

THE LANCER

Belleville East Student Newspaper

BELLEVILLE EAST'S GIRLS WRESTLING:

A Postseason Recap

By: Alexis Bernal

As Belleville East's spring sports bloom into season and students eagerly await the coming of summer, let us recap the Lancer's Girls Wrestling highlights:

POSTSEASON

The Belleville East girls wrestling post-season began with a successful sweep through sectionals. Because the sport is still in its infancy, there are not enough participants to fill a regional tournament, so wrestlers automatically go to sectionals. Although, judging by the immense increase in girl wrestlers, a regional tournament will be needed soon.

Representing Belleville East at the Illinois IHSA Girls Wrestling Sectionals, we had Alexis Bernal (100lbs), Alexcia Hardin (105 lbs), Keely Rulo (170lbs), Kiara Ganey (235 lbs), and Kami Ratcliff (190lbs). The race to State was now in motion. Over 60 schools were competing in the IHSA Sectionals with Belleville East, but only the top four from each weight class advanced to State. Despite the intimidating numbers, our girls wrestled their best. All five Lancers fought hard for their place on the podium. Keely Rulo and Kiara



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Ganey destroyed their opponents and took first place in their bracket. Alexcia Hardin battled her way up to the finals and took second place Kami Ratcliff and Alexis Bernal persevered through the blood rounds and placed in third. Belleville East sent five girls to sectionals and came back with five state qualifiers.

After returning home from a successful Sectionals, the girls went right back to work. They had 2 weeks to prepare and train for the State Tournament. If the Sectional Tournament seemed intimidating, the State Tournament was that times ten. Schools from all over the state were present. Currently, there are no divisions for girls wrestling, so it was literally the entire state at one tournament. Each weight class had a 16-man bracket, and the top six placers got to stand on the

podium. The Belleville East's wrestlers battled well, with many of them winning a match at State. The highlight of the tournament was our returning State Champion, Kiara Ganey. Last year, Kiara won the State championship at her weight and earned the title as the first wrestling state champion at Belleville East. This year, her goal was to do it again. She achieved that goal. Kiara is not only a Lancer, but a two-time State Champion.

Recently, Ganey committed to Mckendree University, a Women's Wrestling



powerhouse. Her teammates and coaches are very proud of her and cannot wait to see what she will accomplish at the collegiate level.

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