



Iowa Girls Get Their Shot at Wrestling

Haley Glade blazes a trail for Cardinal program



Haley Glade wrestles in the quarterfinals at Ogden. (Photos by Todd Weber.)

And tournaments this size and scope have been the norm this season—all over the state. Last year, a record 1,100 girls participated in high school wrestling in Iowa. This season, after the sport was sanctioned by the IGHSAU, over 2,000 girls are competing.

Of course, girls' wrestling is not new in Iowa. AAU programs have been active in the state for a long time. But this season, with increased opportunity, participation and interest is at an all-time high.

Earlham sophomore Haley Glade was a wrestler when girls wrestling wasn't cool. This is her fifth year participating in the sport. She has competed on the club level since then, and last year wrestled as a member of the Cardinal boys' team in their inaugural season.

It took a lot of courage for a sixth grader to take the leap and sign up.

"It was not very popular with girls," she said. "I sat in the wrestling room my brother's entire first year when he was a kindergartener. And I hated basketball. I was not very good at it. So, I was like, 'Can I go out for wrestling?' And I thought, 'No, there are not enough girls.' But I did it. My first two years I think I barely wrestled any girls. Maybe 10 matches. Otherwise, I

was wrestling guys. And last year, it was all guys. So this is the first year of wrestling only girls."

Don't think that wrestling girls is a lot easier than wrestling boys. One thing that stood out in Ogden was the athletes' skill level, quickness, and strength—just like at a boys' tournament. And most of the girls were not beginners—they were experienced wrestlers that knew what they were doing. Especially in the 135-lb bracket, in which Glade competed. The bracket

was competitive, though, and had her opponents in both matches in trouble at times.

Glade doesn't normally wrestle at 135. She has two tournament titles and one 2nd-place at 140, which is a more natural weight for her. She should be more competitive at regionals, and hopefully, state, at 140—plus, she doesn't have to worry as much about cutting weight.

"It's definitely a little easier being able to eat the night before and being able to recuperate from practice," she said. "Coach



Haley discusses strategy with her dad, Doug, before a match.

et was full—16 wrestlers—and there wasn't a pushover in the bunch. Glade won by fall in her first match, but then lost by fall in her next two matches. She was com-

Strandberg is always talking about the right way to do it. In the beginning it was kind of hard. I started two weeks

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The math just adds up. Iowa is the wrestling state + the term 'Iowa girl' is synonymous with opportunities for girls in this state to compete = high school girls' wrestling in Iowa should

work. If anyone still had any doubt about that, they should have been in the gym at Ogden High School last Saturday, when an overflow crowd watched nearly 200 wrestlers from 30 schools

take part in a girls' tournament. Schools from as far away as Osage to the north, Benton Community to the east, Chariton to the south, and Yutan, NE, from the west took part.

Sports Short

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Steve Willem presents a check from MidAmerican Energy for \$7,000 to Christie Goodrich, Board President, Bricker-Price Block. The funds will be used for window coverings. Also present for the ceremony was (L) Kristina Spieker, Board Member, Bricker-Price Block, and Allissa Johnson, Executive Director, Bricker-Price Block. (Photo by Todd Weber.)



Olivia Spurling scores from the low block against DMC. The Cardinals dropped a boys'/girls' doubleheader to the Lions on January 5. Story on Page 6. (Photo by Todd Weber.)

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Down to Earth

Bark, Buds, Branches

Winter is a great time to develop and use your woody plant identification skills. Don't have any skills like that, you say? Well, the first step is to LOOK. Seeing the important identifying characteristics of woody plants is easier when foliage has died and mostly dropped off. Foliage can be 'visual noise' because of its sheer abundance and its ability to disguise other important things like bark, buds and branches.

This edition of Down to Earth, if successful, will coax you and yours outdoors to look at trees in a more focused way and perhaps become fascinated enough to keep looking.

Bark, from ground level to canopy top, is evident during winter. Sometimes, the bark alone is enough to identify a tree. Sycamores are immediately recognizable this way. Catching sight of the striking, chalk-white upper branches that evolve into a mottled white-gray-tan-brown palette as your eye travels down the tree is all that's needed. Even from a perspective miles away sycamores are identifiable.

The name, shagbark hickory, tells you all you need to know when using bark as the identifying feature for this species. Shagbark hickory bark maintains a uniformly gray shade from top to the ground. As the tree matures from sapling to adulthood the bark begins to develop plates, or shags, which give the tree an almost shake shingle look. As the shags age and both the bottoms and tops gradually bend outward away from the trunk, they create ideal shelter for roosting bats, tree frogs and insects that depend upon this reliable protective cover.

