

The Colin E. Baker Wrestling Classic-2007 by Skip Parker

This tournament, a continuation of the Hornet Holiday Classic and the Great Bridge Elite Classic, is always the Wildcats' first tournament after Christmas. In years past this tournament has provided great individual matches and some interesting results. Usually it draws teams from several states, but this year only the state of Virginia was represented. All of the districts in the East Region were represented. There were 14 high schools participating, a number of which also had "B" teams competing. This tournament provided some great moments, not the least of which was one of the most exciting 2nd periods I've ever seen in any wrestling bout. This one was courtesy of Louis Johnson in his title bout with Poquoson's Cody Silva.

Great Bridge had several starting wrestlers out of this tournament, including Garrett Haas, Gary Abels, and Jake Gibson. Chris Mansfield and Jules Whitehurst stepped in to cover 119 and 135. They each wrestled their way to the medal round. Without the points they scored, this tournament would have had a different champion. The Wildcats didn't have time to cover the base at 285, since the injury to Jake Gibson was at the 11th hour.

In this tournament Great Bridge had 4 of the tournament's 14 champions, including Austin Hurst, Louis Johnson, Joey Grainger, and Jared King. Five other Wildcats placed. Below are the individual weight classes and how the Great Bridge wrestlers fared in each of them.

103. Austin Hurst (3-0, 1st Place). Austin was seeded 2nd in this tournament. After a first round bye he pinned 7th seeded Adam Lowe of Poquoson. In the semifinals Austin was in quite a struggle with #3 seed Buddy Scarbrough of Salem. However, his first period takedown followed by an armbar tilt got him all the points he'd need, but not all the points he'd get. Austin scored a reversal in the second period and went on to win it, 6-2. That put him in the finals with top seed, Nansemond River's Vernell Taylor. After a scoreless first period, Austin scored a reversal off a Peterson and got 3 nearfall points in the process. He gave up an escape. With the score 5-1 going into the 3rd period, Austin got reversed 36 seconds into the period, then reversed Taylor 12 seconds later. After trying to turn Taylor, Austin got reversed but escaped 21 seconds later to hammer down a nail-biting 8-5 decision for the title. This was a terrific victory over a strong opponent.

1st. Austin Hurst (Great Bridge) dec. Vernell Woods (Nansemond River) 8-5

3rd. Buddy Scarbrough (Salem) dec. Todd Self (Hickory) 14-8

5th. Adam Barella (Tabb) Injury Default Hayden Bills (Kempsville)

112. Taylor Wilde (1-2). Taylor started this tournament with a first period pin (1:07) over teammate, Johnny McClanahan. After that Taylor just couldn't seem to get any traction out on the mat. Now, this was a very tough field. Even the "B" team wrestlers were formidable. Taylor lost a close, 5-4, quarterfinals bout to Javari Williamson (DC), a dubious loss since the officials awarded Williamson a point after Taylor's 2nd caution, not his third (which never occurred). That point was the margin of victory in this bout.

Taylor never really recovered and lost a 4-1 decision to Zach Isenhour (Kempsville "B") in the 2nd round of the wrestlebacks.

- 1st. Sterling Briscoe (Kempsville) dec. Mathew Graham (Smithfield) 10-6
- 3rd. Stephan Baker (Poquoson) maj dec. Javari Williamson (Deep Creek) 13-0
- 5th. Richard Jonas (Hickory) dec. Zach Isenhour (Kempsville "B") 10-6

119. Chris Mansfield. (3-2, 5th Place). In every tournament there are guys who do a heck of a lot better than you think they will and it's a very good thing for the team that they do. In this tournament, Chris Mansfield and Jules Whitehurst had to cover the absence of key wrestlers (Haas and Abels, who were both out with influenza) to win this tournament. This is how Chris Mansfield fared. After a first round bye, Chris drew the #4 seed and eventual champion, Frank Hruska (Kempsville) in the quarterfinals, and lost it on a fall in 1:44. He hit the wrestlebacks and promptly pinned Billy Clark of Nansemond River in 1:47. In the consolation quarterfinals, he scored a 9-1 major decision over Trevor Alexander (Kempsville "B"). Now Mansfield had reached the medal round. He lost a close 8-4 decision to Hickory's Kyle Curling, the #3 seed. However, in the 5th place bout, he scored a decisive fall over Brian Lee of Norview in 4:24. Note that all of Chris' victories were big victories (major decision or fall). That was crucial to the team, because those wins scored 5 team points in addition to the points he got for finishing 5th. It was a clutch performance in every respect.

