

ALL-STATE



2009-2010



GLENN WRESTLING

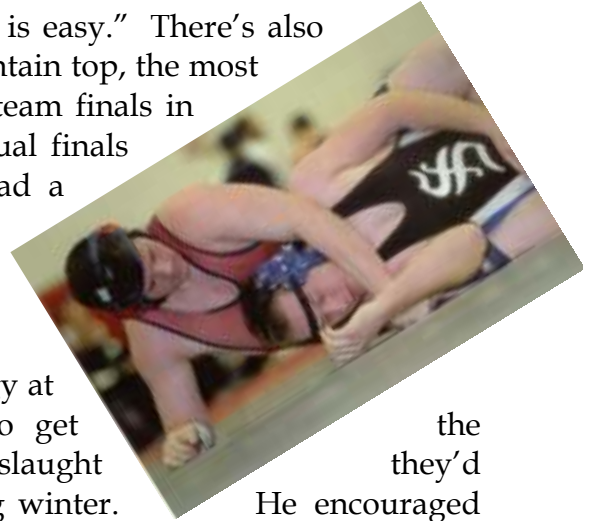
2x ALL-STATE



3X ALL-STATE  
STATE CHAMPION

# ROCKET REPEAT REQUIRED ROUGH RIVALS

It's been said that "After wrestling, everything else is easy." There's also this unwritten notion that once a team has reached the mountain top, the most difficult task is to stay up there. After reaching the state team finals in 2009 and qualifying a record number eight to the individual finals with five medal winners, John Glenn's wrestling team had a target on their back heading into the '09' - '10' season. Coach Polk had a strong squad returning and knew they couldn't rest on past laurels.



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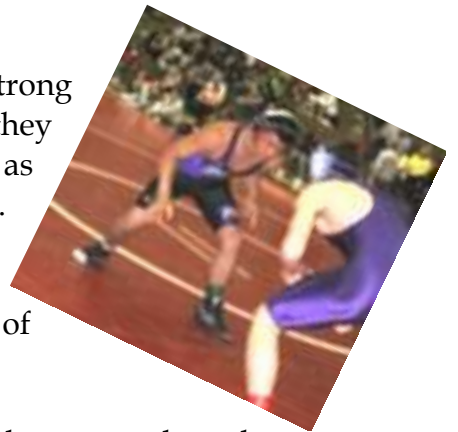
He encouraged coming to open room workouts, summer duals at Crestwood, team camp at Eastern Michigan University, and participation in as many off season events as possible.



With that in mind, Polk laid out an aggressive strategy at last season's banquet to get boys ready for the onslaught surely face the following winter.

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The "Road Rockets", as they were aptly named, got strong participation from their veterans and many of the newcomers as they immediately made some noise at various tournaments such as Chippewa Valley and the Mason Monster Medal tourney in March. This wasn't easy given that so many of the wrestling team members were also key participants in the baseball and track programs. Football was also pushing for active spring training in their hope of reaching a playoff berth in the fall (which they succeeded in doing).



Then came the Crestwood Duals in the late spring. Polk added two squads to the



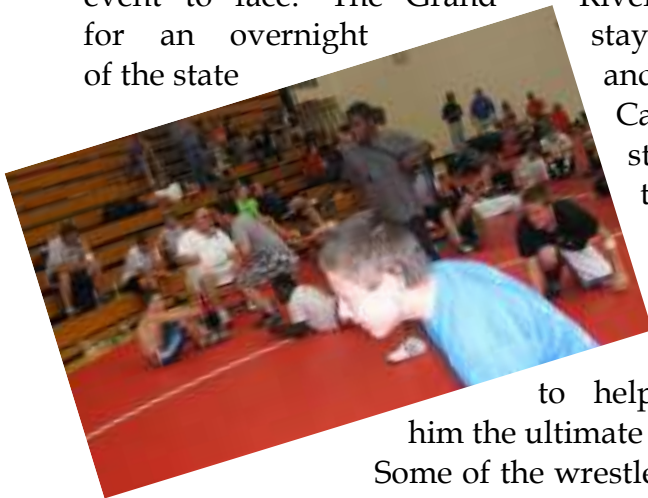
mix which hosted Tuesday night double dual matches for six weeks into the summer. Crestwood had a break in their schedule which accommodated a chance to try a new summer camp program offered at EMU. The team first went through an intensive training regimen before joining in the team competition camp where they would see some new faces such as Hudson, the future Division IV Team champions.



