

*Fourth place medal won
at 171 lb. weight class*



By Jan Schultz
The Imperial Republican

Jeremy Mathews brought home some state wrestling hardware from Omaha last week, finishing fourth in the Class C 171 lb. weight class.

After winning his first two matches, Mathews lost a 5-4 decision in the semi-finals. That sent him into the consolation bracket, where he finished fourth.

It was Mathews' first trip to the state tournament. He joined two other seniors on the team, Justin Lueth and Sean Langin, in representing the Longhorns at state.

Lueth, a four-time state qualifier (two in Colorado, two in Nebraska), and Langin, who also made the state trip a first time, ran into some tough competition at 135 lbs. and 160 lbs. Both finished 0-2.

Longhorn Coach Matt Vlasin indicated it was a typical state tournament—anything can happen, and a previous state championship or medal doesn't mean you're guaranteed to repeat it.

Omaha Qwest Center again served as this year's state tournament venue, Feb. 19-21.

Longhorn matches

Vlasin said Mathews probably should have been in the championship match at 171.

Some judgment calls made by the referee in the semi-finals possibly cost Mathews advancement into the finals, Vlasin said.

Mathews was assessed two penalty points at the end of his semi-finals against Chris Pokorny of David City for locked hands and an illegal headlock. Mathews lost the match, 5-4.

It was a judgment call, Vlasin said.

However, Vlasin said a bigger factor to him was earlier in the match when he believed Mathews was shorted some back points, but the ref ruled he wasn't in control of Pokorny. He only received two back points instead of three.

That one point would have resulted in a tie at end of regulation, had the rest of the match gone as it had.

"When something like that happens, you fight back and we were close," Vlasin said.



After that loss, Jeremy won easily in the next round, 10-0, then lost an 11-4 decision to last year's state champion at 171, Trevor Wiebelhaus of Creighton/Verdigre.

Vlasin believes Mathews would have given Mitchell's Jordan Debus a better championship match than Pokorny did. Debus won a 15-2 decision in the finals.

Mathews closed out his season with a 36-7 record.

Lueth lost a heart-breaker in his first match at 135. Lueth was enroute to the win with just 15 seconds left in the match and leading by three, when St. Paul's Stepanek scored two reversal points and three back points, pulling out a 9-7 decision.

"We just needed to ride him out, but we got out of position," Vlasin said.

Lueth was in a very tough bracket and really needed to win his opener, Vlasin said. He ended up against a past state champion in the first consolation round, losing 12-2 to David City's Wemhoff, which ended his state appearance.

Lueth finished the season with a 32-9 record.

Langin faced an undefeated wrestler in his opening round, Jared Treat, 34-0, of North Bend Central, and lost by pin right at the end of the second period.

In his next match, he was pinned by Tanner Hawks of Kenesaw/Shelton, but wrestled really well, Vlasin said.

"It was close, but Sean made a little mistake and got caught. He stuck with him all the way, though," Vlasin said.

Langin ended his season with a 17-15 record.

Chase County finished the tournament with 15 points in Class C.

Central City won the Class C team title. Mitchell, who came out of the same C4 district as Chase County, was runner-up in the class, just 14 points behind Central City.

Here are Chase County's individual matches from the state meet:

- 135 Justin Lueth dec. by Alex Stepanek, St. Paul, 9-7; dec. by Tanner Wemhoff, David City, 12-2.
- 160 Sean Langin pinned by Jared Treat, No. Bend Central 3:59; pinned by Tanner Hawks, Kenesaw/Shelton 4:23.
- 171 Jeremy Mathews pinned Keaton Bucholtz, Norfolk Catholic, 2:39; dec. Tyson Sutton, Central City 4-0; dec. by Chris Pokorny, David City, 5-4; dec. Derek Mowinkel, Logan View, 10-0; dec. by Trevor Wiebelhaus, Creighton/Verdigre, 11-4 for 4th place.