

DELIVERING A BEAT DOWN

to win the bats

THE SLOWPITCH SOFTBALL TEAM
BRINGS 'THE BATS' HOME

STORY BY: MATTHEW DILLON

Cheering and chanting rang from the Mead dugout during the rivalry game, 'Battle of the Bats,' against Mt. Spokane. Losing 11-6 to Mt. Spokane earlier in the season, the team rallied together to bring down the Wildcats during rivalry week.

Relief struck as the varsity slowpitch team realized the bats were returning home, "It was really relieving because earlier in the season we lost to them and we didn't want to lose the bats again," said junior Alyssa Rodriguez.

Following a perfect season last year the returning state champions were motivated to deliver

a beat down on the Wildcats. Ramping up to the battle the team would get a sweet taste of victory winning against Central Valley High School 12-2 the week prior. "Beating CV really made us stand out," said junior Peyton Cushner. The girls nerves settled for a short moment as they knew the bats were still in the hands of the Wildcats. Leading up to the big game, the team had some practice to do both defensively and offensively. "After losing the first game to Mt. Spokane we moved some people into new positions and worked on a lot of hitting," said sophomore Annie Brose.

Practice can always make perfect as the Panther girls strung together offensive hits and made critical plays in the last inning.

WHAT WILL YOU *always* REMEMBER ABOUT THE TEAM?

"I'll remember making a **HUGE PLAY ON MY BIRTHDAY**, catching a ball in left field and throwing the runner out at home to save a run."
- Emily Ruiz, 12

"**THE BOND** this team created between the ups and downs."
- Peyton Cushner, 11

"I will always remember **THE CLOSENESS** we had with one another."
- Alyssa Rodriguez, 11

"Everyone gets along really well which helps us play better because **WE TRUST ONE ANOTHER**."
- Alyssa Gamache, 12

5. HOME STRETCH. Peyton Cushner (11) rounds third base and heads for home plate in hopes of scoring another point for the team. "I was hoping to sprint the rest of the way home and be safe, I was and we won," said Cushner. **6. GETTING BETTER AND STRONGER.** Grace Sykora (11) high fives head coach Tiffany Caseady as she runs past third base towards home plate. "I'm filled with excitement every time one of my teammates gets a great hit. It inspires me to go up to the plate better and stronger," said Sykora.

1. FAMILY. Makayla Williams (10) prepares for the pitch as her team supports her from the dugout. "It feels good to have a team support me, this team is like my family," said Williams. The team pulled together as a family to beat Shadle 13-1. **3. HAPPINESS THRIVES.** Senior Sadie Bocook smiles as her team brings back the bats to Mead after a 3-2 victory. "Seeing everyone go 110% and leaving it all on the field was

heartwarming, we were all smiling and laughing. It was just all around fun," said Bocook. **2. SUPPORT SYSTEM.** Alyssa Rodriguez (11) winds up to throw the ball from the outfield attempting to knock a runner out. "My teammates help support me, I trust my team on and off the field I have never met such a great team," said Rodriguez. The panthers went on the win the game against East Valley High School 11-8.



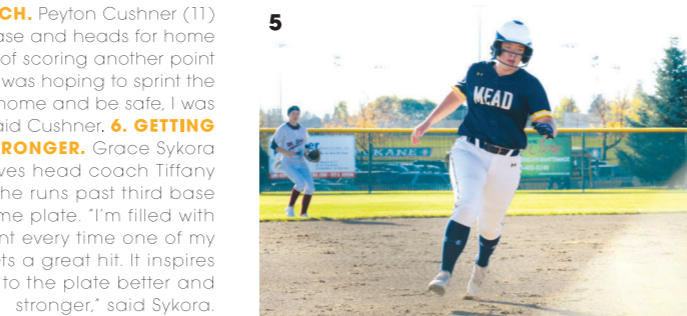
THE PERFECT Fuel

THE GIRLS SHARE THEIR FAVORITE DRINKS BEFORE THE GAME

6 PLAYERS SAID
GATORADE

3 PLAYERS SAID
POWERADE

13 PLAYERS SAID
WATER



THE RUSH. Destiny Scott (12) celebrates after making the last out of 'Battle of the Bats.' "I felt like my heart had just dropped, it was the best feeling of my life," said Scott. The slowpitch team won 'Battle of the Bats' 2-1.



