

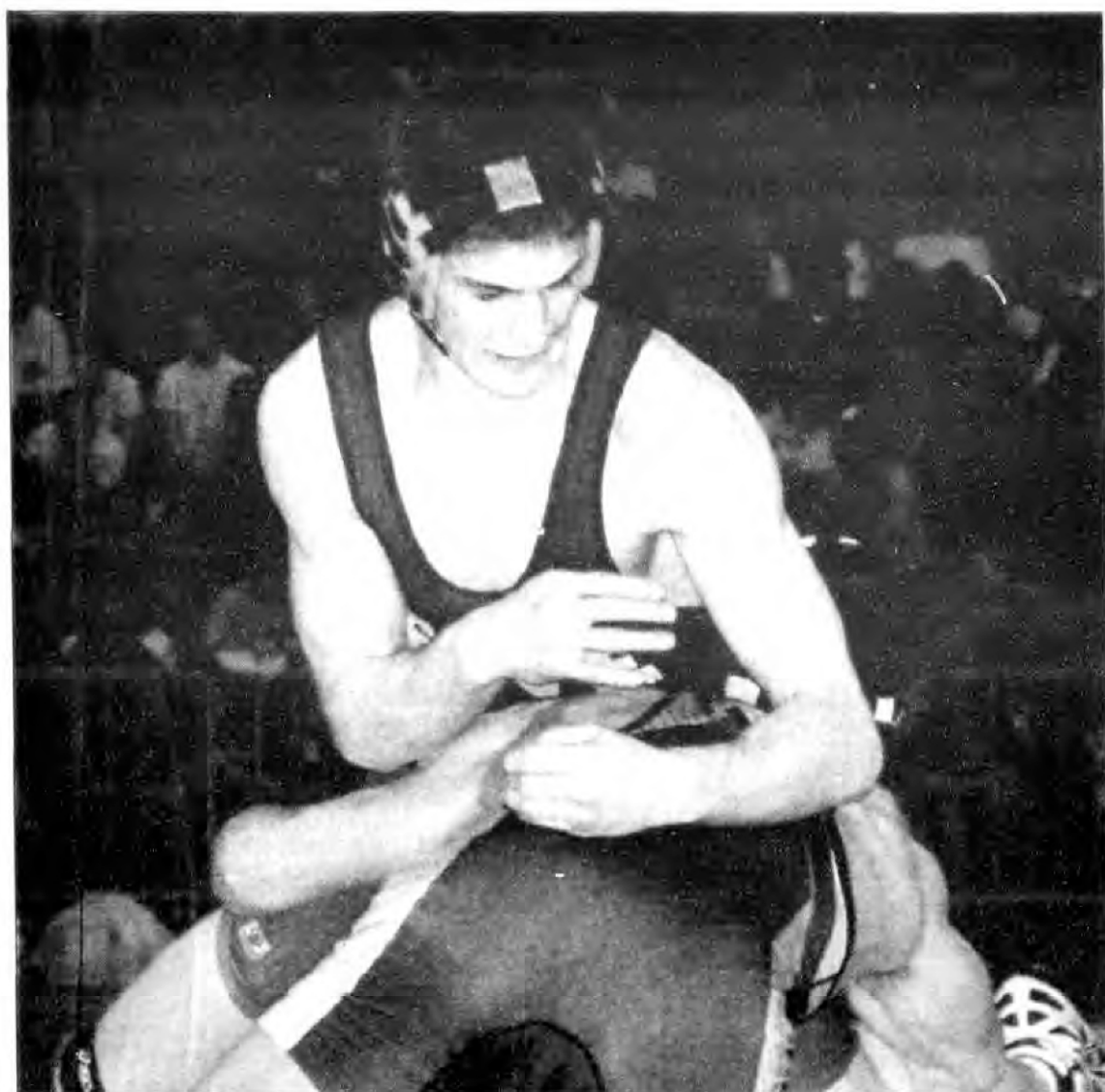
MONDAY, MARCH 1, 2004

HIGH SCHOOL WRESTLING



Holley, Kendall wrestlers win state titles

Grillo reigns at 135 for Hawks; Williams at 145 for Eagles



Cheryl Wertman/The Journal-Register

Holley's Andrew Grillo has the advantage in his state championship match against Matt Campion. See 6B for additional state championship photos.

AMHERST — Saturday was a red letter day for the Holley and Kendall sports programs as the Hawks' Andrew Grillo (135) and the Eagles' Donald Williams (145) captured state wrestling championships at the University at Buffalo's Alumni Arena.

In the championship bouts, before a crowd of more than 7,400, Grillo edged Matt Campion (Frewsburg, Section VI) 4-2, and Williams nipped Brandon MacWhinnie (Tioga, Section IV) 2-1 to become the first state wrestling champions in each of their school's history.

"It's just a great, great feeling. My dad is probably more excited than I am," said Grillo whose victory was truly a family affair as his father, John Grillo, also is his coach.

"It's a dream come true for him, and it's just the most incredible feeling of my life as a father," said John Grillo, who was joined on the bench during the championships by his other two sons, Adam, his assistant coach, and Ashley. "It's just incredible for our family."