- 1st. Frank Hruska (Kempsville) maj. dec. Jonathan Holt (Poquoson) 16-4
- 3rd. Nick Williams (Menchville) dec. Kyle Curling (Hickory) 9-4
- 5th. Chris Mansfield (Great Bridge) pin Brian Lee (Norview) 4:24

125. Wes Sawyer (1-2). Wes was not supposed to be the starter this year at 125, but with the Carlson boys (Henry and Marty) moving to Alabama, Wes was called in to cement the opening. This was a big pair of shoes to fill. Henry had won every title in wrestling since I first saw him on the mat in the 4th grade. Marty was the 125 pound runner-up in the 2007 State AAA tournament. In a lot of ways, it's a tough spot for Wes to be in, but he didn't flinch. He just steps up to the plate and does his best, which most of the time works just fine. Wes was seeded 7th, which means that after his first round bye, he hit 2nd seeded, Colton Crabtree of Poquoson in the quarterfinals. Crabtree won that by fall in 2:52. In round 2 of the wrestlebacks, Wes pinned Tyrell Darden of Smithfield in 2:29. In the consolation quarterfinals, he lost to the eventual 5th place winner, Ryan Midgette of Kempsville, 16-4.

- 1st. *Josh Gillis (Hickory) maj. dec. Colton Crabtree (Poquoson) 16-4
 - 3rd. Marcus Adams (Deep Creek) dec. Jerome Carpenter (Tabb) 7-1
 - 5th. Ryan Midgette (Kempsville) dec. Josh Harris (Grafton) 4-3
- * Gillis was the tournament's outstanding wrestler

130. Donnie Andrews (1-2). Like Wes, Donnie was not a predicted starter, but he's there now and takes it seriously. Outside of Andrew Williams, this was an extremely difficult field to sort out. The #2 and #4 seeds did not place, a rarity in this tournament that only the 130 weight class was able to claim. Donnie started this tournament suffering a tight 7-5 loss to #6 seed and eventual 5th place finisher, Dalton Louks of Deep Creek. In the wrestlebacks, he hit the #4 seed, Clayton Moats of Woodside. Andrews' huge 8 point 2nd period put the bout comfortably out of reach for any ideas Moats might

have of a comeback, as Donnie went on to win it, 11-0. In the consolation quarterfinals, Kempsville's Mike Mosley took a 6-2 decision from Donnie and that was the end of the line. However, like all of the Wildcats winners before him, the degree of victory he took added important team points to the final total.

1st. Andrew Williams (Tabb) dec. Connor Simons (Hickory) 16-9

3rd. Josh Clark (Matoaca) dec. Marcell Jefferson (Norview) 3-2

5th. Dalton Louks (Deep Creek) dec. Mike Mosley (Kempsville) 10-6

135. Jules Whitehurst (3-2, 4th Place). Jules was one of the deal-makers in this tournament. As a stand-in for Gary Abels, it was uncertain how he'd do, since most of us hadn't seen his skills on the mat this season before this tournament. Jules, seeded 5th, wrestled his way to the semifinals with a 13-8 decision over William Deroussel (Deep Creek) and another 13-8 (overtime) decision over 4th seeded Brandon Potter (Grafton). In the semifinals he lost by fall to the tournament champion, Blake Roulo (Matoaca) in 1:36. No matter. Jules hit Deroussel again in the consolation semifinals and this time defeated him by technical fall, 18-2 (4:36). Going for 3rd place, he faced the #2 seed, Jerome Mosley of Kempsville and lost by fall in 2:44. Still, Jules had big wins and was definitely one of the most solid reasons the Wildcats won this tournament.

1st. Blake Roulo (Matoaca) dec. David Kramer (Salem) 11-10

3rd. Jerome Mosley (Kempsville) pin Jules Whitehurst (Great Bridge) 2:44

5th. Brandon Potter (Grafton) dec. William Deroussel (Deep Creek) 8-2

140. Louis Johnson (3-0, 1st Place). Louis was the top seed in his weight class, but there was considerable talent in this field. He would find that out in the finals. Getting to the finals was an interesting trip that began with a 24 second fall over Zach Ramsey of Tabb in the quarterfinals. In the semis, Louis used an assortment of tilts and pinning combinations to score a 16-2 major decision over Nilo Deguiera (Salem). In the finals against the #2 seed, Cody Silva (Poquoson), Louis would wrestle a guy who had pinned every opponent getting to the finals. Silva established quickly that he was a skilled grappler by taking a 7-6 first period lead over Louis. However, in one of the wildest 2nd periods I've ever seen, Louis scored 3 reversals and 4 nearfall points to gain a 16-13 lead going into the final period. In a reversal of usual reality (calm before the storm), the 3rd period was indeed the calm after the storm. Louis turned Silva 1:41 into the period for 2 nearfall points, but that was all the scoring the period would see and Louis took home the title with an 18-13 decision over a very difficult opponent.