BREAKING DOWN Battle of the Bats

WHO: Girls varsity slowpitch team vs. Mt. Spokane

WHEN: Thursday, October 4th

WHERE: The game went down on Mt. Spokane's home turf

WHAT: Battle of the Bats is the annual rivalry match between Mead and Mt. Spokane. Technically the teams play each other twice in the season but the 'battle' takes place during rivalry week in the fall.

HOW: The Mead Slowpitch team won the game 2-1 keeping the bat trophy for the second year in a row.

Pictured above: Top: The girls prepare their bats for 'Battle of the Bats.' Bottom: Peyton Cushner (11) Alyssa Rodriguez (11) and Grace Sykora (11) laugh in the outfield during 'Battle of the Bats.'



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"My teammates inspire me to go up to the plate better and stronger."
- Grace Sykora, 11



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7. ONE STEP CLOSER. After a big play Alyssa Rodriguez (11) and Emily Ruiz (12) shake it up in the outfield. "We all encourage and believe in each other on the field, this is the closest I've ever been to my teammates," said Ruiz. The Panther slowpitch team won the game against East Valley High School 20-2. **PHOTOS BY: MATT DILLON.**

Squaring OFF AT STATE

A LOOK AT THE STATE MATCHES SENIOR CHASE TEBBETS HAS FACED OVER THE PAST FOUR YEARS

2016



VS. ETHAN ROTONDO (UNION HS) 9-5

Tebbets competes in the 106lbs weight class as a freshman. He would go on to state taking second place in his weight class.

Class. Pictured above: Tebbets wraps his arm around an opponent during a tournament match from his freshman season.

2017



VS. ROBBY VAUGHN (CHIAWANA HS) 2-0

Tebbets makes his second appearance in the finals at state and takes his first title in the 106lbs weight class.

2019 Season Stats
RECORD: 45-4
PINS: 24
TECHS: 12
MAJOR: 5

2019



VS. JACK LATIMER (CAMAS HS) SV-1 6-4

Tebbets makes his fourth and final state appearance taking first place in the 132lbs weight class.

2018



VS. ROBBY VAUGHN (CHIAWANA HS) 5-3

Tebbets makes his third state appearance in a row taking first place in the 120lbs weight class.

1. NEVER GIVE UP. Senior Justin Mason keeps his eyes on his opponent waiting for a moment to strike. "I realized as long as I don't give up two more points I can save my team a point, I need to be tough," said Mason. Mead lost the GSL title 36-35. **2. CONFIDENCE.**

During an early season tournament junior Garrett Terrill battles for a top spot. "This tournament was good because I placed and it gave me extra confidence," said Terrill. **3. THE NEW MAN.** Sophomore Dylan Newman stares down his opponent during the teams match against Gonzaga Prep. "Not much goes through my head during the match, you just know how many people are watching and do your best," said Newman.

The team would win 54-18 against the Bullpups.



DON'T BLINK on the pin

CAMERON CRAWFORD
EXPLAINS HIS 11 SECOND PIN



Senior Cameron Crawford has spent the last 13 years of his life on the wrestling mat. With that kind of experience, he knows what he's doing. "I knew it (the Mt. Spokane match) was a really close duel and that **A PIN WOULD BE REALLY CRUCIAL TO OUR WIN.**" said Crawford. Whether he's getting a match over with quickly, or slowing down to "put on a show for the crowd," Crawford is always looking for the pin. **"I GOT HIM INTO A POSITION WHERE HE WAS ON HIS BACK, AND I DIDN'T WANT TO LET HIM UP, SO I STUCK HIM RIGHT THERE."** shared Crawford.

