

## Wrestling

# Redemption for Wozniak

Hanson, Wozniak take home Big Eight Conference titles

BY MARK NESBITT  
Sports editor

The last time Verona senior Cael Wozniak was scheduled to wrestle Janesville Parker's Treveon Sanda in the Big Eight Showcase, he suffered a dislocated shoulder in the first period leading to an injury default and robbing him of a chance of a win.

Wozniak at 182 pounds got a chance at redemption on Saturday, Feb. 5, in the Big Eight Conference tournament, at Verona Area High School.

Wozniak pinned Sanda in 3 minutes, 34 seconds in the title match.

"I was still confident I could beat him," Wozniak said. "There is always a thought in the back of your head because last time I got injured. I was glad I got to wrestle him for an entire match. It felt really good to win."

Both Wozniak and Verona senior Jay Hanson at heavyweight won titles to lead the Wildcats to a fifth-place finish at the conference tournament.

Wozniak (31-8) went 3-0 and rolled to his second conference title in his prep career. Two years ago, he won a conference championship at 145. After a first-round bye, Wozniak pinned Madison East's Bryan Guevara in 4:51. In a semifinal match, he scored a 15-4 major decision over Sun



Photo by Mark Nesbitt

Verona senior Cael Wozniak won the Big Eight Conference championship at 182-pounds on Saturday, Feb. 5, in Verona. Wozniak pinned Madison East's Bryan Guevara in 4 minutes, 51 seconds.

Prairie's Jaxon Johnson.

"I'm feeling really good in my ability to do well at regionals," he said.

Hanson (37-2), ranked fourth at heavyweight in the Division 1 Wisconsin Wrestling Online state poll, had two forfeits and then

was dominant in two matches. He pinned Sun Prairie's Kamron Sarbacker in 1 minute, 38 seconds in a semifinal match. Hanson then pinned Janesville Craig's George Greene in 1:24 in the title match.

"He didn't have any competition there," Verona coach Bob

Wozniak said. "Jay is on another level. That will be different in the Stoughton regional."

Verona will compete in the WIAA Division 1 Stoughton regional on Saturday, Feb. 12. There is a chance Hanson could face top-ranked Griffin Empey

of Stoughton. The top four from each weight class will advance to the sectional.

"We are looking forward to the postseason," Bob Wozniak said. "I think we can have anywhere

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## Boys swimming

# Final hurrah for Verona/Mount Horeb

Program's best finish at state was sixth in 2013

BY MARK NESBITT  
Sports editor

The days as a cooperative program for boys swimming between Verona Area High School and Mount Horeb are numbered.

This is the final year of the swimming co-op that has been going strong for 12 years.

That's because Big Eight Conference athletic directors didn't renew a two-year plan for the co-op for 2022-23. The VA/MH boys swim team has 37 swimmers and 29.7% (11) are Mount Horeb High School student-athletes.

"It's pretty frustrating to hear about because my brother will be a junior," said Mount Horeb senior Oscar Best, a three-time state qualifier who owns three school records. "We



File photo

Mount Horeb senior Oscar Best is a three-time state qualifier who owns three school records for the Verona Area/Mount Horeb boys swimming team. This is the final year of the co-op.

don't even have a pool at Mount Horeb. The fact that they are taking the co-op away means they are just taking away opportunities for some kids. It's obviously very unsportsmanlike that they voted like that."

The WIAA has had a co-op team system in place since 1982 to provide more opportunities and increase

participation.

When one high school didn't have enough athletes for a certain sport, a co-op could allow two or more schools to combine to form one program for that sport. The Big Eight Conference and WIAA the past decade have wanted

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## Boys swimming

# Verona Area/Mount Horeb co-op takes fifth place in Big Eight

Wildcats have runner-up finishes in 100 butterfly, 200 medley relay

BY MARK NESBITT  
Sports editor

Despite the fact that some of the Verona Area/Mount Horeb swimmers were tired coming into the meet, the Wildcats turned in seven top-six finishes at the Big Eight Conference meet on Saturday, Feb. 5, at the Frank Vogel Natatorium at Beloit Memorial High School.

The Wildcats' 200-yard medley relay team of seniors Oscar Best, Luke Bennin, Nathan Rozeboom and Max McCartney finished second with a time of 1 minute, 38.31 seconds, 1.7 seconds behind Madison West.

Best took second in the 100 butterfly with a time of 52.08 seconds. Two other VA/MH swimmers finished in the top 15 in the event. Rozeboom finished 14th (56.41) and sophomore Angus Best placed 15th (57.22).

"I was pretty tired this meet and not feeling the best right now," Oscar Best said of the fly. "My goal was just to get through it. I'm hoping to feel a little near 100% next week."