Nearing the end of the Crestwood Duals, Glenn hosted their own Rocket Camp in late July which was visited by several EMU coaches and team members who brought various techniques to be shared. Several team members had a chance to show off some newly-learned moves at the final Crestwood gathering.



With fall sports slated to start up in early August, the Glenn squad had one last summer event to face: The Grand River Rumble in Lowell. The Rockets brought a good team for an overnight of the state

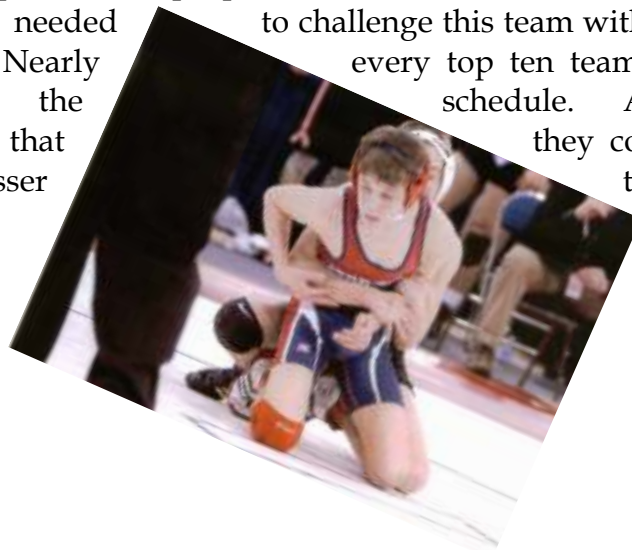


stay on the west side and faced the likes of Canada and some strong all-star teams from west Michigan. Coach Polk rode his motorcycle two hours one way to help coach, making him the ultimate Road Rocket "Leader of the Pack."



Some of the wrestlers, particularly Anthony Pavlich, continued to wrestle in Border Wars competitions in the fall. Most of the other wrestling team members were immersed in football, soccer, and cross country.

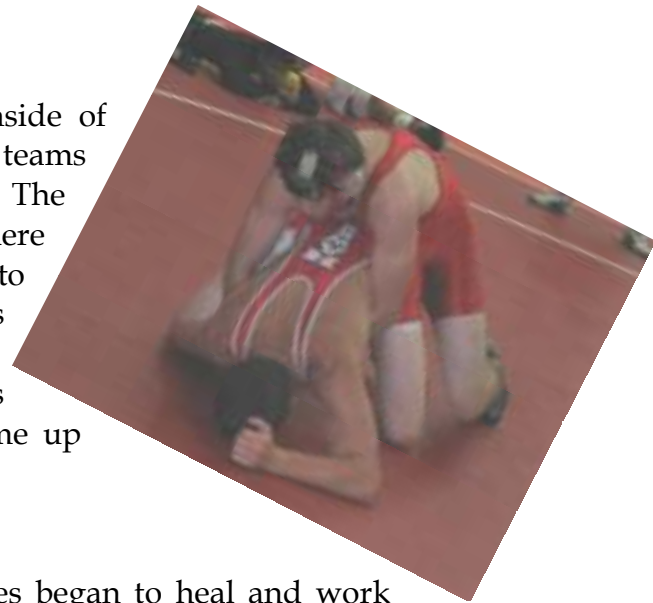
If a team has realistic ambitions of qualifying for the state finals, records are less important than being prepared to step up when the time comes to win during districts and regionals. Polk knew he needed to help accomplish this. Nearly every top ten team that ended up in the state finals was on the schedule. As a result, Glenn experienced some losses that they could have avoided had they gone against lesser teams.



