

SPORTS

Inside

Classified

5B

Entertainment

3B

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2002

SECTION VI WRESTLING CHAMPIONSHIPS

MHS senior duo win sectional titles

Roberts, Hodgins advance to states as does Roy-Hart's Huntington

KENMORE — For the second year in a row Medina High will be sending a pair of representatives to the state wrestling championships as seniors J.R. Roberts and Greg Hodgins both captured Section VI titles in competition held at Kenmore West High School here over the weekend.

Roberts, the defending state 119 lb. champion, successfully defended his Section VI title in that weight class by notching a third period pin over Cassadaga Valley's Kevin Rosplock in the finals. His efforts on the weekend earned him Most Valuable Wrestler honors.

Hodgins earned his first trip to the state championships by avenging a double overtime loss in the previous week's Section VI Class AA 152 lb. title match as he posted an exciting 5-3 victory over Fredonia's Will Sidney.

Roy-Hart will be represented at the state championships by senior Nate Huntington who captured the 275 lb. title with a thrilling last second 3-2 victory over Jake Anderson of West Seneca West.

Boosting his season record to 37-0, Roberts quickly took charge in his title match by grabbing a 7-1 first period lead on two takedowns and a near fall. He upped his advantage to 11-3 with two more second period takedowns and then to 15-4 in the third before scoring a pin at 5:59.

"I'm very pleased," said Roberts of his title bout effort. "My whole thought was keep



Roy-Hart's Nate Huntington

moving, keep moving."

"J.R. did a real good job. He wrestled very solid," said Medina Coach Mike Crandall. "He showed what he can do when he opened up."

Roberts, who now shares Medina's career victory record at 166 with Eric Vaughn, a 1995 graduate and the Mustangs first state champion, opened the competition by scoring a first period (1:51) pin over Nate Sibenik of West Seneca West. He then registered major decision wins over Chris Ciechoski of Grand Island (11-3) in the quarterfinals and Chris Ferraro of Iroquois (13-3) in the semis.

Takedowns in the first and third periods keyed Hodgins to his first sectional title.

"That first takedown was key. He knew he had to get that takedown," said Crandall. "They always say takedowns are wins."

Hodgins added a second period escape to his first period takedown to take a 3-0

lead.

Sidney did close the score to 3-2 in the third but Hodgins answered the challenge with a clutch, title clinching takedown with 20 seconds to go.

"He was tough, very tough," said Hodgins. "It was a battle but all that hard work paid off."

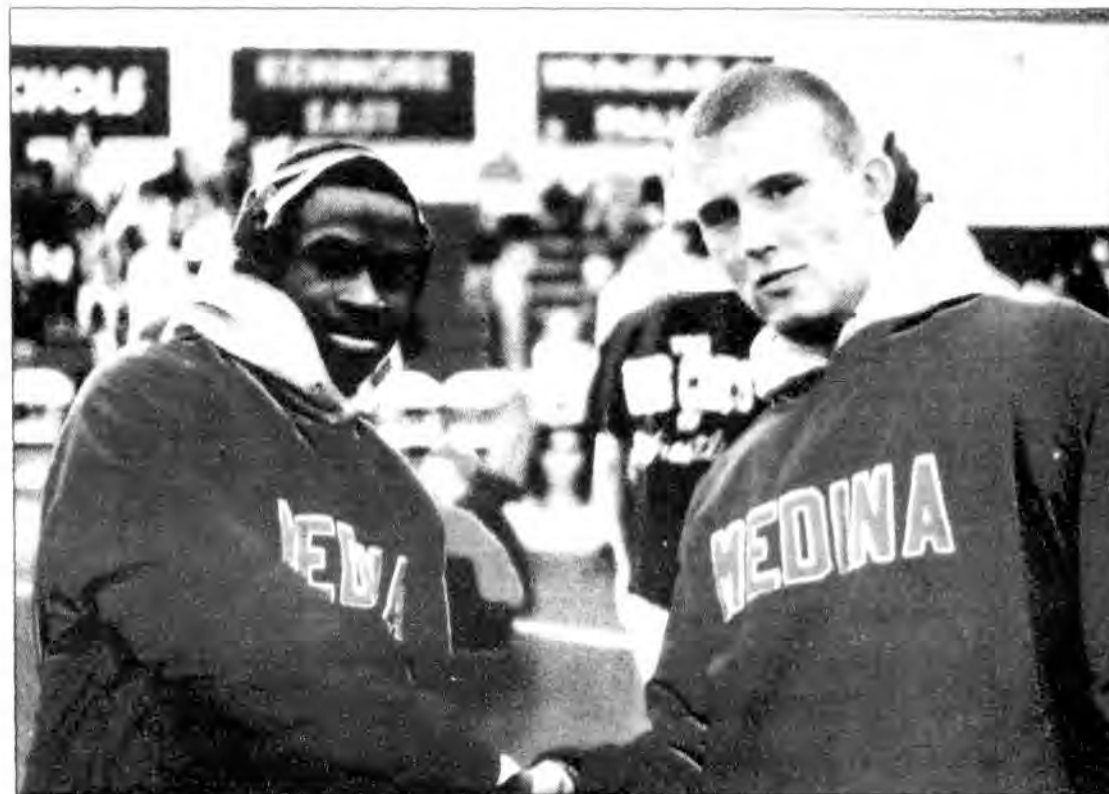
"Greg wrestled tough," said Crandall. "He's really worked hard for it and really deserves it."

