

Town of Amherst schools all sending at least one wrestler to sectionals

by PATRICK J. NAGY
Reporter

Each Town of Amherst school will send at least one wrestler to Saturday's Section VI New York State qualifier at Fredonia State College after placing in the top four at the class tournaments last weekend.

Williamsville North has the most attending sectionals with five followed by Williamsville East (four), Sweet Home (two) and Amherst and Williamsville South (one each). North and Sweet Home competed in the Class AAAA at Clarence High School. East, South and Amherst were at the Class AAA at Starpoint High School.

Williamsville North

The Spartans' Jake Caprow, Nate Carbrey, P.J. Abbarno, Matt Aloisio and Ben DeSoye all advanced. As a team, North finished in seventh place with 93 points, 2½ points away from sixth-place West Seneca West.

"It was probably the best showing we've had in years," said North coach Brian Swatland. "The kids were ready and came out to wrestle. We were in fifth place after the first night. It would have been nice to beat West Seneca West but we didn't have enough wins in wrestlebacks, but I was happy we got five through."

Carbrey finished the highest out of all the Spartans with a second place finish at 135. Carbrey beat Lockport's Andy Norris in the semifinals but lost 12-2 to Niagara-Wheatfield's Zack Lange, in the finals. Carbrey was 3-1.

Abbarno took third at 160. He lost 3-1 in the semifinals to eventual champion Angelo Malvestuto of Niagara-Wheatfield but avenged a loss to Niagara Falls' Shane O'Harrow from the Niagara Frontier Wrestling Officials Association Tournament with a 6-3 win for third.

DeSoye pinned Jamestown's Anthony Nary in the second period for third at 275. He finished 3-1 on the day.

Caprow beat Lancaster's Ben Chaves, 6-4, in his first match but ended up losing to him 8-4 in wrestlebacks to place fourth at 130. Caprow will meet Iroquois' Matt Mariacher in the first round on Saturday.

Aloisio also placed fourth at 171. He beat Clarence's Rick Walter, 2-0, in the first round, was pinned by Niagara-Wheatfield's Jake Koshinski, beat Jamestown's Joe Alden, 5-1, but gave up a takedown with five seconds left in overtime to lose to eventual third place finisher Justin Szuromi of Lockport.

Steven Liebler (112), Ansar Khan (125), Matt Proven (145) and Mohamad Abidi (189) each finished 1-2. Liebler's win came over Clarence's Jon Dennis, who had beat him by 12 and eight points earlier this season.

Williamsville East

The young Flames continued its respectable season by sending four wrestlers to sectionals.

Max Cohen won the 125-pound Class AAA tournament, beating Maryvale's Jeff Digati, 3-2, in the finals. Cohen also beat Cheektowaga's Hoang Pham, 21-5, and West Seneca East's Rick Rukowski, 12-1, en route to his second straight tournament win of the season. Cohen is 25-5.

"I know how bad it felt for him after not winning at the Williamsville North tournament but he went back to work," said East coach Henry Fumerelle. "We have a saying that 'hard work works' and he came back and won the Lew-Port tournament and now he's a class champion. I'm happy for him."

Freshman Ben Mikac finished 3-1 to place third at 96. Mikac lost 3-2 in the semifinals against Cheektowaga's Mike Tomczak

but in wrestlebacks, avenged a finals loss from the North Tournament against Joe Amsdill of Jamestown with a 12-2 decision.

Jacob Beichner and Matt Calleri also advanced with four place finishes at 119 and 130, respectively.

In the semifinals, Beichner fell 10-1 to eventual champion Jared Messina of Cheektowaga. In wrestlebacks, he lost 2-0 to Iroquois' Jim Kloc.

Calleri beat Amherst's Andrew McCauley, 9-2 in wrestlebacks then fell to Cheektowaga's Russ Wojtusiak.

Zach Horton did not advance but finished a respectable 3-2 at 103 for fifth. Ryan Cravatta was sixth at 112. Sean Trabert had to injury default for sixth.

Senior Garrett Roetzer finished 2-2 at 140. Sophomore Brandon Munoz went 1-2 at 152, including a triple overtime loss to West Seneca East's Kyle McNulty. Ernest Jacobs opened with a 9-4 win over Williamsville South's Mike Walter at 171 but finished 1-2.

Fumerelle was pleased with his team's performance.

"When we walked in Saturday morning we were in third place and had six kids in the semifinals," said Fumerelle. "Every one of them is coming back next year so I'm continuing to see improvement."

