

The Paper SPORTS



Online: Visit facebook.com/thepaper.hoschton for more photos of the 2011 dual wrestling championship held in Lyons last weekend.

Inside: Mill Creek girls lacrosse wins silver bracket in county tourney **2B**

SECTION B | THURSDAY, MARCH 3, 2011

HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL: STATE PLAYOFFS

Both Mill Creek teams advance after road wins

By **MATT MAUNEY**

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While one team was looking to continue its legacy, the other was trying to make history.

Both teams accomplished its goals. The Mill Creek boys' basketball team recorded its first state playoff win in school history Saturday with a 65-61 win over Walton, while the girls' team advanced to the Sweet 16 for the sixth straight season with a 61-46 victory over Marietta.

As No. 3 seeds in the Class AAAAA state

playoffs, both teams recorded wins on the road over the No. 2 seeded Raiders (19-8) and Lady Blue Devils (13-15).

The Hawks handed Walton their first home loss this season, by playing hard-nosed defense and having a balanced offensive attack.

"When it gets to this point in the season, defense is key," said head coach Chad Rogers. "We aren't the tallest team, but we pride ourselves on our defense and we like to be very balanced on offense."

The Hawks were about as balanced as you can ask for, with five players scoring in

double figures — Ronald Wamer (16), Brandon Hayman (11), Jalen Bracey (11), Trevon Shaw (11) and Paul Evans (10).

The win was a milestone for the Hawks, who fell in the first round of state two years ago to South Gwinnett, before missing the tournament entirely last season.

"All our hard work this season is finally paying off," Rogers said. "We lack size compared to a lot of our opponents, but we have out rebounded all but two teams we've played this year."

Rogers also credited the tough schedule his team played this season as being a build-

ing block for success. The Hawks faced a handful of state ranked opponents this year, in addition to several nationally ranked opponents from all over the country.

"In my opinion, we played the third most difficult schedule in the state of Georgia, and we play in what I think is the toughest region (7-AAAAA) in the state," Rogers said.

The Hawks (16-12) had the opportunity to face Roswell at home Wednesday, after the No. 4 seeded Hornets upset Berkmar in the first round.

See **BASKETBALL**, page 2B

HIGH SCHOOL WRESTLING: TRADITIONAL STATE

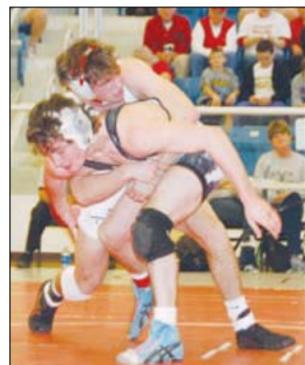
A perfect Ten



Matt Mauney The Paper

The Jefferson High School wrestling team raises the first-place trophy after winning its 10th straight dual state championship last weekend at Toombs County Middle School in Lyons.

Jefferson claims 10th consecutive dual team title



Matt Mauney The Paper

Jefferson's Cain Finch locks up an opponent from Sonoraville in Saturday's dual state finals match in Lyons.

By **MATT MAUNEY**
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LYONS — Jefferson faced a familiar foe en route to their 10th consecutive state duals championship Saturday at Toombs County High School.

Once again, they came out on top, earning a 37-18 win over Sonoraville, the team that finished second behind the Dragons in traditional state championships a week prior.

Jefferson cruised to the championship match with wins over Greater Atlanta Christian (57-9), Cook (56-24) and Spencer (66-3) before getting a somewhat stiffer challenge.

Dragons coach Doug Thurmond and his staff knew

that Sonoraville wouldn't go down easy.

"We knew it was going to be a tough match," Thurmond said. "They're a strong team and we knew we were going to be in for a fight."

The Phoenix did in fact put up a fight, but the Dragons' strong push in the later matches gave them the title.

Sonoraville got a quick start, recording a pin in the first match, but Kyle Kashuba won the second match, followed by a pin from Josh Harris to give the Dragons a 9-6 lead. The Phoenix tied things at nine and later tied the match again at 18.

That's when the Dragons seniors took over.

See **CHAMPS**, page 2B

COLUMN: SHOW ME THE MAUNEY

Jefferson wrestling run a remarkable feat



MATT MAUNEY

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It's hard to imagine a time when the Jefferson wrestling team did not win a state championship.

In fact, it has been 12 years since the last time they didn't.

To put that into perspective, every member of this year's championship team was in elementary school the last time the Dragons did not win a state title.

When it comes to the dual state championship — where results are based on a team versus team performance in a bracket-style tournament — Jefferson only knows how to win it.

