

# Sweet Home wins first Federation title, Castiglia named game MVP



Sweet Home's Ryan Marko winds up at the Kenmore East blue line in the Panthers' 3-2 overtime win in the Section VI Western New York Varsity Hockey Federation small school semifinals last Thursday on the Amherst Pepsi Center Feature Rink. Sweet Home beat Bishop Timon-St. Jude, 2-0, in the finals on Sunday at Buffalo State Ice Arena for the school's first Federation championship.

Photo by Patrick McPartland  
Purchase color photos at [www.BeeNews.com](http://www.BeeNews.com)

by PATRICK J. NAGY  
Reporter

The Sweet Home Federation hockey team knew its backs were against the wall heading into the Section VI Western New York Varsity Hockey small school tournament.

The Panthers had lost out on the small school bid in the regular season to Kenmore East and needed to win three straight games in the small school tournament to head back to the Division II New York State Tournament. No problem.

Third-seeded Sweet Home beat second-seed Kenmore East, 3-2, in overtime in the semifinals on Thursday on the Amherst Pepsi Center Feature Rink and blanked top-seed Bishop Timon-St. Jude, 2-0, in the inaugural small school final on Sunday at Buffalo State Ice Arena to win the Federation title for the first time in school history.

Sweet Home (15-8-4) will play at Burke-Catholic of Section IX at 3 p.m. on Saturday in Newburgh.

"We had some goals this year and one of them was trying to be the best team at the end of the year, which included winning the Federation title," said Sweet Home coach Dave Gerspach. "Last year, we had one loss and got out of the state tournament real quick (lost to Monroe-Woodbury 2-1 in regionals). This year, we have played phenomenal hockey since early January."

## CTK to hold invite hoops tournament

Christ The King School will be holding its 31st annual invitational basketball tournament beginning Tuesday, March 4 and ending with championship games on Wednesday, March 12 and Thursday, March 13 at its school, 2 Lamarck Drive, Snyder. Admission is \$1. There will be a full snack bar. The schedule is posted at [www.ctksnyder.com](http://www.ctksnyder.com). For more information, call tournament chair Steve Wydysh at 432-1605.

**"We had some goals this year and one of them was trying to be the best team at the end of the year, which included winning the Federation title."**

— Dave Gerspach, Sweet Home hockey coach

"After losing to Kenmore East earlier in the season and they got the state bid, we thought our senior was over," said junior forward Ryan Gutt, who scored both Sweet Home goals. "It felt great to win out and finally do it."

Sweet Home qualified for states last year after having the best small school record in the Federation. A new rule was instituted this year where Federation large and small school champions would be crowned. If a public school team won, they would go to states.

Sweet Home goalie Rob Castiglia earned game MVP honors and deservedly so. The senior net-minder stopped all 28 of Timon's shots, including an unbelievable right pad save on Timon's Michael Cassidy with 2:14 remaining in the third period.

"I went to poke check it and I missed the puck," said Castiglia. "He got it by me so I stuck my pad it. I got fortunate on it."

"It was looking like overtime and he robbed the guy," said Gerspach.

It was Castiglia's sixth shutout since early January. The only team

he has not shut out in Division II has been Kenmore East.

"I thought he was the difference," said Timon coach Pat Fisher. "He made big saves when he needed to and that is how you win championships."

Gutt's first goal came with 9:59 left in the second

(Please turn to page 14)

# East's Cohen advances to state wrestling meet

by PATRICK J. NAGY  
Reporter

After taking second at the Class AAA Tournament, Max Cohen was on a mission to win his first Section VI championship and the Williamsville East senior didn't disappoint.

Cohen defeated Iroquois' Jimmy Klock, 3-2, to win the 130-pound weight class at the Division I Section VI New York State qualifier last Saturday at Kenmore West High School.

Cohen (28-4) advances to the New York State Championships for the first time in his career. States are March 8-9 at Rochester's Blue Cross Arena.

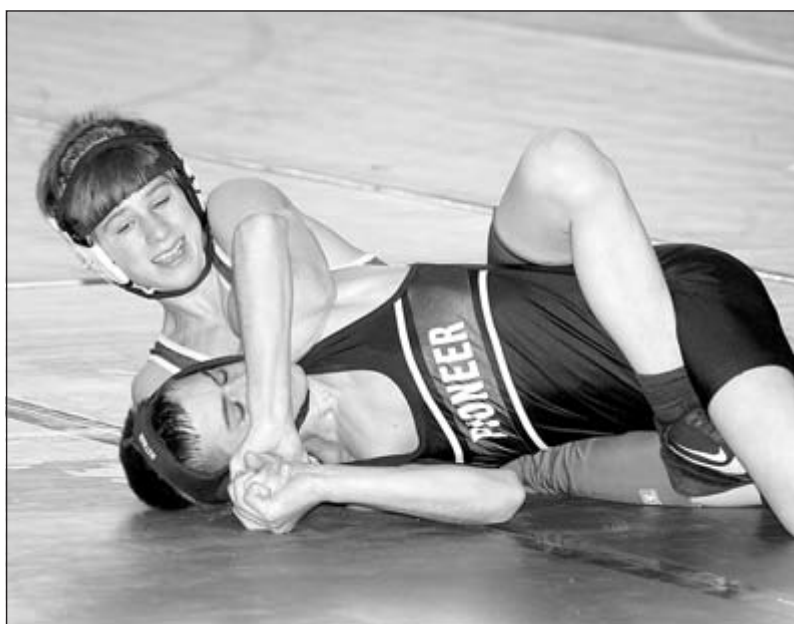
He's the fourth wrestler East coach Henry Fumerelle has sent to states and the first since Andrew Jakiel went in the 2003-04 season.

