

Wrestling:

Tonawanda outpoints Wheatfield in Sectionals

By ED SLOWINSKI

It wasn't a typical night at the Tonawanda High School gym. It was a Saturday and, for that matter, not a typical Saturday. The doors to the THS gym were thrown open and through them walked many a Section VI Division III champion, including team champion Tonawanda High School.

The Red Warriors dethroned the defending champions Niagara-Wheatfield 97-93½ Saturday before their loyal fans. In doing so Tonawanda in essence, also answered the question: "Who is best, Tonawanda or Niagara-Wheatfield?"

In the Niagara Frontier league wrestling meet there was "no official score kept." But of course unofficial scores were kept despite the "league policy" ruling.

Niagara-Wheatfield came out on top after the final tabulation of points in the NFL meet.

"Who is best?" Well, the answer to this question may be disputed until the cows come home. However, only one tournament kept "official scores" and this would give Tonawanda the only victory between the two clubs, and a technical one, at that.

Len Woods of Lake Shore began the finals as he outpointed Ron Szabo of Clarence 7-0. Szabo and Woods both knocked off highly regarded wrestlers before competing in the finals.

Szabo beat Wade Matteson of Niagara-Wheatfield 2-1 for the right to wrestle in the finals. Matteson was top-seeded. Woods pinned Mike Glavin of Lewiston-Porter in 48 seconds to move into the last event for this class. Glavin was the second-seeded grappler. Woods owned the third seat.

Guy Miller of Tonawanda revenged his only loss of the season and redeemed the status he lost in last week's NFL meet when he used a lone takedown to beat John DeLorenzo of Niagara-Wheatfield 2-0.

The Tonawanda freshman lost to DeLorenzo 5-3 in last weekend's league meet at Lew-Port. Miller was the more aggressive wrestler in that tournament, but yielded the one move to DeLorenzo that caused his downfall.

Saturday, Miller tried just about everything and kept DeLorenzo on his back most of the time. Miller could only muster that takedown in the first period as DeLorenzo would not allow points to be scored against him.

Miller was the second-seed, while DeLorenzo was rated as the best in the classes. Before entering the finals Miller had to edge highly-regarded Larry Cohen of Williamsville South 2-0. DeLorenzo had little trouble in putting Paul Castiglione to rest in his bout before the finals. He earned a pin at 5:50.

Nick Perri won the 108-pound class as expected, but he first had to cope with Tonawanda's Glenn Whitlock before beating him 4-2.

Whitlock was the big surprise in the tourney and delighted the enthused Tonawanda fans with his fine performance. Whitlock was matched against Lake Shore's Tom Wood in the first match. Wood was second-seeded to Perri. However, Wood pinned Perri in the Division III finals last year and it looked as though the going would be rough for Whitlock.

It was rough as Wood built up as much as a seven-point lead. Whitlock wouldn't quit and kept chopping at the lead. In the third period he overtook Wood 17-14 to win the match.

Next for Whitlock it was third-seeded Bob Murphy of Orchard Park who had pinned his first opponent in 1:59. Whitlock rose to the occasion again and pinned Murphy in 39 seconds. This not only received a great ovation from the crowd but it was to stand up as the fastest pin of the night.

Now it was Perri for Whitlock, but his luck just ran out.

The first three seeds finished in order in the 115-pound class with Tonawanda's Jeff Toth leading the way. He registered a decision over Niagara-Wheatfield's Jim Heuer in the final match.

The score was 5-3 late in the third period. Toth fought back throughout the last two minutes and finally had Heuer on his back it looked as Toth would add icing to the cake but the referee never indicated any back points.

Heuer escaped to tie the score at 5, as the buzzer sounded. The referees met and walked over to the scorer's table. They added the points once more, thus accounting for Toth's back points and proclaimed Toth the Division III and 115 pound champ.

Mike Martino put together three decisions in the 122 pound class, with the last one being a 5-0 win over Mark Sofia of Williamsville South to win the 122 pound crown.

Bill Mowery became Niagara-Wheatfield's second winner in a row when he beat Tonawanda's Dan Doll in the finals. They were seeded the way they finished.

Bill Caldwell of Lake Shore lived up to his third seed when he ended up in that spot with a 57 second pin over Kevin Dossett of Williamsville South.

In an expected "easy" 135 class Bill Bauer of Williamsville South edged top ranked Steve Gadt of Tonawanda 5-2. Bauer was ranked second.