Verona Area/Mount Horeb racked up

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Photo by Mark Nesbitt

Verona Area/Mount Horeb senior Avery Blas swims the backstroke during the 200-yard individual medley on Saturday, Feb. 5, in the Big Eight Conference meet at Beloit Memorial High School.

# Athlete of the Week

## ❖ Cael Wozniak – Senior ❖

Cael Wozniak wrestled his way to a conference championship at the Big Eight Conference tournament last week. The senior won the 182-pound final to help the Verona wrestling team to a fifth-place finish at the conference meet.

For his success, Wozniak has earned Athlete of the Week honors.

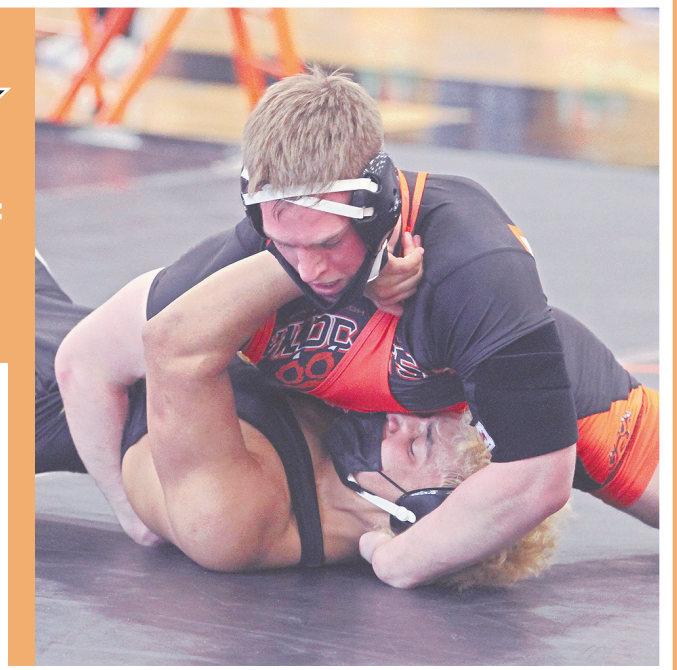
**Matches:** 3

**Record:** 3-0

**Pins:** 2

**Team points:** 29

**Highlight match:** Wozniak earned a pin and major decision win to advance to the 182 final where he beat Janesville Parker's Treveon Sanda at the Big Eight Conference tournament on Saturday, Feb. 5. Wozniak defeated Sanda with a second-period pin 3 minutes, 34 seconds into the match.



### Girls basketball

## Verona extends win streak to 13 games

Verona tops Middleton, Parker in Big Eight action

JACK MILLER  
Sports reporter

The Verona girls basketball team extended its win streak to 13 games with a 49-40 Big Eight Conference victory over Middleton on Saturday, Feb. 5, at Middleton High School.

Reagan Briggs scored a game-high 24 points to lead Verona to a 69-19 Big Eight win over Janesville Parker on Thursday, Feb. 3, at Verona High School.

### Verona 49, Middleton 40

Junior guard Megan Murphy led the way with 17 points for Verona. Junior forward Paige Lambe pitched in with 12 points.

The Wildcats — ranked No. 8 in Division 1 — moved to 16-3 overall and 12-2 in the Big Eight standings with the win.

Sun Prairie defeated Janesville Craig on Thursday to move to 10-2 in the standings. Craig dropped to third with a 10-3 record. Both teams won Big Eight games on Saturday, moving Sun Prairie to 11-2 and Craig to 11-3.

Verona has played its season series with both teams, earning splits against both Sun Prairie and Craig.

### Verona 69, Parker 19

Briggs' 24 points was a game-high, single handedly outscoring Parker. Murphy and Lambe both added 12 points in the victory.

### Big Eight standings

Team	W	L
Verona	12	2
Sun Prairie	11	2
Janesville Craig	11	3
Madison Memorial	9	5
La Follette	8	5
Middleton	7	7
Beloit Memorial	5	9
Madison East	4	10
Janesville Parker	1	13
Madison West	1	13

### Boys hockey

## Verona gets No. 3 sectional seed

Wildcats outdueled by No. 4 Edgewood

BY MARK NESBITT  
Sports editor

The Verona boys hockey team's path of reaching a WIAA state tournament for the fifth straight year became clearer after the WIAA released the seeds and brackets for the regional.