Another readily recognizable tree, given away at first glance by its warty bark, is the hackberry. Warts appear early on in this tree and persist through maturity. However, in what might be a surprising concession to advanced age, the warts flatten out a bit from the pert youngster version.

Buds require closer inspection to make an accurate ID, but some tree species sport unique enough bud forms to ID the tree. Beeches are one such species. Used as landscape trees, this is one you might find on a stroll in a residential area. Beech buds are an inch long, slender, and sharply pointed. Angled well away from the stem they can give the impression of thorns, though you aren't in danger of being punctured by one.

Elms have a profusion of buds, a mere quarter of an inch in size, but easily visible on the tiny branchlets

that make up the upper most canopy. One can ID an elm based upon the buds they sport even though they may be 50' in the air.

Branches can identify our native oaks, especially the white oak family. White oaks are recognizable by their wide-flung branches that can seem to defy gravity as they spread and spread if given an open area in which to mature. Bur oaks, part of the white oak family, also have magnificent wide branching crowns, but parts of their branches seem to go off in their own direction higgledy piggledy. The effect of this branching habit is a more menacing silhouette because the branches can become gnarly looking, such that bur oaks look 'wilder' than their white oak kin.

Hackberry, mentioned earlier with its cosmetic challenges, also can be identified from a peculiar branching habit called a witches' broom. A witches' broom is quite recognizable. What begins as a normal branch sending offside shoots in regular intervals as it grows, suddenly changes as though it's gotten a literal wild hair. This aberration, known as a broom, results in a whole thicket of tightly packed branchlets. The broom, caused by a mite, may infect an individual tree in multiple sites. So, if you spot a tree festooned with brooms you know for sure you've found a hackberry.

If you're new to tree ID, having immediate help at hand is encouraging whether you're walking in a woodland, on a sidewalk or driving a country road. The free iNaturalist app is a good companion when you're strolling. If you can get a picture of a tree (bark, branch, or bud) an ID will appear. Many print resources are also available. The Iowa Living Roadway Trust Fund has a free guide available at <https://iowadot.gov/lrtf>. (While you're at this site check out the other resources.) "Forest and Shade Trees of Iowa" isn't carry-along size, but the photos and text are helpful.

Feeling inspired? Step outdoors and start looking!



Glade Carving a Path for Earlham Girls' Wrestling

(Continued from Page 1.)

late. I waited until the guys' season because I was still doing softball. I eat mostly chicken. Protein drinks, a lot of water. I'm finally staying down in weight because my body has become accustomed to it."

Over 20 girls signed up for youth wrestling in Earlham this season, so it's not hard to envision a full girls' varsity roster in the near future. But for now, Glade is the only girl on the Cardinal team. Last year, she had teammates at all her matches. This season, she's on her own. On most of her match days, the boys' team has also had matches in other towns.

"It's kind of lonely," she said. "But at some of the tournaments, I have some teams I know, and the girls root for me."

Plus, she's not all by herself. Her dad, Doug, was a high school wrestler and serves as her coach. Her mom Angela, is the photographer for Team Glade and is Haley's occasional 'sparring partner.' Haley's brother, Logan, handles the match videography.

"My dad came out of retirement from high school. He's never coached wrestling before, so he came back because we didn't really have a full-time coach, per se. My mom is my wrestling partner when I warm up, but it would be nice to actually have a teammate to warm up with," Glade said with a laugh.

Glade still practices every day with the boys' team. From day one last year, the



Haley Glade's brother, Logan, and mom, Angela, have her match well covered. (Photo by Todd Weber.)

boys have accepted her.

"They treat me like one of the guys," she said. "Sometimes that's a good thing and sometimes it's not. Sometimes I get beat up on a little bit. But it's definitely made me a better wrestler."

Aches, pains, and injuries are just part of wrestling, and Glade has dealt with 'the usual' that comes up during a season. Currently, she's working through ankle and knee issues. There are two meets left before the

regional tournament on January 27, and she hopes to be at full strength by then.

"My practice days are going to get a little shorter because we're coming up on it, but I'll still be going hard at practice," she said. "We still have morning lifts and runs."

Despite her grueling schedule, Glade has found time to help out with the Earlham Wrestling Club girls' practices. She's a humble young lady, and doesn't necessarily see herself as a trailblazer, but she does admit, "I think the girls look up to me."

That's probably an understatement.

More Scenes from the Ogden tournament



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