



**D.J. WARKENTHIEN**  
**NVHS BOOSTER CLUB FEATURED ATHLETE OF THE WEEK**  
**WRESTLING PROGRAM**

*The NVHS Athletic Booster Club is proud to present the featured athlete of this week, wrestler D.J. WARKENTHIEN. DJ was voted one of the captains this season and took over that role in a tremendously active way. His team talks to the program were candid, encouraging and positive. He shows the way through his actions. DJ is a two-sport athlete. He is a very accomplished football player and he is one wrestler that people come out to watch because of his exciting, aggressive style of wrestling. He earned Honorable Mention All State in football and he was named this season as the Upstate 8 Defensive Player of the Year. He has also just earned All-State Honors (for the second time) by placing in the IHSA State Wrestling Finals this past weekend. He wrestled through a cauliflower ear, a slam in the first match and a broken nose in his last match to secure at least a 6<sup>th</sup> place finish. The medical personnel took him off the mat for the rest of the State Series. DJ is a complete student/athlete that does well in the classroom and on the wrestling mat and football field. Coach Ruettiger says it was his great pleasure to be able to coach DJ.*

**Booster Club Reporter:** *Was wrestling an early passion of yours? What are your other interests?*

**D.J.:** I have wrestled for 6 years now. Both of my brothers wrestled in middle school, so I figured I would just follow in their footsteps and wrestle starting in 7<sup>th</sup> grade. I also play football and I participate in best buddies program.

**Booster Club Reporter:** *Is it a tough decision to participate in competitive sports? What are the pros and the cons?*

**D.J.:** At the beginning of the season I was questioning whether or not to wrestle because the practices were so challenging and it was a very long season. I decided to wrestle because although it is very tough, it disciplines me in a lot of different ways and it gets me in great shape. The coaches at the wrestling program transformed me from a completely undisciplined athlete, to a great wrestler with mat strategy.

**Booster Club Reporter:** *And that is one of the roles the coach plays. What else have your coaches taught you?*

**D.J.:** Discipline, hard work, and how to work with people. Through football and wrestling I have learned these three things that I will use for the rest of my life and cherish from my experience in athletics.

**Booster Club Reporter:** *What is your strategy for winning on the mat? How do you deal with losing?*

**D.J.:** I just stick with what I do best: I take kids down and pace myself. I don't have a fear of losing. I believe that having an attitude with loss in your mind is already setting yourself up with a backup plan and eventually a failure.

**Booster Club Reporter:** *But what do you do when you actually fail?*

**D.J.:** In the middle of the season I lost 3 of 4 matches. I had to adapt, the coaches put a strategy in place for me to make adjustments and it has worked so far!

**Booster Club Reporter:** *What comes first, athletics or academics?*

**D.J.:** Grades come first. Athletics are a privilege you get with good grades.

**Booster Club Reporter:** *Who is your source of inspiration?*

**D.J.:** My grandfather! He is the nicest, most sincere, person I have ever met. He always attends any event my siblings or I have ever participated in. If I end up like him I had a good life.

**Booster Club Reporter:** *Looking forward, do you think you will miss High School? Do you already have plans for your college future? And thereafter?*

**D.J.:** I am going to miss all the people I met in High School and all the times that I spent with them. I plan to attend North Central College and study marketing or business management while playing football. My plans for the future include getting a job downtown Chicago and hopefully starting a family!