

Bulldogs sweep duals



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Lake Mills junior Noah Irons grabs Thursday his opponent from Riceville-St. Ansgar in the match for the 145-pound weight class. Irons got the pin to mark his 100th career victory. – Heather Rule/Albert Lea Tribune

Noah Irons earns 100th career victory

It was a milestone night for Lake Mills junior wrestler Noah Irons. He checked off career victory No. 100 with a pin in the 145-weight class dual against Riceville-St. Ansgar Thursday.

Hitting the 100-mark had been a goal for Irons.

“I think I set it my freshman year, ... and at that moment I didn’t realize that I’d get it in my junior year,” Irons said. “That makes it more special.

“It means a lot to reach it as a junior.”

Irons’ personal record for the season is 33-1. Lake Mills coach Alex Brandenburg said reaching 100 wins as a junior is pretty impressive, and he hopes Irons can reach 150.

At its final regular season home meet Thursday, Lake Mills won all three duals, beating Garner-Hayfield/Ventura 72-6, Riceville-St. Ansgar 43-25 and last year’s state dual champion Nashua-Plainfield 37-30. The Bulldogs are ranked No. 4 in Class 1A and improved to 27-2 overall.

Irons said he knew he was at 99 total wins going in to his match, but he didn’t let any pressure get to him. It only took 1:29 to pin his opponent.



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Lake Mills junior Noah Irons stands victorious Thursday after pinning his Riceville-St. Ansgar opponent for career victory No. 100. Irons received a standing ovation from the crowd. – Heather Rule/Albert Lea Tribune

“I just went into it like any other match,” Irons said.

With the win behind him, Irons also saw his undefeated season come to an end later in the night. He had a tough test during the dual against Nashua-Plainfield. Irons went up against senior Cody Marks, who’s ranked No. 1 in Iowa at the 145-pound level.

The Bulldog student section was on its feet for the entire six minutes as the two elite wrestlers battled on the mat. Irons ended up being defeated by decision. It was the first loss of the season for Irons.

Looking ahead to the rest of the season, Irons has other goals to turn to, like making it to the state tournament. But one thing stood out for him more immediately: To dual against Marks again.

“First off, I want to get revenge,” Irons said.

For mom Roxanne Irons in the bleachers, it was a pretty exciting night and she’s extremely proud of her son’s 100-win milestone, she said.

“Noah’s been wrestling since he was 3,” Roxanne Irons said. “It’s been a passion of his.”

Noah’s dad Gary Irons, an assistant wrestling coach for Lake Mills, was the one who developed an interest in the sport, Roxanne Irons said. The interest grew into a family affair; the Irons have three boys who wrestle.

“Noah just took to it,” Roxanne Irons said.

Part of Noah Irons’ passion and commitment to the sport has come because it wasn’t something he thought he had to do.

“I grew up with it,” Noah Irons said. “I think that helps. When I was younger, my parents really didn’t force it on me. They kind of let me choose.”



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Lake Mills junior Noah Irons wrestles Thursday the No. 1-ranked wrestler in the 145-weight class in the state of Iowa, Cody Marks of Nashua-Plainfield. Irons lost the match by decision. – Heather Rule/Albert Lea Tribune

It seems he chose wisely. It’s pretty obvious to his coach as well that wrestling is “kind of his main love,” Brandenburg said.

“He’s really dedicated,” Brandenburg said. “He’s a really good wrestler on the top position. Gets a lot of pins.”

The Bulldogs had their share of pins as a team Thursday, with four against Garner-Hayfield/Ventura, six against Riceville-St./Ansgar and five in the final dual against Nashua-Plainfield. In that dual with Nashua-Plainfield, the Bulldogs jumped out to a 37-6 lead before briefly letting their opponents back within close range.

“I knew the dual was going to be close,” Brandenburg said. “Nashua-Plainfield has been wrestling well as of late, so it was nice to beat them.”

For the Bulldogs, junior Lincoln Boehmer (120 pounds), freshman Noah Greenfield (126), sophomore Brady Schmidt (132), senior Andy Dahle (138) and senior Ben Irons (182) all finished the night undefeated.

Lake Mills travels to North Butler Saturday for a tournament.

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