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Nixon pin gives MHS dramatic victory

By Staff Reports

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Tommy Nixon's pin in the final match gave Marshfield's wrestling team a dramatic one-point win over visiting Churchill on Wednesday in the final home dual of the season for the Pirates.

Nixon, one of five seniors honored earlier in the evening, secured the 40-39 victory for the team by pinning Churchill's Mark Holmberger at the end of the first round.

Nixon said the finish was exciting, but took a lot longer than he would have liked.

"Their team was fired up," he said. "It made the kid seem like he came out and really wanted to win that one.

"I always go out and try to pin the person. It didn't happen and didn't happen."

Nixon had gotten the Churchill wrestler on his back twice earlier in the match, but the action was stopped each time — because of an illegal hold call the first time, and then an injury timeout.

"I used the same move again — an arm bar half nelson," he said.

The pin was whistled with one second remaining in the round.

"We ended up with one of our quality wrestlers in the last match, and he got a pin," said Marshfield coach John Bruckert. "And it was one of our seniors, so that was kind of nice."

The Pirates had taken an early lead in the match before the Lancers rallied to go in front.

"I knew it was going to be really close for match-ups, and maybe closer than I liked," Bruckert said.

The match started at 135 pounds, and, in succession, Chris Welch, Coty Cook, Cameron Winfrey and Alex Ware all recorded pins for the Pirates.

Churchill bounced back to eventually take the lead heading into the final bout.

In what has become the exception, rather than the norm, for high school wrestling duals on the South Coast,

matches were contested at all 14 weight classes, which made for a better evening for the big crowd, Bruckert said.

"A lot of times, wrestling meets are kind of boring because there's a lot of forfeits," he said. "On a night where you honor the seniors, it's just exciting to have an exciting match. That was fun.

"For the first time, it seemed like the crowd was into what was happening and knew the score was getting close."

The entire match was fun, Nixon said.

"It was definitely more interesting than most nights," he said. "It was pretty cool."

Bruckert has seen steady improvement in the wrestlers the past few weeks, and said the team got a big boost by winning the Coquille Invitational on Saturday.

"That was really big for their confidence," he said. "I don't think they thought as a team they could do that."

"I believe we've made a lot of progress," Nixon said. "It was cool to get a tournament win."

The momentum carried over to Wednesday, when the Pirates got wins from the wrestlers they expected, plus a couple of other big showings.

"There was a real crucial match at 171 (pounds)," Bruckert said, referring to the bout with Marshfield's Eric Stout, who beat Brandon Hughes 18-9 for a major decision.

"I know that Churchill planned on getting an easy win there. Eric's been wrestling great lately, and he went out and really throttled the kid. That was a big swing in the meet."

Marshfield also got a good win at 103 pounds by Tyler Nixon, Tommy's younger brother, who pinned Wyatt Dehsbande in the first round.

Winfrey, Cook, Kody Campbell and Dustin Ocobock all wrestled up a weight class so the Pirates could fill every whole in the lineup. Winfrey and Cook got first-round pins, while Ocobock lost a 10-8 decision and Campbell lost by fall.

"It was a team effort to win a dual like that," Tommy Nixon said. "They all wrestled good."

Now the Pirates will try to carry the momentum into the final weeks.

Marshfield is at Eagle Point for a tournament on Saturday and finishes the regular season at Springfield next Wednesday. The district meet is Feb. 1-2, also at Springfield.

Notes: Seniors Nixon, Welch, Winfrey, Ocobock and Anthony Stefani were honored before the match.

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