

Lions struggle at state wrestling; Hawks 2nd

Written by Jim Ecker

Thursday, 14 February 2013 20:21 -

DES MOINES - Linn-Mar Coach Doug Streicher left Wells Fargo Arena Thursday afternoon with a muffin in one hand and a half-empty feeling in the other.

The Lions struggled in spots on the opening day of the Class 3A state wrestling tournament and face an uphill struggle to catch mighty Southeast Polk in the team standings.

Linn-Mar compiled a sub-.500 record of 8-and-9 in 17 matches Thursday and had four grapplers knocked out of the tournament, leaving only eight in contention.

Linn-Mar has seven guys in the winners bracket and one in the losers bracket.

"Well, it's not how we planned it out," Streicher said before leaving the building. "But we have seven guys alive in the front and one in the back. We'll deal with it and move on."

Southeast Polk, which won the Class 3A state dual meet tournament Wednesday, went 12-1 in the opening round of the individual state tournament Thursday and advanced all 13 of its wrestlers to the second day of the three-day meet.

Streicher said his club can still make a run at the title, even though Southeast Polk has an imposing edge in manpower. "We've got a lot of good points out there," he said.

Southeast Polk leads the team standings with 33.5 points.

Cedar Rapids Prairie went 8-and-3 in its matches Thursday and is sitting in second place with 25 points. All eight of Prairie's wrestlers are still alive in the tournament, with five in the winners bracket and three in the consolation bracket.

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There's a tight scramble for second place with Bettendorf (23.5), Linn-Mar (23.0) and Waverly-Shell Rock (22.0) just a few ticks behind Prairie, but they'll have to perform extremely well in the next two days to have any chance of catching Southeast Polk.

"We'll do the best we can, and however it plays out plays out," said Streicher. "We can't control what everybody else does."

Matt Wempen (113), Alijah Jeffery (120), Damon Griffin (126), Joel Northrup (145), Ross Lembeck (152), Andrew Holladay (182) and Justin Green (220) won their opening-round matches for Linn-Mar and give the Lions a considerable amount of firepower in the winners bracket. Wempen, a sophomore, is seeking his second state title in two trips to Wells Fargo Arena.

Toby Northrup split his two matches at 132 pounds for Linn-Mar and stayed alive, but Shea Hartzler (138), Dakota Digmann (160), Luke Wempen (172) and Sam Nowak (195) lost twice and were eliminated without scoring any points for the Lions.

"The big stage maybe got to a couple of guys and they weren't ready to go at the beginning of the match," said Streicher. "The big stage is known for having that effect on some people down here."

The Prairie Hawks got a boost Thursday when Sam Uthoff, who injured his knee in the state dual meet tournament Wednesday, made a quick recovery and returned to the lineup at 106 pounds. He nearly pinned his man before losing in the first round, but the little freshman bounced back and won his consolation match.

"It feels fine. I'm ready," he said. "I just tweaked it a little bit. I was going to go, no matter what. Nobody is 100 percent this time of year."

Uthoff came within a millimeter of pinning Jacob Schwarm of Bettendorf in the opening round.

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"You can't get any flatter than that," Prairie Coach Blake Williams remarked to one his assistants after the match, disappointed that Uthoff did not get the call.

"He was right there, boy," said Williams. "Just a drop away. It was close. If he wrestles like that, he's going to be tough to beat."

Uthoff was trying to come from behind in the first-round match, but ran out of time. He posted a major decision in the consolation bracket and will return for more Friday.

Josh Wenger (126), Trey Blaha (138), Skyler St.John (145), Cameron Rathje (170) and Andrew Netolicky (285) won their first-round bouts Thursday for Prairie and advanced to the quarterfinals. Uthoff (106), River Whitters (160) and Casey Becker (195) split their two matches and will try to wend their way through the losers bracket for high honors.

The Jefferson J-Hawks compiled a 3-and-4 record in their matches Thursday and advanced three wrestlers to Friday. Michael Moncivais won his first-round contest at 132 pounds to reach the quarterfinals. Kyle Briggs (113) and Patrick Rashed (120) are alive in the consolation bracket, but Drake Allen (182) was eliminated.

Clint Lembeck of Xavier split his two matches at 126 pounds and will wrestle again Friday. Sean Ickes (170) lost twice and was eliminated for the Saints.

