

Fate dealt **Chapin** another bitter hand on Saturday in the Class 3A state championship **wrestling** match at Dreher.

For the second year in a row, the Eagles saw their title dreams vanish with a loss in the last bout of the match. This time **Belton-Honea Path** did the deed by a 35-30 margin.

Chapin had a 30-21 lead with three bouts remaining after back-to-back pins by Brandon Owens and Adam Taylor at 220 and 285 pounds, respectively. But the Upper State champion Bears (31-3) responded with three wins down the stretch, including the title-clinching pin with two seconds remaining in the second period at 120 pounds by Kyle Lowe.

"This is just an unbelievable feeling, especially the way the guys responded with the pressure on at the end," BHP coach Chris Strickland said. "This is our first state championship in long time, and it feels great."

It was the first title and championship match appearance for the Bears in the dual-match playoff era that began in 1994. BHP's last title was in 1993.

Ultimately, two key wins made the **Belton-Honea Path** win possible. One was an 11-5 decision by Zack Farmer at 170 pounds over **Chapin's** Devin Lawrence, a defending state runner-up who is ranked No. 2 at his weight by scmat.com. But the stunning pin of Ryan Moore by Caleb Bowie at 195 was even more vital to the Bears' triumph. Though trailing 8-2 entering the third period, Bowie flipped and pinned Moore in one motion for a critical point swing in BHP's favor.

"I've never pulled off that move before," Bowie said. "To tell you the truth, I was more concerned on not getting pinned myself. I'm just glad I was able to help us win."

Prior to Lowe's fall, BHP drew within 30-26 on a technical fall win at 106 by Jobe Sherard and inched within 30-29 on a 9-2 decision by Parker Peeples at 113.

"I have to give **Belton-Honea Path** a lot of credit because they stopped our good people from pinning and just wrestled tough and hard all the way," said **Chapin** coach Ken Wilson, whose team finished with a 37-8 record.

"It came down to one match again, and that's what made it so tough. It was especially hard for our seniors who wanted to win this so bad. We thought we had a good shot at it. Why it didn't work, I don't know."

The Eagle seniors hope to go out on high notes in individual competition over the next two weeks.