The Almost Perfect SEASON

STORY BY: MATTHEW DILLON AND SYDNEY LYMAN

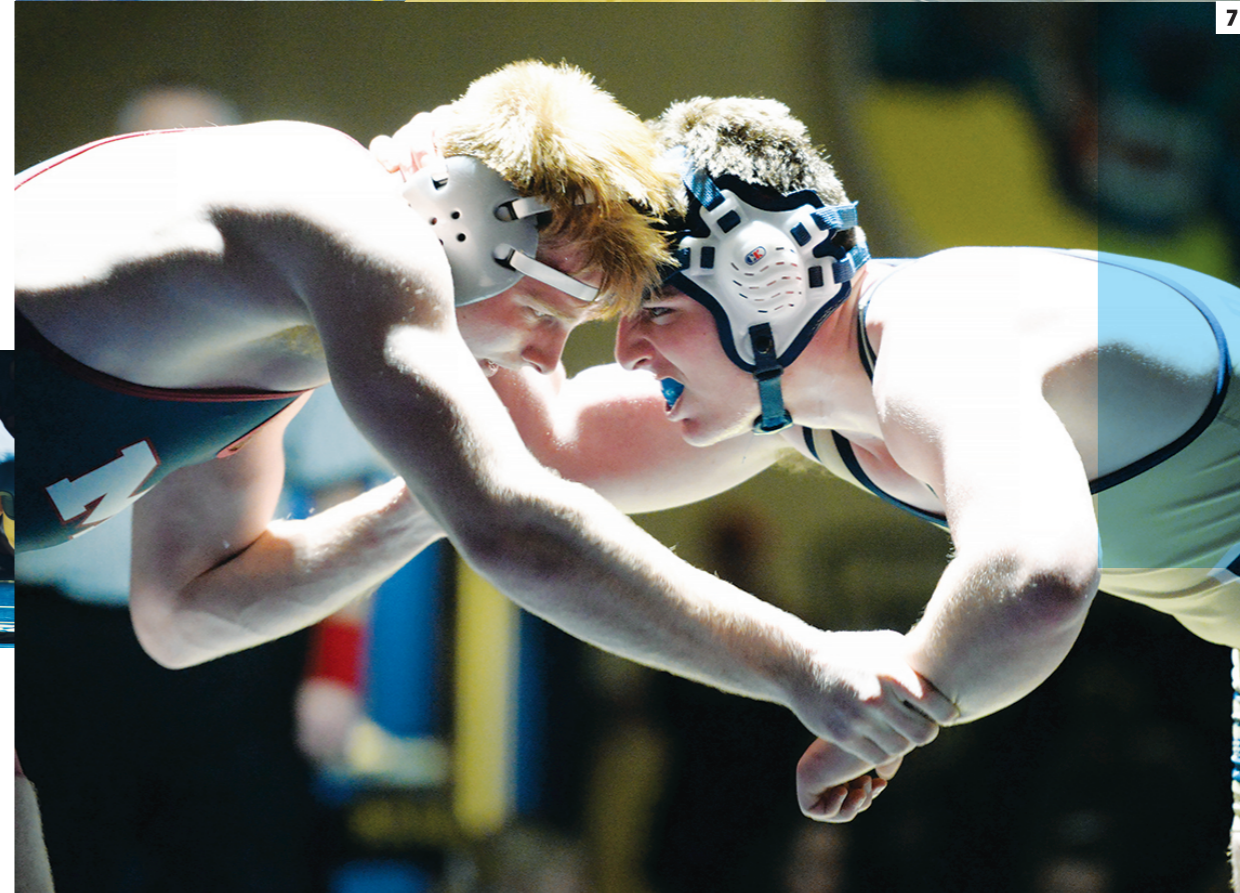
With the GSL title on the line, the roaring crowd repeatedly chanted "Panther Power" as the last seconds of the final match dwindled down. Both sides of the gym were tense, everyone on the edge of their seats. With an undefeated season hanging in the balance, freshman Jakob "JT" Connors stepped up to the mat. His opponent? A two-time state champion. "I was really nervous, I didn't feel ready and I knew so much was on the line," said Connors.

Unfortunately, he fell short. The team lost by one single point. "This being only our second time losing to Mt. Spokane in the last 20 or 30 years, it was especially devastating," said senior

The LEGACY

CHASE TEBBETS MAKES SCHOOL HISTORY WITH FOUR STATE APPEARANCES AND THREE STATE TITLES

Senior wrestler Chase Tebbets has grown up on the mats, training for countless hours in the gym with one thought on his mind: to work hard and win. For Tebbets wrestling is more than just a sport. "Wrestling has made me disciplined with life decisions, **I WANT TO BE THE HARDEST WORKER IN THE ROOM.**" said Tebbets. A reflection of his hard work Tebbets has managed to place as a top competitor in Washington 4A wrestling four years in a row, taking first place in his weight class at state for the past three years. This year, victory wasn't certain from the beginning. **"I THOUGHT I WAS GOING TO LOSE BECAUSE HE WAS UP BY ONE POINT WITH SEVEN SECONDS LEFT,"** said Tebbets. After getting the calls he needed, however, Tebbets won the match in overtime. In the process of winning state titles, Tebbets has also made school history becoming the first wrestler to make four consecutive state final appearances. Such accomplishments will be discussed for years after he graduates this year, leaving a legacy like none other. "I want people to look back and say, 'He was one of the hardest workers in the room,'" said Tebbets.



