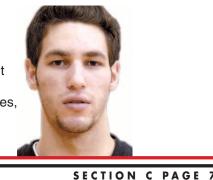
McCoy, the only underclassman in starting lineup. leads the Wildcats in scorseven rebounds in a pivotal ing (16.4) and is second in

MALE ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

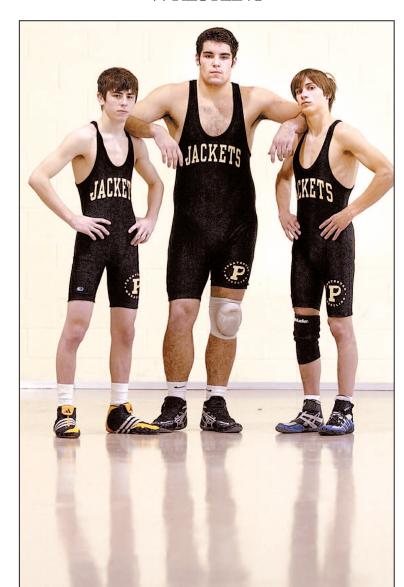
Name: Mike Dhondt School: Perrysburg Class: Senior Sport: Basketball

The 6-0 guard scored 28 points in an 89-84 NLL overtime loss Friday at Southview, then set a school single-game record with 41 points in an 84-47

victory Saturday over Bellevue. Dhondt, who hit 13 3-pointers (9 vs. Bellevue) in the two games, lifted his season scoring average to 23.4.



Wrestling



Perrysburg wrestlers Tony Rodriguez, left, Dave Wyper and Noah Zyduck are all ranked No. 1 in their respective weight classes in the area coaches poll.

high school, and this late start kept

him off the varsity team as a fresh

man. His sophomore season was cut

That year, the 6-6 Wyper had

But this setback sent Wyper a

trimmed from 295 pounds to below

the 275 heavyweight maximum,

and had just placed second in the

message — if he wanted to wrestle

he had to turn things around in

the classroom. Wyper says he has

lifted his cumulative GPA from

whole lot my freshman and soph

omore years," Wyper admitted.

"My parents were always hassling

me about doing my homework

His reward was a 36-13 record

down to 255 pounds, Wyper's goal

Wyper said.

"It's been a huge leap for me,"

"Because of what's happened,"

Bucher said, "it's led Dave to climb

a ladder, success-wise. He worked

and worked to get to the point

where, now, he's a dominating guy.

Academically, athletically and

socially, he's grown tremendously."

City League

SCORING LEADERS

Jena Blosser, St. Ursula

Jana Wilsch, Libbey Ellen Herman, Central

Stephany Johnson, Bowsher Octavia Griswold, Rogers

Mallory Myers, Notre Dame

Olivia Griswold, Rogers

Olivia Griswold, Rogers Nina Mlynek, Clay Vicki Brown, Start Octavia Griswold, Rogers Jana Wilsch, Libbey Ellen Herman, Central Linda Ubokudom, Whitmer Melinda Franco, Bowsher Lindsey McDonald, Rogers Krabia Cengar Libbes

REBOUND

Nina Mlynek, Clay Jessica Minnfield, Central

leather Wiczynski, Notre Dam

G PTS AVG 9 234 26.0

G RBS AVG 6 72 12.0 9 98 10.9

Not reporting:

Northview
Perrysburg
Bowling Green
Southview
Maumee
Rossford
Springfield
Anthony Wayne

Voodward, Waite, Scott

NLL

REBOUNDING LEADERS

SLL

Liz Tarisey, SouthNew Lindsay Vannett, Bowling Green Julia Dempster, Northview Michelle Trumbull, Springfield Niki McCoy, Northview

G RBS AVG 9 101 11.2 8 88 11.0

NWOAL

Archbold Patrick Henry Evergreen Swanton Wauseon Liberty Center Bryan Montpelier Delta

"I didn't really concentrate

around 1.4 to above 2.9.

