

Brockport wrestlers upset Irondequoit for title

By MICHAEL LEWIS
D&C Sportswriter

A not-so-funny thing happened to the Irondequoit Indians on the way to winning their Monroe County wrestling championship last night.

They never made it.

A forfeit and two victories in the final three matches boosted Brockport to a shocking 28-20 victory over the heavily-favored Indians before a packed gymnasium at Penfield High.

Irondequoit (14-1), eighth-ranked in the state, was in control entering the

167-pound match, leading 20-13, but then came the twist of events.

First, Bill Hermance decisioned the Indians' George Morgan, 12-7, to pull the Blue Devils (15-0), ranked 23rd in the state, to within 20-16.

Then, just before the 177-pound match, Irondequoit Coach Art Connorton replaced regular Dallhart Payne with C.J. Dominick.

Dominick, however, did not make 165 pounds during the afternoon weigh-in, according to County rules, and referee Jerry Everling awarded the match to

Brockport. That gave the Blue Devils a 22-20 lead.

Brockport heavyweight Charlie Graves then pinned Tim Oliver in five minutes to clinch the victory.

Connorton's gamble was a risk that didn't pay off.

"He's had a hamstring pull recently and Payne's been getting whipped in the last month," Connorton said. "I figured I didn't want to have the pressure of him getting pinned, so I pulled him."

"I took a gamble and I thought I wouldn't lose."

Connorton then said jokingly, "We all learn that cheaters never prosper."

Brockport Coach Jeff Brown figured what was going to happen.

"Dominick was 160 and a quarter in the afternoon weigh-ins and he had to be at least 165 to make that weight class," Brown said. "My boy (Evan Wexler) had pinned his kid already."

"But I don't think it came down to this. When we had tied them at 11-11, I knew we were in good shape."

Brockport's Rick Lupisella (98) and John Lupisella (105) won their respec-

tive matches to give the Blue Devils a 6-0 advantage.

Rick Lupisella downed Bob Lehmann, 9-4 and brother John whipped Chris Cotroneo, 8-3.

But Chris' older brother, Tony Cotroneo (26-0) brought the Indians their first points with a pin over Dave Schickler in 3:08 at 112 pounds.

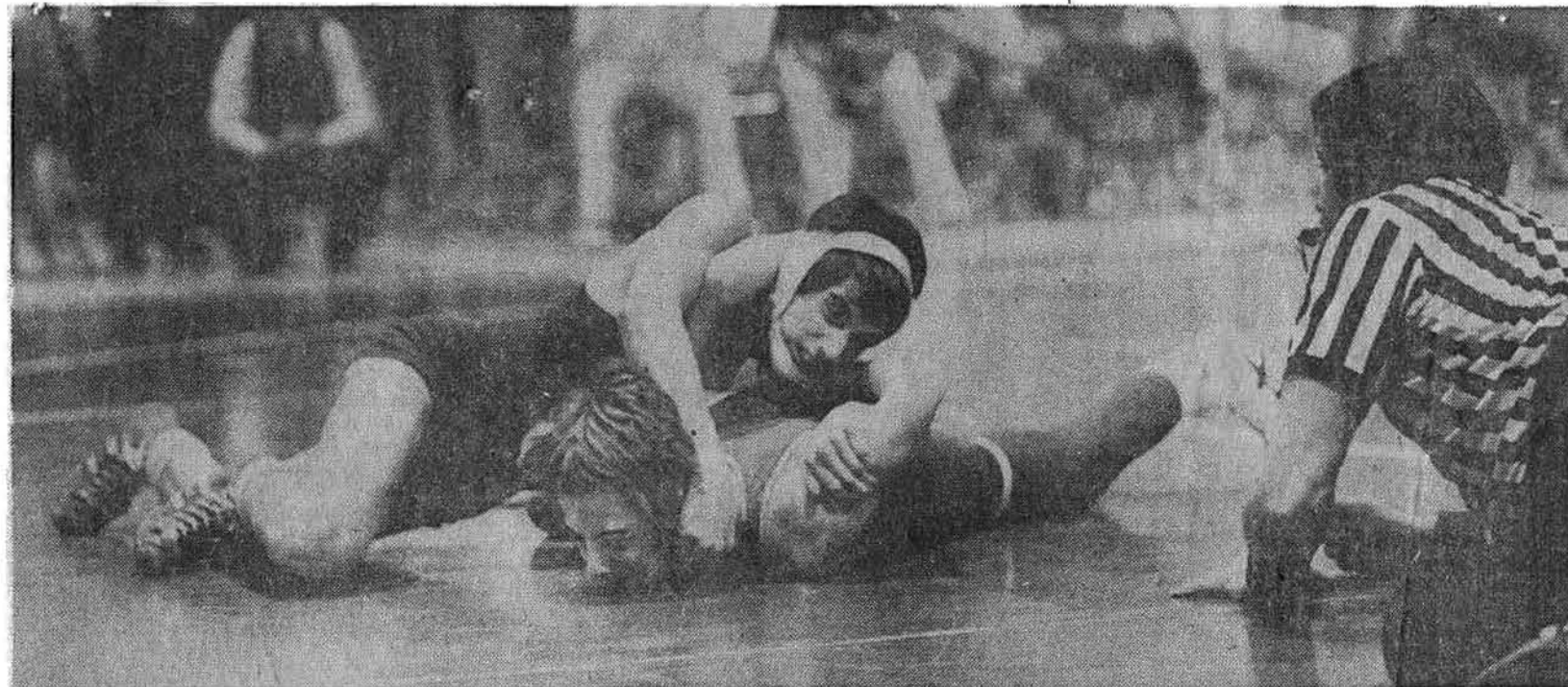
Then teammate Tim Lehmann trounced Bob Brawn at 119 to give Irondequoit a 9-6 lead. Preston Stahl, subbing for the injured Glen Locke at 126, drew with Kirk Avery.

Irondequoit still led, 11-8, but then the Blue Devils' Tom Brawn (17-4) knotted the score at 11-11 with a 13-8 win over Brett Simpson (16-5) at 132.

"That was one of the key victories of the meet for them," Connorton said. "Even one of the two draws helped them."

After Irondequoit's Jim Brault (138) and Paul Salamone (145) posted victories to give the Indians' an 18-11 lead, Brockport's Ralph Matsko fought Scott

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D&C photo by Joe Watson

Tony Cotroneo of Irondequoit controls Brockport's Dave Schickler in 112-pound weight class. Cotroneo eventually won by a pin.

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Simpson to a draw at 155 pounds. Then came Bill Hermance's 12-7 win over George Morgan at 167 and Brockport's walk to the title.

"It isn't that any one kid lost it," Connorton said. "They have what they've claimed all-season long — a well-balanced team."

Brown obviously wasn't in any mood to disagree.

"I'm still kind of shocked," he said. "It's like a dream-come-true. We worked so hard to get here. We were kind of

shafted in the polls, but we showed it tonight that we can stay with some of the best."

"We're not a tournament team. We're not going to win many tournaments, but we do well when it comes to dual meets. This was our 23rd straight victory in a dual meet."

"From the first day of practice, I believed it was going to come down to us and them. We kind of felt that we've been overlooked. We're in Brockport — way out there . . . We just got a super performance from 12 kids tonight."

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