Verona (16-5-1) received a No. 3 seed, the WIAA announced Sunday, Feb. 6. The Wildcats will host Madison La Follette/Madison East in a regional semifinal on Tuesday, Feb. 15. Madison Edgewood (18-3), ranked fourth in the Division 1 Wisconsin Prep Hockey poll, received the top seed in the Sun Prairie sectional. Waunakee (19-3), which beat Verona 5-3 on Dec. 21, is the second seed. When the Warriors beat the Wildcats, Verona junior forward Reece Cordray, the team's leading scorer with 26 goals and 26 assists, was injured and left the game early. If Verona meets Edgewood, it wouldn't come until a sectional semifinal.

"We are playing better hockey the past two weeks," Verona coach Joel Marshall said. "I feel like we are peaking at the right time."

Four of Verona's five losses have come to teams ranked in the top six in the state. Verona lost a nail-biter to Edgewood on Tuesday, Feb. 1. The Wildcats followed that up with a 5-2 victory over Sun Prairie and a 4-1 win over Janesville on Saturday, Feb. 5.

### Edgewood 2, Verona 1

Edgewood senior forward JJ Wiebusch scored one goal and had an assist to propel the Crusaders over the Wildcats 2-1 on Feb. 1, at LaBahn Arena in Madison.

The Crusaders scored two power-play goals. Verona outshot Edgewood 34-23.

"I think Edgewood has the best first line in the state," Marshall said.

The first goal for the Crusaders came from Davis Halbleib on the power play. The puck ricocheted off a blocker's stick and Halbleib buried the shot at 15 minutes, 58 seconds in the first period. Edgewood's JJ Wiebusch and Parker Murn assisted on the goal.



Photo by Evan Halpop

Verona senior forward Brady Stebbeds (3) races down the ice for a shot on goal in the second period against Madison Edgewood on Tuesday, Feb. 1, at the LaBahn Arena in Madison. The Wildcats lost to the Crusaders 2-1.

Wiebusch scored a power-play goal 28 seconds into the second period to give the Crusaders a 2-1 lead. The Wildcats had a golden scoring opportunity on a 5-on-3 in the second period and couldn't convert. Verona outshot Edgewood 13-6 in the second period, but couldn't cash in.

"I personally think we outplayed them," Marshall said. "We had breakaways, shots off the post and wide open shots and we couldn't capitalize. We won most facets of the game except on the scoreboard."

Verona junior forward Jack Marske crashed the net and scored on a rebound from sophomore forward Tre Grignon's shot at 14:35 in the second. The goal was assisted by Grignon and junior defenseman Lars Brotzman.

Verona senior goaltender Owen Hebggen had 21 saves.

### Verona 5, Sun Prairie 2

The Wildcats have been searching to find a way to capitalize more on the power play.

Marshall made an adjustment by shifting Cordray and senior defenseman Tory Tollefson into different locations in the Wildcats' power-play sets. The change paid dividends as Verona went 2-for-5 on the power

play in a win over Sun Prairie on Feb. 3, at the Sun Prairie Ice Arena.

Verona senior forward Easton Simpson netted a hat trick.

"Our downfall this year has been capitalizing on the power play," Marshall said.

Marshall said the Wildcats' conversion rate on the power play is about 18%.

Cordray had one goal and two assists and Tollefson finished with two assists.

The Cardinals struck first on Tyler Wilcenski's goal at 14:38 in the first period. The Wildcats stormed back with four goals in the second period.

Simpson scored a power-play goal on assists from Tollefson and Carson Lindell at 5:01 in the second to tie the game at 1. Sun Prairie's Adrien Krietlow answered with a go-ahead goal four minutes later to give the Cardinals a short-lived 2-1 lead.

The Wildcats responded when Simpson scored his second goal of the period on assists from Cordray and senior forward Anthony Heinrichs at 12:35 to tie the game at 2. Only 12 seconds later, Marske scored the go-ahead goal to give the Wildcats a 3-2 lead they wouldn't relinquish. Simpson

scored his goal on assists from Cordray and Heinrichs at 14:39 to extend the lead to 4-2.

Cordray capped the scoring with a power-play goal 28 seconds into the third period.

Verona outshot Sun Prairie 51-23. Hebggen had 21 saves.

### Verona 4, Janesville 1

Cordray netted a hat trick to lead the Wildcats to a victory over Janesville on Feb. 5, in the conference finale at the Verona Ice Arena.

Verona took control of the game with two goals in the first period. Cordray helped the Wildcats strike first with a goal on assists from Simpson and Tollefson at 9:23 in the first. Simpson scored on assists from Cordray and Heinrichs at 11:47.

Cordray finished with three goals and one assist. Simpson contributed one goal and two assists.

After the Bluebirds scored at the 1:44 mark in the second period, the Wildcats answered. Cordray scored a short-handed goal at 11:26 in the second to give Verona a 3-1 lead. Cordray scored his third goal at 9:33 in the third period.

