Gerke claims MVC wrestling title

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WATERLOO - Xavier High School senior Josh Gerke collected three straight pins Saturday and won the 145-pound title at the Mississippi Valley Conference wrestling tournament in Waterloo.

Gerke drew an opening-round bye, then pinned his opponent in 56 seconds in the quarterfinals and stuck his man in 39 seconds in the semifinals. Gerke pinned Chase St. John of Prairie in 5:41 in the finals.

Gerke, who is ranked No. 6 in Class 3A, raised his record to 35-2.

The Saints finished fifth in the team standings, ahead of such traditional MVC powers as Cedar Rapids Kennedy, Linn-Mar and Cedar Rapids Jefferson. Prairie won the team title.

Xavier received third-place showings from Keegan Schultschik (120), Patrick Chambers (126) and Tommy Pudil (285). Erik Rodriguez finished fifth at 195, Drury Clayton placed seventh at 138, Garrett Ries finished seventh at 152 and Alex Francois was eighth at 220.

TEAM STANDINGS

1. Prairie 224.5, 2. Iowa City High 188, 3. Hempstead 176.5, 4. Iowa City West 146, 5. Xavier 128, 6. Kennedy 123, 7. Linn-Mar 112, 8. Cedar Falls 110, 9. Wahlert 102, 10. Waterloo East 101.5, 11. Jefferson 94.5, 12. (tie) Washington 71, Waterloo West 71, 14. Dubuque Senior 70.