1st. Louis Johnson (Great Bridge) dec. Cody Silva (Poquoson) 18-13

3rd. Nick Squyres (Hickory) dec. Nilo Deguiera (Salem) 6-4 OT

5th. Troy Vann (Norview) dec. Robert Vann Roy (Deep Creek) 6-4

145. Joey Grainger (4-0, 1st Place). Joey was one of the few champions to wrestle in all 4 rounds. Most of the top seeds drew a bye in the first round. However, the 145 pounders filled all but 2 of the first round bracket slots. This field had some very strong wrestlers. Joey opened against teammate, Luke Black and defeated him by tech fall, 16-1 (3:27). Next was Stephan Barringer (Grafton), the #8 seed. In this one Joey locked in a spladle just before the period ended and got the fall in 1:57. The semifinals pitted #4 seed Tony Pizzo (Menchville) against Joey. He would prove to be the most formidable opponent

Joey would face. Initially, it appeared as if Joey would cruise through this one, as he sported a 10-4 lead at the end of the 2nd period. However, a frantic comeback by Pizzo cut Grainger's lead and when the buzzer sounded Joey walked away with an 11-9 decision that put him in the finals against #2 seed Kaylon Marshal (Poquoson). Joey scored 4 takedowns over 3 periods to go out to an 8-2 lead midway through the 3rd period. Marshall scored the final takedown 1:42 into the period, but he couldn't do anything with it and Joey took a well deserved title with an 8-4 decision.

1st. Joey Granger (Great Bridge) dec. Kayton Marshall (Poquoson) 8-4

3rd. Tony Pizzo (Menchville) maj. dec. Robert LaPoint (Kempsville) 8-0

5th. Ryan Milborne (Smithfield) TF Tarrence Hardy (Nansemond River) 16-1 (3:46)

152. Cole Shields (3-1, 3rd Place). If one was paying close attention to how well Wildcats wrestlers were faring in the Beast of the East, he'd have noticed that Cole Shields was one of those guys who was quietly advancing in the wrestlebacks coming up just shy of the medal round. It was a reliable indication of just how far along his mat skills are progressing. In this tournament, Cole continued to show excellent wrestling moves, winning 3 of his 4 bouts, all 3 wins by fall. Here's how it went for him. After a first round bye, Cole wrestled Seth Roberson (Menchville), the #6 seed. Cole turned him, cranked down a reverse headlock, settled on him, and got the fall in 1:09. In the semifinals, Cole hit Adrian Taylor (Norview), the #2 seed and eventual tournament champion. Cole kept it close in the first period, trailing 2-0, but after that, Taylor pulled away and won it, 16-4. In the consolation semifinals, Cole hit Antonio Hamlin (Smithfield), the #4 seed. In this one, Cole ran up a 7-0 lead before pinning Hamlin with a tight-waist tilt. That put Cole in the consolation finals with #5 seed, Mike Guilliani. Cole did what so many Wildcat wrestlers have done over the years. He ran up a 13-0 lead putting him on the brink of a tech fall, locked in a pinning move (in this case a cradle) and would either get the tech fall with nearfall points should Guilliani get out and if he didn't, then Cole would get the fall. The latter happened in 5:25 and Cole nailed down 3rd place. It was a strong performance in a very strong field.

1st. Adrian Taylor (Norview) dec. Chase McAdams (Poquoson) 10-8

3rd. Cole Shields (Great Bridge) pin Mike Guilliani (Hickory) 4:25

5th. Antonio Hamblin (Smithfield) pin Seth Roberson (Menchville) 0:30

160. Jared King (4-0, 1st Place). Jared had come off of a great performance at the Beast of the East and was the top seed for this tournament. He did wrestle all four rounds. In the preliminary round, Jared's first opponent was James French (Menchville). King pinned him in 44 seconds. In the quarterfinals, it was much of the same with Jared registering a fall in 56 seconds over Smithfield's William Woody. In the semifinals, things got a bit dicey. Brian DelGrosso was a tough opponent and took Jared the distance, but King won it, 10-2. On the other side, Joey Bayer scored a 15-0 (5:21) tech fall over Poquoson's Dell Bryce. For me that was a bit intimidating, given the fact that Bryce defeated DelGrosso 4-3 for 3rd place. In the finals, Bayer seemed to be in control. He took Jared down, cut him and took him down again. Jared reversed him 1:31 into the period to tie the score 4-4 going into the 2nd period. Jared chose down, reversed Bayer and took him to his back scoring 3 nearfall points. Bayer reversed him 12 seconds later.

King immediately reversed Bayer using a Peterson and got the fall in the process (3:20). It was a quality win over a very skillful opponent.

