

Medina Musclemán Intimidates Rivals

By JIM RICKEY
D&C Sportswriter

Audie Plumley is known as a musclemán in the Niagara-Orleans Wrestling League. At five-foot-two and 101 pounds, he wouldn't intimidate the average adult, but on the wrestling mat his opposition winces at his strength.

Plumley, only a junior, has won 20 straight matches this season for Medina High School and his second straight Section 6 Class Triple-B championship.

"I guess I do outmuscle most of my opponents," said Plumley, who in the off-season can lift 115 pounds of weights. "I'm kind of big for my weight class and have some good moves from the bottom. My only real trouble is riding the other guy when I have control."

Plumley is one of seven Medina wrestlers who are unbeaten in league play. The Mustangs finished 6-0 in league meets for 12 points. They clinched their fourth straight league title last Saturday in the Niagara-Orleans Tournament, that awards a team two points for each team it tops in the standings. Medina finished first in the tournament and received another 12 points — for a total of 24, the maximum a team can get in one season. Medina went on to win its fourth straight Triple-B Title.

"I have three excellent wrestlers, but Audie is the best of them," said coach Bill Ossont. "Jim Tierney (119 Pounds) and

Dan Curtin (145 pounds) are super, too, but Audie has the better chance to advance in tournaments."

After he won the Triple-B title last season, Audie was drafted in the first round of the Section 6 interclass tournament, in which all wrestlers in the section compete for the right to go to the state championships.

"I wasn't too disappointed," Audie said. "It was only my second year, and I was a sophomore so I figured I could wait. This year my goal is to get into the intersectional final. Only one other Medina wrestler (Mike Crandall) has ever gotten that far."

After Plumley's freshman season, when he finished with a 5-12 record and "all kinds of bruises and aches," he decided to quit the sport.

"I couldn't wait for the season to end," he said. "But when it was all over and my aches and pains were gone, I couldn't wait for it to begin again. It was well worth sticking it out."

Audie, who rises at 4:30 every morning to deliver newspapers before going to school, was first coaxed into trying the sport by physical education instructor Bill Ames, then Medina's wrestling coach.

"He watched me in gym class and asked me if I wanted to go out," he said. "I had nothing better to do at the time so I did."

"Mr. Ames is the one who kept me in the sport my first

year. My coach now, Mr. Ossont, is like a promoter. He's building interest for wrestling among the students. That's why we keep winning every year. More and more kids come out because they like to be a winner."

Audie said another reason for Medina's success is the fact that Ossont schedules bigger schools from Rochester.

"We've wrestled six schools from the Rochester area and have beaten all of them except Cardinal Mooney and Caledonia-Mumfords," he said. "Those matches toughen us up for our league schedule and give us an idea of the competition we'll be going against in the post-season tournaments."

"The matches against the bigger schools are better for the spectators, too. Heck, we haven't allowed an opposing team in our league more than nine points all season and shut out one team. That's not very exciting even though we win."

Audie and Medina has had an easy time of it so far in their own league. Now Medina and its seven league champions will venture outside to take on the best in the state.

"In the interclass sectionals (last night and today), we should have at least four or five champions," Audie said.

"I figure I've got the best chance of anyone on our team to go very far, although I'm worried about John Stranderger of Albion. He's getting better and better everytime we meet. The last time we wrestled, I beat him only 9-2. It was my closest match of the year."