Pat Pittman didn't find the going as easy as expected. He won his first match by a single point and then posted a 12-2 win before entering the finals. In the finale he pinned Williamsville South's Tom Kieby in an overtime period. The Niagara-Wheatfield junior is the first of the Pittman family to win the Division III laurels. Both his brothers, Tam and Art, were beaten by Williamsville South foes in last year's tournament finals.

Third-ranked Pete D'Errico of Orchard Park won the Most Valuable Wrestler as chosen by the other wrestlers with his performance in the 158-pound class.

He byed to the semifinals where he was matched up against second-seeded Pete Caldwell. D'Errico walked away with a 6-4 win and awaited his championship bout against top-rated Steve Magyar of Niagara-Wheatfield.

In the championship match D'Errico was just too powerful and posted a 9-0 win to grab the division crown.

Lewiston-Porter finished strong as it placed champions in three of the last four events.

Kurt Meckes started things off when he beat Tonawanda's top-seeded Steve Marone 3-1.

Meckes lost twice during the Niagara Frontier League season to Marone. The first being a slim 6-5 loss and the other resulting in a pin. Some say that Marone was just too overconfident, while others say Meckes was up for the match.

However, anyway you look at it, Marone hasn't won an individual crown in over two years.

Doug Berkun won the 180 pound class with a 8-5 win over Lew-Port's Bob Hart. The Williamsville South representative was second-seeded while Hart was the top seed.

Third-seeded Paul Bickelmann put together a good effort against Lake Shore's unbeaten Paul Stebbins to gain a 8-2 win. This put the heavyweight from Williamsville South to the finals, where he met Tom Blinco of Lew-Port.

After six minutes of wrestling Blinco retained his Division III crown. He beat Stebbins in last year's final 9-3.

Only two wrestlers took part in the 253-pound class. It was chapter II of a grudge match.

Pete Battaglia of Lew-Port and Ron Snyder of Tonawanda got together again in their third battle this year. The first was during the NFL regular season where Battaglia posted a 6-5 win. The second was in the NFL meet and Snyder evened the score with a pin at 1:54.

In the third and perhaps the last battle between these two hulks Battaglia won the Division III crown with a 6-2 victory.

It was nip-and-tuck throughout the match until the third frame when Battaglia put Snyder on his back and it was just a matter of time before the battle was over.

The wrestling situation now runs down to the state qualifier meet at Sweet Home next weekend. The first two finishers from each Division take part to see who goes to the State meet in Syracuse March 7-8.

TEAM SCORING

Tonawanda 97
Niagara-Wheatfield 93½
Williamsville South 66½
Lewiston-Porter 66½
Lake Shore 36
Clarence 29
Orchard Park 18
Lackawanna 7

FINALS

91: Len Woods (Lake.) dec Ron Szabo (Clar.) 7-0
101: Guy Miller (T) dec. John DeLorenzo (NW) 2-0
108: Nick Perri (NW) dec. Glenn Whitlock (T) 4-2
115: Jeff Toth (T) dec. Jim Heuer (NW) 7-5
122: Mike Martino (NW) dec. Mark Sofia (WS) 5-0
129: Bill Mowery (NW) dec. Dan Doll (no score given)
135: Bill Bauer (WS) dec. Steve Gadt (T) 5-2
141: Pat Pittman (NW) pin Tom Kieby (WS) OT
148: Rick Silvestri (T) dec. Mark Johnson (L-P) 9-6
158: Pete D'Errico (OP) dec. Steve Magyar (NW) 9-0
170: Kurt Meckes (L-P) dec. Steve Marone (T) 3-1
180: Doug Berkun (WS) dec. Bob Hart (L-P) 8-5
218: Tom Blinco (L-P) dec. Paul Bickelman (WS) (no score given)
253: Pete Battaglia (L-P) dec. Ron Snyder (T) 6-2

made before the whole thing is settled." Stroemberg, a former coach for the Swedish national team, said.

The Swedish teams involved stand to make a good sum of money from the proposed Sabres visit.

"If there are sellouts at the four planned games, the take will run up to \$250,000," Stroemberg said.

Organizers have estimated that to bring the Sabres to Sweden would cost about \$75,000. The rent for arenas is expected to cost about \$50,000. The rest is to be split up between the Swedish clubs.

Swedish television has also

COACH OF YEAR

HICKORY, N.C. (UPI)—Guilford College Coach Jack Jensen has been selected as the NAIA District 26 basketball Coach of the Year.

Jensen, in his fifth year as head coach, guided the Quakers to a 22-2 mark this year and the regular season championship in the Carolinas Conference. In the 1972-73 season, Jensen, 37, led the club to the NAIA national championship. His overall mark stands at 106-30.



Jeff Toth, Tonawanda 115-pounder

Among sectional victors