



LOCAL HOPES FADING: The two local hopes in the finals of the Section VI Inter-sectional High School Wrestling Qualifying Tournament at Sweet Home over the weekend ran into some problems and were stopped in their bids for Section VI crowns. Therefore, aside from Cardinal O'Hara's Gerry O'Sullivan, the area was shutout in its bid to

place a wrestler in the New York State Championships this weekend in Syracuse. In the photo at left, Niagara-Wheatfield's John Martino suffered only his second loss of the season as Pioneer's Ron Dabolt (top) picks up a point in their 148-pound bout. Dabolt remained unbeaten with a 6-2 win. In the photo at right, Cassadaga Valley's



Jim Beichner tries to put together a pinning combination on North Tonawanda's Paul Lukaszona (with mask). Beichner, the once-beaten top-seed, found the right hold and pinned "Luk" in 1:55 of their 180-pound match. (Photos by Andy Foreman).

For local wrestlers, it's wait until next year

The Section VI Inter-sectional High School Wrestling Qualifying Tournament is over. Two days of grueling competition has ended at Sweet Home and the Section VI team has been decided.

And if you look closely, there isn't a local wrestler on the squad for the first time in years.

Only two area matmen advanced to the championship round and they were defeated in their bids for a state berth.

John Martino, Niagara-Wheatfield's 148-pounder, lost a decision in the championship match

while North Tonawanda's Paul Lukaszona was pinned at 180.

However, Cardinal O'Hara's Gerry O'Sullivan did gain a berth in the state tournament by winning the New York State Catholic Wrestling Tournament last weekend in New York City.

O'Sullivan will be the only local lad to cheer for in this weekend's state championships at the Onondaga War Memorial in Syracuse. He will be competing in the 180-pound class.

Meanwhile Pioneer High School, perennial

powerhouse in Western New York wrestling, picked up duo awards at the Section VI event.

For the first time several seasons, team scores were kept at the tournament and Pioneer won the title with 96½ points. Olean was second with 96, Falconer third 76 and Niagara-Wheatfield fourth 61.

However, some coaches spoke out against the team scoring because the tournament did not have a true wrestle-back format. If a wrestler lost in the early going, he hurt his team's chances of scoring.

As well as winning the

team crown, Pioneer Coach Dick Post was honored with a sportsmanship award from the WNY Officials' Association before the championship round began.

In the championship round, Martino suffered only his second loss in 33 matches this season when he bowed to unbeaten Ron Dabolt of Pioneer 6-2. Dabolt, who should be seeded highly in the state tourney because of his 35-0 record, was one of three Pioneer grapplers to claim titles.

Meanwhile, Lukaszona had his hands full with

Cassadaga Valley's Jim Beichner at 180. Beichner won his third trip to the states by pinning the North Tonawandian in 1:55.

Beichner, a senior, was fourth in the states last season and fifth two years ago. He carries a 29-1 record into the competition.

In the consolation round, N-W Doug Mt. Pleasant finished third at 155 with a 6-4 win over Tim Menz of Medina. Teammate John Antone whipped Ray Miley of Lancaster 10-1 to take third at 218 while Pete Schiffert added a fourth at 129.

Tonawanda's Scott Allen was fourth at 108 and Kenmore West's Tom Ochs was fourth at 122.

Local wrestlers bowing in the quarter-finals were: Tim Shifflet of Sweet Home

(94), Dave Pietrzakowski of N-W (101), SH's Brian McInnis (101), N-W's Tom Burns (122), Kevin Bos of SH (135), Jim Kowalecyk of THS (135), Randy Kromer of N-W (135), Todd Pollard of THS (141), NT's Jeremy Hepburn (148), Ken-West's Ken Gibson (158), N-W's Dom Cianchetti (170), and Kenmore East's Mike Rowe (253).

Joining Dabolt and Beichner on the Section VI team are:

94: Bob Breidenstein	Oxford Park
101: Rob Waddington	Falconer
106: Chris LoPresto	Salamanca
115: Jeff Waddington	Falconer
122: Todd Slade	Iroquois
129: Calvin Swanson	Newfane
135: Daryl Rogers	Pioneer
141: Dave Hickson	Cheektowaga
158: Pat Zito	Lancaster
170: John Hoffman	Pioneer
218: Robert Johnson	Cass. Valley
253: John Helgren	Maple Grove

MVP and Sportsmanship Award winner — Swanson (129)

Gerry O'Sullivan : Natural ability and hard work key to O'Hara grappler's success

By BOB SALZMAN

GERRY O'SULLIVAN OF THE Cardinal O'Hara High School Wrestling team is either blessed with a great deal of natural athletic ability or a hard-working young man who has to earn everything he achieves, depending upon whom you are talking.

