

Wrestling



Photos by Adam Feiner

Stoughton teammates hoist up junior Alex Wicks after winning the Division 1 team state championship on Saturday, March 7, at the UW Field House. Wicks pinned Mukwonago's Antonio Klinkerfues in 4:27 to help the Vikings to a 32-30 victory over the Indians.

Three-peat complete

Vikings edge Mukwonago for team state title

ADAM FEINER
Sports editor

Every storybook ending has a hero, and Alex Wicks was happy to play the part for Stoughton in the Division 1 team state championship dual.

Wicks won his 126-pound match in thrilling fashion to give the Vikings their first lead against Mukwonago.

Trenton Dow followed with a perfectly-executed defensive bout, as Stoughton captured its third consecutive team state title with a 32-30 victory over the Indians on Saturday, March 7, at the UW Field House.

The Vikings never trailed in their 45-24 quarterfinal win over Neenah and their 42-19 semifinal victory over Kaukauna on Friday, March 6.

Stoughton 32, Mukwonago 30

Wicks scrambled in the first four minutes and trailed Antonio Klinkerfues 6-4 after two periods, but turned the tide with a vice-grip headlock early in the third. He held on to pin Klinkerfues in 4:27 and give the Vikings a 32-27 lead with one match left.

"During the middle of the match, I sensed my opponent got a little down on his luck," Wicks said. "I looked at the bench, saw everyone cheering me on and felt



Stoughton junior Luke Mechler (top) looks to his coaches for instruction while in control of Mukwonago's Lucas Benn during their 160-pound match at the Division 1 team state championship dual. Mechler won by 23-8 technical fall.

like I could pull a win out."

Dow, an individual state qualifier at 132, led for most of his match against two-time state medalist Tyler Goebel. Dow eventually lost by 8-7 decision in overtime, but did his job by avoiding a pin or technical fall.

"I'm good underneath on my shot, so I knew I could either get the score or stalemate to waste time," Dow said. "Most of the time I wasn't trying to finish. I was just trying to get a hold of his legs and hang on. I wanted the win more for my team, not myself."

"As good as their 132-pounder is, Trenton is so good with positioning," Stoughton co-coach Dan Spilde said. "He could've easily went for the win, but he did what was best for the team. I had a great feeling when we started at 138

because then he was our last guy, because no matter what we needed, we knew he was going to get it done."

Top-seeded Mukwonago (25-2) beat Stoughton 48-25 at the Zelinski Memorial Duals on Jan. 25, but the third-seeded Vikings came back to win their 10th team state championship in program history.

"We definitely thought we should have been seeded higher," Stoughton senior Gavin Model said. "Obviously we weren't going to be No. 1 since they (Mukwonago) beat us, but we proved that we were the best team."

Two-time state champion Nicolar Rivera (120) pinned Jake Wisinski in 1:09 to cut the Vikings' deficit to 27-26, setting the stage for Wicks' heroics.

"We knew if we stayed the course, there were matches we could win," Spilde said. "We were forced to be a little more aggressive to try to get bonus points."

Wisinski, who finished sixth at the individual state tournament, took Rivera down early in the match, but the Stoughton sophomore fought back to finish his season 51-0 and remain undefeated in his prep career at 109-0.

"Once I got taken down, my eyes opened up and I got a little upset," Rivera said. "Then I showed him what I could do."

Chance Suddeth (106), Model (152), Luke Mechler (160), Rudy Detweiler (182) and Brooks Empey (220) also won bouts for the Vikings.

Suddeth used an arm bar to pin Brady Wierzbicki in 3:52 and cut Stoughton's deficit to 24-20.

"I've been doing that move since I was really young," Suddeth said. "The only thing I was worried about was beating the clock."

Model, the bronze medalist at 145, finished his season 54-5. He scored two takedowns in the third period to defeat 152-pound sixth-place winner Cole Hansen 4-2.

Mechler, the bronze medalist at 152, finished his junior season 56-2. He scored takedowns at will by using duck-unders against in a 23-8 tech fall over Lucas Benn.

"After I took him down six times and he just laid there, I decided it was time to really start pouring on the takedowns," Mechler said. "I thought if I could score that many points, why not take it."

Detweiler, who qualified for state at 195, dropped down a weight class and came out on top against state qualifier Maximus Berrios. The Stoughton junior scored two takedowns and two back points in the third period to win 8-5.

"He came out strong in the first two periods, but I felt like he got tired," Detweiler said of Berrios. "That allowed me to get on my attacks."

Fresh off an individual state title, Empey (56-1) remained in control throughout a 3-0 win over state qualifier Caleb Willman.

"Being one of the leaders, I should've got more points for my team," Empey said. "It was frustrating, but I had to get over it and support my teammates."

Trent Carpenter (138) started the dual for the Vikings, but was pinned in 1:18 by Devin Lawrence. Braeden Whitehead (145) closed his Stoughton career with a 17-10 loss to state qualifier Nate Stokhaug.

Luke Spilde (170) and Brandt Spilde (182) each lost by pin to state qualifiers. In a rematch of a first-round state match, heavy-weight Griffin Empey lost 7-3 against fourth-place finisher Tyler Pitcel. Ethan Peterson (113) lost 5-1 to Cody Goebel.

Stoughton 42, Kaukauna 19

The Vikings started the dual against the second-seeded Galloping Ghosts (13-3) on the right foot by winning the coin flip, breaking a string of bad luck that allowed them to lock in the lineups.

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