4. THE DRIVE. Junior Benjamin Voightlaender locks his arms under his opponent while looking towards Head Coach Phil McLean mid-match. "It's second nature, I can always hear what coach says and that helps a lot," said Voightlaender. **5. THE POSITION.** Senior Isaiah Simera-Saldana a former basketball player switched gears a decided to try wrestling his senior year. Simera-Saldana didn't go into the season with the highest expectations. "I expected to most likely wrestle varsity, but didn't have high goals for the season. I was just going to go with the flow," said Simera-Saldana. "Going with the flow" helped Simera-Saldana reach the state tournament where he took seventh place in his weight class. **6. HELPING THE TEAM.** Freshman Ryan Clark prepares to pin his 113 pound competitor in the third round. "I stayed motivated in the third round from my team, knowing the win will help the team," said Clark. **7. ON THE HUNT.** Gaining position for a take down during a hand fight senior Grant Engles explains the loss. "The dual had an impact on our season as it came down to be the GSL championship match," said Engles.

THE TEAM BATTLES INJURIES AND ADVERSITY IN THEIR RIVALRY MATCH AGAINST MT. SPOKANE

Cameron Crawford. With the first loss of the season behind them, the team wasn't discouraged. "It was a wakeup call, it gave all of us a reason to work harder and bounce back," said senior Justin Mason. Recalling the first practice after the rivalry showdown, freshman Jacob Mark said the atmosphere felt a lot more intense. "It felt like the music was louder, it felt hotter in the room. Everyone was working that much harder to avenge our loss," he said.

Their hard work paid off. The team traveled to Tacoma for the state competition and took 5th place overall.

"It was a wake up call, it gave all of us a reason to work harder and bounce back."



"It's second nature, I can always hear what coach says and that helps a lot."
- Benjamin Voightlaender, 11



7. THE ESCAPE. While trying to escape from his Mt. Spokane opponent sophomore Jeffrey Rogers tries to save his strength. "I try not to use all my energy in the first round so I can stay consistent," said Rogers. **8. THE ZONE.** Junior Cameron Pieree gets his Mt. Spokane opponent in an arm bar. "I love wrestling because it's a competitive sport, it's hard working, it gets you moving, and it disciplines you. I also love the people in wrestling," said Pieree.

Vaughn STRONG



Former Mead counselor Dave Vaughn has helped, motivated and inspired many in the Mead community during his years at Mead High School. For senior Isaiah Simera-Saldana Vaughn's influence has touched every player on the team. **"HIS POSITIVITY CAUSES A CHAIN REACTION TO ANYONE IN THE ROOM,"** shared Simera-Saldana. "Vaughn has poured countless hours into this school," added junior Chase Randall. After retiring from Mead in the 2017-2018 school year, Vaughn continued to be dedicated to the Panther wrestling program assuming his role as an assistant coach for the 2018-19 season. After a surfing accident in California Vaughn suffered a serious spinal injury which kept him from the sidelines

during the season. **DESPITE HIS INJURY VAUGHN REMAINED COMMITTED TO THE PROGRAM AND ATTENDED SEVERAL MATCHES IN SUPPORT OF THE TEAM.** Rallying in support of his recovery the Mead wrestling community started a campaign in support of coach Vaughn called, 'Vaughn Strong,' with the goal of inspiring strength and resiliency. "I think it is really awesome to see our community come together like family," said Randall. "He has given his life to the community, it's really cool to see everyone giving back because Vaughn deserves it all," added Simera-Saldana. More than \$2,500 were donated in support of Vaughn on his road to recovery during the annual Glow-Down Showdown match on January 24th.



1. Going for the shot, senior Chisom Ajekwu lays up the ball under pressure from Topeka High during the Nov. 30 season-opener. The Lions fell short with a 55-39 loss. Ajekwu's play made her a recruit to the University of Kansas.
PHOTO BY MCKENNA WHITE

2. Hands up, junior Sophie DeWitt keeps low during a game in the Jungle on Jan. 11. The Lions beat Shawnee Mission North 43-23. DeWitt played off and on as a starter throughout her third year on the team.
PHOTO BY MCKENNA WHITE

3. Blocking, senior Hannah Stewart keeps her eye on the ball on Feb. 11 against Free State. The game, which was originally scheduled to take place at Allen Fieldhouse, was moved to LHS after bad weather caused the original game date to be canceled. "Basketball was a very special sport to me," Stewart said. "Our program taught us many life lessons outside the sport of basketball that we will all carry within forever. I am sad it is over, but I am thankful for the amazing memories and experiences."
PHOTO BY MCKENNA WHITE

