

Wenger claims state title at 138

Written by Metro Sports Report

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DES MOINES - Josh Wenger got tired of having to settle for fourth place at the Class 3A state wrestling tournament.

This time the Cedar Rapids Prairie star made it all the way to the top.

Wenger defeated top-ranked Dan Kelly of Cedar Falls, 8-2, to win the 138-pound championship Saturday night at Wells Fargo Arena in Des Moines.

Jarod Cadena of Prairie (182) and Dalton Kuehl of Jefferson (285) lost in the finals.

Wenger finished fourth at the state tournament each year as a freshman, sophomore and junior, but he finished his career in style by dominating Kelly in a battle of Mississippi Valley Conference grapplers.

Kelly struggled with a sore back this year and they did not meet during the season. Their only encounter came in Des Moines, and Wenger was the winner by a clear decision.

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Wenger enjoyed an impressive run through the state tournament with a pin in 1:54, another pin in 3:44, a 16-0 technical fall and the 8-2 verdict over Kelly.

Wenger broke the Prairie school record for most career victories earlier this season and now has a gold medal as well. He finished the season with a 45-1 record and plans to wrestle at Grand View University next season at the NAIA level.

Cadena lost to top-ranked Mitch Otto of Sioux City East, 4-1, in the finals at 182 pounds. Cadena, a senior, finished the season with a 38-8 record.

Kuehl was pinned by top-ranked Jake Marnin of Southeast Polk in 5 minutes in the finals at 285 pounds. Kuehl finished the season with a 37-8 record. He plans to play football at Coe next season and might join the wrestling team as well.

The Prairie Hawks placed fourth in the team standings with 92.5 points. Jefferson finished seventh with 61 points. Linn-Mar tied Iowa City West for 11th place with 44 points.

Southeast Polk ran away with the Class 3A title with 193 points, followed by Bettendorf (154) and Fort Dodge (105).



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TEAM STANDINGS

1. Southeast Polk 193, 2. Bettendorf 154, 3. Fort Dodge 105, 4. Prairie 92.5, 5. North Scott 71, 6. Dowling 63.5, 7. Jefferson 61, 8. Pleasant Valley 59, 9. West Des Moines Valley 57, 10. Waverly-Shell Rock 54. 11. (tie) Linn-Mar 44, Iowa City West 44, 13. Fort Madison 38.5, 14. Western Dubuque 37, 15. Clinton 36.5, 28. Kennedy 19.5, 31. Xavier 17.5.