"It's just awesome," said Williams, who placed fifth at the state championships last year. "It's one of the best feelings I've ever had."

Williams' Kendall teammate, senior Torry Tooley (152), also had a good tournament, earning a fifth place finish.

Breaking away from a score-



Cheryl Wertman/The Journal-Register

Kendall's Donald Williams works toward a title-clinching victory Saturday over Brandon MacWhinnie at 145 pounds.

less deadlock, Grillo gained a key escape point in the second period after using his quickness to get out of a tough situation.

"I got a little worried there, but I recovered," he said.

"We've always stressed it's important to get a takedown, but it's more important not to get taken down," John Grillo said.

He boosted his advantage to 3-0 with a big takedown with just 12 seconds to go in the period.

"That takedown was probably the most important point," Andrew Grillo said.

Campion cut the deficit to 3-2 by scoring at takedown at 1:46 of the third period, but Grillo answered with an escape point just six seconds later.

"The escape was very important as I was able to counter him," Grillo said. "That's 42-0, a perfect season, and I couldn't ask for more."

"That escape was huge because we knew the kid was tough on top," John Grillo said. "Andrew has great technique and he continues to show poise and experience. That was really key for him — poise and experience"

See Grillo, B6

★ Medina duo of Crane and Hartway both place at state meet

AMHERST — Both of Medina's seniors placed at the state wrestling championships Saturday at the University at Buffalo as Mike Crane (112) took fourth and Justin Hartway (130), was fifth.

Crane opened with an 11-8 decision

win over Jamie Castiello (Ardsley, Section 1) after building leads of 6-2 after one period and 9-5 after two.

However, he dropped a 12-5 semifinal decision to a familiar foe, Mike McNally (Byron-Bergen, Section V) whom he had split a pair of matches

with during the regular season. Crane fell behind 6-2 after one period and 8-3 after two.

"The early takedown McNally got changed the complexion of the match," Medina coach Mike Crandall said.

Crane rebounded with a 14-5 decision, victory over Jason Rueda (Mt. Sinai, Section 11) to stay alive in the competition.

However, he dropped a 5-1 decision to Joe Widrick (Beaver River, Section III) in the match for third place.

Crane led 1-0 in the second period, but Widrick rallied to score key takedowns in both the second and third periods to gain the win.

See MHS, B6

Grillo, Williams win

Continued from 1B

Williams made a takedown he scored a minute into the opening period stand up for his title victory.

"To get that first takedown is always big," Kendall coach Jim Sauberan said.

Williams started the second period on top and maintained control as MacWhinne's lone point came on an escape early in the third period.

"I fought as hard as I could," Williams said. "It's great competition and I wrestled the way I'm supposed to."

"He pressed the whole way. He worked to be aggressive and to stay on his feet and he controlled the whole match," Sauberan said. "Donald's success is due in large part to his practice partner, Torry Tooley."

Grillo, who finishes with a career record of 186-11, opened the competition with an 8-2 quarterfinal-round decision over Anthony Howe (Newark Valley, Section IV). He then edged Chris Davis (Mohawk, Section III) 5-3 in the semifinals, registering a takedown with only 16 seconds to go to snap a 3-3 tie.

"I just kept moving and scrambling as I knew a takedown would win it. He lost his balance, and I came out on top," Andrew Grillo said. "It was the best match of the season for me."

"He showed he had a lot of poise," John Grillo said. "He just kept chipping away. He lost the first scramble, but he won the second one when it counted."

Williams opened with a pin of 3:39 over Mike Schmidt (Pawling, Section I) and then decisioned Paul Reale (Falconer, Section VI) 12-7 in the quarterfinals. Registering six takedowns, he led 12-4 in the third period.

Williams needed an escape and a takedown, with just 30 seconds to go, in the third period to score a 9-7 decision over Dave Ballard (Adirondack, Section III) in the semifinals.

"I countered off his attack to get the escape," said Williams, who had taken a 6-5 lead with the escape just before notching the decisive takedown.

"Donald had a good third period," said Sauberan. "We knew we had to hammer away at him."

Williams finishes the season 38-0.

Tooley rebounded from an opening round 3-0 loss by pinning Xenakis in 3:14 and decisioning LaBombard 2-1.

He then dropped a 7-4 decision to Nate Slate (Governour, Section X), but he rebounded to gain a third-period injury default win over Scott Heinz (Stony Brook, Section II) to take fifth place.

MHS duo places at states

Continued from 1B

"It was overwhelming, but I just focused and went out and wrestled," said Crane of his state championship competition. "I could have done a little better, but I'm pretty proud of myself and what I accomplished."

"Mike just worked super hard this year and got better and more confident every week," said Crandall. "I'm just very, very proud of him, and very, very happy for him."

Crane finishes 35-7.

Feeling under the weather at the outset, Hartway was pinned in his first match by Josh Denesha (Governour, Section X) in 3:37.

