

# Grapplers Great In Tourney

by Bob Stiller

While following the Oswego Wrestling team this season, one could sense something very strange was going on. Coach Jim Howard's squad had the talent to wrestle with any team that was scheduled against them, but the team had little, and at times, no depth. The lack of personnel hurt the Lakers, and this lack was probably the major factor in their "disastrous" 9-13 season. Another factor in their regular season downfall was the fact that they wrestled very tough teams. Among the teams Oswego faced were No. 1 ranked University of Buffalo, No. 2 ranked Clairon State, and No. 8 ranked Wilkes College. But in wrestling, the "real" season begins when the post-season tournaments. These tournaments gave the wrestlers a chance to redeem the 1973 season.

They did just that.

It started last week when they finished 3rd place in the SUNYAC tournament, and helped upset top-dog Brockport State. But this week they did one better. Competing in the State Invitational Tournament at R.I.T., they showed New York State that Jim Howard's wrestlers are always dangerous, no matter what the statistics say. The State Invitational marked the first time New York State had a tournament to determine the top team in the state. And, out of a field of 15 teams, Oswego went home with the second place trophy, losing only to favorite Brockport, while avenging regular season losses to such teams as University of Buffalo, SUNYAC champ Potsdam, Cortland, and Ithaca.

Oswego won second place in very unusual fashion. They beat out Potsdam by 7-1/2 points, 77 to 69-1/2, and only had one man in the finals. This compares with four Potsdam finalists, but the Lakers did win one championship, and the rest of the team balanced out the attack. Oswego won in addition to the first, two 3rds, three 4ths, one fifth, and one sixth. This proved to be enough.

Very appropriately, Oswego's lone championship belongs to Captain Ernie Williams. Going into the finals of the tournament it appeared as though for Oswego to finish second, one Potsdam wrestler would have to lose, while Ernie would have to win. So after Potsdam Keith Lyndacker lost to Bob Darin of Cortland, Ernie put second place away, defeating his opponent handily.

Ernie was the only Laker to be seeded first. He started his march to his tournament victory when he faced Paul Kane of University of Rochester. He wasted little time in putting him away, pinning him in 4:45. Ernie had a little tougher time with Potsdam's Larry Aderman, winning "only" 6-0. This was on Friday night. Saturday afternoon was a little different, but the result was the same. Williams faced Tim True of RPI in the semi-final match. Ernie was in control when suddenly True scored 5 quick points, a reversal and a near fall. This put Ernie on the short side of the score board for the first time in a long time. But as champs usually do, Ernie came back, dazzling True with his wizardry of takedowns. Ernie escaped, took True down, and took him down again at the buzzer. This made the final score 9-7, and put the 158 lb. Laker in the finals.

The final was a little easier for Ernie. Facing John Kopalek of the University of Rochester, who had upset second seeded Wally Weller of Binghamton in the semi-finals, Williams had little or no trouble. In the first period he took Kopalek down for a 2-0 lead. He added to his lead in the second period when he reversed the Buffalo wrestler for a 4-0 lead. The referee gave Williams another point for stalling, and he added two more to counteract Kopalek's reversal to make the final score 8-2. Williams had his

first N.Y.S. Invitational crown.

There were no other first place finishers for Oswego this day but there were a bevy of fine performances. One of the better ones came from 134 lb. Carl Carrozza. Carl had finished 3rd in last week's SUNYAC tournament and was looking to better that finish despite a tougher field. He almost did.

Carrozza started off on Friday night by wrestling Lou Candido of Binghamton. Carl made mincemeat of him, destroying him 12-1. His next opponent, Andre Paquette of Union, was even easier for Carl as he pinned him in 5:21. But in the semi-finals, Carl met his match. The opposition was Dave Foxen of Brockport, the winner of the SUNYAC tournament and the eventual champ in this tournament. Carrozza gave Foxen his toughest match before bowing 4-2.