The Wildcats outshot the Bluebirds 40-24. Hebggen had 23 saves.

## Hurrah: Program has 11 swimmers from MH

Continued from page 7

to balance participation opportunity with competitive equity to eliminate any chance of all-star or super-teams dominating and tarnishing the spirit of the co-op idea.

However, VA/MH has not won a swimming Big Eight title.

“We are not a powerhouse team,” Best said. “We have a co-op, but we are not winning everything because of it. It’s frustrating for my family.”

The WIAA has made moves in other sports to level the playing field. Some large gymnastic co-ops were limited and prohibited from competing at state starting last year. To compete for a state team title, a co-op can’t have more than two schools unless their combined enrollment is less than the largest standalone program in its division.

That’s why the Franklin/Muskego/Oak Creek/Whitnall co-op that had a total enrollment of 5,991 students, which had won seven state championships and three runner-up finishes, was barred from competing at state last season. The gymnastics power since has been divided up into two teams.

The swimming co-op between Verona and Mount Horeb has been a blessing for both schools. They have built relationships and bonds over spaghetti dinners and workouts.

“I see the whole team as one big family,” Verona senior Max McCartney said. “We don’t view it as, oh they are a Mount Horeb kid or Verona.”

The team’s best finish at the WIAA Division I state meet is sixth in 2013.

“Going with a co-op we came in and gave these kids an opportunity because they don’t have a pool,” Verona Area/Mount Horeb coach Bill Wuerger said.

Wuerger said he’s not sure what the numbers will look like with next year’s freshman class.

Big Eight		
Year	Conf.	State
2022	5th	?
2021	4th	7th
2020	5th	8th
2019	4th	9th
2018	4th	14th
2017	4th	20th
2016	4th	11th
2015	4th	27th
2014	4th	12th
2013	4th	6th
2012	4th	13th
2011	4th	19th

“It will be sad, especially for the guys who won’t get a chance to finish their careers with the co-op,” he said.

Wuerger said he’s not sure if Mount Horeb will develop their own boys swim program or co-op with a different school.

“I’m hoping it all works out for them,” Wuerger said. “I don’t like to count on freshmen to have too much of an impact on the team. We will need some other guys to step up and fill some roles.”

It just won’t be the same.

“It’s really sad this is our final year, but it’s also a really nice motivation, knowing we have one more chance to put everything together,” McCartney said. “We want to get a couple more records for the school and the co-op would be a great end to that.”

## Swimming: Bennin takes third in breaststroke

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267 points to finish fifth in the conference meet. Madison West captured the conference title with 480.5 points, well ahead of runner-up Middleton (451.5). Seven VA/MH swimmers were tapered for conference and the other half are tapering for the WIAA Division I Verona sectional on Saturday, Feb. 12, at the Verona Aquatic Center. It will mark the first time the program has ever hosted a boys sectional meet.

“Their taper wasn’t set up for them to peak at this meet,” Verona Area/Mount Horeb coach Bill Wuerger said. “As a result some of them didn’t finish as high as they were seeded. We came in seeded fifth and we finished about where I thought we would.”

Bennin finished third in the 100 breaststroke (1:00.04) and Rozeboom took fourth (1:00.17). Bennin added a fifth-place finish in the 50 free (22.61).

“The competition in the conference definitely pushed them and forced them to swim faster,” Wuerger said. “They had to be on their A game. Hopefully, we can carry that into the big meets the next couple of weeks.”

McCartney took fourth in the 100 freestyle (48.50) and fourth in the 200 free (1:47.35).

“I swam well, but there is a lot to work on with my underwaters,” McCartney said. “It’s been really good racing Charlie (House) of Madison Memorial and



File photo

Mount Horeb senior Nathan Rozeboom swims the 100-yard breaststroke. The boys swimming co-op finished fifth in its final year as a co-op in the Big Eight Conference.

Nick (Chirafisi) of Middleton because they all push me. “For me it wasn’t about time, but more racing the people next to me. This is a preview of what we will see at sectionals.”

McCartney said he’s hoping to see an even bigger drop in time on Feb. 12, in the sectional when he and several other VA/MH swimmers are tapered.

The Wildcats had five of the top 15 in the breaststroke. Junior Alex Gundrum finished ninth (1:02.98) and senior Avery Blas placed 10th (1:03.55) followed by freshman Grayson Neumann in 13th (1:03.79).

“The seven swimmers in the conference taper group all had season-best times in every individual event,” Wuerger said.

In the 200 free relay, Oscar Best teamed with Bennin, Rozeboom and McCartney to take fifth (1:28.93). Best added an eighth-place finish in the 100 backstroke (56.24).