However, he rebounded strongly to defeat Derek Sweet (Letchworth, Section V) 2-1 and Keith Cervone (Pearl River, Section I) 5-3 in overtime before

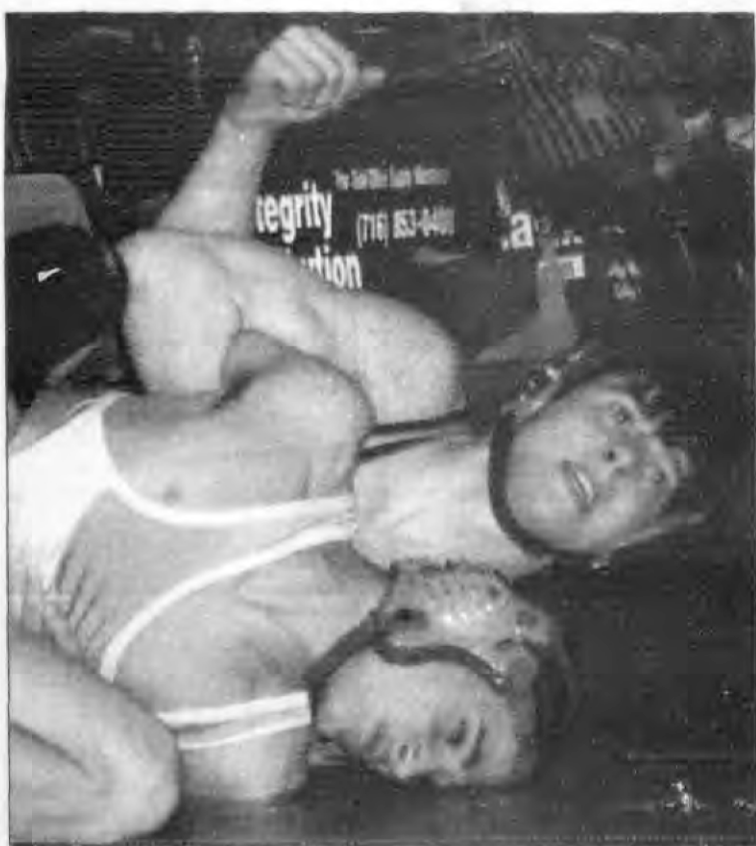
losing to Denesha again 5-4 in the bout for third place.

Hartway, who also competed in the state championships as a freshman, once again bounced back to take fifth place by decisioning Toby Reese (Homer, Section IV) 7-4.

"I had to make the most of it," Hartway said. "It's an emotional sport, and it was hard losing the first match."

However, Hartway said having lost to Sweet earlier in the season gave him extra incentive to win his first key consolation bracket match to stay alive in the competition. "I'd lost to him before, so that gave me a little extra."

"It just shows what kind of a heart he's got to come back like that," Crandall said. "He's wrestled through pain and adversity all season and I couldn't be prouder of him."



Cheryl Wertman/The Journal-Register

Medina's Mike Crane works toward a win over Jamie Castiello (Asdley) in the quarterfinals Friday. Crane went on to place fourth at 112 pounds in the state championships at the University at Buffalo.



Cheryl Wertman/The Journal-Register

Rebounding from an opening-round loss, Medina's Justin Hartway battled back to earn fifth-place honors at 130.

Hartway finishes 21-5.

Mike Sanders loses in quarterfinals

Albion senior Mike Sanders (130) dropped a quarterfinal match to Gregor Gillespie (Webster Schroeder, Section V), 5-0.

Sanders rebounded to blank Dave Pawley (Cicero-North Syracuse, Section III) 5-0, but was eliminated 3-2 margin by

Joe Whitaker (Queensbury, Section II).

"Mike lost to a couple of very good kids," Albion coach Keith Piccirilli said. "He's had an outstanding year and career at Albion, and this does nothing to take away from all the great things he has accomplished."

Sanders, who finishes the season 39-2, is Albion's career victory leader with a record of 177-23.



Sports victories savored in Holley and Kendall

High school wrestling in Orleans County took the New York state spotlight in a big way over the weekend.

Two local grapplers, seniors Andrew Grillo of Holley and Donald Williams of Kendall, captured state champion titles before a crowd of more than 7,400 at the University at Buffalo's Alumni Arena. With their victories, the boys brought home their districts' first-ever championships.

In addition, three other wrestlers earned place finishes: Medina senior Mike Crane took a fourth and Medina's Justin Hartway and Kendall's Torrey Tooley, both seniors, took fifth.

We add our voice to those congratulating these outstanding student athletes for their achievements. Success in a sport as challenging as wrestling requires young men to put forth

consistent hard work, dedication and determination. Getting through the sectionals to the state contest is no small feat.

Holley coach John Grillo and Kendall coach Jim Sauberan can rightly feel extra proud of the work they invested in cultivating champions.

Andrew Grillo's victory was especially thrilling because his coach is also his dad. During Andrew's championship matches, dad was joined matside by sons Adam Grillo, an assistant coach, and Ashley. The memory will be always be sweet for the whole clan, no doubt.

Having earned the title of state champions, Grillo and Williams now can savor the crowing achievement of their high school wrestling careers. They, their families and their communities should be very proud.