



Daily Leader photo/Earl Watt

Victor Cruz had five fireman's carries against West Las Vegas, N.M., opponent Redskin coach Mike Pewthers challenged Cruz to find a different move in the match. Cruz pinned his opponent in the second period.

By Rustin Watt

•Daily Leader

Liberal opened up the Southwest Classic with a devastating win over the Dons of West Las Vegas N.M., 67-9. Las Vegas' only points came in six due to an open at the 103 pound weight class and three in a win at the 160-pound weight class, 11-5. Even though he was the only loss Coach Mike Pewthers had good things to say about the 160 pounder Carlos Rodriguez.

"Carlos lost that match when the kid reversed him and that kid's 13-0 and second in state two years in a row, so he hung right in there," Pewthers said. "Even though he was the one that got beat, I felt he wrestled just as good as anyone else did."

Coach was also excited to get the duel in before the tournament.

"A few guys needed to lose some weight and getting a match in helped them there," he said. "It also helps loosen them up and get those jitters out so they can have their minds focused a little more in the tournament."

Six Liberal wrestlers started the Classic off with a pin: Victor Cruz, Valentin Borunda, Austen Pitts, Tyler Sutherland, Justin McPhail, and Nate Davis. Lorenzo Rios and Adam Meacham won by points. Chuy Torres, Ricky Gomez, and Adrian Salas won by forfeit.

"This lets me know I'm well-conditioned," 189-pounder Nate Davis said. "As long as I go hard like I did in this one I should win this thing. I'm going to try and take care of business before reaching the third period, but if it goes to three I'm going to go hard."

The Redskins usually perform well at home and seem to enjoy the crowd pretty well.

"It's awesome being able to wrestle in front of your home crowd, and the kids really enjoy it," Pewthers said. "The biggest thing is being able to wrestle in front of your friends and family and we'll end up with three or four more events at home this season."

It has been quite a while since the Redskins have won the Southwest Classic but there are definitely ways they could pull this one out.

"We need some of our unseeded or low seeded guys to get some upsets

Redskins leave West Las Vegas in Dust, 67-9

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and our high seeded guys have to win," Pewthers said.
See results in Monday's Leader.