PIT when his season stopped.

short by academic ineligibility.

Perrysburg trio take down foes

With 14 different weight classes in high school wrestling, competitors obviously come in all shapes and sizes.

At Perrysburg this winter, the top three wrestlers, according to their respective No. 1 individual rankings in the area coaches poll, are at near opposite ends of the size spectrum. This trio also represents a diversity in their backgrounds and

Despite their differences, junior 112-pounder Tony Rodriguez (23-6), senior 119-pounder Noah Zyduck (21-3) and senior heavyweight Dave Wyper (24-2) all have the same aspiration — to maxi-

mize their success on the mat. and it finally sank in. I started doing Two things that distinguish my work and getting the grades. Rodriguez are his intelligence and last year, including qualifying for and his preparation. He ranks third in going 2-2 at the state meet. Now his class academically with a gradepoint average just under 4.4, and his work ethic, according to Perrysburg coach Jeff Bucher, is top shelf.

Rodriguez's commitment to excellence has endured despite his battle, for more than a year, with crohn's disease and its related digestive-tract ulcers. "There's some pain and it's not

fun to deal with, but I don't think it really affects my wrestling too much," Rodriguez said. "There's a lot worse [health issues] out there and I'm not going to let it get me

Rodriguez was a Northern Lakes League and Division I sectional champion a year ago

"Tell Tony something and that's what he's going to do," Bucher said. 'You get his best every day and he brings a great attitude. His intelligence pays off. When he's in a match you can see him thinking things through and making good choices."

Zyduck, an NLL and sectional champion in 2003, has also paid his dues. He began wrestling in third grade and has been a spring and summer tournament regular since. Last summer he traveled to Bulgaria on a national youth team that competed in a Greco-Roman meet. "The more [competitive] mat

time you get, the better wrestler you're going to be," said Zyduck, who was first in the Perrysburg Invitational Tournament (PIT) last Saturday. "You know situations better than other people. The Bulgaria trip was a great experience. I only went 1-4, but I learned a lot." "Noah enjoys competing more

than anything," Bucher said. "Practice he doesn't quite enjoy so much, but when its time for a match he's

Wyper never wrestled before

BOYS BASKETBALL

High-flying 5 Monclova Christian gains respect, wins with few players

espite having as many freshmen dress for the poys varsity basketball team as sophomores, uniors and seniors combined, Monclova Christian Academy believes its prayers have been answered this season

The Thunder is on a major roll, just two seasons removed from a 3-18 inaugural campaign in which the majority of its games came against junior var-

Monclova Christian has opened its third season by winning seven of its first ten games, including notable victories over Swanton and Seneca East. Not bad for a team that employs an ironman starting five, with few substitutions, and has been a member of

y were embarrassed the first year. "We're a small school, but we've shown that we the Ohio High School Athletic can come out and play with the rest. We've done that Association for just two years. "We're pioneering a pro-

With approximately

Exactly how Monclova Christian has succeeded is not typical. For instance, tryouts for the varsity have gram," coach Russ Merrin been non-existent during the past three seasons. "If you come out you're on the team," said Matt we feel no one is going to

Velazquez, a 6-1 junior who leads the Thunder in scor-

20 boys and 20 girls enrolled in the entire high

school, Monclova Christian is among the smallest

schools in Division IV. By comparison, Swanton

has 189 boys in the upper three grades alone, and

nothing into the (Very) Little Engine That Could.

also playing well enough to garner a Buckeye Chris-

tian League championship. Based upon the Thun-

der's start to this season, expectations are to exceed

rin, the coach's son, a 6-4 junior who is averaging 19 points and a team-leading 11 rebounds. "We real-

Basically, in no time flat, the Thunder rose from

The Thunder finished last year at 13-7 while

"We're gaining some respect," said Derek Mer-

Seneca East 126.

last season's win total.

ing with 21.7 points a contest.

