

[Della Lamb Wrestling: Smithville Tournament: "Character"](#)

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Season two competitions for Della Lamb Wrestling began today with our “season opener” at the Smithville tournament. Unlike last year where we attended primarily novice tournaments, this year we have committed ourselves to a full schedule of open tournaments.

As the day has come to a close and I take a moment to look back I am in awe. Much like our season, today was a day where I was easily caught off guard with tears stinging my eyes at the pure sweetness of our Father.

Last October we were unsure how this season would really go for us as we were practicing in a local park without a wrestling facility. With the days shortening and the weather beginning to give us a slight taste of the winter months ahead we were blessed with the ability to use a local gymnasium owned by a Christian organization in our neighborhood. The gymnasium was amazing...but soon began our questions of how it would work with the lack of both running water and heat. Again, our Father blessed us with funding to supply some heat to the facility to endure these winter months. Through all of this, we went into January, a month and a half behind schedule in competitions wondering what would come of this season.

Answers to this question came flooding in today in several ways, once again God shining His glory through this team. I could not have been more proud to be a part of such an amazing group of boys, coaches, and parents as I was today. Despite my personal frustrations with our start to wrestling this year, my fear of not getting in enough tournaments, today I was proven wrong and reminded of a vital truth, life is not always about winning. I learned today more of the character that comes with winning and before winning, and I learned this through our young boys’ pure, sweet hearts.

Our day began with our eight and six year olds wrestling, many for their first time. Smiles and fear covered their faces anticipating what was ahead of them. Wins and losses were scattered amongst the first session, as were tears and radiant beaming faces of victory. Ending our morning we had one wrestler take first place, one second, three thirds, and a fifth place finish. Standing beyond just the stats of the morning though was the attitudes of the boys. Cheering each other on, encouraging through defeats, and celebrating the wins. Smiles on most just pleased to have participated in the event. Even further beyond their attitudes was their heart, with one of our wrestlers telling his sister how when he “grows up” he wants to be a “really good” wrestler so he can give all the glory back to our Father. Pure hearts wanting not to win for mans glory, but wanting to win for the glory of our Lord.

While the morning session was wrapping up our ten and twelve year olds were full of energy, again both nervous and excited for what would lie ahead of them as they stepped out onto the mat. Throughout the afternoon we saw a mixture of wins and losses amongst the boys. A returning wrestler in the 12 and under division was able to capture a first place win along with two second places, one third place, two fourth places and two fifth place finishes. Again, it wasn’t so much the stats that made them shine but their character.

In a ten year old bracket which two of our boys were in there was an individual who had been

having a rough day, he had been pinned by two prior wrestlers within seconds of stepping on the mat. The individual wrestler may not have had the skill the other boys had, but he did have heart and I believe that is exactly what Brett saw as he gave our wrestler a little pep talk before wrestling. As our wrestler stepped out to the mat to compete he showed complete class, he did not just go out there to win and get a pin, but to allow the other wrestler to get in time on the mat. He didn't just simply pin him, but allowed him to feel what it was like to be out wrestling. When the match concluded our ten year old was met by several parents from other teams coming to tell him what a class act he was as well as one individual dad quoting "that is some of the best sportsmanship I have seen in a long time". I had to look away as tears filled my eyes; it was not about the win but about the experience. Sure our ten year old could have went and pinned this boy within seconds and then never remembered the match. Instead, however he learned what it was to be a true champion today. He was not out there to glorify himself, but to glorify what it means to be a champion. I, along with many others, learned a lesson from this ten year old today. I learned it is not about the win; it is far more than that. What it truly is about is the character you display. Again, I am so proud to be a part of this team and blessed to be a part of the lives of these young boys within the inner city of Kansas City