

# Waterloo wrestler qualifies for state with extra effort

By Gary Fallesen

Democrat and Chronicle

With 10 seconds remaining, Waterloo wrestler Joel Lamson trailed two-time state runner-up Butch Hibbard of Canandaigua by one point. But Lamson did not give up.

If he had, he would have hated himself yesterday morning.

"A lot of kids would have bagged it," Waterloo Coach Abe Meyers said. "But Joel's aggressive. That's how he beat Hibbard. He was losing with 10 seconds to go, but he would not quit."

Lamson took Hibbard down to his back for four points and a 7-4 decision before the towel was thrown onto the mat to end their 119-pound semifinal bout Saturday at the Super Sectionals.

Lamson, a senior, then decisioned Kevin Bishop of Greece Athena in the final, 7-5, for the right to advance to the New York State Public High School Athletic Association tournament.

"I sort of feel bad for them," Lamson said afterward at Brockport State. "I know what it's like (to be so close to qualifying for the state tournament)."

Lamson lost last year in the final of the state qualifier when Brighton's Jon Blauvelt scored a last-second takedown for a 6-4 decision.

"That was depressing," he recalled, "I felt bad for a long time."

"It just kills you," he added. "I didn't even want to get out of bed the next morning."

Lamson was prepared yesterday, however, for his usual Sunday regimen — a seven-mile run. He and 91-pound teammate Tom Finnerty are among 14 area individuals who will represent Section 5 at the intersectional meet Friday and Saturday in Syracuse.

Finnerty, a sophomore, pinned East Rochester freshman Sean Rucker at 3:20 of the final for a spot on the team.

"I told them they could both do it," said Meyers.

Only one other Waterloo wrestler ever has advanced to the state meet. Chris Schaffer placed fourth in the 250-pound weight class in 1976.

Lamson, a four-time Class B champion with a 136-15-1 career record, emerged from the toughest weight class. He needed to get past Hilton's Pat Serafino, Bolivar's Jim McDonald, and Hibbard in about four hours Saturday afternoon. Then, in the final, he needed a victory over Bishop, a senior with a 121-11-1 career record.

Hibbard, a 134-12-2 senior who placed fourth in the state three years ago and was second each of the past two seasons,

defeated Lamson during the regular season, 8-7. It is Lamson's only loss so far this year.

"That made me want to beat him even more," said Lamson, whose first organized bout was against Hibbard in the third grade. "I wanted to go undefeated this year."

Lamson and Finnerty are two of the nine individuals who will be making their first trip to the state meet. East Rochester's Chris Schojan (177 pounds), Canandaigua's Paul Lamphier (112) and Mike Lacognato (98), Edison's Mike Cronmiller (145) and Avon's Bill Maher (250) have been there before.

Schojan and Lamphier are two-time state runners-up. Lacognato placed fifth last year.

Meyers is convinced Lamson also can be successful against intersectional competition.

"He can make mistakes," the fifth-year coach said. "But he's the type of kid who can win the states. He'll go and get it."

Lamson's aggressiveness could rub off on the younger Finnerty, who is in his first full varsity season after suffering a shoulder separation midway through his freshman year.

"Joel has helped me out so much," said Finnerty (36-0 on the year). "He took me under his wing. He has taught me everything I know."

Waterloo is one of three teams sending more than one individual to the intersectionals. Canandaigua qualified three — Lamphier, Lacognato and 126-pound Tracy Foster — and Brockport two — Nathan Van Duzer (132) and Phil St. George (167).

St. George, a senior, advanced despite giving up a four-point move early in the final against Fairport's Todd English.

"Mental breakdowns at this point can kill you," said Brockport Coach Woody VanDenBurg. "They (Van Duzer and St. George) were my two favorites to go to the states this year. But everybody coming into this tournament has doubts. You've just got to keep telling yourself, 'I can make it... I can make it.'"

St. George made it with a pin at 3:29. He will be joined on the Rochester area's state-bound team by Mike Siebert of Lyndonville (98 pounds), Tim Habecker of Marion (155), Mike Scott of McQuaid (138), and Mike Van Horn of Brighton (215).

Habecker, a junior and the son of Marion Coach Steve Habecker, is the first individual from his school to qualify for the state meet.

Siebert, a Super Sectional runner-up last year behind Hibbard, also is the first to advance from Lyndonville.

Canandaigua, ER, McQuaid, Brighton, Brockport, Avon and Edison have produced several state place winners since Section 5 began participating in the intersectionals in 1968.

## Boys High School



By Scott Conroe

Only four of Section Three's wrestlers reached the state tournament's semifinals. Only two reached the finals.

Why? There are many possible reasons.

There is no seeding, so some of them had formidable first-round opponents. Of the 12 who didn't reach the semifinals, 10 lost to finalists.

Some got ahead and tried to hang on, a mistake at that level of competition.

Some coaches felt the two-week practice period — a departure from previous years, where the section's team practiced for four days — hurt. Others, including Fulton's Wayne Bleau, liked it.

"I was against it," Bleau said, "but the kids liked it. They relaxed, then they had tough workouts." 3-10-85

Section Three bounced back to place fourth in the competition at the Onondaga County War Memorial last Saturday.

State championship medals were presented to placemen by Clar Anderson, two-time state champ from Olean and All-American at Auburn University. ... Central Square's George Korthas, the state champ at 250, was the 32nd state titlist in Section Three's history. The first was Auburn's Kurt Kuppinger in 1963. The section's champs have won 38 state titles (some were multiple winners). ... Their tournament showings gave Korthas 108 career wins, East Syracuse-Minoa 112-pounder Chris Labbate 128 and Fulton 119-pounder John Howard 110. Howard is a junior. ... Korthas was one of the few wrestlers in the state to be undefeated this year. ... Mexico's Steve Bradish, Section Three champ at 126, forfeited in the wrestle-backs after injuring his neck during a quarterfinal loss.