Zac Gillis, representing the Washington Warriors, lost twice at 285 pounds and was ousted from the event.

The tournament resumes Friday at 9 a.m.

CLASS 3A TEAM STANDINGS

Top 10

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1. Southeast Polk 33.5, 2. Prairie 25.0, 3. Bettendorf 23.5, 4. Linn-Mar 23, 5. Waverly-Shell Rock 22, 6. North Scott 19, 7. Mason City 14.5, 8. (tie) Dowling 14; Iowa City West 14, 10. Algona 13.5.

LINN-MAR RESULTS

113 - Matt Wempen major dec. Travis Price (Johnston), 9-1.
120 - Alijah Jeffery major dec. Matt Malcom (Glenwood), 10-0.
126 - Damon Griffin major dec. Jacob Adams (Algona), 12-2.
132 - Toby Northrup lost to Clayton Hocker (Fort Madison) 4-3.
132 - Toby Northrup major dec. Alberto Jurado (SC North), 13-4.
138 - Shea Hartzler lost to Landon BeLieu (Indianola), 3-2.
138 - Shea Hartzler pinned by Matt Taylor (Dallas Center-Grimes), 3:41.
145 - Joel Northrup pinned Dylan Ganson (Western Dubuque), 3:22.
152 - Ross Lembeck pinned Joe Pancratz (North Scott), 1:34.
160 - Dakota Digmann lost to Logan Walkup (Johnston), 6-0.
160 - Dakota Digmann lost to Cody Jones (Oskaloosa), 7-6.
170 - Luke Wempen pinned by Dustin Fuller (Sioux City North), 0:25.
170 - Luke Wempen lost to Jayton Phillips (Mount Pleasant), 6-4 (ot).
182 - Andrew Holladay dec. Tyler Frideres (Algona), 9-5.
195 - Sam Nowak pinned by Mickey Pelfrey (Iowa City West), 1:50.
195 - Sam Nowak pinned by Kennedy Rhodd (Council Bluffs Jefferson), 1:53.
220 - Justin Green dec. Brady Smith (WDM Valley), 1-0.

PRAIRIE RESULTS

106 - Sam Uthoff lost to Jacob Schwarm (Bettendorf), 11-9.
106 - Sam Uthoff major dec. Jordan Crawford (Iowa City West), 14-0.
126 - Josh Wenger major dec. Mac Spotts (Mason City), 14-0.
138 - Trey Blaha pinned Tony Gatzionis (Waukee), 3:56.
145 - Skyler St. John dec. Corey Abernathy (Waverly-Shell Rock), 6-3.
160 - River Whitters pinned by Tim Miklus (Southeast Polk), 4:49.
160 - River Whitters pinned Hank Swalla (Ames), 5:30.
170 - Cam Rathje pinned Calvin Buchanan (Sioux City East), 1:04.
195 - Casey Becker lost to Dane Jones (Oskaloosa), 8-6 (ot).
195 - Casey Becker pinned Chris Hiserote (LeMars), 2:20.
285 - Andrew Netolikcy pinned Spencer Williams (Cedar Falls), 1:45.

JEFFERSON RESULTS

113 - Kyle Briggs lost to Trevor Murano (Dallas Center-Grimes), 4-1.
113 - Kyle Briggs dec. Camiran Sadeghi (Keokuk), 5-4.
120 - Patrick Rashed lost to Shane Gill (Sioux City North), 4-1.
120 - Patrick Rashed dec. Tyler Lanphier (Mount Pleasant), 4-0.
132 - Michael Moncivais pinned Tristen Bowers (Iowa City West), 3:53.
182 - Drake Allen lost to Dylan Fielder (Webster City), 14-6.

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182 - Drake Allen lost to Justin Dilks (Mount Pleasant), 13-8.

XAVIER RESULTS

126 - Clint Lembeck lost to Joe McGinnis (Indianola), 10-3.

126 - Clint Lembeck dec. Dalton Hanson (Sioux City North), 8-2.

170 - Sean Ickes pinned by Dylan Blackford (Southeast Polk), 2:14.

170 - Sean Ickes pinned by Matt Collins (Dowling), 5:48.

WASHINGTON RESULTS

285 - Zac Gillis lost to Pedro Gomez (Marshalltown), 3-1.

285 - Zac Gillis pinned by Ryan Glenn (Waukee), 2:28.