In the 10 year history of the Georgia High School Association State Duals, Jefferson has won all 10, a feat unmatched by any team in any other classification.

Actually, the Dragons have dominated the duals since its creation in 2002 in both Class A (2002-08) and AA (2009-11), proving year after year that they were the team to beat around the state.

The Dragons have also had success in the traditional state tournament — where individual performances earn points that make up a total team score.

Jefferson has won the last 11, but has done it many different ways, from producing as many as seven individual state champions (2009-10) to producing as few as two, happening this year with Cain Finch and Forrest Przybysz.

This shows that Jefferson can win traditional team titles even without the best talent in the state year in and year out. The success comes from the overall dedication and work ethic from the wrestlers. While they may not have seven individual champions every year, they have had consistency in the amount of placers in each weight class and with the amount of wrestlers that qualify for the sectionals and state tournament each year.

See **REMARKABLE**, page 2B

Hawks lacrosse starts 2-0



Graham Robson The Paper

The Mill Creek boys' lacrosse team defeated Grayson in its season opener 10-8 on Feb. 23. The win gave the Hawks a 1-0 record in Area 4-AAAAA, in their first season of GHSA varsity competition. They improved to 2-0 overall with a 13-0 win over South Forsyth last Friday. Alec Bussink leads the team with six goals through the first two games. Dylan Stanley and David Bryan each have four goals through the first two games. Goalie Alex Scheinder had 10 saves in the Grayson game. **Above:** Mill Creek's Kyle Black runs up-field while being defended by Grayson's Michael Santry. *Be sure to pick up next week's edition as The Paper features lacrosse and the growth and popularity of the sport in this region.*

HIGH SCHOOL BASEBALL

Mill Creek knocks off Parkview

From staff reports

LILBURN — Mill Creek defeated No. 1 ranked Parkview 4-3 Friday night in Lilburn.

The Panthers jumped out to a 2-0 lead in the early innings, but Hawks senior outfielder Chandler Boyd scored on a wild pitch to make the score 2-1 after four innings. The score would remain 2-1 until the top of the seventh when senior Aryan Rodriguez led off the inning with a walk.

Pinch hitter Tim Hernandez worked a full count before lining a double down the left field line to plate Rodriguez and tie the score.

Devin Bonin moved the runner to third and brought up Boyd. Boyd was hit by a pitch, followed by back-to-back RBI singles from seniors Jerad Curry and Connor Kasten, giving the Hawks a 4-2 lead going to the bottom of the seventh.

Parkview had a lead-off homer in the final half-inning to pull within one, but Mill Creek reliever Shane

Seckinger closed the game out and recorded his first high school victory after throwing the final three innings. Chip Fleming started on the mound for the Hawks and went four innings, allowing two runs.

The Hawks (2-0) faced state power Lassiter Tuesday for the home opener in Hoschton, and will begin a four game road trip Saturday as they face McEachern.

For up-to-date scores and stats, visit facebook.com/thepaper.hoschton.

HIGH SCHOOL TENNIS

Jefferson boys win, girls fall to Hart Co.

The Jefferson boys tennis team defeated Hart County last Thursday 5-0. Zach Bost (6-0, 6-1), Blair Buffington (6-0, 6-1) and Ben Daniel (6-1, 6-1) were singles winners. The team of Brandon Clabo and Jordan Tyler and team of Andrew James and Austin Pratt were winners in doubles competition. The Jefferson girls' tennis team fell to Hart County 2-3 Thursday. Bell Blankenship and Tristan McGarity were singles winners, while the Lady Dragons doubles teams continued to struggle, going 0-2 on the night.

HIGH SCHOOL BASEBALL

Jefferson-Commerce game called

The Jefferson baseball team's home opener with Commerce High was called Monday night in the first inning due to severe thunderstorms that hit the area. Information regarding if the non-region game will be made up and a possible time and date for that game had not released by press time. The Dragons are 1-1 on the year and began Region 8B-AA play Wednesday against Elbert County. Jefferson will continue region action Friday at North Oconee set for a 5:55 p.m. first-pitch.

YOUTH BASKETBALL

Jackson Co. all-stars in state tournament

The Jackson County 9-10-year-old boys' all-star basketball team won the region championship Feb. 22. This is the first time the team has won the region in over a decade. The team is coached by long-time volunteer coach Kris Giroux, who also coaches baseball, baseball all-stars, travel baseball, football, basketball and now acts as the head coach of the Jackson County basketball all-stars. The Jackson County all-stars will compete in the state tournament beginning Friday.

REMARKABLE from page 1B

Team overcame adversity to win



Matt Mauney The Paper

Jefferson coach Doug Thurmond discusses a call with an official at the dual state championships last Saturday in Lyons.

