

The Sentinel

Keeping an eye on the Juniata Valley

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Mustangs are fourth, Tigers take eighth

By ZACH KNEPP, Sentinel correspondent

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MIDDLEBURG - Halifax gave a forfeit to Mid-West's Ty Knepp during its 152-pound match Saturday at the Mid-West Mustang Duals tournament. That turned out to be a very good decision.

Knepp's other four matches on the day were nearly as short as the senior pinned all his opponents during the first period.

He was one of five local wrestlers have a perfect day Saturday. Joining him were teammates Nick Kratzer (135) and Sam Shirey (160), along with East Juniata's Trent Burris (130) and Peyton Kerstetter (135).

As a team Mid-West (3-2) went 3-2 on the day to claim fourth place in the 10-team tournament. East Juniata (1-6) finished 1-4 to take home eighth place.

The Mustangs finished second in Pool B with a 3-1 record. They started out strong with a convincing win over Williams Valley before falling to eventual tournament champion Wallenpaupak. Mid-West rebounded to win its final two matches of pool wrestling over Halifax and Loyalsock.

In their third place match, the Mustangs were dominated by Muncy, a team with only one loss in pool competition that was a contest against Lewisburg decided by the eighth criteria after the two squads tied.

"I was pleased with our effort today," Mid-West coach Clint Swartz said. "It was the start to our season. I think we had some jitters early, but I'm happy with the end results."

East Juniata struggled during Pool A wrestling. Its only win came against Schuylkill Haven, while dropping matches to Muncy, Lewisburg and Montgomery. In the seventh place match the Tigers fell to Williams Valley for the second time in a week.

Despite the record, coach Ray Barrick was pleased with his team's effort.

"I think we finally wrestled well enough to win today," he said. "Unfortunately we just don't have enough bodies (in the lineup) to win as a team. That has been the case all season so far."

Knepp, who finished fourth at states last season, was not tested as he only yielded two points during the day on two voluntary escapes.

"Ty looked good," Swartz said. "What can I say? He works hard and takes care of business."

Shirey, who joined Knepp as state place winners last season with a seventh place medal, had a tougher road to his perfect afternoon. He was able to pick up one fall and two forfeits along with pair of 3-2 and 3-1 decisions.

"Sam had some tough matches today," Swartz said. "He did what he needed to do to win."

While Knepp and Shirey are seniors with plenty of experience, Kratzer had no varsity matches before his tournament Saturday. It did not show as he went 5-0 with the aid of one forfeit and an injury default.

"It shows us we have something to build on with Nick," Swartz said. "There is potential there. He had a good day."

Burris and Kerstetter having perfect tournament was no surprise to Barrick.

"Trent had some good matches today. He had a forfeit or two, but he wrestled well."

Kerstetter, who was finished last season around .500, is looking to take the next step this season. So far, he is walking in the right direction with a 7-0 start on the season.

"I thought Peyton had a good tournament as well," stated Barrick.

Article Photos



Sentinel photo by JOHN THOMAS

East Juniata's Payton Kerstetter, top, moves in on Muncy's Rex Cline Saturday during their 135-pound bout at the Mid-West Mustang Duals in Middleburg. Kerstetter won a 14-2 major decision.

Fact Box

r East Juniata will travel to Newport at 7 p.m. Thursday.

r Mid-West hosts Warrior Run at 7 p.m. Tuesday.

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