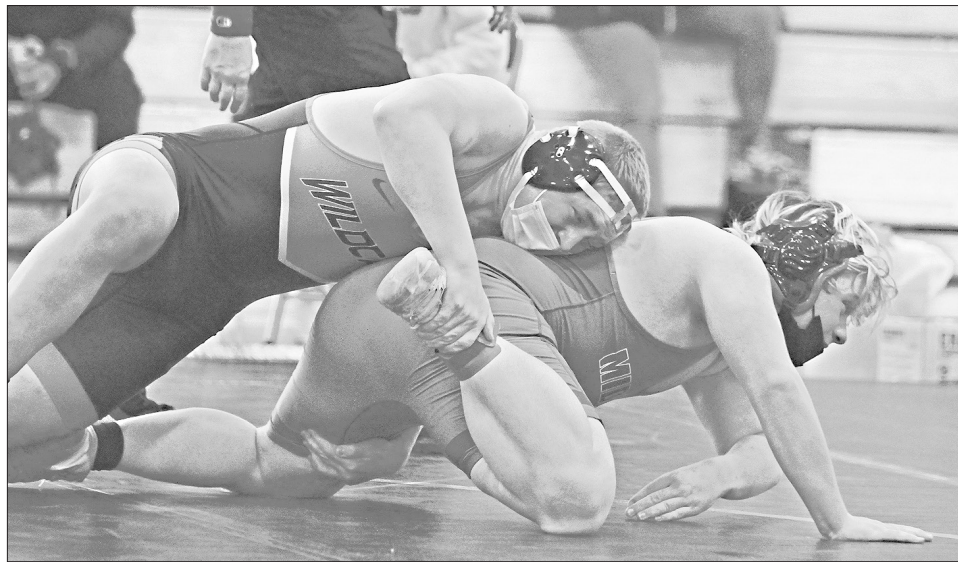
The Wildcats’ 400 free

relay team of Angus Best, sophomore Landyn Drapp, sophomore Calvin Patton and Liam Updegrave placed eighth (3:26.79).

Four swimmers reached their end of the season goal times — sophomore Charlie Olson in the 100 fly, Gundrum in the 100 breaststroke and Oscar Carabell in the 100 free and in the 400 free relay.

Other top-20 finishes for the Wildcats included freshman Evan Lederer taking 12th in the 500 free (5:12.02) and 14th in the 100 back (58.44). Freshman teammate Hunter Franke placed 17th (5:21.77) in the 500 free. Updegrave took 17th (1:54.40) in the 200 free and 18th in the 100 fly (52.05). Olson took 18th in the 100 back (59.49) and junior Dane Sickler placed 20th in the 100 back (59.55). Sophomore Caleb Rost placed 19th (1:55.17) in the 200 free.

“We’ll look for similar results from our sectional taper group at sectionals,” Wuerger said.



Photos by Mark Nesbitt

Verona senior Adam Murphy at 220 pounds looks to turn Middleton’s Gavynn Cooper. Murphy pinned Cooper in 55 seconds and went on to take second place.

## Wrestling: All 11 Wildcat grapplers finish in top six at Big Eight tournament

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from six to seven kids get through to the sectional.”

Verona took fifth in the conference tournament with 147 points. Janesville Parker racked up 202 points to win the conference title, one week after beating the Wildcats 54-24 in the championship match of the Big Eight Showcase. All 11 Wildcat grapplers finished in the top six. Senior Adam Murphy at 220 finished second. Senior Atticus Marse (160) took third place and senior Jimmy Shields (195) placed fourth.

“I thought we would be in the top three,” Bob Wozniak said.

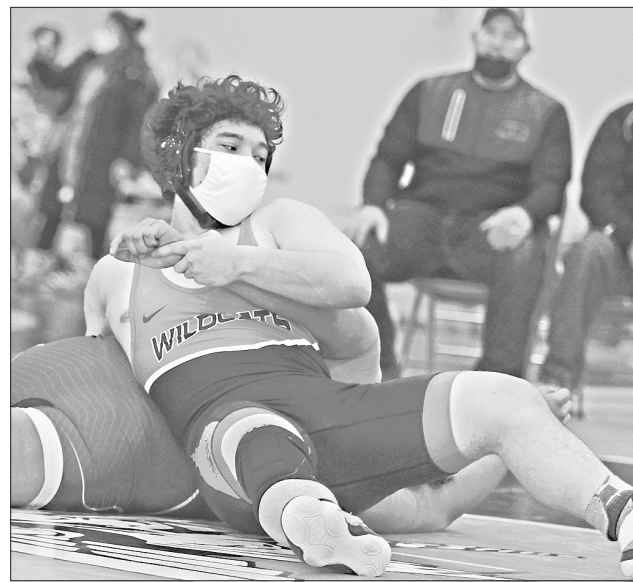
Verona had three wrestlers out with injuries and Wozniak said some of the teams were so depleted that the top teams in the conference had wrestlers score more points than anticipated with some weight classes not being filled. The 113-pound weight class had just three competitors and Madison West had just one wrestler competing.

