

Sports

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Wrestling: Smith-Foot, Kennedy finish seventh at State

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Macon - Union County senior heavyweight Eli Smith-Foot won two matches following a first-round bye, falling one victory shy of competing for fifth place at last week's Class AA State Wrestling Championships.

Freshman Brooke Kennedy also turned in a top-seven performance in the female State tournament, reaching the fourth round of the consolation bracket despite competing against all seven classifications.

Meanwhile, junior Brady Guild picked up three wins at 160 pounds, battling his way to the fourth round of the consolation bracket before dropping a decision to a familiar opponent in Fannin County's McKay Turner - the eventual third-place finisher.

After an opening-round win, junior Kanon Abercrombie followed suit at 120 pounds, securing a pair of pinfalls in the fourth round.

Freshman Anderson Clouse (113) also reached the fourth round of the consolation bracket, splitting his first two matches, then winning two more bouts in the consols.

Senior Trevor Guild picked up a pair of victories at 152 pounds, falling in the third round of the consols. Likewise, sophomore Damon Wallace won his opening bout at 138, then added one more victory in the consolation brackets before suffering a pinfall in his fourth match of the day.

Zander Rotko (126) finished the tournament with a 1-2 record, winning the



Senior heavyweight Eli Smith-Foot (along with Brooke Kennedy) recorded the best State finish by a Union County wrestler in program history, placing seventh last week in Macon. Photo/Todd Forrest

first match but dropping the next two. James Whisenhunt dropped his two bouts after earning a tough draw in the consols, facing off with the eventual fourth-place finisher in the second round of the consolation bracket.

Along with the eight men who qualified for State, Union County also sent two females, sophomore Shelby Agacinski and Kennedy, who came away with two wins and one win, respectively.

At 197, Kennedy lost to Effingham County's Mia Barnacki in the first round but bounced back with a pinfall victory over Osborne's Kaylee Nicholson. Her day came to an end thanks to a pinfall by Franklin County's Kennia Martineez.

At 152 pounds, Agacinski lost an 11-6 decision to

Walton's Jordan Chesser in the opening round despite ending the first period in a 4-4 tie. In the consols, she pinned Creekside's Shanaya Hardy, then defeated Cartersville's Paige Nelson, who was unable to continue due to injury. Kiera Johnson of Jordan pinned Agacinski in the next round.

Riding high off the first Area Championship in program history and earning a first-round bye as a result, Smith-Foot pinned Dade County's Dakota Whitmore, sending him to the State Championship quarterfinals.

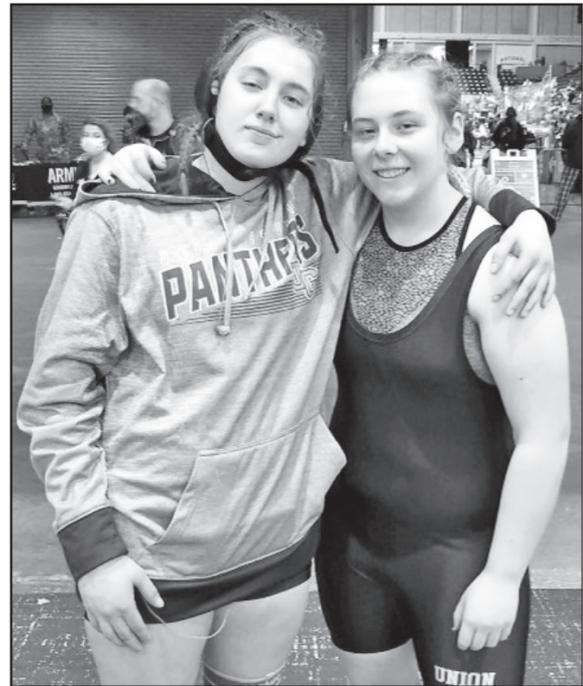
After falling in the quarters to the eventual State champ, Vidalia's Jaylin Burns, Smith-Foot bounced back with a pin over Swainsboro's Matthew Hancock. Unfortunately, Smith-Foot's day came to an end at the hands of East

Laurens' Kaleb Cannon.

Brady Guild pinned Gordon Lee's Kendall Lively to kickoff his tournament on a high note. The second round saw the 160-pound junior suffer a tough 10-7 decision to Lovett's Finn Bresnahan. Tied 2-2 after the first period, Brady Guild fell behind 6-2 in the second, but his late rally fell short.

Brady Guild pinned Cook County's Ignacio Arredondo, then led wire-to-wire in a 15-9 decision over Harlem's Jonah Sanders. His day ended in a 14-4 decision to Turner - who only surrendered four points combined over his final three matches.

Abercrombie's tournament began with a pinfall of Oglethorpe County's Austin Cort. Dade County's Garrett Dunn pinned Abercrombie



Shelby Agacinski (left) and Brooke Kennedy (right) combined to win three matches in the girls tournament. Photo/submitted

in round two but the junior responded with a pinfall over Temple's Jackson Andrews.

After defeating Swainsboro's R'Tavian Green, Abercrombie fell in the next round to the eventual fourth-place finisher Jardarr Goolsby of Northeast.

Clouse took out Elbert's Carter Flemming with a pinfall. Eventual State Runner-up, Coosa's Travis Pelfrey pinned Clouse in round two, but Clouse rebounded with a pin of Bremen's Brock Bullock and a pinfall over Monticello's Gabe Evans. Clouse's day ended with a loss to Lamar County's Hunter Hammock.

Trevor Guild began with a pinfall victory over Elbert's Jamaze Hall. A round-two loss to Dade's Zac Smith sent the senior to the consols, where

he scored a pinfall over Berrien's Drake Jones. However, his tournament came to a close via Jeff Davis' Deivon McMillon.

Wallace pinned Westside's Zion Corral but lost to defending champ, and eventual runner-up, Al Coy of Lovett in the second round.

After pinning Temple's Lewis Ward in the consols, Wallace was eliminated by Roman Coley of East Laurens.

Rotko pinned Gordon Lee's Latrez Tanksley, but dropped his second-round bout to Lovett's Josh Robinson - the eventual runner-up. During the second round of the consolation bracket, Dodge County's Blaine Pritchett ended Rotko's tournament with a pinfall.



Despite entering the Area 8 Tournament shorthanded, (minus three likely State qualifiers) Union County Wrestling advanced a program-record eight men to last week's State Championships in Macon. In addition, UCHS capped off the wrestling program's first decade in existence by reaching its very first State Duals Tournament in late-January. Then, in February, not only did a program-best eight men reach State (topping last year's mark of five State qualifiers), Union County sent its first two females to the State Championships. Of the 10 Union County wrestlers that competed at State, nine won at least one match and six recorded two-plus victories. Photo/Todd Forrest