

Staying power: Gators pumped up to lift at regionals



Darin Slater does squat lifts during powerlifting practice at Dickinson High School on Wednesday. Dickinson is sending 13 lifters to the regional powerlifting meet on Saturday at Mayde Creek High School.

Photos by Kevin Cox



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By BRANDON C. WILLIAMS

DICKINSON — In the past decade, Earl Ricicar has turned the Dickinson powerlifting program into one of the state's most formidable units, highlighted by the performance of Kenny Nguyen, who set new standards in bench pressing in both the 123-pound and 132-pound classes.

While this season's squad, which consists of just one senior, is young, Ricicar is excited about Dickinson's



chances heading into this weekend's regional meet at Mayde Creek High School.

"This is one of my most talented groups, but what makes them special is their youth," said Ricicar, who is assisted by Kevin Berneathy. "Each of these kids are busting their tail, and it makes me feel like the next three years will be very exciting for Dickinson powerlifting."

Of the 13 Gators who will be participating this weekend, Ricicar feels that as many as 10 have legitimate chances to advance to next month's state meet, with sophomore Kaylon North (242-pound class) and junior Alec DeLeon (148 pounds) as strong contenders.

North and DeLeon will also be joined by Dominic Monsivaiz (123 pounds), Chein Phan (123 pounds), Cecilio Hernandez (132 pounds), Brandon Martinez (132 pounds), Trey Vaughans (165 pounds), Thomas Bridges (181 pounds), Anietie Etuk (242 pounds), Ernesto Reales (275 pounds), Alonzo Crittendon, (super heavyweight) Chance Harmanson (super heavyweight) and Darin Slater (super heavyweight).

"It's fun to be a coach when you have kids who really enjoy the sport," Ricicar said. "Their work ethic is very good, and it's great to see them rewarded when they see their progress in strength."

Ricicar and the Gators won't be the only area program represented at Mayde Creek, as La Marque and Texas City will also participate.

Cougars coach Michael Janes will have 14 members, as Jay Bradley (114 pounds), Jimmy Coleman (123 pounds), Dylan Billiott (132 pounds), Dequan Jones (148 pounds), Gerald Johnson (148 pounds), Alan Cooper (165 pounds), LaDarrian Ellis-Jones (165 pounds), Justin Britton (181 pounds), Marquez Baker (275) pounds, Aymiel Flemming (275 pounds) and Devyn Billott (super heavyweight) will compete in the boys' division, while Dareille Crow (220 pounds), Aarron Logan (220-plus pounds) and Sha'nia Lawson (220-plus pounds) will represent La Marque in the girls' bracket.

Stingarees coach James Shepard will have the trio of Francois Bonilla (22 pounds), Lorenzo Baeza (242 pounds) and Korey Robinson (275 pounds).

"What makes the sport special is that everyone is rooting for everyone," said Ricicar. "Everyone participating is encouraging each other to succeed."

At a glance

WHAT: Region IV, Division I powerlifting meet

WHEN: Saturday

WHERE: Mayde Creek High School, 19202 Groschke Rd, in Houston