ONCLOVA



Monclova Christian's varsity players are joined by junior varsity players as they get pumped up for a game. The JV players are used as substitutes in the varsity game.

The Thunder relies on its three seniors — 5-10 "It's all still kind of new to me," said Russell, Brian Boes, 6-2 Tony Russell and 6-4 Josh Rose — and who transferred from Bowling Green to Monclova juniors Merrin and Velazquez to log most of the Christian two years ago. "To start out on varsity minutes in each game. Two of the seniors had never and never having played basketball before, I thought that was kind of cool. It was all confusing at first. I played organized basketball until last year. had no idea of what was going on." Meanwhile, the bench is made up of even more

inexperience — one sophomore and six freshmen. The underclassmen also make up the Thunder's Merrin is limited in the number of substitutions he can make in a game based upon OHSAA rules that limit students from playing in more than five quar-

ters of basketball on a given day. Generally, Merrin doesn't substitute in the first quarter, which then allows him to use his nonstarters as subs for the rest of the game, although none can play in more than one quarter.

A lack of players also hinders his coaching options. Applying full-court pressure is out of the question. He keeps it simple

On defense the Thunder plays some man-to-man,

but it also employs a half-court zone to prevent players from becoming overly fatigued. On offense the team has relied heavily on Velazquez and Merrin — the best and most experienced players. Still, should any of the starters end up in foul trou-

ble it creates a major breakdown. "That's the worst-case scenario for us," coach Merrin said. "When we get in foul trouble we don't have that many players to go to other than the fresh-

Nonetheless, the Thunder continues to roll. "It's good to finally taste success," Derek Merrin

said. "The hard work is finally paying off." Russ Merrin, also the church pastor, worked as a high school coach more than 20 years ago before being called into the ministry. He has taken on the double-duty task of pastor and coach with open arms

the past three years.

"I enjoy the kids and enjoy basketball. I don't have a problem separating the two," the coach said. "I'm a little hoarse sometimes on Sundays, but as long as I don't get called for a technical in a game then I think my testimony is still good."

THE BLADE/JEREMY WADSWORTH Monclova Christian coach Russ Merrin waits to take the court with his varsity team of Derek Merrin, left, Josh Rose, Matt Velazquez, Tony Russell and Brian Bose. The school has just 20 boys and 20 girls.

Nотевоок

Bedford among state's best in volleyball again

Titans make waves

head volleyball coach at Bedford High School, Jodi Manore has cultivated, and come to expect, excellence in her Kicking Mules. Her 1998 and 2001 teams won Michigan Class A (big school) state championships, and this year's squad is off to a 25-3 start and a No. 4 ranking in the latest state poll.

Led by senior right-side hitter Lauren Keiser, who Manore said has been the Mules' most consistent all-

Through her 19 seasons as

and sophomore /eronica Rood. he team's leader percentage, Bedford, a state semifinalist last season, has lost only

ranked above it in the state poll — No. 1 East Kentwood, No. 2 Fraser and No. 3 Grand

The Mules, 3-0 in the Southeastern Conference, face an SC challenge tonight against Chelsea, the only conference team to beat the Mules last year, and has a bigger test Jan. 24 at the 24-team East Kentwood Invitational. That tournament field includes perennial powers Portage Northern and Portage Central, both top-10 ranked

BASKETBALL

1,000 and counting Fostoria junior guard Jacob



Jacob per game. His 6-5 Diebler er, Ion, is second on the team in both categories (16.7 points, 6.7

Chapman honored

Justin Chapman, a former Rogers and Wayne State University basketball standout who died last summer in a Detroit-area boating accident, will be honored during the Martin Luther King Jr. Classic Monday at Libbey

The most valuable player at the 1999 MLK Classic, Chapman was a standout football and basketball player for Rogers. He led Wayne State in scoring (13.1) and was among the team leaders in rebounds and blocked shots for his 2002-03 senior season.

"He was a tremendous young man," said Rogers football coach Rick Rios. "He was a pretty good athlete but, more importantly, he was a top-notch person."