4. Smiling, members of the girls basketball team link up before the game against Free State. Pictured were senior Krissy Howard, sophomore Ozi Ajekwu, junior Sophie DeWitt, junior Ella Stewart and freshman Layla Harjo. The girls were defeated 42-34. "It's really fun because it's a family sport," freshman Ozi Ajekwu said. "Everyone is so close, and it's so fun playing a sport you love with people you love."
PHOTO BY MCKENNA WHITE

5. In the huddle, senior Leslie Ostronic listens as fellow senior Samantha Williams strategizes the next possession on Jan. 11. "We had a great competitive energy and a great bench," Ostronic said. "We really tried hard, and it was a great game."
PHOTO BY MCKENNA WHITE

6. Defending, sophomore Ella Stewart stays with her Free State defender to keep her from scoring. The girls fell short in the much-anticipated city showdown. "Don't let her score," Stewart said of her mindset at the game, "so we can get the ball back in."
PHOTO BY MCKENNA WHITE



Fighting UNTIL THE END

STORY BY DANIEL DAVIDSON
DESIGN BY EMMA HOWARD

Girls' basketball team stays determined until the very last second

The game had already been decided, but the senior girls told coach Jeff Dickson they had to stay in for the last 48 seconds.

Facing the Derby Panthers, the Lions kept fighting till the very end of a 60-40 loss in the sub-state championship. The players knew that beating last year's 6A state basketball champion, already toting a 42 consecutive win streak, would be no easy feat.

"As a team we did what we were supposed to do, everything we practiced," senior post Chisom Ajekwu said. "We put our hearts out...The other team just got the better of us."

The first half of back-and-forth scores left the Lions behind 34-18, but they came out still confident amidst the roaring Derby crowd.

"We were still in it by halftime," Ajekwu said. "Still motivated, still going at it, still coming out strong."

The Panthers' strong press made catching up hard for the Lions. The 60-40 score had already determined the game's winner, but the girls refused to let it determine how it ended.

"Dickson called a time out and asked us seniors if we wanted to play the last 48 seconds," senior Hannah

Stewart said. "I look at everyone and said, 'We are playing. We are seniors. We are playing these last 48 seconds together.'"

Despite their determination, the Panthers ran out the clock to make sure LHS did not make a single point.

"You could just see the looks on everyone's faces and even mine, we were all just tearing up," Ajekwu said. "But you know we stayed positive and kept having good sportsmanship all the way till the end."

Juniors were already looking to take the team past sub-state next year, but junior Sophie DeWitt says the exiting seniors' impact will not be forgotten.

"I feel intimidated but excited for next year," DeWitt said. "These seniors have had one of the biggest impact on our program, and I would never be where I am without them."

Going for the shot, freshman Layla Harjo drives toward the hoop at the JV girls basketball game against Wyandotte High School. The JV girls basketball team had a strong season this year, and Wyandotte was another game under their belt. "I enjoy every single moment on and off the court," Harjo said. "Everyone motivates you and believes in you. It's a great place to be."

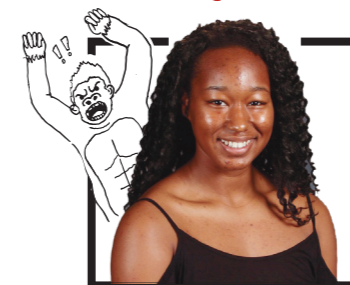
PHOTO BY MCKENNA WHITE

BB
"As a team, we did what we were supposed to do, everything we practiced."
—Chisom Ajekwu, senior

REPORTING BY COOPER WRIGHT

Inspired by...

Girl's basketball players share the favorite daily quotes they were asked to memorize for inspiration



"We had one that was, 'Competing is like wrestling a gorilla: you don't stop when you get tired, you stop when the gorilla gets tired.' I like how it gives you an example of how you don't stop when you get tired. You stop when what you're doing is over."
—Kayla Galbreath, sophomore



"There's one by Serena Williams that says, 'Luck has nothing to do with it because I have spent many, many hours, countless hours on the court working for my one moment in time not knowing when it would come.' I like that quote because it makes everyone feel like they have something to work for. They're part of the team for a reason. Everyone's going to get their time at one point."
—Ella Stewart, sophomore