“If we would have had those three we would have scored 20 or more points and been more in the running,” he said.

Murphy (27-9) received a first-round bye. He then pinned Middleton’s Gavynn Cooper in 55 seconds. In a quarterfinal match, he pinned Madison East’s Angel Tejada in 4:57. Murphy lost to Madison La Follette’s Jackson Mankowski 17-2 in a championship match.

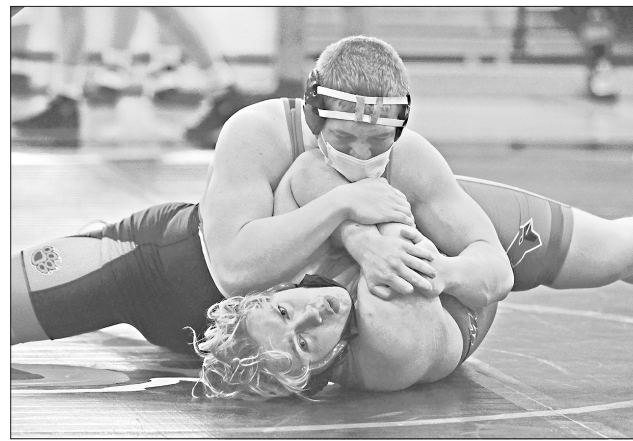
Marse (20-14) also posted three pins at 160. After a first-round-bye, he pinned Janesville Craig’s Sebastian Getchell in 4:46. In a semifinal match, Middleton’s Gavin Gall pinned him in 5:08. Marse then beat Sun Prairie’s Seth Kosky by fall in 2:27 in a consolation match. Marse pinned Getchell for the second time of the tournament in a third-place match in 5:15.

Shields went 2-2 in the tournament at 195. He pinned Madison Memorial’s Rodolfo Juarez in 3:53 in a quarterfinal match. Janesville Parker’s Carter Wesley pinned Shields in 43 seconds in a semifinal match. He bounced back, pinning Middleton’s Jack Sigler in 2:49 in a



Above: Verona senior Jimmy Shields at 195-pounds took fourth place in the Big Eight Conference tournament on Saturday, Feb. 5, in Verona. Shields pinned Madison Memorial’s Rodolfo Juarez in 3 minutes, 53 seconds in a quarterfinal match.

Below: Verona senior Adam Murphy at 220-pounds finished second place in the Big Eight Conference tournament on Saturday, Feb. 5, in Verona. Murphy pinned Middleton’s Gavynn Cooper in 55 seconds.



consolation match. Janesville Craig’s Gavin Bailey then pinned Shields in 1:15 in a third-place match.

Bryson Kunder (138), Brett Burrs (152) each finished fifth place. Verona’s Tavyn Howard (106), Makayle Moore (120), Jacob Munson (126) and Spencer Lokken each placed sixth.

Kunder (24-16) and Burrs (13-10) each went 3-2 in the tournament. After a first-round bye, Kunder pulled out a 6-4 sudden victory over Madison La Follette’s Irie Jackson in a quarterfinal match. In a semifinal match, he was pinned by Madison East’s Mikel Myadze in 3:49. In a consolation match, Middleton’s Scott Vance beat Kunder by fall in 38 seconds. Kunder rebounded to edge La

Follette’s Jackson 3-1 in a fifth-place match.

Burrs also got off to a strong start. After a first-round bye, he defeated Janesville Craig’s Andrew Craddick 8-3 in a quarterfinal match. In a semifinal match, Madison East’s Muhammad Saneh defeated him 8-2. He then lost an ultimate tiebreaker to Madison West’s Leonardo Ruggiero 3-2. Burrs defeated Janesville Parker’s Deeze Richards 7-1 in a fifth-place match.

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Boys basketball

# Wildcats tipped by Purgolders, Vikings

BY MARK NESBITT  
Sports editor

The Verona boys basketball team lost two Big Eight Conference games by three points each last week.

Madison East clipped Verona 58-55 in a conference game on Saturday, Feb. 5, in Madison. The day before that, the Wildcats lost to Janesville Parker on the road 59-56.

Verona (10-9, 5-8 Big Eight) lost to Beloit Memorial in a rescheduled game on Monday, Feb. 7, in Beloit.

