

Fayetteville senior wraps up title, unbeaten season

BY NICK WALKER ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE

Not many wrestlers get to say they completed their high school career as a two-time, undefeated state champion.

Fayetteville's Michael Gordon can say just that.

Gordon defeated Springdale Har-Ber's Chris Rabe in the 152-pound finals of the Arkansas State Wrestling Tournament at the Jack Stephens Center in Little Rock on Saturday, pinning Rabe at 1:40 of the first period. It was Gordon's fourth victory over Rabe this season and gave Gordon consecutive state titles and a 44-0 senior season.

"I've never really cared about the wins and losses," said Gordon, who won the 145-pound title last year. "It's always been about the team wins, the big tournaments."

Unlike many of his competitors at the state tournament, Gordon had an extensive background in wrestling before the sport started back up in Arkansas two years ago.

Gordon began wrestling in the first grade when his family lived in Iowa. He continued wrestling and finding success when his family moved across the border to South Dakota.

He won several youth titles before his family moved to Fayetteville when he was in the seventh grade.

The Gordons knew there wasn't wrestling in the state when they moved to Fayetteville in 2003. So, they contacted several clubs just across the state line in Oklahoma.

Gordon wrestled in several under-15 tournaments and actually won a junior high state tournament wrestling for Catoosa, Okla.

"That was a big deal for them to even let him wrestle," said Michael's father, Steve Gordon. "When you are wrestling those lower weight classes in Oklahoma, you're wrestling some of the elite wrestlers in the state."

Once Gordon entered high school, though, his options became limited. He didn't wrestle as a sophomore.

"Michael would have had to go as an independent and try to go to national tournaments," Steve Gordon said. "He just decided that he didn't want to do that."

Then came word that a group headed by Little Rock's Greg Hatcher and Bentonville's Don Schuler were trying to get wrestling started again in the state last year.

"I was excited," Michael Gordon said. "I told my dad I wanted to get back into wrestling."

Gordon went undefeated as a junior and won the 145-pound state title.

"We try to keep the focus on the team, but I can't let this season end without saying that Michael is pound-for-pound the best wrestler in the state of Arkansas," Fayetteville Coach Tony Travis said. "He's the best wrestler in the state."

Gordon has talked to wrestling coaches at Missouri and Arizona State and is currently ranked as the top 152-pound high school wrestler in the country by Wrestlerankings.net and is ranked in the top 50 by Wrestlingusa.com.

"Having gone to a couple of practices, it's just amazing," said Gordon, who has visited Missouri.

"They really get after it and I know it's going to be a lot of work."

Gordon tried to increase his profile with college coaches when his family moved to Tulsa last spring and he enrolled at Tulsa Union High School.

"He was going through the off-season wrestling program, but he never really got comfortable," Steve Gordon said. "The coaches at the school were great, but he wasn't comfortable with the idea that he would be taking somebody's spot."

So, Gordon moved back and re-enrolled at Fayetteville, setting up a spectacular senior season in Northwest Arkansas.

Gordon had a combined record of 39-0 going into the state tournament, wrestling in both Arkansas and Oklahoma.

Gordon said his toughest victory of the season came in the semifinals of the Mid America Nationals in Tulsa against Tulsa Union's Ronnie Belfour.

"It had been a while since I had to go three periods," Gordon said.

Gordon's father said he thinks his son has the ability to wrestle in college.

"If you sit down and talk wrestling with him, it's amazing how much he knows about the sport," Steve Gordon said. "If he continues to work hard and develop, he can go a long way in this sport."

Results

Seeds in parenthesis

Class 5A-7A

103

CHAMPIONSHIP (2) Chavin Scales, Cabot Dec. (1) Jon Reasoner, Russellville, 14-7 THIRD PLACE (6) Antonio Guerrero, Springdale Har-Ber Dec. (4) Devin Asbill, Bentonville, 6-1 FIFTH PLACE (3) Tanner Mann, LR Central Major dec. Bryan Arroyos, Fayetteville, 12-3

112

CHAMPIONSHIP (3) Glenn Becker, LR Central Major dec. (1) Caleb Bourland, Bentonville, 12-3 THIRD PLACE (5) Henry Reyes, Russellville Major dec. (2) Nolen Moyer, Fayetteville, 22-11 FIFTH PLACE (6) Kyle Kemp, Rogers Major dec. (4) Devonte Miller, Searcy, 15-3

119

CHAMPIONSHIP (1) Brandon McCuien, LR Central technical fall Luis Pena, Cabot, 21-4 THIRD PLACE (6) Nate Waldrip, Searcy Dec. (4) Spencer McMurtrey, Bentonville, 5-2 FIFTH PLACE (3) Andrew Wells, Catholic Major dec. (5) Jonathon Buzzitta, North Pulaski, 13-5