"I'd probably say, 'Fatigue makes cowards of us all,' because it just makes you think that you yourself have to push yourself to get better, so it's all on you. Each quote kind of goes along with a theme we have for practice. I use the quotes to help my performance."
—Paiden Bell, junior

REPORTING BY WILLIAM YANEK

OH, THE Horror



Freshman Hunter Girard shares his scariest wrestling horror story

"One time, I was wrestling this guy at this tournament. He was a couple weight classes up, and I had to wrestle up because they had nobody my weight. So I wrestled him, and he picked me up in the beginning. And I was like, 'Oh no. He's going to drop me on my head.' Then he picked me up, and he went down with me. The scary part was when I got knocked down. I lost some of my breath, so I was kind of out of breath, and I didn't want to lose. Our coach was yelling, 'Keep wrestling! Keep wrestling!' So I was sitting there, and I was like, 'Ah this really hurts,' but I have to keep going. So then I tried turning him, but since he was heavier, I couldn't really. So then I flattened out on my stomach, and after that, our was time up."



1. Dumped up, junior Henry DeWitt jumps for joy following a team victory. The team competed against Olathe West on Jan. 17. "I don't win," DeWitt said. "So when other people win, I'm happy for them." PHOTO BY MCKENNA WHITE

2. Fighting back, sophomore Logan Farrell holds his ground during a match on Jan. 17. Farrell was one of three Lions to wrestle at state. "My most memorable moments from this season was the regional tournament with both teams on the bus and in the hotel." PHOTO BY MCKENNA WHITE

3. Pinning his opponent, senior AJ Powell looks for a call from the referee at the home meet on Jan. 17. Powell took home a victory over his competitor. "The headgear looks just as hard to hear in as it really is," Powell said. "People yell

at me, but I usually don't know what's going on," he said. PHOTO BY MCKENNA WHITE

4. Facing off, senior EJ Jewsome takes on an opponent at the home meet on Jan. 17. Jewsome was one of three wrestlers to go to state, where he finished second. "We had a lot of challenges this year," Jewsome said. "With that being said, in wrestling, it's more so about what you know and not how athletic you are." PHOTO BY MCKENNA WHITE

5. Standing up strong, senior Fransior Jones lifts his opponent during a victory at the Sunflower League meet on Feb. 9 at Free State. Marquis had been wrestling since seventh grade. "When I go on the mat, I want to do the best that I can," Jones said. "I can't change the way I wrestle." PHOTO BY MEGAN DRUMM

STORY BY MEGAN DRUMM + ALEX STARK
DESIGN BY SOPHIA KAUFMAN

FINDING

Grit

Lions send three wrestlers to the state, find strength in final stretch

Clutching his opponent, senior EJ Jewsome held him to the mat in hopes of pinning for a state title. With just seconds to go in his final match, the state title slipped through his fingers, when an unexpected roll-through performed by his opponent pinned Jewsome.

As one of three wrestlers to make the state tournament in Wichita, Jewsome walked into state having pinned some of the top 6A wrestlers.

"I got to see the best wrestlers and the best talent in the state," Jewsome said. "I really enjoyed it even though I didn't get first."

Going into his final season, Jewsome didn't expect to be wrestling in the state tournament. He was convinced by coaches and other wrestlers to try to wrestle again.

"I guess my goal was to put together a senior season that I could be proud of," Jewsome said.

The last three weeks of the season as the team neared state, Jewsome hit his stride by knocking off the No. 1 and the No. 3 through No. 6 wrestlers in the state. He eventually made it to the championship round in his weight class.

"I kind of have some regret about that match but at the end of the day I can't complain..." Jewsome said. "I had been doing this for a while, and that's pretty good for someone who just started. So I'm pretty happy about my senior season."

On Feb. 15 and 16, the Lions traveled to Garden City to compete in regionals where Jewsome won his match and realized he would advance to state.

"I immediately ran over to my mom and gave her a hug," Jewsome said, "because she has supported me through everything."

Freshman standout, Kevin Honas had an exceptional season as well. One of his goals was to win 25 matches, which he accomplished quickly. Honas finished fifth at the state tournament.

"It was really cool getting there as a freshman, and I ended up placing, which was really special, and that was my goal," Honas said.

