

# Eisenhower And Olean In Showdown For Title

A western setting would be more appropriate, but the Eisenhower High School gym will have to do. Ike wrestling coach Al Bean steps off ten paces to the edge of the mat. Across the gym, Olean coach Mike Foster does the same. After a long silent moment, they both draw their guns.

It is time for the showdown of scholastic wrestling. The Eisenhower Knights and the Olean Huskies. Both unbeaten. Both highly touted. Both wanting the same Division One league title. One, however, must fall by the wayside, like any western gun fight, when they meet Tuesday evening in the Eisenhower gym.

A gun fight is exactly what it is going to be and it will surely take more than one shot to put the opposition down and out.

Warren and Sheffield are also slated for action on the mats Tuesday evening. The Dragons will warm up for Friday's Section Two showdown with Meadville by visiting the Titusville Rockets. The Dragons are unbeaten in league competition.

Sheffield, on the other hand, is still searching for their initial victory of the season. The Wolverines will host Southwestern.

"It puts our guns against theirs," Bean said, referring to some shuffling he has done in his lineup for the bout. "It's the only way to go. We can't run from Olean's strength. We've got to meet it head on and the best team will come out the winner."

Although it could be a long, drawn out battle from 91 pounds right up to the heavyweights, some major wounds could be opened early. Eric Hurley of Eisenhower, loser of just one dual match in two seasons, will go up against Olean's Andy Taylor at 112 pounds. "Andy's been up and down all season," Foster said of the wrestler with a 12-3 record. "It could be a pivotal match."

Ike's Scott Hurley, 10-3 on the year with all three losses directly related to an injury suffered in the Warren Holiday Tournament. He will bump heads with Eric Simpson, 19-0, at 119 pounds. "He's unorthodox and he's not really a pinner," Foster explained. "But he's just been burying people all year for us."

Kent Alcorn, the Knights' top wrestler this year, is unbeaten and, so far, unchallenged as a 132-pounder. Now he's down to 126 pounds. Waiting for him there will be Kevin Forrest, 19-0, and also unchallenged. "That will be a whale of a bout right there," Foster said, adding, "If we lose any of those, we could be in trouble."

"It really surprises me," said a puzzled Foster of the Eisenhower lineup change. "They are going head to head with some of our best boys. It looks like it will match up strength against strength. It should be a whale of a dual meet."

Bean, though, does have another reason for shifting Scott Hurley and Alcorn down a weight and inserting Gary Craig at 132

pounds. "There is a possibility of a five-match minimum at a weight class to be seeded in post-season," he said. "It is incredibly stupid. It is not only going to hurt the kid who drops and can't be seeded but should be, it is going to penalize those who are seeded and will have to go against one of these kids right off the bat. I hope we can vote that rule out at the seeding meeting. But until then, we'll just have to go with it as it is."

Olean has other top-notch grapplers in its talent-laden lineup. Clair Anderson, a sophomore, is 19-0 at 105 pounds and, as Foster notes, is "one of our pinners." He will meet Barry VanOrd, also a sophomore, who is 10-3 on the year. Steve Pancio, 10-1, will be Craig's opponent at 132 pounds. Craig has won both of his outings. Chris Leichtweis, 155-pounder, was a New York state finalist a year ago. He will tangle with the aggressive Eric Donaldson, 9-1. Kirk Stephen, 16-2 at 167 pounds, has been "a real surprise for us" as Foster put it. Handy Wilkins, a sophomore, has been the same for Bean. Wilkins is unbeaten since a loss in his first varsity match.

Eisenhower is not lacking for artillery, either. Besides those previously mentioned, the Knights will send Dave Hitchcock, 9-1, out on the mat at 138 pounds. Brad Johnson, 12-1, at 145 pounds, hasn't lost since the opening match of the year. Steve DuPont has been the team's biggest find. Moving into the lineup four matches into the year, DuPont, a

sophomore weighing about 175 pounds, has lost just once. That was while wrestling heavyweight, which he does quite often. Another thing he does quite often is pin his opponent. His 9-1 record is accented by eight pins. Heavyweight Craig Swanson is fast, strong, and quite a pinner in his own right whether wrestling there or at 185 pounds in Pennsylvania matches.

Hitchcock's opponent will be Bill Thomas, 13-4-1. Johnson will tangle with Robby Parks, 11-5. DuPont will battle Rick Fie, 15-3-1, at 177 pounds. Swanson is scheduled to meet Mark Darrow, 8-8.

The 98-pounders are the biggest question marks for both coaches. Bruce Taylor will go for Olean if he's healthy. If not, John Hickey will fill in the position. If Taylor wrestles, Hickey will drop to 91 pounds for an exhibition bout with Ike's Mark Donaldson.

Vic Baron has had problems making weight for the Knights all season. He is scheduled to start at 98 for Eisenhower.

"It could go either way," Foster added. "There are a lot of key bouts. A pin here or there could make a tremendous difference."

Bean feels that "some of the best scholastic wrestling of the year will come out of that match. I've been over it a thousand times in my mind, all to no avail. We'll find out what happens Tuesday night."

All three varsity matches are set to get underway at 8 p.m.