

By Jan Schultz

The Imperial Republican

Chase County is in one of the toughest districts in the state, but Longhorn Coach Matt Vlasin believes there will be some local wrestlers in Omaha next week for the state tournament.

The Longhorns will be in Gordon Friday and Saturday this week for the C4 district tournament, which includes a number of state-ranked competitors.

“Every coach I’ve talked with, who’s in another district, says they’re glad they aren’t in this one,” Vlasin said Monday.

“There are going to be no easy matches, no easy push-overs,” he said.

Vlasin said a lot of the C4 brackets have more than one state-ranked wrestler. But, when it comes to districts, every wrestler starts with a 0-0 record, he noted.

“Records don’t really matter at districts except for seeding. I’ve seen many times a 3-14 wrestler upset a kid with a winning record,” Vlasin said.

As the team met for practice Monday, the coaches told the 10 Longhorn wrestlers that preparation this week will be vital, and they’ll need to prepare for every match on Friday and Saturday, not looking beyond any of them.

Wrestling gets underway at the high school in Gordon at 3:30 p.m. (MT) Friday. First rounds, quarterfinals and first round consolations are scheduled Friday.

Wrestling continues Saturday starting at 10 a.m. with the second round consolation matches.

The top four finishers in each weight class will qualify for the Class C state tournament Feb. 19-21 at the Omaha Qwest Center.

Vlasin said all 10 of his wrestlers will be at the district tournament this week.

Besides Chase County, other teams in the C4 district include Ainsworth, Bayard, Bridgeport, Gordon-Rushville, Hershey, Hitchcock County-Wauneta/Palisade, Kearney Catholic, Kimball, Loomis/Bertrand, Mitchell, Morrill, Sargent/Burwell, Southern Valley, Valentine and West Holt.