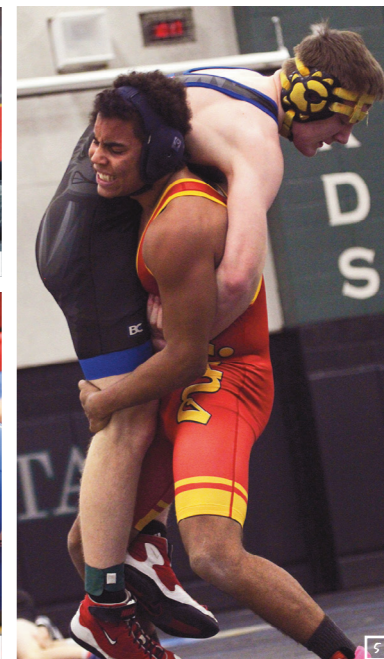
Sophomore Logan Farrell also competed in the state meet, contributing to his team by scoring a total 5.5 points. He too had hoped to place at state and

was mentored by the other state wrestlers.

"Kevin was my practice partner this year and pushed me really hard," Farrell said, "and EJ [is] a motivation to the whole team."

Battling, senior Justin Miller puts an opponent in a headlock in a match against Olathe West on Jan. 17. "Overall, I did a lot better this year than last year," Miller said. "My goal was to improve and do the best I could. I would definitely start going to more camps and extracurricular activities to improve myself, so I could have gone to state. Other than that, I wouldn't have changed anything."

PHOTO BY MCKENNA WHITE



Weigh IN

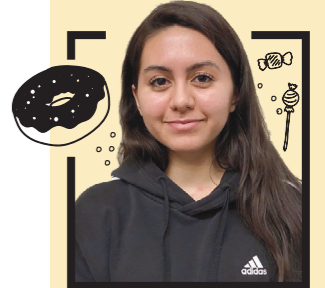
REPORTING BY ANAHITA HURT

Wrestlers explain their food restrictions during the season



"I had to restrict myself in several ways to drop weight, because I have drop quite a bit of weight. I went from 185 to 170, so I dropped 15 pounds in, like, a month. I'd have smaller lunches, smaller meals, just more frequent."

—Dylan Gillespie, sophomore



"Sugary stuff or anything that will make me bloated. I needed to stay in the same weight group, and I didn't want to wrestle someone that was bigger than me, so I had a better chance of beating the opponent."

—Carla Haro-Villa, senior



"I didn't really have to change my diet. I just had to sometimes eat less or more. ...I didn't drink soda, because I wouldn't have as much endurance when I ran."

—Joey Haake, freshman

MEET AT THE NET

"Take your time," repeated in her head as senior **Jillian McCoy** walked up to serve game point. After tossing the ball to serve, the gym filled with shouts of "1...2...3...ACE."

"Winning my last volleyball game with an ace felt great because I was just making sure I did my part by closing the game. It was the most perfect way to end the season," McCoy said.

For the first time since 2015, the Lady Royals defeated the Thomas Dale Knights 3-1 (25-21)(23-25)(25-15) (25-18).

"The girls pulled together the last few games and worked well together. We won a few consecutive games, which was the best way to end the season," Coach Wanda Gilbert said.

Junior **Erin Beaver** ended the game with 36 assists, freshman **Jaylin Slaughter** had 10 kills and 8 aces, and sophomore **Grace Peterson** had 19 kills and 4 aces.

"Being a setter and learning that position was definitely a challenge for me, especially because I'm always on the court and make the perfect passes for my hitters. I'm proud of myself for being able to play this position and help my team succeed," Beaver said.

- Written by Monica Thompson,
Designed by Mady Degan

KILLIN' IT Jumping up the net, senior **Jillian McCoy** attempts for an attack against Dinwiddie. McCoy has worked hard to become better at playing as a middle hitter. "Volleyball is an escape for me and it's one thing in my life that will always bring me happiness," McCoy said. Photo by Monica Thompson.



BEHIND THE SCENES.



1. BLOCK PARTY Defending the ball, sophomore **Grace Peterson** completes a solo block from a middle hitter. Peterson had 8 blocks against the Thomas Knights. "Moving up to varsity from JV, I learned a lot more on how to do certain plays more successfully," Peterson said. Photo by Monica Thompson.

2. DIGGIN' IT Receiving the ball from the opponents, junior **Kyleigh Naylor** passes the ball to the setter. Naylor has played the positions of outside hitter, middle hitter, and back row. "Volleyball is a way to escape my daily life and struggles and lets me focus on something I love," Naylor said. Photo by Monica Thompson.

3. TEAM PRIDE Chanting for the team, senior **Mariah Campbell** prepares everyone to play against Thomas Dale. Campbell has played the position of libero for 6 years. "Our team works well together and we have a good group of girls who love playing volleyball," Campbell said. Photo by Monica Thompson.

