

Wrestlers from page C2

all the younger wrestlers on our team." Polk said. "His future will be as great as his career has been. I'm sure he will be a great coach some day."

Nate Rodriguez, 140, Redford CC: An outstanding junior year may only be a preview of things to come next year for CC Junior Nate Rodriguez. After a 2002 campaign that saw him ring up a 43-5 record along with a Catholic League title and first places at the CC Invitational, Observant Tournament and Toledo St. John's Tournament, Coach Rodriguez said higher goals are in place for him next season. "Note caught fire in the middle of the season and things were looking great for him," he said. "Unfortunately, unexpected injuries do happen and he has 365 days to prepare for next season."

Trevor Stewart, 148, Redford CC: Another CC wrestler who rang up an impressive record, but was derailed by injuries, freshman Trevor Stewart made quite a splash in his first season on the high school wrestling circuit. He finished with a 44-2 record and took first-place medals in every tournament the Shamrocks participated in before winning a district championship. Despite his fourth-place finish at regionals, Coach Rodriguez predicted great things for him. "He is a very talented young man who makes coaching pure joy," he said. "I am looking forward to the next three years of his career."

Tony Kennard, 145, Ply. Salem: An ankle injury kept Kennard from finishing his senior season the way he would have liked to. He was a state finalist, but it didn't diminish an otherwise superb campaign. Kennard was MVP at three tournaments, finishing first at both Salem Intationals as well as the Wayne State and Williamstown tournaments, and a win at the WLA and regional meets. His match record for the season was 46-6; for his career, he was 84-18.

"Everybody on the team learned from how Tony conducted himself in competition," said his coach, Greg Woodchuk. **Bryan Marsh, 152, Wayne:** After going undefeated during the regular season and winning an Observant title, Marsh finished with a 42-4 record, including a fourth-place finish at the Division I state meet. He posted career record of 110-20.

"He is one of the Wayne High greats," coach Dave Davis said. "I really, really don't want him to leave."

Steve Wallace, 160, Wayne: The junior finished 35-2 this season to run his career record to 84-23. He won every tournament he entered, including the Mega Conference and district meets. He did not make weight at the regional by 0.1. He also bested the Division II state champion at the Romulus Tournament.

"Beware of him next season," Davis said.

Jay Abshire, 171, Liv. Churchill: The senior transfer from CC became eligible just before the Observant meet where he won the title and went on to claim a WLA crown as well. Abshire finished with an 18-5 record and placed seventh in Division I.

"Jay is a very intense and competitive young man who overcame many obstacles this year to achieve what he did," Altonian said. "He was a joy to watch wrestle and amazed many people who he wrestled."

Chris Cracchiolo, 171, Redford CC: An excellent career was topped off in fine fashion by Cracchiolo. A 43-11 record included district and regional championships, capping a career in which he won 112 of 127 matches.

"Here is a young man who has worked his heart out to develop," Rodriguez said.

Ryan Rogowski, 189, Redford CC: What better way to wrap up a career than with a state championship? That's what Rogowski did after two prior top-

eight finishes at the state meet.

He had a 33-2 record last season and finished his career with a 150-24 mark. He was a three-time district champion and regional champ and state runner-up in 2001.

"This year, there was no one to stop him, not even the blackout at the Palace before the finals," coach Rodriguez said. "It was outstanding to see Ryan accomplish his dreams."

Phil Rothwell, 215, Ply. Canton: Twice the WLA and Observant champion, Rothwell completed his senior season by establishing a new school record for career pins with 93. He finished the season sixth in the state, compiling a 45-3 match record; for his career, Rothwell was 127-28.

"Phil is a hard worker who has earned the name of 'animal,'" said Canton coach John Demick. "But he's also a quality person who we will miss having around."

Blair Naysmith, 215, Redford CC: A former hockey player, Naysmith made the transition from the ice to the mat seem pretty smooth. A 39-4 record this year and career mark of 112-22 prove that.

"It was great to see him finally make it to states and place in his senior season," coach Rodriguez said.

Tony Martinez, 276, Liv. Franklin: The senior was a two-time state qualifier who posted a career record of 57-21, including a 33-8 mark this season. He was first at the Berkeley, WLA and district meets.

"I've only coached Tony for two years, but I've seen tremendous improvement over those two years," Franklin coach Dave Chiola said.

"He's the guy we depended on for a win, and he usually came up big. He felt a little short of his goal this year, but he was still a great leader and asset to our team."

