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The high school wrestling season is now over, complete with a banquet to talk about the entire program and the year that has been so successful. It has, indeed, been a very good season.

This writer took in the entire State Wrestling Tournament, and, once again, it's a very memorable event. With three classes and all the individuals taking part, the 3 1/2 days of wrestling are jam-packed with action.

I can't say which Class of fans have the most fun. Class A includes all the smaller schools like Minneota, and the teams bring almost the whole town with them.

The Class AA schools are the larger sized schools with Class AAA having the largest number of students involved. It seems like many of the same teams are entered into the State race each year, with Apple Valley the perennial favorite each year. But other schools make the lineup, which brings so much energy and fun into the tournament.

The Xcel Center is an excellent arena for the wrestling venue. Eight mats are almost in constant use, and there really isn't a bad seat in the place. Once you know which mat your entrant will be on, you can seat yourself in the area where you can also see the best. While you may have to disturb a few folks to get to a seat, people are generally very accepting of the "moving around" of the fans.

For when the wrestlers are not in action, it seems that most people are eating or going to one of the many rest rooms. Food is a bit "spendy" at the Xcel, but it's no different than other large arenas in the area. But whatever you're hungry for, it's probably there if you look far enough.

My trip was made better by popcorn, large hot dogs, chicken baskets, mini doughnuts, fruit drinks, soda, licorice, french fries and ice cream. Good grief - I think I ate my way through the tournament!

Just when you think you have had your fill, someone slips by with one of those treats - and you just have to have it! I cannot imagine being a vendor during these tournaments - for their days are very long. By the time the tournament was over, the smell of grease was getting a little strong...so it was time to go home and back to reality and much smarter eating.

While the fans are enjoying their treats, the wrestlers are weighing in after every session and only getting an extra pound of lee-way for the next day. Many wrestlers had their own food along, so they could eat more healthy items and maintain weight and conditioning. Too much of those sugar and salt foods would really throw them off.

A large number of referees were called on for all the matches, and they were introduced before each session. Peter Janiszeski, of Minnesota, was one of the officials while Jim Williams of Granite Falls, who refs many of our matches, was also on the mat several times.

The fans surpassed the numbers of past years at this tournament - with over 13,000 attending on Saturday, and an overall total of some 53,000 over the tournament action. Every-one had a good time, with the wrestlers giving all a lot of action to watch.

If you've never been to a State Tournament, you really need to try it once. Not only can you cheer on your own entrants, but you see so much top-quality wrestling from young men all around the State. It's a very contagious thing.