently Diego had about 15 seconds to grab his opponent and get him to the ground and everyone in the gym knew it but me. Which he did... and won the match.

I did get a decent shot of Diego on top after bum rushing his opponent and bringing him to the floor with the ref showing the winning two points and flash bulb going off from some other photographer. I'm sure HE knew what he was doing.

But since that moment, coupled with watching Harlan Steffensmeier appear to toy with his opponents like a cat wraps itself around a stuffed toy and pins it to the ground, I've developed a curious interest in the sport. I found myself torn by sticking around on Saturday for the girls basketball game or going to Cedar Rapids to watch the J-Hawks Invite. My dad's birthday kept me home... but I almost went.

This new sport is exciting to me and it's been part of a storied FMHS history for decades. I'll fit in just fine. But I just have to remember that even though I may want to, I'm a reporter/photographer and I can't yell... "GET HIM!"

But that's Beside the Point.

Steffensmeiers place for FM in strong field

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junior had a bye in the first round and then lost to Kobey Pritchard of Indianola, who's ranked 3rd in the state in Class 3A. Steffensmeier then pinned Evan Woods of West Delaware at the :25 mark, before recording a 10-1 major decision over Darrin Bethard of Clinton to put him in the 5th-6th place matchup.

Aaron Steffensmeier and Diego Lozano were both one match away from placing. Steffensmei-

er wrestling at 132 lbs. got knocked from the placing round by James Runestad in a 6-2 decision. Lozano at 182 lbs., had his place hopes dashed by Chayton Reif of Indianola in a 13-11 decision.

Head Coach Ryan Smith said the competition was very tough.

"It was a very tough tourney but a part of the process. It allowed us to find out what our weaknesses are before we get to state," he said.

"There were a lot of top 10 teams and top 10 individuals. Lots of state champion caliber competitors. We're not where we want to be necessarily, but we battled and learned a lot about ourselves today."

The Hounds host Keokuk on Thursday and travel to Urbandale for a tournament there as well.

"It doesn't get any easier as we go forward, but it's part of the process and we'll be ready for districts because of it," Smith said.



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Trimble on the move

FMHS senior Mercedes Trimble (35) looks for a scoring lane in Saturday's 61-52 loss to Monmouth-Roseville. The Hounds fall to 3-10 on the season with the loss.

Lady Hounds come up short

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choosing instead to work the ball around the perimeter usually resulting in a turnover.

The 3rd quarter was much the same and the Hounds were down by as much as nine, but then a couple of quick inside buckets by Dilsaver and an 8-1 run had FMHS within two with six minutes remaining. But Monmouth completed a 3-point play at the other end on their next possession to push the lead back to 5 and then to seven on a bucket in transition.

The Hounds had a shot to trim the lead to three when Kamryn Bailey was fouled on a drive from the left side, but the ball bounced around and came out and Bailey missed the free-throw.

The Hounds fall to 3-10 on the season and travel to Burlington on Tuesday.



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

New publishers

The Fort Madison Chamber of Commerce Ambassador Club welcomed Mississippi Valley Publishing's Steve Helenthal, 2nd from left front, and brother Bill Helenthal, 4th from left, on Friday. The two are the new publishers of the Daily Democrat, Keokuk Daily Gate City, Hancock County Journal-Pilot, Bonny Buyer and Lee & Hancock County Shopper.

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