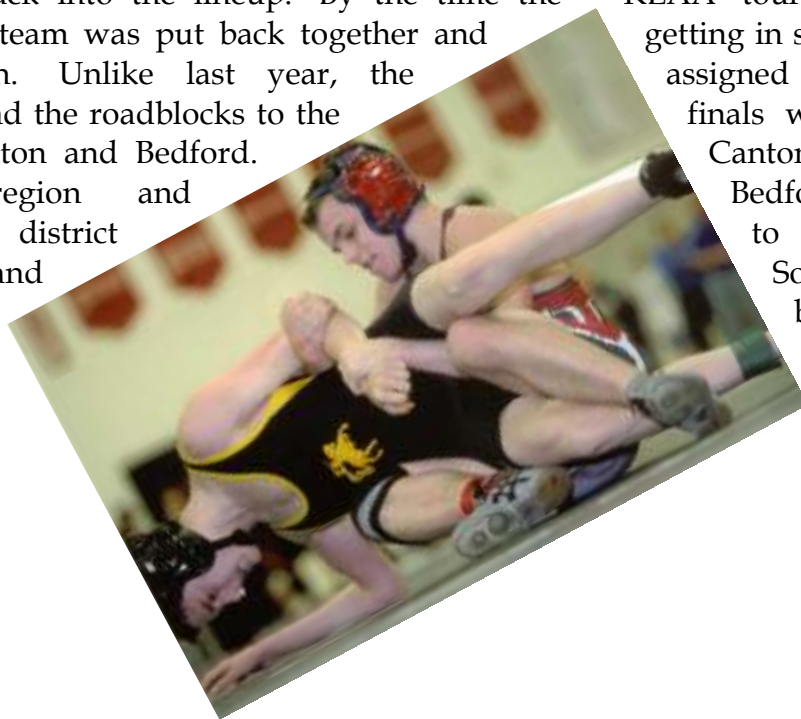
The John Glenn schedule featured the long established and tough Observerland and Catholic Central Invitationals. It also added a couple of new events that had historic implications. The inaugural Wayne County tournament, hosted this year at Romulus, pulled in nearly every team within the county boundaries and Glenn won it handily. Also, for the first time the KLAA conference held the first full conference championship which included all 24 member teams. Glenn hosted it and placed second to perennial powerhouse, Hartland.



Besides blemishes on the record, another downside of such a tough schedule is the potential for injury. Strong teams pose more threat that wrestlers will get banged up. The Rockets went through a period during mid-season where observers had their doubts that Glenn had what it took to be compared to other elite teams. Several key wrestlers went down with serious injuries right around the December holiday and, while younger team members did a commendable job as replacements, the team came up short several times.



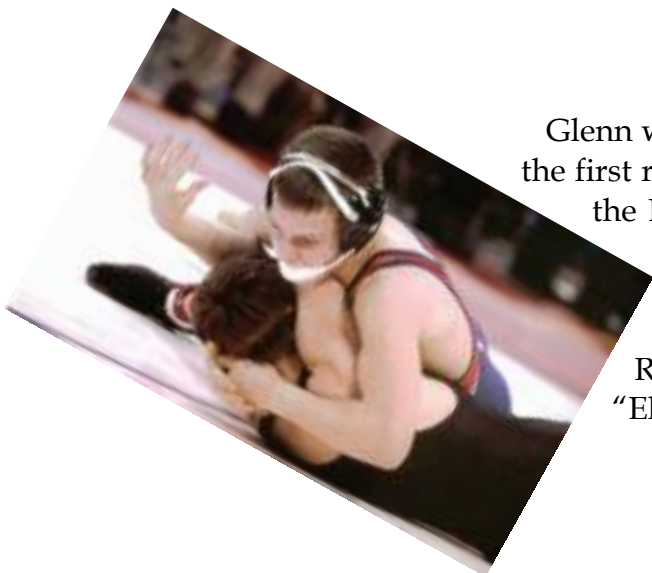
However, little by little, the guys on the sidelines began to heal and work their way back into the lineup. By the time the KLAA tournament rolled around, most of the team was put back together and getting in shape for the district and assigned teams were changed somewhat and the roadblocks to the finals would not come in the form of Canton and Bedford. Canton was assigned to a different region and Bedford would suffer a rare loss in their district to Monroe making the Trojans and Southgate Anderson the teams to beat.



Polk had studied Monroe 's team at the individual districts the weekend prior. He looked at the potential matchups and, while not worried, he was skeptical. He knew that certain people would have to do certain things as planned if the Rockets were to pull it off. Things started out better than planned, but quickly changed and, indeed, it appeared bleak for a spell. But the team rallied and knocked off the Trojans by 3. Next up, Southgate , did not match up as well with the Rockets and Glenn cruised into the state team finals for the second year in a row.



Glenn would draw defending state champion, Rockford , in the first round. The Rockets and the Rams had met earlier at the Eastern Michigan Duals, but neither team had their regular lineup. Again, Polk knew there was a chance, but that everything would have to go Glenn's way in order to pull off the upset. The Rockets came close, but fell just short. Still, another "Elite Eight" finish was achieved.



The final chapter in this team's legacy would be at the individual state finals. Led by senior Anthony Pavlich, who helped Polk end the long string of runner up finishes by winning the 130 lb state finals; the Rockets also had seniors Josh Austin and Dustin Gajowiak finish their careers with All State honors. This group that finished their four year run in the '09 - 10' season, has been arguably Polk's and Glenn's all time best team.