"I was pretty upset with myself after losing the class tournament," said Cohen. "This was definitely the one to win and I came back strong and I won it. Words can't explain how a great a feeling it was."

"He's worked so hard for it," added Fumerelle. "After the bell rang, he jumped into my arms and said 'we did it'. It was a special moment for him and me."

Cohen took second at 125 pounds at the state qualifier last year but wouldn't be denied this season.

Tied at 1-1 with Klock in the third period, Cohen finished a



Williamsville East's Sam Beichner wraps himself around Pioneer's Brandon Price during a 96-pound match at the Division I Section VI New York State qualifier last Saturday at Kenmore West. Beichner, a freshman, took third in the weight class. He finished the year 27-10.

Photo by Joe Eberle  
Purchase color photos at [www.BeeNews.com](http://www.BeeNews.com)

double leg takedown and rode Klock out of bounds to take a 3-1 lead.

With 13 seconds left, Cohen let Klock go for a one point and held him off to win.

"There were a lot of flurries at the end of the match," said Cohen. "I heard him breathing heavily so I knew he was getting tired and I felt I had to go after it so I took him down and won the match."

To get to the finals, Cohen avenged a loss to the wrestler who beat him at the Class Tourna-

ment, Darren Whittall of Starpoint. Cohen won 6-2.

Cohen opened the tournament with a 10-7 victory over North Tonawanda's Derek Drass.

Cohen also won at Maple Grove and Williamsville North and took second at the Akron Holiday, ECICs and Class Tournaments.

Cohen isn't the first person in his family to have won a section title. His father, Larry, won titles in his junior and senior years at 103 and 112, respectively, while attending Williamsville South.

Cohen was one of eight

wrestlers from East to compete on Saturday. Three other wrestlers, freshman Sam Beichner, sophomore Jacob Beichner and senior Jayson Dieckman, each placed.

Sam Beichner brought home third at 96. Jacob Beichner and Dieckman were fourth at 125 and 152, respectively. All three lost their semifinals matches by one point.

Sam Beichner beat Pioneer's Brandon Price, 9-4, in the first round, lost to Kenmore West's Dylan Caruana, 2-0, in overtime, in the semifinals and in wrestlebacks, pinned Starpoint's Jim Whittall in the third period and defeated Clarence's Collin Dresher, 8-3, for third. Beichner finished 27-11.

"He's done a solid job for us," said Fumerelle. "He's improved so much throughout the year."

Jacob Beichner upset second-seed Mike Uglinica of Starpoint, 5-2, in the first round but lost a 2-1 heartbreaker in the semifinals to Jamestown's Max Murray. Beichner was leading 1-0 with two seconds remaining when Murray recorded a reversal.

In wrestlebacks, Jacob Beichner pinned Frontier's Don Heppner in the second period and lost to West Seneca East's Rich Rutkowski, 5-4, in the third-fourth match. Rutkowski scored a reversal late to win. Beichner finished 26-13.

Dieckman lost 17-5 to Cheek-

towaga's Jonah Messina but came back and defeated West Seneca West's Ryan Grasso, 7-2, and pinned Clarence's Chris Duge with five seconds left to avenge two losses from ECICs before falling 7-1 to Grand Island's Anthony Gugino.

Dieckman (25-15) is in consideration for Thursday's senior dual meet at Maryvale High School.

Jayson's younger brother, eighth-grader Andrew Dieckman, lost his first round match at 103 to eventual champion, Joey Malvestuto of Niagara-Wheatfield.

In wrestlebacks, Andrew Dieckman edged Lewiston-Porter's Dan Reagan, 5-4, and lost, 4-3, to Olean's Zach Marra. Andrew Dieckman was winning 2-0 with 12 seconds remaining when Marra applied a Peterson reversal and two back points.

Senior Sean Trabert went 1-2 at 140. He beat Albion's Azael Tapia, 13-2 and lost, 1-0, to Clarence's Josh Feiler.

Trabert finished his senior season 29-7 and with 107 career victories.

Junior Matt Callari and sophomore MP Joseph each went 0-2 at 135 and 189, respectively. Joseph wrestled with an ankle injury he suffered on Friday in practice.

East finished eighth in Western New York large schools and earned a state ranking for the first time in school history, taking an honorable mention.

e-mail: [pnagy@beenews.com](mailto:pnagy@beenews.com)