ALL-OBSERVERLAND WRESTLING TEAM

2002 ALL-AREA WRESTLING

103 pounds: 1. Matt Steintreger, sophomore, Catholic Central; and Nick Naber, junior, Westland John Glenn; 2. Dan McKuliffe, sophomore, Livonia Stevenson; 3. Steve Hogg, sophomore, Plymouth Canton.

112: Ramis Bojrami, senior, North Farmington; 2. Matt Kozlars, junior, Catholic Central; 3. Abdullahi Gent, junior, Livonia Churchill.

119: 1. Kofentse Mandisa, senior, Westland John Glenn; 2. Peter Boben, junior, Plymouth Salem; 3. Craig LeBaron, sophomore, Redford Thurston.

125: 1. Mike Goeth, junior, Plymouth Salem; and Brian Clement, junior, Livonia Churchill; 2. Shawn Parker, senior, Westland John Glenn; 3. Tim Hammer, sophomore, Wayne Memorial.

130: 1. Jason Fischer, junior, Livonia Stevenson; and Rocco Cox, freshman, Westland John Glenn; 2. Doy Demick, senior, Plymouth Canton; 3. Brandon Sammut, senior, Plymouth Salem.

135: 1. Phil Perry, senior, Westland John Glenn; 2. Nathan Dillard, senior, Plymouth Salem; 3. Steve Lenhardt, senior, Livonia Churchill.

140: 1. Nate Rodriguez, junior, Catholic Central; 2. Lev Merglan, junior, Livonia Churchill; 3. Chris Hossey, senior, Plymouth Canton.

145: 1. Trevor Stewart, freshman, Catholic Central; and Tony Kennard, senior, Plymouth Salem; 2. Greg Muxter, senior, Plymouth Canton; 3. Daron Cruickshank, sophomore, Westland John Glenn.

152: 1. Bryan Marsh, senior, Wayne Memorial; 2. Matt Redley, senior, Livonia Stevenson; 3. Scott Schwarlose, sophomore, Catholic Central; and Adam Schaefer, senior, Plymouth Salem.

160: 1. Steve Wallace, junior, Wayne Memorial; 2. Brian Jones, senior, Livonia Churchill; 3. Nick Wroblewski, senior, Westland John Glenn; and Dan Heller, sophomore, Lutheran Westland.

171: 1. Jay Abshire, senior, Livonia Churchill; and Chris Cracchiolo, senior, Catholic Central; 2. Jack Sees, senior, Westland John Glenn; 3. Jake Bongera, junior, Redford Union.

189: 1. Ryan Rogowski, senior, Catholic Central; 2. Alex Murray, junior, Livonia Churchill; 3. Shaheer Rajee, senior, Plymouth Canton.

215: 1. Phil Rothwell, senior, Plymouth Canton; and Blair Naysmith, senior, Catholic Central; 2. Zack Blair, senior, Plymouth Salem; 3. R.J. Ramsey, sophomore, Wayne Memorial.

275: 1. Tony Martinez, senior, Livonia Franklin; 2. Jason LeDuc, junior, Redford Union; 3. Nick Renton, senior,

Wayne Memorial.

COACH OF THE YEAR
Bill Polk, Westland John Glenn HS

HONORABLE MENTIONS

Stevenson: Mike Robinson, Charlie Rabaut, Bill Bullock, Doug Novack, Sean O'Halloran, Darlo Malinella, Churchhill: Justin Smith, Dan Clement, Dan Gaffka, Manuel Schubert, Kris Felice, Franklin: Ray Stratos, James Azzopardi, Richard Martinez, Kayle McCarri, Clarenceville: Robert Malady, Nader Al-Mooshi, Ali Ismail, Nick Elam, Ryan Smith, Lutheran Westland: Peter Daniels, Daniel Baseley, Brandon Noble, Neal Kemp, Daniel Ungar, John Glenn: Drew Conner, Enrique Garcia, Brad Gregory, Jake Fairchild, Eric Schambers, Tonia Schenck, Herbert Reudus, Wayne: Dan Marsh, Mark Valentine, Rex Fugaban, Jason McLean, John Dobbins, Chris McGloie, Garden City: Jacob Davis, Rich Russell, Jeremy Sparks, Nick Cooper; Redford Union: Butch Chorasewski, Nick Westlake, John Gourlay, Josh Lear, Jim Moore; Thurston: Joshua Harrington, Nick Shafer; Catholic Central: Patrick Clark, J.P. Foley, Tony Kuecher, Brad Banham, John Clary, Brian Baumgartner, Steve Haynes; Canton: Rob Schnottler, Andy Roberts, Derek Robinson, Mike Siegrist; Salem: Craig Blair, Michael Dendries, Chris Hanson, Alan Miynek, Phil Portellos, Will Schultz, Brian Schultz, Jeremy Walker; Farmington: Jon Schwartz, Nick Belsky, Steve Russo; N. Farmington: Eric Shapiro, Dan Perach, Harrison Romy Sulaiman.