125

CHAMPIONSHIP (1) Cody Ealy, Cabot pinned (3) Adam Irons, Bentonville, 3:15 THIRD PLACE (5) Chris Ellison, LR Central Major dec. (4) Bryce Koenan, Mountain Home, 10-0 FIFTH PLACE (2) Joshua Segovia, Catholic pinned (6) Alex Ritter, Fayetteville, 0:40

130

CHAMPIONSHIP (1) Adam Cline, LR Central Major dec. (2) Kile Coatney, Bentonville, 11-3 THIRD PLACE Jason Decoursey, Catholic pinned Tate House, Cabot, 5:27 FIFTH PLACE Ever Sondoval, Russellville defeats (3) Ted Goll, Fayetteville

135

CHAMPIONSHIP (1) Cappy Leaf, Fayetteville Dec. (2) Dan Willingham, Searcy, 13-11 THIRD PLACE (5) Steven Gorgas, Catholic Dec. (4) Drew Coble, Bentonville, 11-5 FIFTH PLACE (3) Ben Cline, LR Central pinned Matt Page, Pulaski Academy, 1:22

140

CHAMPIONSHIP (2) Josh Koenan, Mountain Home Dec. (1) Colton Steen, Bentonville, 17-10 THIRD PLACE (3) Derik McGuire, Catholic Dec. (5) Jared Arthur, Rogers, 8-4 FIFTH PLACE Kennan Thomas, LR Hall wins by forfeit,

145

CHAMPIONSHIP (1) Markies Eubanks, Fayetteville pinned (2) Christian Schuler, Bentonville, 1:53 THIRD PLACE (4) Hubin Hailu, LR Central Dec. (3) Seth Bell, Cabot, 15-11 FIFTH PLACE (5) Jake Chase, Catholic pinned (6) Jeffrey Dellamuth, Rogers, 3:21

152

CHAMPIONSHIP (1) Michael Gordon, Fayetteville pinned (2) Chris Rabe, Springdale Har-Ber, 1:40 THIRD PLACE David Day, Beebe pinned Zack Finney, Jacksonville, 2:52 FIFTH PLACE (4) Levi Johnson, Russellville Dec. (3) Seth St. Pierre, Bentonville

160

CHAMPIONSHIP (1) Cody Conklin, Bentonville Dec. (2) Dexter Carter, Catholic, 9-4 THIRD PLACE (4) Jeremy Strode, Fayetteville Dec. (5) Kevin Homen, Russellville, 9-8 FIFTH PLACE E. J. Bailey, Searcy pinned (6) Dalton Carlsen, Mountain Home, 2:56

171

CHAMPIONSHIP (1) Aaron Butler, LR Central pinned (2) J J Molinaro, Catholic, 3:55 THIRD PLACE (4) Ben Nichols, Bentonville Dec. (3) Ben Scharfenberg, Fayetteville, 8-4 FIFTH PLACE Billy Stanford, LR Christian Academy pinned Michael Robinson, Sylvan Hills High, 3:44

189

CHAMPIONSHIP (1) Josh Anderson, Bentonville Major dec. (3) Markel Eubanks, Fayetteville, 14-6 THIRD PLACE (2) Cody Loftis, Mountain Home pinned (4) Hunter Cox, Catholic, 3:01 FIFTH PLACE Peter Lowery, Pulaski Academy Dec. Jake Todd, Cabot, 13-11

215

CHAMPIONSHIP (1) Scott Hovious, Bentonville Dec. (2) Colby Schreagle, Catholic, 3-2 THIRD PLACE (5) J. D. Courney, LR Central Dec. (4) Ed Dwyer, Mountain Home, 10-6 FIFTH PLACE Patrick Onuigbo, Sylvan Hills High pinned (6) J. C. Moore, Springdale Har-Ber, 3:38

275

CHAMPIONSHIP (2) L J Tarrant, Cabot pinned (1) Nick Stewart, Bentonville, 5:10 THIRD PLACE (4) Dave Grunfest, Pulaski Academy Dec. (3) Coty Cox, Mountain Home, 5-2 FIFTH PLACE Taylor James Lightner, LR Central DQ (6) Phillip Piggie, LR Hall

Class 1A-4A

112

CHAMPIONSHIP (1) Eric Yarberry, Arkansas School For The Blind, pinned (2) Jeremy Pilcher, Bismarck, 4:13 THRD PLACE (3) Ethan Castleberry, Des Arc, pinned (4) Zac Cochran, CAC, 4:21 FIFTH PLACE (5) Colby McDowell, Shiloh Christian, advanced through BYE

