VRESTLING CHAMPIONS

Area schools, wrestlers seeking titles

State tournaments begin this morning

By AJ MAZZOLINI East Oregonian

PORTLAND — After three months of seasoned wrestling and many, many more of offseason preparation — only two days of the journey toward a state championship remain.

These teams are ready to go.

The Hermiston Bulldogs, Pendleton Buckaroos, Mac-Hi Pioneers. Riverside Pirates, Heppner Mustangs and Irrigon Knights will all be in action today from Portland's Veterans Memorial Coliseum. The first matches of the tournaments — all six classifications will compete simultaneously — begin at 8:30 a.m.

with 70 individual winners along the way.

At the Class 5A level, Hermiston will be a front runner to bring back the most gold, along with last year's champions from Dal-

las. The Bulldogs have battered straight for the Dawgs, qualified and bludgeoned the 5A ranks all season and qualified 17 wrestlers

By Saturday night, five championship teams will be crowned to the state meet at last week's Special District 2 championships Special District 2 championships that were also contested in Port-

land. Dallas, which edged Pendleton and Hermiston at the big

tournament last February for a state title to break a string of five

See STATE/2B

Justice League of Hermiston



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Hermiston wrestlers Samuel Colbray, Beau Gleed, Abraham Rodriguez and Tyler Berger will lead the Hermiston wrestling team at

Bulldogs prepared for fight to reclaim state championship

By MATT ENTRUP . East Oregonian

rom Gilgamesh to the Green Lantern, tales of superheroes and their fantastical deeds have produced best-sellers and box-office hits for centuries.

For mortal beings living in a dangerous world, the hero's abil-

ity to overcome limitations most times through the acquisition of amazing powers — and elevate themselves to superhuman status is a fantasy that drew equal appeal in ancient Babylon as it does in modern New York

Perhaps that would explain the appeal of the Hermiston Bulldogs wrestling team. While

completely mortal until proven otherwise, the Hermiston wrestlers have become more than mere student-athletes.

They roam the halls of Hermiston High just like their peers, but after the final bell releases the hoards into the streets, the wrestlers retreat to their lair over-

looking the school gymnasium. It's within those four padded walls that these relentless athletes sharpen their skills through daily combat.

And like any team of heroes, the Bulldogs have a mission — to right a wrong that occurred at the Class 5A OSAA State Championships last season.

Justice. See HERMISTON/3B

PENDLETON

Back comes Holcomb



Dylan Holcomb pins Hood River Valley's lan Rand in the 145pound match during the Buck's dual with the Eagles in Pendleton this season. Holcomb is going for his second career state title this weekend after finishing third last year.

Buck put slow start to season behind him

By AJ MAZZOLINI East Oregonian

Dylan Holcomb understood that after injury must come rest. He knew he had to take it slow after a major thigh contusion, the kind that turned his upper leg an unhealthy shade purple and required drainage even before the wrestling season began.

But by the third week of the

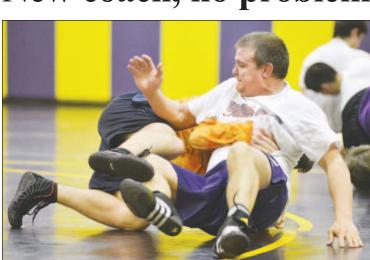
schedule, as his teammates continued to train for tournament after tournament, Holcomb was starting to rethink the rest. His injury, a holdover from football season weeks before, was causing more emotional pain than phys-

"By the third tournament I'm missing and just watching, it

See HOLCOMB/2B

HERMISTON

New coach, no problem



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Hermiston head wrestling coach Shaun Williams practices with junior Beau Brock on Tuesday in Hermiston. Williams took over the program this year when former coach Curt Berger retired last season after 21 year with the team.

Williams stepped into big shoes, excelled

By AJ MAZZOLINI

East Oregonian

Even before Shaun Williams took over the head coaching position for the Hermiston wrestling team last May, he knew what kind of season the Bulldogs were going to have in 2012-13. He'd heard all about Hermiston's state championships, they're four-time individual winner and the culture the sport had groomed in the small Eastern Oregon town. He wanted in.

"Hermiston has always been the envy of most coaches, Williams said when the East Oregonian spoke with him after the school board approved his hire last year. And it hasn't taken long for the new coach to prove that sentiment correct.

See COACH/3B

Class 5A Hermiston (17) 106 — Liam Tarvin;

State

Wrestling

Qualifiers

Andy Wagner 113 — AJ Garica (3

seed) 120 — Isaac Aguilar

(2)

126 — Wyatt Scribner

132 — Beau Gleed (2); Mason Ballew

138 — Tyler Berger

152 — Bob Coleman 160 — Abraham Rodriguez (1); Jesee Rodelo

170 — Alec St. Hilaire

195 — Samuel Colbray (1)

220 — Caleb Batease (2); Michael Finn

285 — Jacob Batease; Armando Garcia

Pendleton (7)

106 — Tristan

Holcomb 120 — Colton Skeen

126 — Ryan Skeen

132 — TJ Hancock

145 — Dylan Holcomb (2) 152 — Alex Ferder

220 — Jack Ezell

Class 4A Mac-Hi (9)

120 - Cole Skramstad

126 — Alyx Shaw 132 — Chandler

Fortune

138 — Tavis Hodgen 145 — Jeffery Jones;

Blake Yensen 152 — Vince Roff

170 — Brayden

160 — Jesus

Saldana

Moller (2)

Class 3A Riverside (9)

106 — Gustavo Madrigal (1); Charlie 113 — Hans

Rockwell (1); Gilberto Silva 120 — Elijah Conlon

126 — Clay Miller 138 — Martin Herrera (4)

145 — Mario Sepulveda (4)

182 — Daniel Puerta

Class 2A Heppner (6)

126 — Jared Lemmon (2) 132 — Alex Smith

Maben (3) 160 — Earl Propheter (3)

145 — Treston

195 — Tim Nelson 285 — John

Irrigon (2)

Propheter

152 — Andy Aguilera (2) 182 — Jamie

Thomas (3)

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