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the job done this season.

Mike Williams, a 6-8 forward from Detroit City High, leads the Ocelots in scoring (21.5 points per game) and rebounding (11.2 per game). He is also second in assists and leads the team in steals.

Williams, getting strong looks from the Pac-10, ACC, Big Ten and Big 12 conferences, was named All-Region 12 MVP, All-Conference and All-Michigan Community College Athletic Association.

Guard Javon Clark (Detroit) Cass Tech, a dandy 3-point shooter (40 percent), averages 15.6 points per game. He made first-team All-Region and was second-team All-Conference.

His running mate at guard is University of Detroit Mercy signee Rulon Harris (Detroit Mumford), a transfer from Flint Mott CC, who runs the point. The 6-1 Harris made second-team All-Conference and was a first-team All-Region selection. He averages 8.0 points and 7.2 assists per game.

Westland John Glenn grad Yaku Moton-Spruill, a 6-8, 260-pound center, averages 14.4 points and 5.9 rebounds per game. He was voted second-team All-Eastern Conference in the MCCA.

The other starter is 6-6 forward Emir Medunjanin, the only player returning from last year's squad who saw action last year in Hutchinson. He averages 8.2 points per game.

Other key Schoolcraft reserves include 6-7, 280-pound center Delvar Barrett (Detroit Cooley), who averages 9 points; 6-5 forward Ronald Dorsey (Detroit Porshing), averaging 8.3 points; 6-5 forward Julius Austin (Baldwin), 4.4 points; 6-6 forward Carl Muhammad (Detroit Redford), 3.8 points; and Gary Johnson (Wayne Memorial), 3.3 points.

Last year, Schoolcraft won its opening round game against Western Nebraska before losing in overtime to eventual champion



STAFF PHOTO BY TOM HAWLEY

Inside presence: Schoolcraft center Yaku Moton-Spruill of Westland John Glenn is the team's third leading scorer and second leading rebounder.

Wabash Valley. The Ocelots also lost a consolation game in OT to Okaloosa-Walton (Fla.), which featured Boston Celtics first-round draft pick Kendrick Brown.

"What I think I learned last year is that you have to play the bench more because you're in for the long haul in a tourney like," said Briggs, who needs four more wins to bring home the national title. "And I learned that the further you go, every possession and every play becomes that much more important."

"We also have to make sure you get enough rest before you play."

If Schoolcraft gets past Alleghany, the Ocelots would play the winner of Itawamba CC (Fulton, Miss.), 21-5 vs. Coastal Georgia, 24-9 — in a 6:30 p.m. quarterfinal matchup Thursday. The losers square off in the consolation round at 12:30 p.m. Thursday.

Whalers from page C1

have dominated the OHL for most of the season; a win in their last two games guarantees them the regular-season championship, which means they would have home-ice advantage throughout the OHL playoffs.

Plymouth scored twice in the first six minutes of Wednesday's game, getting goals from Chad LaRose — who had been hampered for two weeks by an ankle injury — and Kris Vornarsky. Stephen Weiss, who had three assists in the game, and Nate Kiser assisted on the first goal; Weiss and LaRose assisted on the second.

The Greyhounds narrowed the deficit to 2-1 on a goal by Brent Kelly, his 38th of the season. But that's as close as they would come.

Following a scoreless second period, the Whalers scored the win with third-period scores by Brad Yeo and another by LaRose,

giving him 31 for the season. Surma and Greg Campbell assisted on Yeo's goal; Weiss and Vornarsky had assists on LaRose's.

Jason Bacashihua was superb in goal for the Whalers, stopping 24 of 25 shots. The Greyhounds' Ray Emery turned away 24 of 28 shots.

Just who the Whalers will face in the opening round of the OHL playoffs will still be determined. After last weekend, the London Knights and Sarnia Sting were tied for the fourth (and final) playoff spot in the West Division, each with 63 points. London, which had played one fewer game than Sarnia, picked up its 64th point when it played Windsor to a scoreless tie Wednesday.

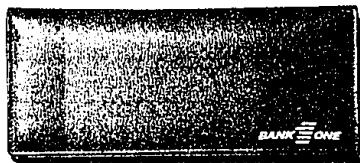
When the playoffs will begin also must be determined. This much is certain: The Whalers will open at home, either Friday or Saturday.



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