“The Lone Wrestler”

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Standing alone can mean a few different things. It may mean being intimidated, shy or out of one’s comfort zone. Being the lone wrestler from Dorchester and going to Milford could have been scary and may have made one even want to quit.

However, in this case, being alone meant being strong, independent and true to one’s self. Representing the entire wrestling program from your school can be a tough act to lead. Some may have seen it as a problem, but others like senior Chris Nelson, took it as a challenge.

Whether it was staying after practice to work on a certain skill or lifting every day before school, being dedicated was an important character that Chris possessed.

“There have been many times that I have thought about quitting,” said Chris. “Then I just think to myself ‘I’m not a quitter. Everyone else may have quit, but I’m not a quitter.’”

“I wake up at six o’clock in the morning every day to lift weights at school. I go to school, and when there are twenty minutes left of study hall, I leave to go to Milford for practice. When practice is over, I ride home with my coach. I drive home and do my homework right away before I pass out from being so tired. Then I either get up at five for a wrestling meet in the morning, or I do the same routine over again.”

Because of low numbers of Dorchester wrestlers, Dorchester and Milford were in their third year of co-oping.

“I don’t mind going to Milford. It sure would be nice if we could still have it in Dorchester, but I need someone to practice wrestling against.”

Meeting new friends, learning new techniques, and sometimes even a bit of fun was also a positive.

“Last year after State Wrestling was over, Marty (Shildt, a wrestler from Milford) and I ate a whole ‘Trash Can Lid’ from Famous Dave’s. The lid was full of different kinds of food, involving corn, chicken, ribs, and other various foods. Then we decided that we weren’t done eating yet, so we decided to order two large pizzas back at the hotel. When we were done, we could barely move. We went to the weight room where our coaches found us passed out from eating so much. It was worth it.”

Although Chris was the only wrestler from Dorchester, Dorchester spirit was still shown throughout the whole Milford-Dorchester wrestling program.

“Last year I asked my coach if we could wear Dorchester singlets for a couple of meets. He said no because it didn’t have any Milford on it. I was disappointed, but that didn’t mean I was giving up. I asked him a few more times, and he still said no.”

“This year I was talking to the other Milford guys about it, and they were all for it. So I found the old singlets, brought them to coach, and thought I’d ask him one more time before Conference. When I asked him, I was shocked to hear him say, ‘Okay. You can wear them this once. If you do well, you can wear them next time. We all did well, so we got to wear it at Districts; then we wore them at State.”

Going to State had always been a goal for Chris, which was finally realized.

“It took me four years, but I wouldn’t have wanted to finish my senior year any other way than at the State tournament. After all, being the only one from your school to go to another and wrestle isn’t really that much of a deal in the end.”

“Wrestling has been part of me since kindergarten. The sport really teaches you so much. It teaches you respect, self-discipline, responsibility, and perseverance. No matter where I had to be so I could wrestle, it was worth it,” said Chris.