

Six Area Wrestlers Advance To State Mat Meet

By BRIAN MAZUREK
FREDONIA — The Southern Tier Wrestling Conference will be well represented this weekend at the New York State High School Wrestling Tournament in Syracuse as six local matmen won Section 6 titles Saturday night at Dods Hall on the campus of Fredonia State College.

Maple Grove's Jim Nalbhone (105), Falconer's Rob Waddington (112), Cassadaga Valley's Steve Penhollow (155) along with Olean's Jeff Prescott (98), Steve Irving (119), and Jeff Gabler (167) all won their respective weight classes and earned the right to advance to the State Tournament.

It was a record-setting victory for Waddington since the Falconer senior became the first wrestler in Section 6 history to win the State Qualifier five years in a row.

Waddington said of winning for the fifth straight year, "It's getting easier. The thought of getting beat was in the back of my mind, but I knew I could win."

About his chances at the State Tournament, he said, "I feel I'm sitting good. I just have to go there and wrestle the way I have been." Waddington, who first went to the State Tournament when he was in eighth grade, now has a career record of 145-14-1.

Besides Waddington, Penhollow and Prescott will be heading to Syracuse for the second straight season while Nalbhone, Irving, and Gabler will be participating in the State Tournament for the first time.

Olean Coach Jim Meyers said of his Huskies with a big grin, "We were three-for-three in the finals and I'll take that anytime. I think Prescott, Irving, and Gabler all have an excellent shot of placing at the States."

Sending three wrestlers to the States is nothing new for Olean. The Huskies had four representatives back in 1977 and sent five in 1978.

The Southern Tier Conference had 10 wrestlers in the finals. Falconer's Joel Sopak (126), Ray Norton (145) and Tony Milliner (250), and Cassadaga Valley's Marty Nichols (132) all reached the finals, but were beaten.

"I think the Section 6 team will be pretty decent," Section 6 Wrestling Chairman Skip Pine said. "We've got some place winners back from last season and I think we've got a chance

FINALS
91: Lou Rosselli (Roy-Hart) d. Anthony Verdi (Kenmore East) 14-7.
98: Jeff Prescott (Olean) p. Kevin Day (Iroquois) 2-18.
105: Jim Nalbhone (Maple Grove) d. Matt Haberl (Maryvale) 6-4.
112: Rob Waddington (Falconer) p. Tim Shifflet (Sweet Home) 1-34.
119: Steve Irving (Olean) d. Rawn Mitchell (Albion) 4-3.
126: Daryl Gattuso (Depew) d. Joel Sopak (Falconer) 10-7.
132: Jon Vesper (Clarence) p. Marty Nichols (Cassadaga Valley) 4-4.
138: Tom O'Brecht (Orchard Park) d. Ken Coppella (Roy-Hart) 4-0.
145: Kevin Bos (Sweet Home) d. Ray Norton (Falconer) 12-7.
155: Steve Penhollow (Cassadaga Valley) d. Dan Uhteg (Clarence) 9-1.
167: Jeff Gabler (Olean) d. Bill Kopera (Niagara-Wheatfield) 14-5.
177: Tom Chirayath (Williamsville North) d. Ron Koszrzeski (Iroquois) 10-8.
Hvy: Jeff Ellis (Clarence) won by default over Andy Utr (Williamsville South).
Unl: Brian Schoenle (Williamsville South) d. Tony Milliner (Falconer) 14-2.

to win the team title."

Falconer Coach Bill Davenport said, "I'm very optimistic about the Section 6 team. I think we've got a stronger team than last year's team that finished in third place."

Olean's Prescott was the first local wrestler to earn a berth in the state meet. He pinned Iroquois' Kevin Day in 2:18. Prescott had a commanding 13-3 lead before using a bar-and-half for the fall.

The Dragons' Nalbhone beat top-seeded and previously undefeated Matt Haberl of Maryvale 6-4 in the 105-pound bout. The match was tied 4-4 after two periods, but Nalbhone recorded an escape and received a point for stalling in the last 1:22 to pull out the victory.

The win was especially sweet for Nalbhone since he lost by a point in overtime in last year's Section 6 finals at 91.

"Jim wrestled the match I thought he would," Maple Grove Coach Curt Miceli said. "Jim wasn't as sharp on his feet, but his conditioning pulled him through."

Falconer's Waddington wasted little time in pinning Sweet Home's Tim Shifflet in 1:34. Waddington got the initial takedown then applied a half-nelson and scooped Shifflet's leg for the pin.