Winning both titles this season might be the most impressive to date. Jefferson faced major injuries and illnesses this year, leaving the championship fate of the team uncertain for the first time in years.

"It's been one whale of a season with kids hurt and kids sick all year," said Dragons head coach Doug Thurmond after his team won their 10th straight dual title. "It seemed like it was raining on us, but they say that you have to weather the storm before you see the sunshine and

the sun is shining on us now," he said smiling.

Injuries affecting the team this year include Isaac Kelly — an individual state champion from 2009-10 — who had a blown joint and Clay Richardson, who tore a clavicle mid-season.

According to Thurmond, this year was one of the toughest when it came to overcoming setbacks and adversity.

On top of two more state titles for Thurmond, giving him 20 total since taking over as head coach in 2002, he also got to

witness another of his sons compete at the same high school that he did over 30 years ago.

Cason Thurmond missed his chance at becoming the fifth four-time state champ at JHS, but as a father, Doug couldn't be more proud of his son.

"He had a lot of pressure on him and unfortunately it didn't turn out like he wanted, but I'm awfully proud of him and all the seniors on this team," Thurmond said.

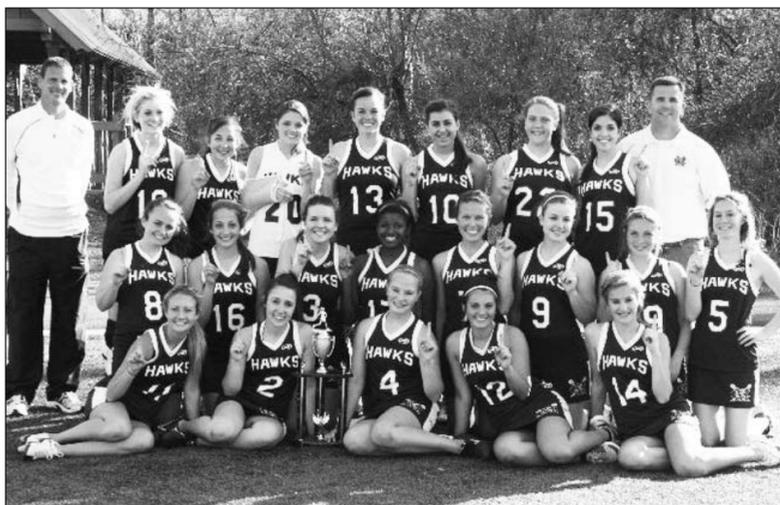
"What I'll remember about this team is that they never gave up. They had so many times where they could have laid down and given up due to the circumstances against them. We just had some guys man up this year," Thurmond added.

The seniors on this year's team all had pressure on them to live up to the legacy that has become Jefferson wrestling.

They came through with flying colors.

"You don't want to be the senior team that gives up the first loss, but it sure feels good now that we brought the program another win," Cason Thurmond said.

Lady Hawks off to strong start



For The Paper

From staff reports

The Mill Creek girls' lacrosse team started its first sanctioned GHSA season strong, winning the first three matches of the year to take the Silver Bracket title in the Gwinnett County tournament last weekend.

The tournament was divided into two divisions Gold (schools with more established teams) and Silver (schools with teams that are fairly new to the sport).

The Lady Hawks defeated Brookwood 9-7 in overtime Friday, Parkview 8-3 Saturday morning and Duluth 7-6 in the finals that afternoon to take the Silver division. Freshman Kelly Shoglund led the team with eight goals in the tournament, while junior Alexis Ordini had four goals and three assists. Freshman MacKenzie

Fagioli and senior Jessica Reese each added four goals as well.

Senior goalie Kali Coleman, who is new to the sport, saved seven of 13 shots in the finals against Duluth. The Lady Hawks defense was led by senior Erin Miller and junior Allison Jackson.

"We had a good start to our season and we also learned what we need to work on," said first-year head coach Brian Williamson. "The girls were very excited about winning and starting the season off so well."

The team is currently playing in its first season of GHSA varsity competition, after playing at the club level the past two seasons.

The Lady Hawks (3-0) faced Parkview again Wednesday and will face South Forsyth next Tuesday on the road.

