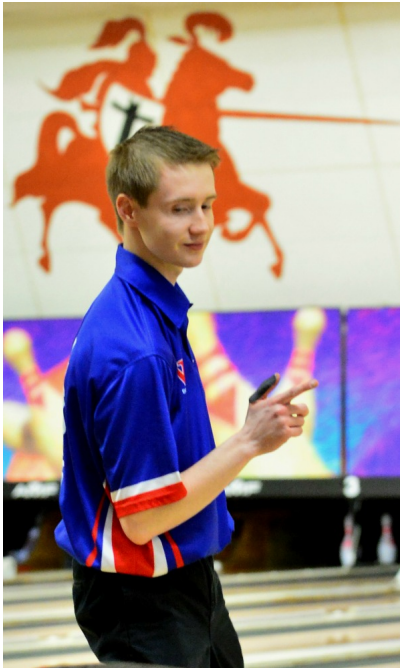


Cline, Hite lead bowlers to state

Written by Tom Fruehling

Tuesday, 17 February 2015 21:03 - Last Updated Tuesday, 17 February 2015 22:50



As expected, the highly ranked Jefferson boys and Prairie girls earned return trips to next week's state bowling tournament with team victories in the state qualifiers Tuesday afternoon at Lancer Lanes.

But the two individual qualifiers had to come from far back in the field to stake their place at state.

In the case of boys champ Bryan Cline of Washington, it was a mild upset in that he came into the meet seeded third with a 216 average. The two Jefferson bowlers ahead of him, however, boasted much higher averages and are ranked second and third in the state in Class 3A.

The senior Cline does have experience on his side, though.

He bowled at the state tourney as a freshman and sophomore when the Warriors qualified as a team, and two years ago he was the runner-up for the individual title.

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“The guy that beat me,” he noted, “rolled a 300 game.”

The victory by girls medalist Mikayla Hite of Prairie was a clear surprise, even to her and her coach.

“She’s only a freshman,” Prairie Coach Don Wilfong pointed out. “I don’t think anyone expected her to do this well. I know I didn’t. But she bowled fantastic.”

Hite is not even the top bowler on her own team. Her season average of 170 trails Class 3A third-ranked teammate Rylee Blood by more than 30 pins.

“I wasn’t even sure I was going to make the regional team,” Hite admitted. “I was so nervous all morning and really right up to the eighth frame of my second game. That’s when I kind of started to relax and have fun.”

She started out Tuesday with a 175 game, mired in 12th place behind leader Blood’s 221. But with eight strikes and a spare in her second match, she scored a season-high 222 and series best 397 to beat Washington junior Shania Christensen by seven pins.

Hite, who is nearly 6-foot-tall, tagged along as a child with bowler grandmother Renee Flack and soon learned to love the sport.

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"I was an angry kid," she shyly explained, "and it felt good to chuck a ball down the alley and knock things down."

Cline, on the other hand, is a blithe spirit who barely comes up to Hite's shoulder blades. Coming he says from a family more in tune with high culture, he joined up for a bumper bowling league while in kindergarten.

"There was only one other kid who signed up," he said, "and he was younger than me. We just wanted to get the ball all the way down the lane.

"When the season was over we got a cheese pizza and a towel."

He's since progressed to the point that on his 16th birthday he became a certified coach and now instructs youth bowling on Saturday mornings.

The effervescent Cline carries a 5.0 grade point average at Washington (all advanced placement classes) and was named all-state as an alto-sax musician. He plans to try out for the top-flight Wichita State bowling team next year and major in aeronautical engineering.

"To become a rocket scientist, if you will," he pointed out.

And he's a poster boy for the sport of bowling, even recruiting his parents and younger sisters to the alley ways.

"People don't realize how difficult and challenging it is," he said. "It's much more than just throwing a round, heavy object at funny-looking things a long ways away."

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In high school bowling, there's also a strong team environment, which Cline will miss this year since his Warrior mates will not be with him to compete for the team title in Des Moines next Wednesday.

Hite, however, will have her friends along as they make a return trip to state. The Hawks finished fourth last year and are ranked fifth in Class 3A this time around.

They blew away the other three teams in the field on Tuesday, winning by almost 400 points over second-place Jefferson. Prairie had four bowlers in the top five and all six finished among the top 10.

"They were awesome," said Willfong.

The Jefferson boys, ranked first in the state Class 3A, had a more difficult match.

Going into the final round, the J-Hawks led Kennedy by just 14 pins and Prairie by 45. When the chips were on the line, however, the Jefferson boys teamed up in the Baker to roll a 240 series and retain their district title. They finished eighth in the state tournament last year.

"There was some good competition today," said Jefferson Coach Virg Cerveney, who has taken a team to the state meet 21 out of his 25 years at the helm. "And, overall, we really didn't have our best performance. We'll save that for state."

BOYS RESULTS

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Team Scores

1. Jefferson 3029, 2. Prairie 2971, 3. Kennedy 2955, 4. Washington 2796.

Top 10 Individuals

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| 1. Bryan Cline, Washington | 453 |
| 2. Nick Moffitt, Prairie | 450 |
| 3. Noah Tiedtke, Jefferson | 435 |
| 4. Alec White, Kennedy | 425 |
| 5. Matt Galloro, Prairie | 414 |
| 6. Davis Sutton, Kennedy | 413 |
| Chris Schuttloffel, Wash | 413 |
| 8. Hunter Sturtz, Jefferson | 406 |
| 9. Chaise Donner, Jefferson | 405 |
| 10. Aaron Smith, Kennedy | 394 |

Jefferson: Noak Tiedtke 435, Hunter Sturtz 406, Chaise Donner 405, Tanner Bennett 389, Victor Baccam 388, Tyler Fowler 325.

Prairie: Nick Moffitt 450, Matt Galloro 414, Lucas Galloro 394, Zach Zimmerman 375, Walker Hunt 374, Sawyer Hansen 333.

Kennedy: Alec White 425, Davis Sutton 413, Aaron Smith 394, George Goodwin 382, Doug Svoboda 352, James Jambois 351.

Washington: Bryan Cline 453, Chris Schuttloffel 413, Donovan Trimble 381, Gabe Wedel 359, John Taylor 332, Landen Akers 326.

GIRLS RESULTS

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Tuesday, 17 February 2015 21:03 - Last Updated Tuesday, 17 February 2015 22:50

Team Standings

1. Prairie 2842, 2. Jefferson 2479, 3. Washington 2371, 4. Kennedy 2292.

Top 10 Individuals

1. Mikayla Hite, Prairie	397
2. Shania Christensen, Wash	390
3. Kaitlyn Early, Prairie	385
Rylee Blood, Prairie	385
5. Samantha Keiper, Prairie	377
6. Rylea Bennett, Jefferson	372
7. Kattie Smith, Jefferson	369
8. Katie Slota, Kennedy	362
Jade Klinefelter, Prairie	362
10. Ashley Grady, Prairie	361

Prairie: Mikayla Hite 397, Kaitlyn Early 385, Rylee Blood 385, Samantha Keiper 377, Jade Klinefelter 362, Ashley Grady 361.

Jefferson: Rylea Bennett 372, Kattie Smith 369, Holly Miller 358, Rachel Daugherty 299, Hailey Kimble 284, Allie Schirmer 266.

Washington: Shanie Christensen 390, Lynze Moon 360, Ally Owens 329, Viola Niyizigama 280, Lucy Forster 275, Ella Wake 223.

Kennedy: Katie Slota 362, Jill Zaiser 310, Jamie Milota 306, Abbie Haller 301, Alyssa Wiedemeier 300, Kayla Sickles 274.