Actually, both assessments are true. O'Sullivan is a hard-working athlete who has plenty of athletic ability and knows how to make the best use of it.

He showed what the combination of talent and work can produce over the weekend when he captured a berth in the State Tournament next weekend in Syracuse with a victory over Ed Forni of Nazareth of Long Island in the 177-pound bout in the State Catholic Wrestling Tournament in New York City.

IN THE HEAD-TO-HEAD competition between the Msgr. Martin Athletic Association All-Catholic champions and the representatives from the downstate Catholic League, only two local matmen, O'Sullivan and Nichols' Bill Ullmark, emerged victorious.

In their match, O'Sullivan, a senior, dominated Forni from start to finish. The O'Hara star put his opponent on his back in the first period but was unable to get a pin. He made up for that in quick order in the second stanza, however, pinning Forni only 45 seconds into the period.

This victory had to be a very satisfying one for O'Sullivan, who lost out on a chance to compete in the state tourney last year when he was pinned by a downstate opponent in the Catholic tourney, held at Canisius High School.

THE OTHER TWO O'HARA GRAPPLERS who qualified for the Catholic affair were George Boesze and Tom Tornabene, both of whom were defeated over the weekend.

Tornabene, who was hampered by a painful ankle injury suffered during practice last week, was pinned by Steve Servidio of Charminade at 132 pounds, while Boesze lost an 8-2 decision to Kevin Rausa of St. Anthony's at 91.

O'Sullivan, who was an All-Catholic performer for O'Hara's highly-touted football team in the fall, is no stranger to adversity, which makes him even more of a hero around the school.

In the fall of his junior year, Gerry was made the football team's starting quarterback despite

the fact that he had limited experience at that position.

NOBODY COULD HAVE BLAMED him if he had given up after the first few weeks of the season when he had completed more passes to the opposition than his own teammates, but he didn't. He stuck with it and worked hard to learn the position.

He showed a marked improvement with each subsequent game that season and came back this year acknowledged as one of the Hawks' leaders. His improvement continued this year and he was duly honored by gaining All-Catholic status.

Adversity confronted him again early in this wrestling campaign when he stretched left knee ligaments in practice and missed three weeks of action while wearing a brace on the knee.

THERE WAS JUST NO WAY that he was going to let that stop him. He came back after the injury and recorded an unbeaten regular season and an impressive overall mark of 21-1. His lone loss came in tournament competition.

"When things get tough for Gerry, it just seems to make him more determined to succeed," remarked O'Hara mat mentor Dan Nigro. "In the Catholic State Tournament, when he did not pin that guy in the first round he was really mad and I knew right then that he would get the pin in the second period."

One of O'Sullivan's harshest critics is himself. The soft-spoken athlete is never satisfied with anything other than perfection and seems to have a strong inner drive to achieve whatever he sets his sights on.

"I WAS REALLY NOT SURPRISED when Gerry came back so well from his injury because that is just the kind of kid he is, nothing can keep him down because he won't let it," Nigro said.

"I really don't think that I do anything special, I just do whatever I have to, to win," said O'Sullivan.

When Gerry steps onto the mat at the New York State Championships at the Syracuse War Memorial Auditorium this weekend, he will no doubt be considered an underdog compared to some of the more well-known public school matmen in the tourney.

BUT DON'T BET AGAINST HIM. If there is a way to win, he'll find it.

Ciccarelli and Broten shine for North Stars

UPI Sports

Dino Ciccarelli and Neal Broten wrapped up their personal arithmetic just in time — concentrating on records is no way to prepare for the New York Islanders.

"Tommy (McCarthy) and Neal have been trying to set me up for the last two games," Ciccarelli said Monday night after setting a Minnesota club record for goals in a season to help the North Stars post an 8-1 victory over the St. Louis Blues.

"Finally, we said, 'Let's just play our game and it'll come,'" he continued.

The strategy worked. Ciccarelli, after missing an open net 45 seconds into

the game, broke Bill Goldsworthy's 1973-74 mark of 48 on a rebound at 8:18 of the first period.

"I tried hard to get him that goal," said Broten. "I probably passed up three or four shots."

Ciccarelli reached the 50-goal mark with a backhander at 12:04 of the second period.

"To get the 50th, that was a relief too," said Ciccarelli. "Why couldn't Goldy have scored some other number — it made my 49th and 50th the two hardest goals to get."

In the league's only other game, the New York Rangers defeated the Detroit Red Wings, 6-3.

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