

Northrup may forfeit wrestling match to girl

Written by Jim Ecker

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The Metro Sports Report has learned that Linn-Mar sophomore Joel Northrup is considering the possibility of forfeiting his first-round match in the state wrestling tournament because he may not want to compete against a girl.

Northrup is scheduled to meet Cedar Falls freshman Cassy Herkelman at 112 pounds when the Class 3A state tournament begins Thursday morning at Wells Fargo Arena in Des Moines.

The possibility exists that Northrup will forfeit that match.

"I know it's been talked about. I can answer that. Yes," Linn-Mar activities director Scott Mahmens told the Metro Sports Report Tuesday night.

"I know it was kind of being tossed out there, but I don't think a decision has been made yet, as far as I know," he said.

Sources have told the Metro Sports Report that the Northrup family has strong religious beliefs, which may be a factor in the decision to wrestle Herkelman or not.

"I'm sure they talked about it," Mahmens said.

Linn-Mar wrestling coach Doug Streicher could not be reached for comment Thursday night.

"I'll be anxious to talk to Doug in the morning as well," Mahmens said.

Girls have been allowed to wrestle for Iowa high school teams for more than 20 years, according to the Iowa High School Athletic Association, but this is the first time any girls have

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qualified for the state tournament. Herkelman finished second in her district Saturday and has compiled a 20-13 record for the Cedar Falls varsity this season.

Black also finished second in her district and has a 25-13 record for Ottumwa this season.

If Northrup (33-4) forfeits his opening-round match, the best he could finish would be in third place. He placed third last season as a freshman at 103 pounds.

Northrup declined comment Monday when the Metro Sports Report interviewed him about wrestling a girl at the state tournament.

"I don't really have a comment for that," he said Monday. "I'll talk to you after the first round."