

J-Hawk bowlers turn back the clock

Written by Tom Fruehling

Tuesday, 18 February 2014 21:09 -

Happy days are here again for the Jefferson J-Hawk bowlers.

Both the girls and boys teams won the all-metro regional qualifying meet Tuesday at Lancer Lanes and advanced to the Class 2A state tournament next Tuesday in Des Moines.

The Linn-Mar boys also qualified as an at-large team. In the early days of high school bowling, Jefferson dominated the local scene. But the J-Hawks have been challenged in recent years by up-and-coming programs like Prairie and Linn-Mar.

"It is not unusual for us to qualify both teams for state," said venerable J-Hawk Coach Virg Cervený. "But it's been a few years."

The fourth-ranked Jefferson boys (10-1) were favorites coming into the regional meet and withstood a strong showing by Linn-Mar (9-2) to capture the title with a 3294 series. The Lions came in second at 3175.

The J-Hawk girls (5-6), whose team average placed them fourth out of the five metro teams in the field, put together a total team effort to claim the championship with a score of 2744. Highly favored Prairie (8-3) was close behind at 2729.

While Linn-Mar fell short in team competition, it boasted individual champs with seniors Brooke McMorran (207-214=421) and Connor Pickering (247-245=492). Both automatically qualified for the state meet.

Runner-up Kyle Kaness from Washington also made it to state on the boys side as an at-large qualifier. Prairie's Amber Westemeier was an at-large qualifier on the girls side.

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The winning tally by the Jefferson girls was nearly 300 pins higher than their season average, but longtime Coach Cervený said he was not totally surprised by their performance.

“This has been a rebuilding year,” he said. “But they've been getting better and better as the season has progressed. But, my gosh, they exceeded my expectations today.”

The team lost four starters from last year's fifth-place state tournament team.

Both returning veterans and some newcomers came through on Tuesday, however.

Junior anchor Rylea Bennett struggled with a 167 opening game, then rebounded with a 214 for a 381 series. Senior Savannah Fowler picked up the slack by topping her average by 64 pins with games of 188 and 232 for a 420 series, just a single point below the regional champ.

They also got help from first-year varsity bowlers Holly Miller and Abbi Stastny, each of whom turned in 200 games.

“They made the difference” said Fowler, a J-Hawk softball outfielder who will play next year at Loras College. “Everybody's game really came together.”

With five of six team members notching a 400 series, the J-Hawk boys rolled to the state tournament they missed by a mere 30 pins last year.

Senior anchor Austin Kluth, who is ranked ninth in the state, led the way with a 257-215=472 series, and junior Noah Tiedtke was close behind at 212-256=468.

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"The whole team did great," said Kluth. "We picked up the spares when we needed to, and that's the key to winning."

This will be the J-Hawk boys first rip to the state tournament since 2010.

The Lions' McMorran and Pickering will be making their maiden appearances in the state meet, and both are late bloomers.

McMorran only began bowling four years ago, starting off with a measly 110 average.

"I just thought it would be something fun," she said. "So I decided to go for it."

She has improved every year since. Her 204 average this season ranks eighth in the state and second among metro bowlers to the state's No. 2 bowler Rylee Blood of Prairie, who sports a 216 average.

While her 421 series on Tuesday was 13 above her average, McMorran said she wasn't completely satisfied.

"I did OK," she said, "but I could have done better.

"I was afraid I was going to get too nervous and totally tank. But I pretended it was just any other meet.

"I really didn't think I had a shot at state, but all my hard work and practice paid off."

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For Pickering, going to Des Moines is a dream come true.

This is his first year on the Linn-Mar varsity, and his 201 average puts him sixth among the six starters.

His 492 series in the regional was nearly 100 pins above his average.

"I was nice and consistent," he said of career-best score. "I didn't have any open frames. I don't know, I just tried to find a line that was safe and not mess up.

"All I was really trying to do was help get our team to state."

CLASS 2A STATE QUALIFYING MEET

Boys

Team scores

1. Jefferson $2204 + 1090 = 3294$
2. Linn-Mar $2190 + 985 = 3175$
3. Washington $1967 + 985 = 2952$
4. Kennedy $2036 + 900 = 2936$
5. Prairie $2043 + 885 = 2928$

Top 10 Individuals

1. Connor Pickering (LM) $247-245=492$
2. Kyle Kaness (CRW) $247-234=481$
3. Austin Kluth (CRJ) $257-215=472$
4. Raymond Glueck (LM) $258-211=469$

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5. Noah Tiedtke (CRJ) 212-256=468
6. Doug Svoboda (CRK) 235-211=446
7. Andrew Galloro (CRP) 186-256=442
8. Christian Hindt (CRJ) 226-212=438
9. Josh Kacena (CRP) 215-215=430
10. Colby Frye (LM) 239-187=426

JEFFERSON (3294): Kluth 257-215=472, Tiedtke 212-256=468, Hindt 226-212=438, Baccam 215-206=421, Sturtz 231-174=405, Fowler 196-202=398

LINN-MAR (3175): Pickering 247-245=492, Glueck 258-211=469, Frye 239-187=426, Tegtmeier 214-204=418, Diercks 213-172=385, Wilcox 150-151=301

WASHINGTON (2952): Kaness 247-234=481, Cline 222-201=423, Schuttloffel 183-204=387, Lopez 183-169=352, Trimble 164-160=324, Nading 134-176=310

KENNEDY (2936): Svoboda 235-211=446, White 180-235=415, Green 206-207=413, Smith 203-204=407, Sutton 161-194=355, Jambois 194-151=345

PRAIRIE (2928): A.Galloro 186-256=442, Kacena 215-215=430, M.Galloro 209-189=398, Zimmerman 193-201=394, L.Galloro 187-192=379, Hunt 172-191=363

Girls

Team scores

1. Jefferson 1877 + 867 = 2744
2. Prairie 1872 + 857 = 2729
3. Washington 1851 + 847 = 2698
4. Linn-Mar 1767 + 853 = 2620
5. Kennedy 1626 + 787 = 2413

Top 10 Individuals

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1. Brooke McMorran (LM) 207-214=421
2. Savannah Fowler (CRJ) 188-232=420
3. Amber Westemeier (CRP) 224-195=419
4. Shania Christensen (CRW) 245-173=418
5. Keely Pernicka (CRW) 203-213=416
6. Rylee Blood (CRP) 221-191=412
7. Rylea Bennett (CRJ) 167-214=381
8. Lynze Moon (CRW) 175-204=379
9. Megan Dunham (CRK) 171-202=373
10. Abbi Stastny (CRJ) 200-170=370

JEFFERSON (2744): Fowler 188-232=420, Bennett 167-214=381, Stastny 200-170=370, Smith 178-182=360, Miller 210-136=346, Daugherty 159-136=295

PRAIRIE (2729): Westemeier 224-195=419, Blood 221-191=412, Tollefson 166-193=359, Early 177-180=357, Keiper 190-135=325, A.Grady 174-146=320

WASHINGTON (2698): Christensen 245-173=418, Pernicka 203-213=416, Moon 175-204=379, Owens 147-177=324, Waters 136-178=314, Elkin 119-143=262

LINN-MAR (2620): McMorran 207-214=421, Johnson 198-166=364, Davis 166-180=346, Uridil 187-153=340, Whitlock 140-156=296, Tschantz 116-162=278

KENNEDY (2413): Dunham 171-202=373, Doyle 159-188=347, Fischer 167-148=315, Weidemeier 132-180=312, Duggan 138-141=279, Warnock 132-145=277