

Contra Costa

THE TIMES

FRIDAY, MAY 26, 2006

Concord hosts top wrestlers

■ Junior Greco World
Duals will feature West's
best and team from Sweden

By Jay Heater
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CONCORD — The highly regarded Community Youth Center Greco Roman wrestling team will host the 2006 Junior Greco World Duals on Saturday and Sunday.

"We used to have clinics with international athletes and it evolved into a competition," said CYC coach Mark Halvorson, who has produced two U.S. World Team members, 10 national champions, 52 All-Americans, 18 regional champs and 85 state champs since he took over the program in 1998.

This year's competition features elite wrestlers from the Western United States along with the OrgrYTE Wrestling Team of Sweden.

A round-robin event will be held followed by individual matches featuring the four top wrestlers (determined by their results in team competition) in each weight class. The top-seeded wrestler will face No. 4 in the semifinals and No. 2 will face No. 3. Then the winners will meet in the title match to determine an individual champ.

Oregon is the defending team champion.

Halvorson said the goal is to get the tournament, formerly called the Concord Cup, known as one of the top Greco Roman events in the country.

"The guys get a lot of matches and it's good timing because the national junior duals (in Oklahoma City) are four weeks out. We are trying to prepare all the kids for national competitions."

Action begins at 9 a.m. on both Saturday and Sunday and wrestling is expected to last until 5 p.m. each day. Anyone under 18 will be admitted free. Adults pay \$10 per day or \$15 for both days.

CYC will be represented by 12 to 15 athletes. Among the top competitors will be Nikko Triggas, the defending Cadet Division national Greco Roman champ. Triggas also won the California high school title this season as a Campolindo High junior. He will compete at 123 pounds this weekend.

Others representing CYC include 174-pounder Tito Pica, who was second at the Cadet nationals last year; 138-pounder Nate Spangler, who was fifth in the Cadet nationals last year; Johnny Merryfield, this year's state Junior Greco Roman champ; 190-pounder Nick Pica, this year's state Greco Roman Cadet champ; and 138-pounder Tyler Sheridan, this year's state Greco Roman Cadet champ. All five attend De La Salle High.

Also competing from the area are 145-pounder Nick Waldrop, who won the Cadet state Greco Roman championship this year; and David Klingsheim, who won both the state Cadet and Junior titles this year. Waldrop attends Freedom High in Oakley, while Klingsheim goes to Liberty High in Brentwood.

CYC is located at 2241 Galaxy Court in Concord.