

CALEDONIA – The power of four was nearly enough for the Caledonia High School girls powerlifting team to win a state title.

In only its second year of existence, Caledonia High's team of Delani Clements (105 pounds), Nina Weinstein (165), Izzy Glasgow (181) and Lacy Goins (242) recorded two second-place finishes and two firsts and scored 24 points to finish third at the Mississippi High School Activities Association (MHSAA) Class 4A Powerlifting Championships on April 5 at Mississippi Coliseum in Jackson.

Clements set a state record with a 290-pound dead lift en route to taking second, Weinstein and Glasgow won their weight classes with combined weight totals of 740 and 765 pounds, respectively, and Goins took second in her first year on the team.

"All of them did a really, really good job and prepared really well," said Jason Forrester, who coached the team with Crystal Martin. Forrester said he was probably more nervous than any of the student-athletes and he credited all of them for keeping their heads.

"I think now they see the benefit, but they put in the work," Forrester said.

Clements, a junior, also had a personal-best combined weight total (610 pounds), as did her teammates. She said she never would have imagined setting a state record, especially after she went out in the first meet last year after scratching on her bench press.

"If you would have told me at the beginning of the season I would get second at the state meet, I would have been like, 'You're joking' because I have grown so much from last year," Clements said. "It is kind of surreal I got second."

Clements, who also plays basketball and competes in track and field, said she "grinded" all year because she "wanted to leave an

impression” on everyone. She said her sister, Molly, a sophomore, and her boyfriend went to the gym with her three or four times a week and provided extra motivation to help her do so well.

Weinstein, a sophomore, set a personal-best in the squat (320) and recorded a meet-PR in the dead lift (290) to go with her 130-pound bench press. She said she started to go to the gym on her own at least two days a week after practices with the team and that a “stricter” lifting schedule helped her “grow some muscles.”

“If you would have told me at the beginning of the season I was going to win state I would not have believed you,” Weinstein said. “Last year, I didn’t make it past regionals, so this year is a big improvement.”

Glasgow, a senior, set a PR in the dead lift (345) and said a state title was a “long time coming” in her second year on the team and third year lifting weights. She credited Forrester’s “1970 Russian workouts” for helping get everybody prepare for the state meet, even though she called them “horrible.”

Glasgow said the workout included squat and dead lift on the same day and featured a different number of sets and repetitions. Following six sets of squats, Glasgow said the workout moved to three other lifts or activities and then shifted to six sets of dead lift. She said she and her teammates had to do eight to four reps with different percentages of their one-rep maximum.

“From the beginning of the season I have progressed quite a bit,” Glasgow said. “My maxes went up, which comes with doing the work and putting in the time. I think I could have gotten more – and I wish I could have gotten more – but I am still proud of myself for getting first.”

Forrester said the workout, which was twice a week for a month, pushed everyone and left team members moving slowly on occasion, but he said they reaped the rewards.

Goins, a senior, recorded a PR in the squat (360) by 25 pounds and a PR in the bench press (135) by 10 pounds. She said she had an idea what powerlifting was going to be like, but that she asked questions and figured things out along the way. She said the practices were definitely harder than the meets, which helped prepare everyone for the state championship meet.

“I think I did pretty well for it to be my first year,” Goins said. “It does kind of suck that I didn’t get first, but she (Bay Senior High’s Kiara Johnson) has been doing it since her freshman year.”

The third-place finish builds off the 2023 event in which Lauren Brown won a state championship as the team’s only representative. It remains to be seen how many Cavaliers will make it to Jackson next year, but there’s no denying the hard work Clements, Weinstein, Glasgow and Goins invested this season.

“I was so proud of them,” Goins said. “We all have been like a family throughout this whole thing. We always lift each other up.”

Said Glasgow, “I am very proud of them. I couldn’t be there for every practice, but I definitely know they put in the work and we all worked very hard to achieve this.”