Being a part of the girls volleyball team does not always mean that you have to play on the court. Senior **Xoe Binns** and junior **Alison Worley** are first year managers trained by senior **Monica Thompson**.

"Sitting at the score table gives you a different point of view of the game, like if you're playing then you know that part of the game. Being a manager, no one really knows what goes on behind the scenes," Worley said.

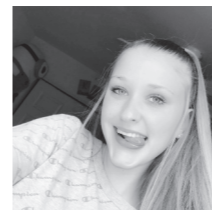
Responsibilities for the managers included keeping score, libero tracking, and tasks given by Coach Wanda Gilbert.

"We're always taking care of the players, even when they don't think we're taking care of them," Binns said.

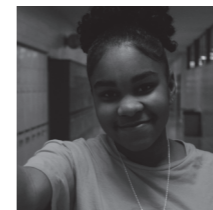
SPECIAL MOMENT



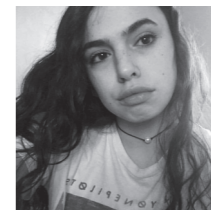
"Our team bonding moments are special when we either get a point, or when we all come together and we're all happy."
Marissa Morales, 12



"My favorite moment was when I hit outside for the first time on varsity against Meadowbrook and got the kill."
Kassidy Reed, 10



"When we played against Godwin, I finished with the most good digs than any other game."
Justice Phillips, 12



"When I play middle back, I get many opportunities to save the ball from hitting the ground."
Savannah Figueroa, 11

THIS YEAR'S GOALS



"My goal this season was to take dubs and to learn to work as a team to make sure that we all understand each other."
Yajani Santiago, 12



"As a JV player, my goal was to be involved and get along with everyone so that we could grow as a team."
Lydia Moore, 10



"Working hard to stand out was my goal so that I can get a scholarship to Bridgewater College."
Savana Goodson, 10



"My main goal was to be more effective in my game and to always stay positive."
Kae'Ra Lucas, 12

1. DEFEND AND MOTIVATE Predicting her next move, sophomore **Thaydn Harpin** plays an aggressive defense against the Knights. "Those girls were super athletic, we just had to play smart and consistent," Harpin said. Photo by Monica Thompson.



2. LOOKING FOR THE PASS Being heavily guarded by a Thomas Dale player, sophomore **Rachael Blumenschine** protects the ball while looking for an open teammate. Blumenschine avoided the turnover by being patient. "Dale is a really good team, even though we lost, we still competed," Blumenschine said. Photo by Monica Thompson.



3. STACK The Lady Royals prepare an inbounds play, where the players stack at the block. Junior **Annie Fulmore** passed the ball to the post for two points. "We run a couple of different plays, but 'stack' works the best and most effectively for us," Fulmore said. Photo by Monica Thompson.



4. LIVIN' LARGE As the game continues, coach **ShaVohn Curley** communicates with her team from the sideline. "After the outcome, I realized that we had some work to do. We were a young team with good potential," Curley said. Photo by Monica Thompson.



WHICH GAME WAS MOST CHALLENGING?



Out of 12 players

SECURE THE REBOUND



As the clock ticked down to begin the home game against Thomas Dale, the Lady Royals set their minds on one common goal. Before this game, the Lady Knights had cranked out six wins in a row, making them highly favored to beat the Lady Royals. However, the intimidation of the winning streak did not hinder the hustle of the girls.

"Going into the game, we knew it was going to be a hard fight, but we remained calm and stayed focused despite the pressure. Our strongholds during the game were that we stayed confident, despite the tough competition," senior Kae'Ra Lucas said.

After sixty minutes of hard work, the Lady Royals ended with a tough loss to the Lady Knights. They found themselves more determined to better themselves as a team.

"We went over plays and gave each other words of encouragement," junior Jaelyn Ashcraft said.

During last year's season, the wins were split between the teams. The girls team defeated the Lady Knights on their home court in a close game.

"Winning two years in a row against the Lady Knights on their court has made it feel like it could become a Lady Royal tradition," junior Alyssa Stadler said.

- Written by Sydney Bartlett & Macie Blankenship, Designed by Jordan Whitehead

FAST AND FURIOUS Dribbling down the court, freshman **Mariah Washington** searches for an open teammate. Washington played point guard and directed the game on the court. "Being a freshman is a lot of pressure and it can be nerve racking," Washington said. Photo by Monica Thompson.