119

CHAMPIONSHIP (3) Seth Johnson, Gentry, pinned (1) Bronson Baily, Episcopal Collegiate, 2:18 THRD PLACE (2) Jimmy Godwin, Bismarck, pinned (4) Anthony Hampton, Des Arc, 2:21 FIFTH PLACE (3) Seth Johnson, Gentry, pinned (2) Jimmy Godwin, Bismarck, 1:13

130

CHAMPIONSHIP (2) Patrick Clemmons, Episcopal Collegiate, pinned (1) J C Eldridge, Des Arc, 3:56 THRD PLACE (4) Jarrett Franklin, Academics Plus, pinned (3) Dennis Edwards, Gentry, 1:32 FIFTH PLACE (4) Gage Stanfill, Gentry, advanced through BYE

135

CHAMPIONSHIP (1) Tyler Binford, CAC, pinned (3) Derek Monreal, Gentry, 2:47 THRD PLACE (4) Evan Gardner, Union Christian, pinned (2) Carl Weaver, Des Arc, 1:40

140

CHAMPIONSHIP (1) Blake Hogan, CAC, dec. (3) Zach Scheffler, Shiloh Christian, 16-12 THRD PLACE (2) Nick Holloway, Des Arc, pinned George Vang, Gentry, 1:32

145

CHAMPIONSHIP (1) Greg Welch, Des Arc, dec. (2) Braxtol Myers, Episcopal Collegiate, 10-7 THRD PLACE (3) Jacob Szybowski, Oak Grove, pinned Jacob Adney, Academics Plus, 1:54

152

CHAMPIONSHIP (2) Bradley Goshen, CAC, pinned (1) Justin Hollis, Des Arc, 2:52 THRD PLACE (4) Grant Richardson, Episcopal Collegiate, pinned (5) Sam Berry, Mountain View, 1:18

160

CHAMPIONSHIP (3) Robert Henderson, Gentry, pinned (4) Roy Brown, CAC, 4:44 THRD PLACE (1) Josh Childers, Des Arc, pinned (2) Robert Henry, Episcopal Collegiate, 2:56

171

CHAMPIONSHIP (1) Jared Thomas, CAC, pinned (3) Blaiq Charles, Episcopal Collegiate, 3:11 THRD PLACE (4) Jeff Philpott, Gentry, pinned (2) Tra Harrelson, Des Arc, 2:36

189

CHAMPIONSHIP (5) Waylon Biggs, Oak Grove, pinned Daniel Miller, Mountain View, 2:30 THRD PLACE (1) Nick Rynders, CAC, pinned Jeremy Tennant, Union Christian, 5:24

215

CHAMPIONSHIP (3) Jonathan Roberts, CAC, dec. (4) Doug Switzer, Gentry, 5-2 THRD PLACE(1) Brian Huskey, Bismarck, pinned Kareem Matthews, Barton, 1:25

275

CHAMPIONSHIP (3) Marco Pope, CAC, DQ (1) Kelvin Walker, Des Arc THRD PLACE(2) Richard Brooks, Oak Grove, pinned (5) Derek McCain, Gentry, 5:12

Arkansas State

Wrestling Tournament

Jack Stephens Center, Little Rock

Saturday's rounds

CLASS 5A-7A

1. Bentonville.....	284.50	2. Little Rock Central	232.00	3.
Fayetteville	185.00	4. Catholic.....	183.50	5.
Cabot.....	156.00	6. Mountain Home.....	116.00	7.
Russellville.....	103.00	8. Searcy.....	85.50	9.

Rogers	78.00	10. Pulaski Academy.....	60.00	11.
Springdale Har-Ber.....	49.50	12. Hall.....	33.00	13. Sylvan
Hills	31.00	14. Beebe.....	30.00	15. North
Pulaski.....	23.00	16. Jacksonville	21.00	17. Little Rock
Christian Academy.....	20.00	18. Pulaski Robinson.....	9.00	19.
Springdale.....	8.00			

CLASS 1A-4A

1. Central Arkansas Christian.....	239.00	2. Des Arc	189.00	3.
Gentry	156.00	4. Episcopal Collegiate.....	109.00	5.
Bismarck.....	97.00	6. Oak Grove.....	56.00	7.
Mountain View.....	44.00	8. Academics Plus	33.00	9. Union
Christian.....	30.00	10. Shiloh Christian.....	28.00	11. Arkansas
School For The Blind....	27.00	12. Barton.....	23.00	13.
England.....	0.00	13. (tie) Harding Academy	0.00	



Arkansas Democrat-Gazette/CHRIS DEAN

Fayetteville's Michael Gordon pins Springdale Har-Ber's Chris Rabe to win the 152-pound finals of the state wrestling meet at the Stephens Center in Little Rock on Saturday.