Sweet Home

The Panthers have the best shot out of all Town of Amherst schools to send a wrestler to states in Nic Stella.

The junior continued his unbelievable season win a first place finish at the AAAA at 140 pounds.

Stella is 36-0 and ranked No. 4 in New York State and second among large schools.

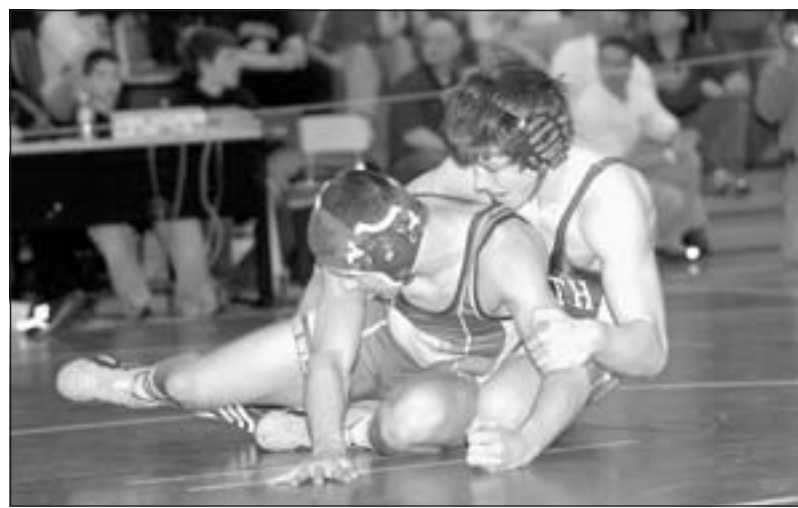
After a first round bye, Stella destroyed Lancaster's Dan Welch and Orchard Park's Andrew Hutchins, each by 19-4 technical fall decisions, before he pinned Jamestown's Joe Kinem in 4:54.

"Nic's on a mission and is not going to let anything stop him," said Sweet Home coach Chris Nadeau. "He's very focused."

Also advancing through was freshman Gage Bateman, who lost 2-1 to Lancaster's Clint Schaefer, in the finals. Bateman, now 22-9, beat Orchard Park's Doug Henning, the second seed, 15-0, by technical fall. Bateman won the rubber match this season with Jamestown's Max Murray, 5-2, in the semifinals.

"Gage looks like he's peaking," said Nadeau. "He looks stronger and more aggressive than at the beginning of the year."

"He's the first one up on every drill we do and works hard," Nadeau continued. "I tell the kids that's why he's does as well as he



Williamsville North's Jake Caprow, back, finished fourth at 130 pounds at the Class AAAA Tournament on Saturday at Clarence High School. Caprow is wrestling Kenmore West's Nathan Skiba.

Photo by John Normile
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does. His dad was a New York State champ so it's in the bloodline but he works hard."

Ryan Murray and Paul Fazekas each placed sixth. Murray, 20-10, beat Kenmore West's Sam Giordano, 8-7, Niagara Falls' Josh Coppede, the second seed, 10-6, before he was pinned by West Seneca West's Mike Lignos, in the semifinals. Murray then lost 6-0 to Clarence's Brian Cournan and had to injury default for sixth.

Fazekas, who has been wrestling strong as of late, rebounded from a first round pin by Niagara-Wheatfield's Jake Koshinski, to beat North Tonawanda's Rick Yaeger, 16-1, Lancaster's Adam Bertucci, 9-2, before he lost to Lockport's Justin Szuromi, 4-3, in overtime. Fazekas was pinned by Jamestown's Joel Ahlbin to finish sixth.

Zach Fumerelle finished 0-2 at 125 but wrestled runner-up Rob Williams of Kenmore West tough, losing when he couldn't ride him in overtime. Andrew Serio beat North Tonawanda's Chris Powers, 8-5, for his first win of the year.

Amherst Central

After losing in three tournament finals this year, senior Steve Devlin won the 135-pound Class AAA finals.

Devlin entered the tourney seeded No. 1 and proved he was the best at his weight class, said Amherst coach Dennis Bauer.

In the quarterfinals, Devlin pinned Pat Tuttle from Kenmore East at 26 seconds of the second period. In the semifinals, Devlin beat Grand Island's Anthony Genova, 18-4.

In the finals, Devlin defeated West Seneca East's Dave Pangallo, 10-3. Devlin nearly pinned Pangallo in the first period and was leading, 5-0.