This dropped Carrozza into the consolation bracket. He then went up against Jim Nordland of Oneonta and decisioned him 4-2. This put Carl in the consolation finals. His opponent was tough Ed Gerace of Geneseo, who had finished 2nd in the SUNYAC ahead of Carrozza. But Carrozza was not to be denied a medal this day, as he eked out a touch 3-2 win. The final at 134 was won by Dave Foxen of Brockport as he decisioned R.I.T.'s Rulliffson, 5-2.

Another third place finish came from surprising Ed Pucci at 150 lbs. Ed showed people last week that he was not to be taken easily, when he placed third in the SUNYAC. This week Pucci came through again.

In the preliminary round Pucci met Greg Pancio of RIT. Pancio probably wished he never stepped on the mat as Ed totally dominated the match, winning 14-1. But in the quarter-finals, SUNYAC champ Bob Darin made Pucci wish he had never stepped on the mat as Darin won, 13-1. The next day Pucci wrestled in the consolation bracket. He had to do it the hard way, wrestling two matches to get to the consolation finals. He first met Dwight Dale of Buffalo and easily pinned him. Then for the second time in two weeks Pucci wrestled Bob Albrecht's brother Jeff from Albany. Pucci took him down to his back in the first period and coasted to a 8-0 victory. In the consolation finals Ed went up against Dave Berry of Binghamton. Pucci came through in this match as he edged Berry 6-5 for a third place medal. The 150 lb. final was won by Bob Darin of Cortland who defeated Keith Lyncacker from Potsdam, 8-5.

Last week in the SUNYAC, Oswego's 126 lb., Bob Albrecht, won his first championship. Going into the State Invitational this week, Bob was second seeded. This got him a bye in the preliminary round. In the quarter-finals Albrecht went up against Paul Thompson of Cortland and easily handed him a 9-2 defeat. Albrecht advanced to the semi-finals for a rematch with Octavis Jones, a man Bob defeated in the SUNYAC finals 6-5. It was almost a repeat of that match, but Jones picked up a point more to have the match end in a 6-6 tie. This put the match into overtime. After a brief rest both wrestlers took the mat again. But, to Oswego's dismay, Jones came through to defeat Albrecht, 5-0.

A disappointed Albrecht went into the consolation bracket, where he faced Oneonta's Bruce Freeman. Albrecht easily defeated him by a score of 9-2. Albrecht then faced top-seeded Tom Pearce of RIT, who had been upset by champ Doug Rutter of The University of Buffalo in the semifinals. Pearce proved to be too much for Albrecht, as he won 2-0 to give Bob a fourth place finish. The final pitted Octavis Jones against Doug Rutter. Rutter caught Jones in the first period and pinned him, a feat which won him the tourna-

ment's Most Valuable Wrestler trophy along with his first place medal.

All during the season, Wayne Hoffman was probably the most consistent Laker on the team. In this tournament Wayne continued to be consistent although he was almost spectacular. In the preliminaries Hoffman faced Robert Coleman of RPI and defeated him 10-4. He then advanced to the quarterfinals where his opponent was James Lamb of the University of Buffalo. Lamb bit the dust as Wayne won, 6-3. Then came his semifinal match against SUNYAC champ Rich Molbury of Potsdam. In the first period both wrestlers wrestled cautiously and both ended up with a warning for stalling. This cautious wrestling on both sides continued, with both men being penalized a point for stalling. Molbury then won the match when Hoffman purposely let him escape, and neither wrestler could manage a take-down in the final moments. Molbury had more than a minute riding time, and this made the final score 3-1.

Hoffman was dropped to the consolation bracket where he faced Greg Lyons of Union who Hoffman disposed of 11-1. In the consolation finals Wayne met Adrian King of the University of Rochester, who had nearly upset tournament champ Paul Bruns in the semifinals. The match was very even with both grapplers scoring one point each through the first two periods. In the third period King scored a five point move, a takedown and a nearfall, to win the match 6-1. In the final, SUNYAC champ Rich Molbury faced Bruns of Brockport a man Molbury had easily handled the week before. But this week proved to be different as Bruns easily handled Molbury, winning 6-0.

