

Raiders top East Aurora, win ECIC IV title

Eden avenged a pair of two-point losses in 2005-06 and 2006-07 by defeating East Aurora, 38-26 on Feb. 8, in the long awaited duel between the teams which basically decided the Erie County Interscholastic Conference IV champion.

The Raiders also celebrated Senior Night, and the upperclassmen represented the school well, scoring 17 points. Of the seniors, Rob Broda, wrestling at 112, scored a major decision worth five points, Tom Caldwell (171) received a forfeit for six, Mike Abrams (140) notched three points after scoring an exciting decision in overtime and Greg Gellerson got his 100th win by bumping up to 160 and also winning by decision.

Junior Eddie Sarcione recorded a last minute take down in the third period to win his match, and first year wrestler Troy Bigalo earned another three points in his decision at 215.

The win all but sealed up the division championship, provided that the Raiders win their last two dual meets, which were make ups due to the weather. The first was Feb. 9, which turned out to be a victory over Depew, 47-13. The highlight of the meet was Broda, ranked second in Section VI at 112, bumping up to 119 to face Depew's Ryan Baer, ranked third at 119. Broda earned the 5-2 decision. Eden's last match was Feb. 12 against Holland, which only fills a partial squad, but it was too late for press time. With a win against Holland, Eden would officially win the division championship.

The Raiders focus will next move to the Section VI Class AA Championships, which take place Feb. 16 and 17 at Fredonia High School. Class AAAA will compete at Clarence, Class AAA, at Starpoint, and Class A, at Pine Valley.

The results there will determine the field for the Section VI Large and Small School Championships on Feb. 23. The top four finishers in each class will qualify for this meet with Class A and AA in Division II at Jamestown College and Class AAA and AAAA in Division I at Kenmore West.

Red Raiders MMAA champs

In one week, St. Francis not only clinched its 25th Monsignor Martin Athletic Association regular season title since 1981, but also won the MMAA All-Catholic Tournament behind seven weight class champions. The Red Raiders finished 6-0 in the MMAA and 18-5 overall, setting a school record for dual wins in a season.

At the tournament on Feb. 10

on the campus of St. Francis, the Red Raiders, ranked eighth among Large Schools in Western New York, qualified 19 wrestlers, who placed fourth or better, for the upcoming Catholic High School Athletic Association state tournament at Chaminade High School in Long Island.

Tim Willson, currently ranked No. 1 in Western New York in the 145-pound weight class, won his second career All-Catholic title with a first-period pin. He was also voted the Most Outstanding Wrestler of the tournament by the league's coaches. Willson improved his record this season to 36-3, and currently has 135 career varsity wins. Willson eclipsed the previous mark set just last year by Brian Haas.

Senior Rich Rogers (160) was the only other repeat winner, earning his second All-Catholic title with a third-period pin. Juniors C.J. Canterbury (103), Matt Holtz (145) and Connor O'Gorman (125), sophomore Brian Rogers (140) and senior Matt Coughlin (171) also were crowned All-Catholic champions.

Other finalists from Saint Francis included Jim Widger (112), Blaine Aldrich (119), Zack Steczkowski (130) and Mark Smith (189).

The Red Raiders' third place winners were freshman Paul Gahagan (103), Kyle Guido (112), Scott Parker (119), Steve Turkasz (125), and Nick Eagan (130). Eagan earned the aggregate pin award for most pins in the least amount of time with three in 6 minutes and 16 seconds. Placing fourth at the tournament were Charles Stephens (145), David Drozda (160) and Chris Reger (215).

The Red Raiders are returning

CHSAA Class B champions and have won that title in five of the last six seasons. Individual winners at the CHSAA tournament on Feb. 18-19 qualify for the NYSPHSAA state tournament the in early March in Rochester.

On Feb. 6, Saint Francis secured a MMAA title with a decisive 37-17 victory over league rival St. Joe's. The Red Raiders received pins from Willson (152), Canterbury (112) and Drozda (160). A regular in the dual lineup when the Red Raiders bump their 160 and 171 pound wrestlers up to the next weight classes, Drozda sealed the victory with a dramatic first period pin. The Red Raiders took a 19-14 lead and never looked back. Aldrich (125) won an important early match victory to set the tempo, then Gahagan (103), Brian Rogers (140), Rich Rogers (171), and Coughlin (189) added wins for Saint Francis.

Frontier enjoys best season in 10 years

Frontier has enjoyed its best season in 10 years. Recently, the Falcons, who won five dual meets this season, had several wrestlers place at tournaments.

At the Depew Invitational Tournament, junior Don Heppner took first place in the 125-pound weight class; freshman Mitch Jameison finished second at 145; and Nick Bannister took third at 130. At the Ken-Ton Tournament, Heppner placed second in his class, while senior Sean Alford took third at the ECIC Championships in East Aurora at 189.

Coach Dan Uhteg, along with his assistants Brian Baney and Chuck Reiford, said they are proud of their team and optimistic about its future.



The Edén wrestling team enjoys its victory over ECIC IV rival East Aurora after the Feb. 8 match in the Raiders' gym.