Senior Andy McCauley placed fifth at 130. After losing 15-0 to Albion's Matt Hilobuk, he beat Lake Shore's Brett Colling, 2-1, then came back to beat West Seneca East's Justin Butts, 7-4.

McCauley was trailing Butts, 4-2, with less than 30 seconds left but took him down and held him on his back to earn the come from behind win.

McCauley next faced Williamsville East's Matt Callieri where the winner qualifies to continue in the postseason. Bauer said Callieri was leading 1-0 at the start of the third period then took charge, turning McCauley to his back twice, winning 8-1.

In McCauley's last match of his high school career, he faced Hilobuk in a rematch of the first round. After surrendering an early takedown, McCauley came back with ten unanswered points before pinning him in the third period.

"I have coached few athletes

with the mental toughness of these two wrestlers," said Bauer. "Andy's ability to come back and beat a kid who beat him 15-0 the day before speaks volumes about him."

Williamsville South

South advanced Logan Struebing to sectionals but it wasn't without some drama.

Struebing, unseeded, defeated Pioneer's Garrett Pauly, to place fourth at 160.

Struebing trailed, 6-2, heading into the third period. Nothing seemed to be going his way.

"We chose down in hopes he could get a reversal and turn him for a five count to win by one," said South coach Sean Leaderstorf. "Logan was trying everything he knew to get that reversal with no avail."

After going out of bounds with 40 seconds left, Leaderstorf said they had to change strategy and hope for a quick escape worth one point, and a throw that would put Pauly to his back right away.

Leaderstorf said when the referee blew his whistle, Struebing hit a quick stand but Pauly locked his hands around his waist preventing him from escaping, and with 25 seconds left by the edge of the mat, Struebing was able to cut in and face Pauly while his hands were still locked. Struebing shimmied his arms free and got a headlock on Pauly and got his takedown and the referee started his back points count.

"The period was finally over and Logan was declared the winner," said Leaderstorf. "We were ecstatic and going crazy. This meant the tradition of a South wrestler going to the state qualifier would live on. All of the sudden, I was paged back to the mat for a discussion. The referee explained that someone at the scorers table didn't start the clock for roughly 15 seconds which meant that he wouldn't have been able to get the three necessary back points to win. To compromise, he would give Logan two back points which meant they would have been tied at the end of three periods and would go into overtime."

After a scoreless first overtime, Pauly won the coin flip in sudden death and chose bottom. Struebing stayed behind and maintained control for the full period. Struebing chose down and within five seconds, had hit his Granby Roll and got his escape.

"At this point all he had to do was stall (waste time) and not get taken down. He was warned with about 10 seconds left of the 30, but not penalized," said Leaderstorf.

Bill Truesdell took fifth at 152. Luke Falzone (96) and Justin St. George (103) were sixth in their weight classes.



Sweet Home's Gage Bateman, front, placed second at 112 pounds at the Class AAAA Tournament. Bateman will join teammate Nic Stella at this Saturday's Section VI New York State qualifier at Fredonia State College.

Photo by John Normile
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Girls Bowling

Sweet Home wins ECIC Division II title

by PATRICK J. NAGY
Reporter

After finishing 8-4 last year in ECIC Division I, Sweet Home girls bowling returned to its dominance in ECIC II with a 10-0 record.

The Lady Panthers are 41-4 under coach Jim Russo with two undefeated ECIC II seasons.

Russo said the closest any team this season has come close to beating them was a 4-3 win over Williamsville South. In that match, South's Jessica Mamon set school and ECIC records with a 289 game and 770 set but Sweet Home's Amanda Page answered with a 243 high game and 685 set. Page led Sweet Home all season with a 173 average.

Page is one of eight Lady Panthers who have qualified for Thursday's Section VI Championships at Thruway Lanes. Joining Page in team competi-

tion will be Gina Picone (164), Margaret Wahl (164), Jacquie Johnson (160), and Jill Nasisi (158). Charlene Cinelli (156), Shannon Huebert (155) and Ashley Brant (154) will roll as individuals. Kaylee Kaminski just missed sectionals with a 146 average. Girls must average at least 150 and bowl in 60 percent of their matches to qualify.

Russo said you can throw the 10-0 record out the window for sectionals.

"This is the part of the year is that 10-0 doesn't mean a lot," said Russo. "Lockport is always the team to beat but if our five girls click and their top bowlers slip, it's not outside the realm of possibility (to win sectionals)."

The New York State Championships are March 3-4 at Thruway.

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