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Dickinson powerlifting wins third straight regional title

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By **BRANDON C. WILLIAMS** Correspondent

DICKINSON

Galveston County has seen its share of athletic programs establish stretches of dominance, yet the latest may be the strongest. Literally.

The Dickinson powerlifting team captured its third straight Region IV, Division I championship this past Saturday at Katy Taylor High School, as coach Earl Ricicar's Gators finished with 37 points, which almost doubled the 19 points of second-place The Woodlands.

In the process of overpowering the competition, Dickinson had six lifters qualify for next month's state meet in Abilene, where the Gators will be favored to win a second straight state title.

"We knew going into the season that we would have a target on our backs," said Ricicar, "But we knew that if we worked hard and stayed focused on the goals we set that we would be back here preparing to win another state title."

Dickinson was able to achieve most of their goals despite having to start late due to the football team's run to the Region III finals. Ricicar said the team wasted little time in getting back into form, as his senior-laden unit didn't need much pushing or prodding to put their work in.

The Gators reaped the rewards on Saturday, as senior Kaylond North set a regional record with a squat of 770 pounds en route to a total lift of 1,880 pounds. Fellow senior Anietie Etuk smashed the regional dead lift record when he pulled up 650 pounds while finishing with a total of 1,785 pounds, while senior Chance Harmanson set the regional super heavyweight record with a 480-pound bench press, finishing with 1,865 pounds.

All three finished first in their division along with Chien Phan, who won the 132-pound class with a total of 1,095 pounds and Cornelious Vaughns, who topped the field in the 181-pound class with

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1,480 pounds. Pablo Cavazos earned a trip to the state finals with his fifth place finish in the 148-pound division (1,200 pounds).

Ricicar feels that Etuk and Harmanson have a great chance to follow up their regional performances by setting state records in the dead lift and bench press.

With all but Cavazos graduating this spring, the state finals will mark the end of their remarkable run, but their legacy will be cemented.

“This is a once in a lifetime group of athletes,” said Ricicar. “They are the most powerful group I’ve ever worked with and maybe the best I will ever have. This is a self-motivated set of lifters who will leave a lasting legacy for the younger lifters will have to follow.”

It’s not just the boys who are having success, as the Gators will have two girls who will compete in this weekend’s state title meet in Corpus Christi. Summer Harris will compete in the 132-pound class, while Denu Phan will take part in the 97-pound class.

Two other area schools will also compete in the state finals, as Texas City had three members qualify for Abilene. Jared Hernandez won the 165-pound class with a total of 1,300 pounds, while Demontre Bell (1,400 pounds, 198-pound class) and Dante Hayes (1,550 pounds, 275-pound class) each finished fifth. Santa Fe’s Kyler Gentry tied for fifth in the 275-pound class with 1,550 pounds and advanced to the finals.

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