1st. Jared King (Great Bridge) pin Joey Bayer (Matoaca) 3:20

3rd. Dell Bryce (Poquoson) dec. Brian DelGrosso (Woodside) 4-3

5th. Eric Pittman (Salem) dec Marquez Fields (Norview) 1-0

171. Robbie Mello (3-1, 2nd Place). Robbie is a very fine wrestler who improves the strength of this line-up. He proves it every weekend out on the mat and each time he proves it, I'm surprised. It makes very little sense. Like Cole Shields and Billy Curling, he didn't place at the Beast of the East, but he advanced quite a distance through the wrestlebacks. The tournament organizers seeded him second in the Baker Classic. In the opening round, he pinned Desmond Walker (Nansemond River "B") in 3:59. In the quarterfinals, he pinned Taylor Briggs (Hickory "B") in 3:45. Next was his first real test in Steve Foster of Hickory, the eventual 3rd place finisher. Robbie used a series of takedowns and tilts to score a 15-2 major decision and advance to the finals. Here he it top seed, Chris Collins (Smithfield). There was no way to deal with him. Collins won this one, 6-0. Still, Mello made a great account of himself.

1st. Chris Collins (Smithfield) dec. Robbie Mello (Great Bridge) 6-0

3rd. Steve Foster (Hickory) dec. Dustin Clark (Matoaca) 5-1

5th. Thomas Reyes (Salem) dec. Khirey Bell (Kempsville) 13-9

189. Billy Curling (3-1, 2nd Place). Billy is a bit light to be wrestling 189, but with Alan Clamp out of the line-up, this is where he has to wrestle. In this tournament, Billy pinned his first 2 opponents in the first period. He pinned Austin Akins (Matoaca) in 36 seconds and then pinned Alex Marriam from the Wildcats' "B" team in the quarterfinals. In the semifinals he had a big 2nd period against Paul Bresnan (Tabb), the 4th place finisher, en route to a 15-6 major decision. In the finals against 5th seeded Pierce Embry (Kempsville) Billy just could not finish his takedown attempts after the first period. Embry won it, 14-6. Now, Embry is an excellent wrestler. He had taken out the top seed, Chase Ennis (Grafton) 7-5 in the semifinals. This was a pretty tough field and Billy did well in it. It may take a few weeks before he's completely adjusted to this new weight class.

1st. Pierce Embry (Kempsville) dec. Billy Curling (Great Bridge) 14-8

3rd. Chase Ennis (Grafton) dec. Paul Bresnan (Tabb) 3-1

5th. Connor O'Hara (Nansemond River) dec. Marc Graves (Menchville) 8-3

215. Jimmy Carter (0-2). Jimmy is not an experienced wrestler. He is strong enough, but has not quite developed the skills of the guys who have been wrestling a lot long that he has. The tournament organizers knew this. As a result, he drew the #3 seed (Daniel Brian of Kempsville) in the first round and got pinned in 35 seconds of the first period. In the wrestlebacks, Jimmy hit #5 seed, Devin Stoval of Matoaca. Stoval won this one 10-3. Jimmy has a lot still to learn and with some experience, much of it will come together for him. Good luck, Jimmy.

1st. Grant Chapman dec. Daniel Brian (Kempsville "B") 5-3

3rd. Josh Cole (Kempsville) pin Dustin Hempeck (Deep Creek) 2:46

5th. Julian Parker (Norview) pin Mike Riggins (Tabb) 2:45

285. No entry. Jake Gibson injured his foot just before the competition and had to withdraw, so the Wildcats had no one competing in this weight class. Curiously enough the Menchville “B” team wrestler, Nick Marcos, was seeded 4th, while the “A” team wrestler, Walter Pavusa, was seeded 7th. Pavusa made the finals and was the lowest seed to do so in the tournament. Marcos finished 6th.

1st. Keith Person (Grafton) dec. Walter Pavusa (Menchville) 3-1 OT

3rd. Dwayne Paschal (Kempsville) dec. Kindell Allen (Deep Creek) 1-0

5th. Jesse Sizemore (Tabb) dec. Nick Marcos (Menchville “B”) 9-7

I did not have a copy of all of the team scores, but from the best I could write down as they were jibberishly announced, this is how it came out:

Place	Team	Points
1	Great Bridge	202
2	Kempsville	190
3	Hickory	169.5
4	Poquoson	153.5
5	Tabb	103
6	Salem	98
7	Matoaca	92
8	Deep Creek	88
9	Menchville	86.5
10	Smithfield	80
11	Grafton	75
12	Norview	72
13	Nansemond River	51
14	Woodside	

The season is still young. We’ll see you at the Virginia Duals.

Skip Parker