Hodgins, who will take a 25-2 season record and 105 career victory total into the state championships, opened the competition with a 15-4 major decision over Bobby Elliott of Olean. He then decided Shawn Hannon of Jamestown 7-1 in the quarterfinals and Kellen Feltz of Springville 3-0 in the semis.

Huntington earned his first trip to the states in thrilling fashion as he scored a two-point takedown at the edge of the mat with two seconds to go to snap a 1-1 tie and edge Anderson 3-2.

"I just kept my toes in," said Huntington of the decisive take-down. Earlier in the period he just missed gaining a takedown at the edge of the mat as officials ruled both wrestlers were out of bounds. He made sure that didn't happen a second time.

Now at 25-3 on the season, Huntington advanced to the finals by deciding Jimmie Byrd of Lockport 6-4 in the quarterfinals and pinning Todd Hoeltke of Kenmore East in 3:40 in the semis.



Mike Wertman/The Journal-Register

Medina seniors J.R. Roberts, left, and Greg Hodgins exchange a good luck handshake before their successful title round matches. See page 6B for additional photos.

The state championships will be held this Friday and Saturday in Syracuse.

Also for Medina, juniors Matt Root (140) and Nate Hartway (112) both went 1-2 and sophomore Mike Crane (103) 0-2 on the weekend.

Albion's trio of entrants all placed as Mike Sanders took third at 119, Brad Watkins fifth at 215 and Kyle Piccirilli sixth at 145.

Sanders opened with a pin over Matt Lundgren of

Frewsburg in 2:53 and an 11-5 decision over Will Bruce of North Tonawanda before dropping a narrow 3-2 decision to Rosplock in the semifinals. He rebounded to decision Jeremy Stopa of Newfane 2-1 for third place honors.

Piccirilli likewise opened with two wins, decisions of 5-3 over Barker's Anthony Hallows and 4-2 over Eden's Jason Zittel, before losing in the semis via a pin of 3:10 by Ripley's Mark Babcock.

Watkins' weekend followed a similar pattern as he opened with pins of 3:29 over Gowanda's Tristan John and of 3:14 over Barker's Jason Nellist before dropping a 10-5 semifinal round decision to eventual champion Jim Nelson of Southwestern.

In one all Niagara-Orleans League final, Newfane's Ryan Needle (130) earned his third trip to the state championships pin pinning Akron's Dan Klonowski in 3:26.

Section VI wrestling championships

103 lbs.

Prequarters

Joe Stanz (Jamestown) p. Mike Crane (Medina) 3:12.

Losers bracket

Scott Johnson (Ripley) d. Crane 10-3.

112 lbs.

Prequarters

Dan Faden (Amherst) d. Nate Hartway (Medina) 3-2.

Losers Bracket

Hartway p. Kale Luce (Cattaraugus/Little Valley) 3:34; Shea Anzivine (Olean) d. Hartway 5-1.

119 lbs.

Prequarters

J.R. Roberts (Medina) p. Nate Sibelnik (West Seneca West) 1:51; Mike Sanders (Albion) p. Matt Lundgren (Frewsburg) 2:53.

Quarterfinals

Roberts d. Chris Siechoski (Grand Island) 11-3; Sanders d. Will Bruce (North Tonawanda) 5-1.

Semifinals

Roberts d. Chris Ferraro (Iroquois) 13-3; Kevin Rosplock (Cassadaga Valley) d. Sanders 3-2.

Finals

Roberts p. Rosplock 5:59.

Losers Bracket

Sanders d. Ciechoski 3-1; Sanders d. Jeremy Stopa (Newfane) 3-1 for third place.

140 lbs.

Prequarters

Matt Root (Medina) p. Raymond Navarro (Chautauqua Lake) 5:19.

Quarterfinals

Jeff Tatar (Sweet Home) d. Root 8-3.

Losers Bracket

Wayne Lindquist (Gowanda) d. Root 3-1 OT.

145 lbs.

Prequarters

Kyle Piccirilli (Albion) d. Anthony Hallows (Barker) 5-3.

Quarterfinals

Piccirilli d. Jason Zittel (Eden) 4-2.

Semifinals

Mark Babcock (Ripley) p. Piccirilli 3:10.

Losers Bracket

David Young (Frontier) d. Piccirilli 22-8 for fifth place.

152 lbs.

Prequarters

Greg Hodgins (Medina) d. Bobby Ellicott (Olean) 15-4.

Quarterfinals

Hodgins d. Shawn Hannon (Jamestown) 7-1.

Semifinals

Hodgins d. Kellen Feltz (Springville) 3-0.

Finals

Hodgins d. Will Sidney (Fredonia) 5-3.

160 lbs.

Prequarters

Keith Donnelly (Roy-Hart) d. Josh Liuzzi (Barker) 11-2.

Quarterfinals

Kyle Schmelze (Niagara-Wheatfield) d. Donnelly 10-6.

Losers Bracket

Eric Barker (Lew-Port) d. Donnelly 5-2.

215 lbs.

Prequarters

Brad Watkins (Albion) p. Tristan John (Gowanda) 3:29.

Quarterfinals

Watkins p. Jason Nellist (Barker) 3:14.

Semifinals

Jim Nelson (Southwestern) d. Watkins 10-5.

Losers Bracket

Matt Kochalski (Depew) d. Watkins 2-1.

275 lbs.

Quarterfinals

Nate Huntington (Roy-Hart) d. Jimmie Byrd (Lockport) 6-4.

Semifinals

Huntington p. Todd Hoeltke (Kenmore East) 3:40.

Finals

Huntington d. Jake Anderson (West Seneca West) 3-2.