

**By Shari Friedel**

*Tribune Staff*

Four Perkins County wrestlers qualified for and three participated in the state wrestling tournament held at the Qwest Center in Omaha Feb. 17-19.

Austin Thelander at 103 lbs., Garrett Toner at 112 lbs., Christian Miyamoto at 145 lbs. and heavyweight Vinny Ross all placed at districts the previous week.

Lone Perkins County state placer Vinny Ross returned with a fifth place medal.



The team earned 15 points, and finished 36th out of 58 teams.

102 lb. Austin Thelander was defeated in two matches, pinned in 5:56 by Aaron Hueftle of Eustis-Farnam and lost by decision, 2-6 to Brandon Burruss of High Plains Community.

“Austin wrestled well for a first time showing at state,” said Coach Dean Friedel. “He was ahead 6-4 in his first match and with about 30 seconds left, a critical error put him on his back.”

Both of Thelander’s opponents ended up placing in the tournament.

In an unfortunate turn of events, 112 lb. Garrett Toner was disqualified from state competition for medical reasons based on the National Federation of State High School Association guidelines.

“It was very disappointing to us to have Garrett disqualified from the tournament,” said Coach Friedel. “I felt he had a good opportunity to gain some valuable experience.”

In the 145 lb. bracket, Christian Miyamoto won his first match by decision over Kalan Swertzic of Fullerton. His next match resulted in a loss by decision to Aaron Winberg of Pleasanton/Litchfield. He then beat Austin Fauss of South Loup 6-4, and finally lost by decision to Cory Sebade of Pender, 1-4.

“Christian had a great showing at the tournament, said Coach Friedel. “He was able to avenge an earlier loss in the year to Fauss of South Loup with a 6-4 decision. Both opponents Christian lost to placed at state.”

Sophomore Vinny Ross at 285 lb. won four of his six matches at state, and brought home a fifth place medal.

He lost in overtime to Kayne Daudt of Plainview 4-5; pinned Kyle Beck of High Plains Community 1:52, pinned Pablo Rodriguez of Harvard in 4:46, won 2-0 over Charles Kramer of Mullen, was pinned by Tanner Vargas of Toledo-Osmond and won 6-1 over Travis Willey of Bayard.

“Vinny was our lone placer at the tournament and he was also able to avenge a loss from the district tournament by defeating Willey of Bayard for fifth place,” said Coach Friedel.

He added, “I am excited about our prospects for next year with four state qualifiers returning to the squad. Their experience and leadership should help to move our program in a positive

direction.”