LOCAL SOCCER

JEFFERSON — The elimination phase of the 2011 Newell Orthodontics Futsal (indoor soccer) Cup kicked off last week. After the two games, only the top eight teams in the combined standings advance to the single elimination playoffs. Peruvian Power (Athens) started off the week with a victory over Newell Orthodontics. The 7-3 win put Peruvian Power in second in the combined standings. The reigning champion, Fresh Frozen Foods, defeated El Jinete Mexican Restaurant 16-5, keeping the victory in Jefferson. The win puts Fresh Frozen in first in the overall standings. Alianza (Athens) played an excellent game against San Joaquin and ended up bringing the victory to Athens with the final score of 7-3. Alianza is currently in the top eight teams, with three others close behind, making their next game crucial. Real Centro America alternated goals with Jackson FC in the first half of their game, before Jackson FC took the lead in the second. Real Centro America knotted things up with three minutes to play to end the game in a 5-5 tie. In order to get into the top eight teams, Jackson FC will have to beat International FC this week. International FC is coming off an win over Bajio. Calientitos picked up an 11-7 win over El Roble to close out last week's scores. For more information on Northeast Georgia International Soccer or the Futsal League, visit www.negaintlsoccer.com or find them on Facebook: Nega Int'l Soccer.

inning with some timely hitting. Joel Ellis kept Habersham at bay the first three innings as the Panthers jumped out to a 4-0 lead before Habersham got on the board in the fourth inning with three runs of their own. The Panthers pitching struggled in the fifth and sixth inning as Habersham scored six runs over the two innings for a 9-4 lead. In the bottom of the sixth, the Panthers put up three runs to cut the lead to 9-7. In the top of the seventh, Jace Latty came on and struck out the side and the Panthers rode that momentum to the bottom of the seventh, scoring three runs to secure the 10-9 victory.

— By Chris Hamby for The Paper

HIGH SCHOOL BASEBALL

HOSCHTON — The Mill Creek baseball team will become one of the first two high school teams to compete in the AAA Gwinnett Braves Stadium in Buford, as they will face Brookwood March 9. The game makes up the inaugural Gwinnett Baseball Classic, which will benefit Children's Healthcare of Atlanta. The game is currently scheduled for 3 p.m. and will make up the first half of a doubleheader, with SEC rivals Georgia and Alabama taking the field for a 7 p.m. start.

JEFFERSON — The Jefferson High School baseball team got its first win of the 2011 season Feb. 24 with a 12-2 win over Clarke-Central in Athens. Jesse Tallent went 4-for-4 with three RBIs and two runs scored for the Dragons. Tallent also pitched three scoreless innings and recorded a save. Matt Bowen grabbed the win on the mound for Jefferson.

GOLF

WINDER — The Mill Creek girls' golf team took a second place finish at the Gwinnett Open at Chimneys in Winder over the weekend. The event used a Modified Stableford scoring system, with GAC finishing first with 92 points, followed by Mill Creek (79), Harrison (74) and Gainesville (65).

LOCAL RACING

The 14th annual Petit Le Mans at Road Atlanta on Oct. 1 is expecting one of the largest race fields in the history of the prestigious international endurance race. The elite grid is due in part to the Intercontinental Le Mans Cup (ILMC), a new global sports car championship which expands to seven-rounds in 2011 with Petit Le Mans/Road Atlanta being the

sixth stop. The Automobile Club de l'Ouest (sanctioning body for the Le Mans 24 Hours) announced that the ILMC will feature an impressive list of 26 entries across four categories with teams represented from both Europe and North America.

Audi Sport Team Joest and Team Peugeot Total headline the ILMC entry list in LMP1, each entering a pair of diesel-powered prototypes. Petit Le Mans powered by Mazda will also be the North American Debut for the new, highly anticipated Audi R18. They're joined by a Peugeot 908 from Team ORECA Matmut, Rebellion Racing's Lola B10/60 Toyota, two OAK Racing Oak-Pescarolo Judds and an Aston Martin AMR One.

In LMP2, Wisconsin-based Level 5 Motorsports headlines the entry with a Lola B08/80 Honda, joined by one of OAK Racing Oak-Pescarolo and a Oreca 03 Nissan for Signatech.

Thirteen entries are represented in GT with two-car teams from BMW Motorsport, Lotus Jetalliance and Luxury Racing as well as a third Ferrari 458 Italia for Italian GT specialists AF Corse. The GT category also features Ferrari 430s from Krohn Racing, AF Corse and CRS Racing as well as, Larbre Competition's Corvette C6.R, a Porsche 911 GT3 RSR for Team Felbermayr-Proton and Gulf AMR Middle East's Aston Martin Vantage GT2.

Combine these ILMC entries with traditional American Le Mans Series LMP or GT entries and perennial powers likely to include Honda Performance Development, Toyota, Mazda, Aston Martin, BMW, Corvette, Ferrari, Ford, Jaguar, Lamborghini, Panoz and Porsche, and you have history in the making with the largest and most elite field ever at Petit Le Mans.

