

Proud of our wrestlers

By Larry Pritchett

Past PCHS activities director

State Champion Wrestler

It is always super to be a state champion in any sport, but Austin Thelander, Perkins County senior, comes home from Omaha with a state champion medal and the "Title" of first-ever PC wrestler to accomplish the task.

Thelander had an outstanding career, outstanding senior regular season record losing only one match, and then ending up 39-1 with a State Championship effort. Thelander also picked up his 100th win at the state tournament which is an outstanding benchmark for high school wrestlers.

Another senior who has had a great career and regular season is Vinny Ross. Ross got to the finals by pinning all of his opponents and then lost to an undefeated wrestler from Howells, Nathan Bazata. Ross made three trips to the state tournament and brought medals home each year.

Ross also won his 100th match during the season to go along with his state runner-up finish. Ross finished the season 42-2.

Congratulations also are in order for Perkins County wrestlers Mark Hanson and Trey Johnson, who made it to the state tournament for the first time and each won a match and all of the wrestlers contributed to the 57 team points that gave the Plainsmen a top ten finish in the team race.

Hanson ended up with a 25-19 record and Johnson ended the season with 26 wins and 16 losses. An outstanding effort for the wrestlers and their coaches Dean Friedel and Todd Ford.

Spring Seasons Starting

Most volleyball, football, basketball and wrestling participants usually want to do something to make themselves better in the off season.

Some things are pretty evident in that most athletes need to be bigger and stronger and that can be accomplished in the summer weight programs. Right along with that most athletes need to be quicker and faster and that is where my annual support for the track program comes to the forefront.

I think that every athlete if they truly want to get better never takes a season off and always participates in track. It is easy to say you want to improve, it is another thing to work hard enough to make it happen.

Track in my opinion does more positive things for other sports than you can imagine. It builds self-discipline because it isn't an easy sport. It takes hard work.

As a basketball coach, I usually found that the kids that participated in track and field were the ones I wanted on the free throw line, or with the ball in their hands at the end of the game, because they were the athletes that were confident because they had gotten quicker and faster

during track season.

Usually they also were the ones that never took a season off, they participated all school year and then did the team summer things plus worked on their own.

It is funny how that works. Too many kids want to go to bed and roll out the next morning an All-American, it doesn't work that way. I think that you need a plan for success and a lot of times it isn't the plan that is so important but it is important that you have a plan. Just my opinion, but nearly 40 years of working with high school athletes tells me I am pretty close to the truth.