The Northwest Ohio Black Media Association has created a sportsmanship award named in Chapman's honor. The formal dedication will come at halftime of the 3 p.m. Libbey-Trotwood Madison game on Monday.

SWIMMING

St. John's Jesuit coach Andy Dugan has plenty to be pleased

The Titans (5-1 in dual meets), who face Erie Mason tonight, are coming off a close victory over a strong Northview team. It required St. John's 400-meter freestyle relay team of Greg Szmanski, David Braunreuther, David Fournier and Stott Dittemore to win the final race with a time of 4:01.

"It was more of a mental win for us than anything," Dugan said. "To win, it really was a confidence ouilder for us. They should have very positive thoughts for themselves going into other meets."

Fournier, a senior, ranks fifth in the state in the 50-yard free with a school-record time of 21.90. David Colturi, a freshman, ranks third in the state among divers after posting a season-best 281 points on six dives.

HOCKEY

Icy hot Veteran coach Dan DeWitt's

Bowling Green Bobcats are on a roll. Their 2-0 win Saturday at Parma Padua Franciscan was their 15th straight victory, avenging the only emish on a 17-0-1 record. Bowl ing Green is 6-0-1 against teams from the Cleveland area's top division, including a win over defend-

ing state champ University School The Bobcats, 6-0-0 in the top division of the Northwest Hockey Conference, have been led by senior forwards Kevin Rawlik (26 goals, 13 assists), Steve Culbertson (16, 11) and Casev Horner (11, 16).

Senior goalie Dan Marcson has a 1.37 goals-against average and a .937 save percentage.

GYMNASTICS

Gym dandies Catie Wolf and Lindy Curlis led the way as Findlay ran away with

the team title at the 19-team Southview Invitational Wolf won the vault and the floor, while Curlis finished second in the bars and the balance beam on her way to a second-place fin-

ish in the all-around. won the all-around by taking first place in the bars and the beam.

THE DOCKET

WRESTLING

■ Tomorrow and Saturday: The Mary E. Kerr Memorial Invitational wrestling tournament begins with preliminary competition at 4 p.m. tomorrow at the Waite High School field

In its 28th year as one of the area's top regular-season invitationals, this year's tournament features a 26-team field, with schools that sent a combined 42 wrestlers to the state tournament last year.

Included in the field are Clay, Delta, Franklin Heights, Galloway Westland, Genoa, Grove City, Hilliard Darby, Libbey, Lorain Southview, Massillon Washington, Maumee, Mid-dlefield Cardinal, Montpelier, Mount Vernon, Newbury, Northwood, Perry, Reynoldsburg Sandusky, Scott, Start, Southview, Springfield, host Waite, Whitmer and Wood-

The tournament resumes Saturday at 10 a.m. with championship-bracket semifinals and consolation-bracket matches, and concludes with first, third and fifth-place matches at

SWIMMING/DIVING ■ Tomorrow: The Sylvania Invitational takes place at Northview, with diving at 4 p.m. and swimming at 6 p.m. Swimmers from as many as 16 schools are expected to com-

> ■ Saturday: Napoleon will host the Greater Buckeye Conference Championships. The meet is scheduled to start at

GYMNASTICS ■ Saturday: Central vs

Southview and Notre Dame vs. Northview at Sunrise Gymnastics Academy at 4:30 p.m ■ Jan. 21: Southview and

Notre Dame at Perrysburg - at Perrysburg Gymynastics Club at 7 p.m.; Northview and Bowsher at Maumee - at South Toledo YMCA at 7 p.m.

FLASHBACK

■ 30 YEARS AGO: On Jan. 18, 1974, Jeff Shaneck set the Genoa single-game scoring record with 42 points in a 94-71 basketball win over Gibsonburg. All-Ohio player Ron Hammye added 20 for the Comets, who would go on that season under coach Dave Hitchen to reach the Class AA state semifinals.