"I wasn't looking for anything in particular — I just hit what was there," Waddington said in describing the pin. Olean's Irving claimed the 119-pound

CONSOLATIONS
91: Tom Shifflet (Sweet Home) d. Ralph Gillon (Lockport) 7-5.
98: Chad Waddington (Falconer) d. Jim Schraufstetter (Sweet Home) 7-4.
105: Todd Spencer (Albion) d. Tony Rotundo (Clarence) 3-0.
112: Mike Conn (Albion) won by forfeit over Dan Sheffer (Clarence).
119: Mark Dickerson (Kenmore East) d. Ray Ryan (Allegany) 1-0.
126: Dan Fruck (Lancaster) d. Ron Prescott (Olean) 3-1.
132: Don Quackenbush (Roy-Hart) d. Shawn Regan (Akron) 4-2.
138: Mark Kasubak (Clarence) d. Dave Romanski (Lake Shore) 4-3.
145: Dan Benjamin (Pioneer) won by default over John Wolf (LaSalle).
155: Dave Lang (Orchard Park) won by default over Ron Fedkin (Newlane).
167: Willie Cunningham (Roy-Hart) d. Tom Koszrzeski (Iroquois) 4-3.
177: Joe Zito (Lancaster) d. Bill Schoenle (Williamsville South) 5-2.
Hvy: John Eagle (Kenmore West) p. Darrin Cowher (Olean) 4-58.
Unl: Matt Martin (Olean) won by forfeit over Marc Hudak (Orchard Park).

title with an impressive 9-1 victory over Clarence's Dan Uhteg in the 155-pound test. Penhollow raced to a 7-0 first period lead as he tipped Uhteg twice for back points. He sealed the victory with a third period reversal.

Olean's Gabler won the 167-pound title in the same fashion he took the Southern Tier Conference crown — with takedowns. He used five takedowns and a three-point near-fall to rout Niagara Wheatfield's Bill Kopera 14-5.

Daryl Gattuso of Depew, named the tournament's Outstanding Wrestler, handed Falconer's Joel Sopak a 10-loss in the 126-pound title tilt. Sopak trailed 8-7 with 30 seconds left, but Gattuso wrapped up the win with his fourth takedown on the mat.

Jon Vesper of Clarence used a "parade" and pinned top-seed Marty Nichols of Cassadaga Valley in 4 seconds. Vesper took Nichols right down to the mat and used a press to notch the fall.

At 145, Sweet Home's Kevin Bos registered a hard-fought 12-7 victory over Falconer's Ray Norton. Bos race to a 7-1 first period lead, but needed takedown with 30 seconds left to stop the upset-minded Norton.

In the final match of the night Williamsville South's Brian Schoenle handled Falconer's Tony Milliner 14-1 in the unlimited battle. Schoenle tipped Milliner twice for back points and also used four takedowns to score the decision.

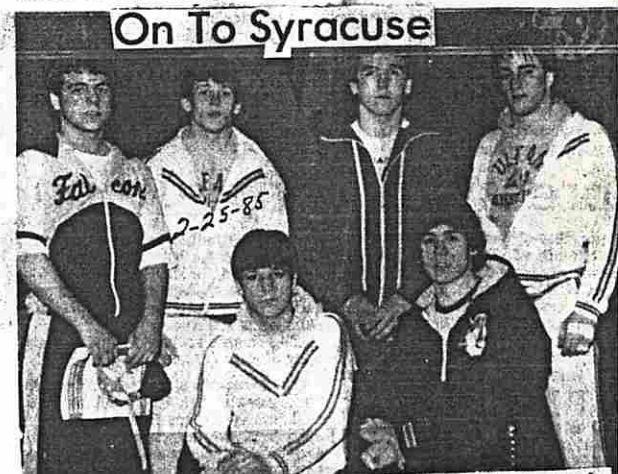
The consolation round saw Falconer's Chad Waddington (98) and Olean's Matt Martin (250) taking third while the Huskies' Ron Prescott (126) and Darrin Cowher (215) finished fourth.

championship with a narrow 4-3 decision over Albion's Rawn Mitchell. With the scored tied at 3-3 and both wrestlers on their feet, Irving received a point as Mitchell was called for stalling with seven seconds left in the match. It was the second point Irving received because of stalling.

It was a controversial call and upset Albion Coach Steve Piccierielli. "The kids should decide the match, not the referees," he said.

Huskies' Coach Meyers said, "It was an excellent call. The kid didn't shoot one takedown the entire match. He was just holding on while Irving continually shot for a takedown."

Cassadaga Valley's Penhollow claimed his second straight Section 6



These are the six area representatives from Section 6 who will be competing in the New York State High School Wrestling Tournament at Syracuse beginning Friday. In front from left are Jeff Prescott of Olean and Jim Nalbhone of Maple Grove. In back are Rob Waddington of Falconer, Steve Irving of Olean, Steve Penhollow of Cassadaga Valley and Jeff Gabler of Olean.