

## Gillis wins silver at provincial wrestling championship



**By Bill Kilpatrick**

On Feb. 1 Jaxsyn Gillis, a Grade 12 student at North Hastings High School and member of the Huskies' wrestling team, traveled to Markham to participate in the Ontario Juvenile wrestling Championships invitational tournament. It's an important tournament for Gillis because he was facing some stiff competition, says wrestling coach Sean Roulston, who has been working with Gillis for the last three years, "Most of the wrestlers there participate in club wrestling as well as their high school teams," said Roulston, "It's the best wrestlers in the province." Roulston pointed out that there are not many wrestling clubs in the area and that the closest is Cobourg, which makes it a challenge for Gillis to wrestle other youth at his level. "I've been working with him at the gym in the off

season," said Roulston, "he's been putting a lot of work in and it's definitely paying off."

Gillis' first match saw him up against a wrestler who was seeded in second place for the Markham tournament. The same wrestler came in third at the Ontario Federation of Secondary School Association championships in 2024 and also happened to be the wrestler who knocked Gillis out of that same tournament. Gillis was looking for revenge and he got it. He won by tech, (getting ahead by 10 points) beating him 21-11, which also resulted in him being noticed by some post-secondary scouts who were at the tournament. "That was a good win for me, I had a chip on my shoulder for that guy" that was pretty awesome," said Gillis. He won the second match by tech as well 10-0 and then was put to the test in the third match that lasted the full six minutes, but he ended up winning a close one 6-3. The gold medal match began well, but after attempting a maneuver, he found himself pinned. Gillis' second place finish will allow him to be seeded at the Ontario Championships if he comes in the top two at the Central Ontario Championships.

Gillis is now preparing for the road to the Ontario Secondary School championships in March. That road begins with the Central Ontario seeding at Adam Scott Secondary School in Peterborough on Feb. 13, followed by the Central Ontario championships on Feb. 20 at Centennial Secondary School in Belleville. "I'm just trying to improve at this point," said Gillis, "It's looking good for OFSAA." Gillis thanked his coaches, parents, and all the people who have helped give him this opportunity to do what he loves.