Brondes Ford is proud to be a sponsor of

> For the best in local sports.

*** If you try it you'll like it!

419-473-1411

Reynolds at Dussel • Maumee • Ohio 419-887-1511



Jackie Emmenecker, Toledo Christian Brittany Bogart, Northwood Erin Steinbeck, Danbury Amanda Agler, Northwood Megan Jamieson, Ottawa Hills Charlotte Jones, Emmanuel Baptist Abby LaVigne, Swanton Kara Buehrer, Archbold Sarah Grime, Archbold Kendra Stahl, Archbold G RBS AVG Abby LaVigne, Swanton Leslie Stong, Evergreen Kelly Beer, Evergreen Chelsea White, Swanton Tarah Dominique, Swanton Jessica Davis, Delta Val Moxim, Wauseon Clyde Port Clinton REBOUNDING **EADERS** TAAC Cardinal Stritch
Ottawa Hills
Danbury
Toledo Christian
Emmanuel Baptis
Maumee Valley Jamie Flick, Northwood
Charlotte Jones, Emmanuel Baptis
Andria Barlage, Toledo Christian
Frittany Bogart, Northwood
Kristen Ameling, Cardinal Stritch
Jackie Emmenecker, Toledo Chris
Alissa Toth, Toledo Christian
Rachel Garber, Ottawa Hills
Julie Lorkowski, Ottawa Hills
Jumanda Agler, Northwood
Kelcee Evans, Cardinal Stritch
Kim Zivan Daburur. **G PTS AVG** 9 160 17.8 Not reporting: Elmwood, Lakota

Sandusky Bay Conference Margaretta Sandusky Perkins Huron Edison Sandusky St. Mary Midland Athletic League

Buckeye Border Conference New Riegel Carey Mohawk Hopewell-Loudon Fremont St. Joseph Old Fort North Baltimore Tiffin Calvert Bettsville Seneca East Fostoria St. Wende Blanchard Valley Conf.

Fayette Stryker Edon Hilltop Pettisville North Central **Other Northwest Ohio** Ottawa-Glandorf Fostoria Findlay Napoleon Bellevue Defiance

Overall 10-1 9-2 7-3 6-5 5-3 4-6 COMING TOMORROWS ■ Boys basketball standings and

Green Meadows Conference

Putnam County League

Overall 10-0 7-3 9-2 7-3 6-2 5-5 4-4 2-8

9-0 7-4 6-5 3-9 1-7

Fairview
Wayne Trac
Hicksville
Ayersville
Antwerp
Tinora
Edgerton
Holgate

Snow. Sleet. Ice. (Is your car ready for winter?) Winterize Now! Only Complete Oil Change with FREE Tire Rotation **On Any 4 Tires** cludes FREE Alignment Check only 139 99 Cars yVoodville 37/29 Williston Ro. Sylvania 5832 Moorroe St West Toledo 2779 W Central North Towne 222 W Alexis Franklin Park 5022 Monroe St Spring Meadows 6834 Centers Dr Bowling Green 999 S Main St Monroe, Michigan 1986 N Telegraph Includes Complete Inspection Ask about 90 DAYS SAME AS CASH Truck & Farm Ctr 532 Illinois Ave

WEEKEND HIGHLIGHTS Girls basketball: Rogers vs. Whitmer, midnight

AUTO SERVICE CENTERS 🚤

Boys basketball: Central Catholic vs. St. John's, 6:30 p.m Boys basketball: Libbey vs. Start, 8:30 p.m. (live) Boys basketball: Springfield vs. Perrysburg, midnight College basketball: Minnesota at Ohio State, noon (live) College basketball: Owens CC

vomen vs. Edison State, 8 p.m. College basketball: Owens CC men vs. Edison State, 10 p.m. Boys basketball: Whitmer vs. Bedford, midnight

Girls basketball: St. Ursula vs. Southview, noon

Boys basketball: Libbey vs. Dayton Trotwood, midnight