OUTDOORS

Braselton's Mulberry River Walk walking trail will re-open this weekend after being closed for the past several weeks while construction crews worked to install new groundwater wells and raw water transmission lines. The closing affected sections between the Madrid Falls Road Entrance and Oliney Falls Drive. For more information, contact Yvette Wise, Braselton Public Works Department, at 706-654-3915.

High school, middle school and local sports results may be reported to Sports Editor Matt Mauney at mmauney@clickthepaper.com. Results must be reported by Monday at 5 p.m. to get into the following Thursday edition.

LOCAL COLLEGE SPORTS

North Georgia falls four spots

The North Georgia College & State University baseball team fell four spots to No. 11 in the latest Collegiate Baseball Newspaper Division-II Top 30 Poll, released Monday.

North Georgia dropped two of three games over the weekend, taking the series opener 6-5 in 10 innings over North Carolina-Pembroke, before the Braves battled back to win the final two games of the weekend.

The Saints will play a two-game series with No. 2 West Florida beginning Tuesday and concluding Wednesday afternoon.

Truett-McConnell sweeps Clearwater

North Hall graduate Jacob Brewster earned his third save of the year in Game 1 and Lumpkin County graduate Drew Uptegraph combined with Kyle York to throw a no-hitter in Game 2 as the Bears won two games, 11-9, 11-0, Sunday in Florida. Chad Fulton, also a Lumpkin County graduate, went 3-for-3 with a double in Game 2.

Brenau undefeated at Shorter Invitational

The Golden Tigers defeated Lindsey Wilson College 2-0, Tennessee Wesleyan 4-3, and Georgetown-Kentucky 12-4 over the weekend in Rome.

Brenau (9-0) opened conference play against Truett-McConnell Tuesday in Cleveland.

UGA running back Ealey reinstated

Georgia running back Washaun Ealey was reinstated to the team, less than three weeks after he was suspended for disciplinary reasons.

Ealey, who led the team last season with 811 yards rushing and 11 touchdowns last season, rejoined team activities Monday.

Ealey was suspended Feb. 8, fueling speculation that he was on the verge of transferring. Georgia head coach Mark Richt didn't give a specific reason for the punishment, but left the door open for Ealey's return. ESPN.com reported that he failed to show up for disciplinary running.

The sophomore was also suspended for the 2010 season opener after his arrest for driving with a suspended license and leaving the scene of an accident.

Ealey and backup Caleb King will get competition this season from one of Georgia's top signees, Isaiah Crowell.

CHAMPS from page 1B

Finch, Przybysz help clinch 10th dual title

Cain Finch, who won an individual state title last weekend, took an 8-2 decision, followed by a 16-11 decision by Jake Sherman. Senior Shaq Maxey added a pin, giving the Dragons a commanding 27-18 lead.

Forrest Przybysz, the other Jefferson individual title winner this year, clinched the dual team win with an 11-3 decision, giving Jefferson a 31-18 lead before Jace McCloskey and Zach Allen close the match with wins.

Thurmond said that this year's championship team might be the most significant out of the last decade of winners.

"We've overcome so much adversity this year with injuries and illnesses," Thurmond said. "I'm just so proud of these kids. They all just manned up this season. I just don't know how else to say it."

"This one is sweet baby." The win comes a week after the team won its 11th straight traditional title.

BASKETBALL from page 1B

Lady Hawks use long-ball to top Marietta

While Rogers doesn't think that playing at home gives his team a competitive advantage, he feels that it brings good exposure of the team to the local community.

"It will give a lot of people that haven't ever seen us play the opportunity to come out and watch us. It will also be a good experience for the boys to get to take in a state playoff game on their home floor," Rogers said.

The Roswell game occurred after press time. Results will be in next week's edition.

The Mill Creek girls' team also used balance in its offense, but focused on the long-ball to notch a first round win last Friday in Marietta. The Lady Hawks hit 12-of-25 threes — a 48 percent shooting rate — to end the Lady Blue Devils season. Five Lady Hawks — Christina McDonald, Alicia Brookins, Tamarr Williams, Nadiya Miller and Sierra Menzies all hit at least one shot from long range.

Williams and Miller led the way, hitting four and five 3-pointers respectively, combining to hit 9-of-14 from behind the arc.

Brookins finished with 11 points, behind Miller (19) and Williams, who had 12.

The Mill Creek defense held the Lady Blue Devils to just 36 percent shooting from the field and forced 16 turnovers.

The Lady Hawks (16-13) faced Northview Wednesday in Hoschton. Results will be in next week's edition.

For up to date scores and stats from both Mill Creek teams in the state tournament, visit facebook.com/thepaper.hoschton.

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