

THE CITIZEN

Sports

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Auburn mat ref to work key high school duel ★

By SCOTT CONROE

Auburn's Dave Adams must be a good wrestling referee.

For the second year in a row, he'll be in the middle when the top two teams in New York State face each other on the mat Saturday.

The two high school teams in question are number one Baldwinsville (12-0) and its guest for the 7 p.m. clash, second-ranked Canandaigua (9-0). The match will be broadcast live on Channel 24.

The stakes are high, because the winner will be the top dual meet team in the Empire State, and because Canandaigua is looking to oust the Bees from the throne they've held the past two seasons.

To add to the tension, the match will be in B'ville's gym, with the screaming crowd and relentless psychological pressure that go with it. Baldwinsville coach

Leo Johnson's mat forces will have a 50-meet winning streak on the line, and they intend to preserve it.

If they do, they'll break the Section Three record for consecutive wins currently held by Watertown.

Canandaigua, which has been one of a handful of dominant teams in the state throughout the past decade, intends to win.

Adams will be between them, handing out the points that will determine the outcome. It's a job nobody envies.

Last January, Adams was the official when top-ranked Port Jervis of Section Nine met underdog Baldwinsville at Syracuse University's Manley Field House. B'ville won 33-19, and reclaimed the state crown it had held the year before.

Adams kept his cool in a volatile situation, and his performance as a referee was later praised by both Johnson

and Port coach Mark Faller. That speaks highly of Adams' ability to keep an eye on the action and decide when points should be awarded.

"I think he's one of the three best referees in Section Three," says Mike Froid, wrestling coach at Jordan-Elbridge. "Scott Coapman (also of Auburn) is another of the best. Adams is really cool all the time; crowds and coaches don't bother him, and that's essential."

Adams has been a wrestling official for 14 years, and coached high school wrestling from 1966 to 1971. He describes his job as being an "unbiased mercenary."

He is a respiratory therapist in Syracuse. He and his wife Penny, a physical education teacher at J-E and formerly at Auburn High School, live at 21 Oak St.