Last week in the SUNYAC, 190 lb. Dennis Luzon took a surprising second place. His hopes were high as he entered the State Invitational. His hopes grew even higher when he wrestled Gill Erickson of RIT. He pinned Erickson in 7:40. He continued his winning ways in the quarter-finals as he pinned Frank Hermand of Albany in 3:20. He then met top seeded Paul Iacovelli from Ithaca. The match was even in the first period with neither wrestler scoring a take-down. Iacovelli was in top position in the second period and twice turned Luzon on his back before Dennis escaped. Dennis added two points in the final period only to lose 5-3. Luzon was dropped into the consolation bracket where he faced Fergus Murphy of Potsdam. Luzon made short work of the highly touted Murphy, pinning him in the second period. This put him in the consolation bracket final against Dave Parimiter. But fatigue finally set in on Dennis and he showed it, losing to Parimiter 3-1. The final was won by Iacovelli of Ithaca when Mike Parente had to default halfway through the match.

The only fifth place finish on the Lakers belonged to Tony Companion. Tony started off right when he pinned Chuck McCombs of Geneseo. He then faced Brockport ace Dave Cook and was decisioned 9-5. Tony then beat Charles Levy from RIT. He was supposed to wrestle Dave Cook again for 5th place, but Cook had been injured in his match with Potsdam's Joe Galea and had to forfeit to Companion. The final was won by second seeded Greg Reilly of Binghamton who beat top seeded Joe Galea in the final 9-7.

Co-captain Tim Law fared just a little bit worse than Companion in his quest for the title. Tim opened Friday night against Bill Tregaskis of Geneseo and scored the first pin of his varsity career. The pin came at 2:35 of the second period. Law then faced Jim Lomonaco of Cortland and lost 5-1. The consolation pitted Law against Media of Oneonta in the first round. Law came out victorious in this round only to lose to Brockport's Tom

Maddock. In the battle for fifth and sixth place, there was a rematch Tim against Lomonaco. Tim came closer this time than he did in the previous match, but still the Cortland grappler prevailed, 3-2.

This tournament marked the close of the 1973 wrestling season for many of the Lakers. The one remaining tournament left for college grapplers is the Nationals, which will be held in South Dakota this year. Although many Oswego wrestlers have the right to go there the financial aspects permit only two to go. These two are the only graduating seniors on the team - Captain Ernie Williams and Wayne Hoffman.

As Williams closes out his wrestling career the record he leaves behind is very impressive to say the least. This season Ernie's record, including tournament victories stands at 27-4-1. Add this to his previous two years and you come up with 66-10-1. Not bad. But Williams is not just a regular season wrestler. He shines brightest in the post-season tournaments. He has won the SUNYAC for the last three years. On top of that he has won the Colgate Open for the past two years. Ernie has also taken third in the toughest Christmas tournament the Wilkes Open for the past two years. Ernie won the only State Invitational tournament Oswego was invited to Saturday. And to top this off, he also was a qualifier for the U.S. Olympic team. Whoever wrestles 158 for Oswego next year will have awful big shoes to fill.

Another wrestler who will be sorely missed by the Lakers next year is 177 lb. Wayne Hoffman. Wayne was one of the more exciting Oswego wrestlers this season, winning more than half of his matches by pins. He ended the season with a 16-4-1 record, and he ended his career record at 21-7-1. Many a close match was won by Wayne this year with his timely falls. Coach Howard will have to do some heavy recruiting to replace Hoffman and Williams.

So the final leg of the long wrestling season is traveled by Jim Howard and his two stars. The trip to Brooking, South Dakota will start on Wednesday, and the tournament is scheduled for Friday and Saturday, March 2 and 3. Howard has high hopes for both wrestlers. Only on Saturday, however will we know

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