

Four locals prepare to wrestle at state

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After proving their worth at the North Coast Sections Championships in Fremont last weekend, four local wrestlers will take the next step at the California Interscholastic Federation State Wrestling Championships today and Saturday in Bakersfield.

Three NCS champions, Arcata's Trent Stevenson (140 pounds), McKinleyville's Mike Larson (189) and Del Norte's Roger McCovey (285), along with teammate Jake Young (215), will be competing for state medals.

Stevenson will face Vacaville's Aaron Hendricks in his first match today.

Arcata head coach Robert England said that while Stevenson has already defeated Hendricks, he should expect his opponent to be a formidable challenge.

"It's not necessarily Hendricks' skill, but the fact that he didn't take any chances and stayed in good position while making the match longer," England said. "He's a tough competitor and for almost four minutes it was a 0-0 match."

England added that for Stevenson to have success at the championships, he must be confident and wrestle the full two minutes of each round to avoid becoming complacent.?

Larson will wrestle Santiago's Travis Meservy in his first match.

McKinleyville head coach Virgil Moorehead said he believes Larson can place if he can rise up to the level of competition and take advantage of his good position in his weight bracket.

"He's been at the big two-day tournaments before," Moorehead said of Larson. "He's very confident in his abilities. He just needs to perform and wrestle smart."

Moorehead added that he wants Larson to continue to be as aggressive and physical as possible and avoid putting himself in bad situations.

"That combination is hard to beat," Moorehead said. "And that's why he is where he's at right now."

Young, who was fourth at NCS after being defeated by Alhambra's Jeff McGee in the third-place match, will face Temecula Valley's Javier Hernandez in his opener. The winner is scheduled to face Modoc's Jeff Wood.

Del Norte assistant head coach Clinton Schaad said while he views Young as a wildcard, he still expects Young to wrestle to his full potential

Young's teammate McCovey, meanwhile, will wrestle against Bakersfield's Anthony Padilla in his first match.

Schaad said anyone who can beat McCovey should be commended due to how locked in McCovey has looked recently.

"If he gets beat, hats off to the kid that beats him," Schaad said. "Roger isn't going to make any mistakes."

For more information about the CIF championships and to view full brackets, visit **www.cifstate.org**.

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