

Prairie wrestlers 4th in new rankings

Written by Metro Sports Report

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The Cedar Rapids Prairie wrestling team defeated Linn-Mar and Bettendorf in high-profile battles last week, but the Hawks still trail the Lions and Bulldogs in the new rankings issued Thursday by The Predicament.

Linn-Mar is ranked No.2, Bettendorf is No.3 and Prairie is No.4 in the now poll. Southeast Polk topped the rankings again this week.

The Predicament measures a team's projected strength for the traditional state tournament, rather than a team's strength for a particular dual meet. So even though Prairie demonstrated it can defeat Linn-Mar and Bettendorf in head-to-head action, The Predicament believes Linn-Mar and Bettendorf would finish ahead of Prairie in an open tournament.

In other words, The Predicament thinks Linn-Mar has more firepower with top-ranked Alijah Jeffery (120), top-ranked Ross Lembeck (145), second-ranked Matt Wempen (113) and second-ranked Joel Northrup (145) capable of reaching the state finals.

By contrast, The Predicament thinks second-ranked Cam Rathje (170) is the only Prairie wrestler who will make the finals at this point.

The Predicament thinks Prairie has a deep team with 10 wrestlers ranked in the top 10. Josh Wenger (126), Austin Gould (182) and Andrew Netolicky (285) are ranked third. Trey Blaha (138) is No.4, Skyler St. John (152) is No.6, River Whitters (160) is No.7, Sam Uthoff (106) is No.8, Dylan Becker (132) is No.8 and Casey Becker (195) is No.10.

Linn-Mar has seven grapplers in the top 10 this week. Justin Green (220) is ranked No.3, Damon Griffin (126) is No.4 and Andrew Holladay (182) is No.6.

Jefferson has two ranked wrestlers with Brenden Baker (106) at No.6 and Kelly May (145) at No.10. Zac Gillis of Washington is ranked eighth at 285 pounds and J.D. Ruzicka of Kennedy is ranked NO.10 at 132 pounds.

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CLASS 3A TEAM RANKINGS

1. Southeast Polk, 2. Linn-Mar, 3. Bettendorf, 4. Prairie, 5. Waverly-Shell Rock, 6. North Scott, 7. Ankeny, 8. Burlington, 9. Dowling, 10. Pleasant Valley.