

KSHSAA GIRLS' INAUGURAL STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

Lady Cat wrestlers compete in first official girls' state tourney

SALINA — History was made in Salina Thursday, Feb. 27, as the best girls' wrestlers from across the sunflower state competed in Kansas' first-ever official girls' state wrestling tournament, the KSHSAA Girls' Inaugural State Championship. Three Burlington Lady Wildcats were among the wrestlers who took to the mat for the momentous occasion.

As a team, the three BHS girls earned 10 points and finished in 47th place in the team standings. The Lady Wildcats won five matches and lost six, recording a 45.45 percent winning percentage on the day. Of the six losses, five were to eventual state placers.

Junior Bryleigh Isch and sophomore E'owynn Codney both went 2-2 and were top eight finishers. Isch wrestled at 191 pounds and Codney wrestled at 116. All four of the wrestlers fell to were eventual state placers. The wrestlers Isch fell to, Tonganoxie's Holly Colvert and Effingham-ACCHS's Tanah Forbes, went on to place fourth and fifth, respectively. The wrestlers Codney fell to, Oakley's Mikyah Cain and Basehor-Linwood's Olivia O'Donnell, went on to place fifth and sixth, respectively.



Michaela Divoll/The Republican
Burlington's M.J. Huff works to avoid being taken down during a match at the KSHSAA Girls' Inaugural State Championship at Salina Thursday, Feb. 27.



Michaela Divoll/The Republican
Lady Wildcat E'owynn Codney presses her opponent into the mat during a state tournament match.



Michaela Divoll/The Republican
Burlington's Bryleigh Isch attempts an escape from the bottom position against one of her opponents at state.

Sophomore M.J. Huff went 1-2 and was a top 12 finisher. She wrestled at 109 pounds. One of the wrestlers she fell to, Hays' Sarah Zimmerman, went on to place sixth.

In addition to being part of history by wrestling in the inaugural official girls' state tournament, Isch had the honor of singing the national anthem before the championship finals.

The historic state tournament was the final competition of the 2019-20 season.

KSHSAA Girls' State Championship Team Scores

1. Topeka-Washburn Rural 84, 2. Great Bend 80, 3. Paola 44, 4. (tie) Nickerson and Pratt 41, 6. Abilene 38, 7. Lakin 35, 8. Leavenworth

34, 9. Osawatimie 32, 10. Altamont-Labette County 30, 11. (tie) Basehor-Linwood, Council Grove and KC-Piper 28, 14. Onaga 27.5, 15. (tie) Junction City and Lawrence Free State 27, 17. Wellington 25, 18. Independence 24, 19. (tie) Olathe West and Topeka West 22, 21. Marysville 21.5, 22. (tie) Andover Central, Concordia, Garden City, Hoisington, Hutchinson, Salina Central and Tonganoxie 20, 29. (tie) Mulvane, Rose Hill and Valley Center 19, 32. (tie) Effingham-ACCHS, Ottawa and Tecumseh-Shawnee Heights 18, 35. Burlington 17, 36. Overland Park-Blue Valley Southwest 16, 37. (tie) Hoxie and Oakley 15, 39. Caney Valley 14, 40. Hays, Olathe South, Silver Lake and Spring Hill 13, 44. Wakeeney-Trego Community 12, 45. (tie) Chapman and Liberal 11, 47. Burlington 10, 48. (tie) Olathe North and Winfield 9, 50. (tie) Dodge City and La Cygne-Prairie View 8, 52. (tie) Fort Scott, Hoyt-Royal Valley and McPherson 7, 55. Wichita Heights 6.5, 56. (tie) Baldwin and Manhattan 6, 58. Emporia 5, 59. (tie) Humboldt,

See **Girls**, Page 14



Katie McMurray/The Republican
BHS girls' wrestling state qualifiers E'owynn Codney, M.J. Huff and Bryleigh Isch high-five young fans at Burlington Elementary School during a state send-off Wednesday, Feb. 26, that also included stops at BMS and BHS.



Katie McMurray/The Republican
Lady Wildcat M.J. Huff receives her state blanket from her sister and fellow wrestler Matti Huff during the portion of the send-off held at BHS. The state blankets are a special tradition for Burlington Wrestling.