## Beloit Memorial 79, Verona 75, OT

Missed free throws down the stretch hurt the Wildcats in a conference road loss to the Purple Knights.

Verona missed four free throws in the final 31 seconds of regulation. The Wildcats finished 57.1% at the line.

"It just comes down to being mentally focused and tough," Verona coach Reggie Patterson said.

Beloit Memorial's Shaq Roman had a pair of steals and free throws in the final 20 seconds to lead the Purple Knights over the Wildcats. Roman scored 20 points and went 5-for-6 at the charity stripe.

Verona freshman Drew Murphy scored 20 points. Senior Kyle Krantz added 13 points and junior Gavin Farrell had 12.

## Madison East 58, Verona 55

The Wildcats led by four points with two minutes left, but couldn't slam the door on the Purgolders.

"We have to learn that time and possession is a big key late in the game," Patterson said.

Verona junior Gavin Farrell scored a team-high 15 points. Senior Jonah Anderson added 12 points and freshman Drew Murphy pitched in 11.

## Janesville Parker 59, Verona 56

Murphy scored 16 points and made three 3-pointers, but the Wildcats couldn't make a halftime lead hold up on the road.

Verona led by seven points at the half. The Vikings outscored the Wildcats 37-27 in the second half. Parker was led by Sam Bess who had a game-high 23 points and 11 rebounds. Bess knocked down a 3-pointer with 2.4 seconds to beat the Wildcats.

Parker used an 11-3 run to take a 42-37 lead on Keegan Skrzypchak's steal and basket with 9:28 left. The lead see-sawed the rest of the way before Verona tied the game with 38 seconds left on two Anderson free throws.

Anderson and junior Zack Zimmerman each added 12 points.

Verona shot 84.6% at the free-throw line (11 of 13), compared to Parker which was 50% (12 of 24). The Vikings had a big edge in 3-pointers made 16-8.

The Vikings had three players with 10 or more rebounds. Parker's Jacob Naber also posted a double-double with 16 points and 10 rebounds.

"I take the blame for the loss," Patterson said. "I have to put us in a better position to close out the game."

Gymnastics

# Verona/Edgewood wins big at Cardinal Invite

Wildcat/Crusaders roll by Janesville Craig

BY MARK NESBITT  
Sports editor

The Verona Area/Madison Edgewood gymnastics team swept the top three spots on the vault to win the Cardinal Invitational on Saturday, Feb. 5, in Middleton.

The Wildcat/Crusaders scored 142.025 points to top runner-up Sun Prairie (137.9) in the eight-team invitational.

In dominating fashion, VA/ME rolled to a 141.9-121.9 win over Janesville Craig in a Big Eight Conference dual meet on Tuesday, Feb. 1, in Janesville.

## Cardinal Invitational

There were three performances by VA/ME that scored higher than 9.0 on the vault.

Sophomore Annika Rufenacht won the vault with a 9.6. Junior Ella Crowley took second (9.25) and sophomore Anna Messner placed third (9.10).

Rufenacht finished second on the uneven bars

(8.725) and Crowley took third (8.625). Rufenacht added a third-place finish on the balance beam (9.25) and took second in the all-around competition (36.4), 0.4 points behind Madison West's Alexa Harris.

The Wildcat/Crusaders had four of the top eight gymnasts. Crowley took fourth in the all-around competition (35.675), senior Alyssa Fischer placed seventh (34.425) and Messner took eighth (34.10).

Junior teammate Katie Ryan won the floor exercise with a 9.6. Crowley tied Sun Prairie's Sophia Clark for fourth (9.4).

## VA/Edgewood 141.9, Janesville Craig 121.9

Rufenacht won four events to lead the Wildcat/Crusaders past Janesville Craig in a

conference dual meet. Rufenacht won the balance beam (9.350), floor exercise (9.325), uneven bars (9.4) and vault (9.0) en route to winning the all-around competition with a score of 37.075.

Messner took second in the all-around competition (35.075). The Wildcat/Crusaders swept the top five spots on the balance beam, floor and uneven bars.

All five scores for VA/ME on the floor reached 9.0 or higher. Ryan and Fischer tied for second (9.150). Crowley took fourth on the floor (9.050) and Messner placed fifth (9.0).

Messner added a second-place finish on the balance beam (9.050) and second on the vault (8.325). Crowley took second on the uneven bars (8.950).

Girls hockey

# Lynx clinch Badger Conference title

Metro Lynx sweep Viroqua to move to 10-0 in standings

JACK MILLER  
Sports reporter

The Madison Metro Lynx girls hockey team defeated Viroqua twice in a span of five days to seal the Badger Conference title.

