

HIGH SCHOOL REPORT

A winner on the mat and in classroom

■ Olympia's Terrence Nolan captains his team and carries a high average.

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STAFF WRITER

GREECE — Terrence Nolan is a high school senior with potential.

The National Honor Society member's grade-point average is 4.1 on Greece Olympia's scale of 4.5. He has an appreciation for different forms of music, as he plays the saxophone in two school bands and jams with friends in an alternative group.

Officials at the United States Military Academy at West Point thought enough of Nolan to admit him, a piece of good news he received this month.

Nolan believed he had the potential to win on the wrestling mat, too. That's why he continued to show up for exhausting practices despite, at first, losing more matches than he won.

Olympia's 140-pounder will bring a 22-7 record this season with him to the Monroe County Championships at Webster Schroeder. Nolan won't be a No. 1 seed when the tournament begins tonight, but he won't shut

down no matter what the score is or who is in front of him.

"I'm definitely not the favorite to win this," he said. "You just have to hope to close the gap between you and the top guys.

"Maybe that someday will be now or maybe not. There's no point in giving up."

His teammates like his attitude. The last two years they have paid more attention to his hustle than statistics when it came time to vote for their leaders among themselves.

"He went from being a clumsy eighth-grader to a captain," Olympia 189-pounder Nate Burns said. "Leadership is a quality that he has.

"He does everything that we're supposed to and more."

That covers drills in practice, making weight for matches and year-round conditioning. Nolan ran for the cross country team the last two years, in part to prepare himself for wrestling.

Teammates and coaches point out that though Nolan is an A-student, he shows up for extra

Monroe County Wrestling Championships

When: Tonight and Saturday.

Where: Webster Schroeder.

Tonight: Qualifying round, 4:15; quarterfinals, 8 p.m.

Saturday: Consolations 9:30 a.m.; semifinals, 11 a.m.; finals, 5:30 p.m.

review sessions.

"He does everything thoroughly," 130-pounder Tim Greene said. "Some kids, if they're down by a point with 15 seconds left, they'll stop.

"He'll take it to you for the whole six minutes, he'll fight. He never stops." Nolan said that the image of wrestlers being "tough guys" attracted him to the sport. He was promoted to Olympia's varsity as a 96-pound eighth-grader and began his steep climb to become about a .500 wrestler his sophomore year. "I was losing a lot of matches, I had records like 4 and 20," Nolan said. "I was working hard in the room but I didn't get wins. I thought about (quitting), maybe wrestling wasn't for me. But then coaches would say, not directly to me, stick with it."

Nolan's record was above .500

as a junior, and this season he won his weight division at a tournament for the first time with four wins in Lockport.

"I get excited about a lot of things," Olympia coach Tony Russo said. "But I had to leave the gym so that I wouldn't embarrass myself, I was so choked up. He had a rough time of it at the start. T.R. has worked for everything he has."

Nolan was asked to wrestle in the 152-pound match during a dual meet against Webster Schroeder earlier this month. Olympia led by a point before the final bout, which Nolan won after he pinned his opponent.

It was a sweet day for Nolan. He was told earlier that he had been accepted into West Point.

Nolan needed a recommendation from Rep. Thomas Reynolds, R-Clarence, had to pass



MAX SCHULTE staff photographer

Greece Olympia wrestler Terrence Nolan drills with teammate Riley Shea. Nolan, who wrestles at the 140-weight class, brings a 22-7 record into the Monroe County Championships.

an Army physical and impress West Point officials on applications and during an interview.

"It's kind of cliché, but I've always wanted to serve my country," Nolan said. "It's hard to say what will happen in four years,

but it's part of the game. There's risk in everything you do.

"This is really a great opportunity, so I'm not going to let that (possibility of combat service) stop me." □

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