CLASS 4A STATE WRESTLING CHAMPIONSHIPS

Johnson caps career with third-place state medal

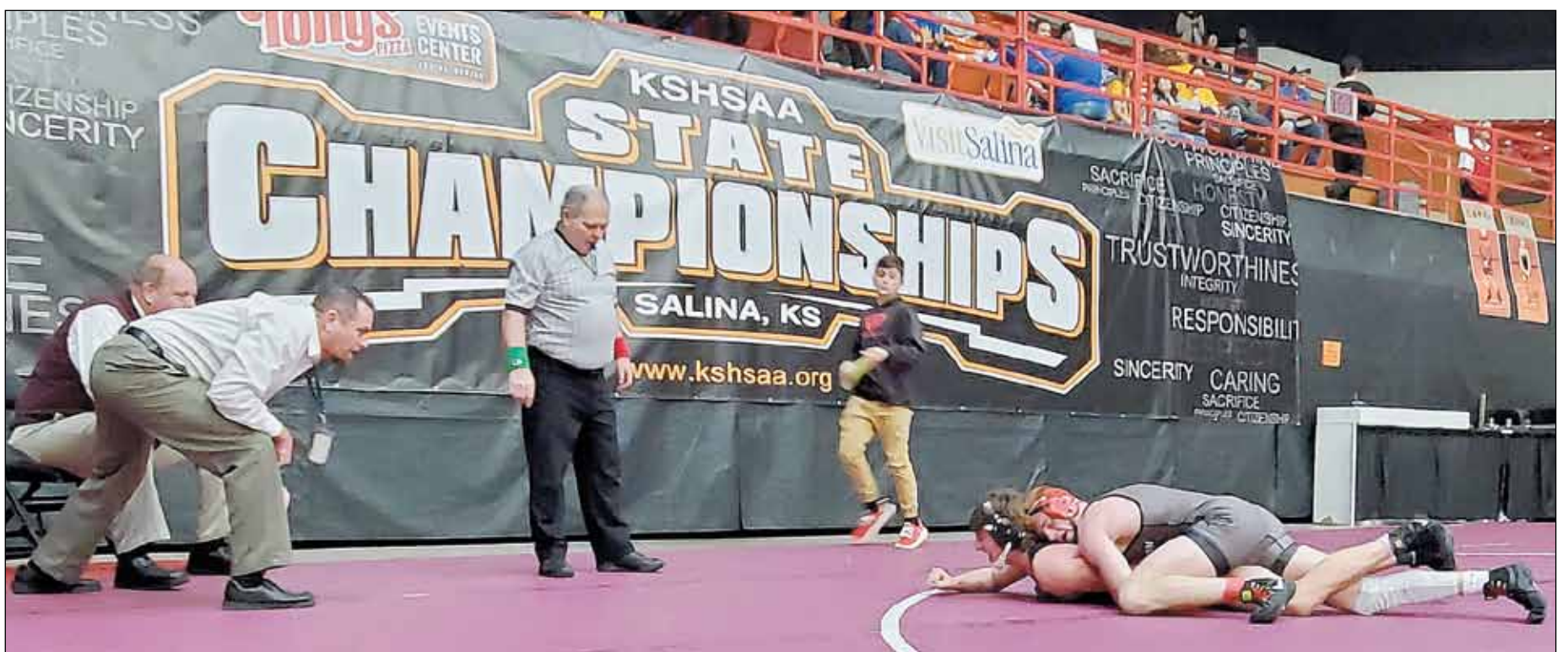
SALINA — Five Burlington Wildcat wrestlers were among the quality wrestlers from across Kansas who competed in boys' state wrestling tournaments Friday and Saturday, Feb. 28 and 29. The Wildcats traveled to Salina to compete in the Class 4A State tournament and one of them brought home a bronze state medal.

The Wildcats finished in a tie with Abilene for 25th place in the team standings. Both teams finished with 30 points. Chantue, who had won the team title in the regional in which Burlington competed, won the team state championship. The Wildcats won nine matches and lost nine, recording a 50 percent winning percentage over the two-day tournament. Of the nine losses, seven were to eventual state placers.

Individually, Burlington's run was highlighted by senior Cael Johnson, who wrestled at 160 pounds. After taking a heartbreaking, 2-1 decision loss to the eventual state champion in the quarterfinal round, he wrestled tough through the back of the bracket and captured a bronze state medal with a pin in the third-place match.

Senior T.T. Totty reached the top eight at 132 pounds. He went 2-2 and finished one win shy of reaching the state podium. Both wrestlers he fell to, Rose Hill's Keegan Beavers and Pratt's Koda Dipman, were eventual medalists, with Beavers placing fourth and Dipman sixth.

See **Boys**, Page 14



Michaela Divoll/The Republican
With a large KSHSAA State Championships banner as his backdrop, Wildcat Cael Johnson wrestles an opponent at the state tournament, while BHS head coach Doug Vander Linden and assistant coach Tim Johnson encourage him. Johnson was Burlington's only state medalist, placing third at 160 pounds.



Michaela Divoll/The Republican
Wildcat Damon Hoback takes down an opponent during a match at the state tournament.



Michaela Divoll/The Republican
Burlington's T.T. Totty wrestles atop an opponent during one of his state tournament matches.



Michaela Divoll/The Republican
Burlington's Caedon Berkenemeier pushes an opponent's head against the mat as he works to turn him over onto his back.



Michaela Divoll/The Republican
The five BHS boys who qualified for state, Tucker Williams, Damon Hoback, Caedon Berkenemeier, T.T. Totty and Cael Johnson, take a photo with some of their young fans at BES during the state send-off.



Katie McMurray/The Republican
Cael Johnson and his father, Tim, who is also a BHS assistant wrestling coach, share a hug after one of Cael's state matches.



Katie McMurray/The Republican
The BHS wrestling cheerleaders perform a cheer during the state send-off assembly at Burlington Elementary School. A squad consisting of both the BHS wrestling and basketball cheerleaders also performed a dance prior to the championship finals of the Class 4A State tournament Feb. 29.



Michaela Divoll/The Republican
Bryleigh Isch, BHS, sings the national anthem prior to the grand march Feb. 28 at the boys' state tournament. She also sang it at the girls' tournament Feb. 27 and day two of the boys' tournament Feb. 29.



Katie McMurray/The Republican
T.T. Totty hugs his family members who presented him a state blanket during the state send-off at BHS.

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