The Lynx defeated Viroqua in a Badger Conference game 3-2 on Tuesday, Feb. 1, at Viroqua Community Arena.

Madison then defeated Viroqua 6-1 in a conference game on Saturday, Feb. 5, at Madison Ice Arena.

Sandwiched in between defeats to the Lynx, Viroqua also lost a Badger Conference game to the Cap City Cougars on Friday, Feb. 4. Viroqua entered last week with a 7-1 conference record, but the three Badger defeats dropped them to 7-4 in the standings and third overall. The Lynx entered last week 8-0 in the standings and improved to 10-0 with the season sweep of Viroqua.

With just a conference game remaining on the schedule, the Lynx (18-3) are mathematically too far ahead of the Cap City Cougars — who are second and 8-3 in the conference standings.

The Lynx received a No. 1 seed in the WIAA girls hockey tournament. Madison will host the winner of No. 4 Stoughton or No. 5 Beloit in a sectional semifinal on Feb. 22 at Madison Ice Arena.

## Metro Lynx 6, Viroqua 1

The Lynx led 2-1 heading into the third before racking up four goals in the final period in a Badger Conference game on Feb. 5.

Viroqua scored the first goal of the game 5 minutes, 37 seconds into the second period, but Madison responded with goals from junior forward Rachel Jasinski and sophomore defenseman Izzy Goldshmidt to take a 2-1 lead. Senior forward Hannah Kasdorf assisted on both scores.

The Lynx then got scores from a pair of Verona players — sophomore forward Emma Stebbeds 2:59 into the third and senior forward Rachel Mirwald 3:25 into the third. Junior defenseman Grace Bonnell assisted on both goals.

Kasdorf added two more goals in the final period. Bonnell also assisted on those scores for a total of four assists in the win.

Senior goalie Abby Nutini had 17 saves.

## Metro Lynx 3, Viroqua 2

Bonnell's third-period goal broke a 2-2 tie and lifted the Lynx to a win over Viroqua on Tuesday, Feb. 1.

Deadlocked at 2-2, Bonnell scored on a power play 55 seconds into the third for what proved to be the final goal of the game.

Senior defenseman Ally Jacobsen and Mirwald were both credited with assists on the play.

Jacobsen scored the Metro Lynx's first goal of the game in the first period. Jasinski found the back of the net in the second for the Lynx for the only score of the period. Mirwald and Jacobsen assisted on the score.

Jacobsen finished with a game-high three points.

Junior goalie Addy Armstrong stopped 18 shots for Madison. The Metro Lynx outshot the Blackhawks 30-20.

Obituary

## Jeffrey Lynn Hardel

Jeffrey Lynn Hardel, 68, of Verona passed unexpectedly and without suffering of cardiac arrest on Monday Jan 31, 2022.

Jeff was born June 8<sup>th</sup>, 1953, the son of Marilyn and the late Paul Hardel. Jeff graduated from Lena-Winslow High School in 1971. He received his Associate's Degree in Automotive Technology at Highland Community College and continued on the Advisory Board for many years. Jeff was a mechanic at Alphorn Ford in Monroe for nearly 30 years. He enjoyed wrenching on cars long after retirement. Jeff was an avid hunter and taught hunter safety for many years. Jeff was also



Hardel

a member of the Monroe Fire Department retiring after 27 years. During his time on the fire department, he served as assistant chief and instructor. After retirement Jeff spent his Summer Days mowing for the Verona Park District. He influenced the lives of so many through his passion to help and mentor others.

Jeff was an amazing father and grandfather. He had 2 children, Jennifer (Mike) Chapman (Megan and Brinlee) and Eric (Ahna Holliday) (Asher and Payton) with his former wife Glenene.

Jeff found his true love, Rita Martin whom he married in 2009. Together Jeff and Rita attended and served at Memorial Baptist Church, where Jeff came to know Jesus as his personal savior. They loved sharing their farm, High Hill Acres in Richland Center with friends and family, where they hunted and enjoyed the simple life of the outdoors.

Jeff was blessed to have 3 siblings Dave (Ann), Sharon (Rich) Moore, Deb (Keith) Iborg, many nieces

and nephews including 3 very special nieces by marriage Kayla (Devin) Truman, Kim (Daniel) Lawless, Katy (Derek) Brinkman and a daughter of love and caring, Lori Anderson and her son Brandon.

A celebration of life will be held Friday, Feb 4, 2022 at Memorial Baptist Church in Verona at 2 pm, with visitation from 12-2.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to your local service organizations.

To view and sign this guestbook, please visit: [www.ryanfuneralservice.com](http://www.ryanfuneralservice.com).

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