

# Defending UIL Wrestling Champions hope to repeat this season

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Two local high schools wrestlers are determined to defend the state championships that they won last season.

Cy-Fair High senior Jake Ekster (130 pound boys champion) and Cy Creek High junior Anna McAleavey (128 pound girls champion) made history last season, and they'll look to keep doing that this winter.

Ekster became the second Cy-Fair wrestler to win a state title (Austin McCain won state in 2006), and he has the opportunity to be the Bobcats' first-ever two-time state champion.

"I want to make a statement this year," Ekster said. "I don't just want to win it. (I) want to be dominant."

McAleavey is Cy Creek's first state wrestling champion, and she'll have the opportunity to win two more state titles in her career.

"(Last year) was cool because I was the first -- I made history," McAleavey said. "It was a good feeling (winning state) -- a surprising feeling."

Ekster has moved up to the 140-pound weight class this season, but plans on wrestling at 135 pounds at state.

"I trained and tried to kick it up a notch -- be much more determined to be the best," Ekster said.

"I feel like I've got a target on my back. I beat the kids that handed me my two losses for the season."

He was determined to win a state title after finishing second as a 125-pound sophomore in 2008, losing to Amarillo Randall's Michael Roberts.

Last season, he lost to Clear Lake's Matt Greene earlier in the season, but defeated him, 6-5, to win the state title.

"I've got to show that I'm the best wrestler, and hard work pays off," Ekster said. "Each year has been a stepping stone."

Ekster went on to finish 2-2 at Junior Nationals and also competed in the Preseason National Super 32 Tournament in North Carolina, finishing in the Top 12 at 4-2.

He hopes to compete in the 2011 Senior National Tournament in Virginia Beach, Va. and then wrestle in college at a program like Bacone (Okla.) or Chattanooga (Tenn.).

"With hard work and drive, you can accomplish anything you set your mind to in this sport," said Ekster, who helped lead Cy-Fair to a second place finish at the district tournament last season.

Both Ekster and McAleavey began wrestling when they were in elementary school, and their experience has paid dividends.

“(When I was in second grade) they passed out a wrestling flier, and it seemed like the coolest thing at the time,” McAleavey said.

McAleavey comes from a wrestling family. Her father, Gary, was a high school wrestler in New York and also wrestled in college.

Five of her six siblings have or are currently competing in the sport, and Cy Creek will have three McAleaveys on its roster through next season.

Senior Jordan McAleavey qualified for state last season, and freshman Joe McAleavey debuted this season; after Jordan graduates, eighth grader Kenny will join the team as a freshman.

Anna qualified for state as a freshman (119 pounds) and placed sixth. She’s excelled this season, winning tournaments at Cy Ridge and Klein Oak.

Her only loss last season was against Katy Taylor senior Erin Miller in the Regional Championship Match.

She spent the offseason training and competed in the Freestyle Nationals Tournament in North Dakota.

Anna helped lead Cy Creek to a fourth place finish at state, and Cy Creek head coach Corey Kerr said the team can improve on that this season.

“She’s working a lot harder, and she’s very determined,” Kerr said. “I think she’ll try to repeat (at 128). We really think we have a chance to finish high at state. She’s really stepped into that (leadership) role.”

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