

Local wrestlers excel on first day of states

Published: Mar 1 2008, 12:33 AM

Category: **Sports**

Topic: **Prep wrestling**

Two of the four local wrestlers competing at the California Interscholastic Federation State Wrestling Championships in Bakersfield Friday advanced to today's semifinals.

Arcata's Trent Stevenson had an excellent first day.

Stevenson, competing at 140 pounds, defeated Vacaville's Aaron Hendricks, California SS's Matthew Melendez and Bakersfield's Jonah Cruz in his three matches and will face Natomas' Vlad Dombroski today.

Arcata head coach Robert England said Stevenson wrestled a smart match versus Cruz, who knocked him out in last year's state championships, but his work isn't done yet.

"Without a doubt, we're very proud of his accomplishments," England said. "But he still wants to win two more."

Stevenson will be Arcata's first state placer since 1987 after Saturday's matches are completed.

McKinleyville's Mike Larson (189) defeated Santiago's Travis Meservy and Marsyville's James Chandless, but fell short against the second-ranked wrestler in the state, Calvary Chapel's Caleb Gerl, by a score of 8-6.

McKinleyville head coach Virgil Moorehead said Larson was very close to winning the match, but was hampered by a few takedowns by Gerl.

"Those takedowns cost us the match," Moorehead said. "But we've got to win one (on Saturday) to get into the medal round."

Del Norte's Jake Young (215) was eliminated from the tournament by Northview's Robert Alcantar by a score of 7-6 and finished 2-2 overall.

Young's tournament was highlighted by a victory over Alhambra's Jeff McGee, who had defeated him three times this season, including for third-place at the North Coast Section Wrestling Championships last weekend.

"Jake got the best of him this time," said Del Norte assistant coach Clinton Schaad.

Young's teammate, Roger McCovey (285), defeated Rancho Buena Vista's Trent Smith 5-1 and will face Norte Vista's Willie Hernandez today.

Schaad said McCovey moved well against Smith and will need to do more of the same against Hernandez.

“He needs to get good angles and use his speed to his advantage,” Schaad said.

© 2008 The Eureka Reporter. All rights reserved.