

SPORTS

Brace, Breazeale win weight class championships

By GAIL SPEEDY
Sports editor

SALAMANCA — If you're going to host a tournament, you might as well enjoy it.

Two Warriors did indeed enjoy the League Wrestling Tournament held this weekend at Salamanca as they both won their weight class and earned the right to compete at next week's sectionals.

Both Chauncey Brace (177 pounds) and Bob Breazeale (heavyweight) had long roads to their championships both on paper and throughout their varsity wrestling career, but Coach Rich Morton said Monday that the hardships proved worth it.

"That was absolutely terrific," said Morton, noting the Brace had had to earn his experience on the mat for a couple of years before this championship and Breazeale had to overcome other problems and fight through a weight class where he was a slim first seed.

"He's the top dog in the league," said Morton of Brace. "He proved it right here.... He proved it on the mat when it counted."

Morton was referring to earlier in the season when Brace had lost three close matches to Trey Marra of Olean and had come into the tournament as a second seed behind Marra. Had both wrestlers stayed on course, the two would have met in the finals, but Marra lost in the semifinals and finished up sixth in the tournament.

Brace, on the other hand, made it look easy. After a first-round bye, Brace earned a 16-3 decision over Nathan Davis of Fredonia, a 19-3 decision over Chris Grey of Frewsburg and then pinned Dave Hodges of Southwestern in 4:48 for the 177-pound crown.

"If you just stay focussed on what you need to do, you get it done.... He was winning them in the third period," said Morton, adding that Brace wrestled well in the final two minutes of the match. "Anybody can wrestle the first period tough. (In the third period), that's where you find out."

Breazeale played opposite of Brace in that he came in as a slim favorite at first seed. But, he didn't waste much time after he got there. Breazeale also enjoyed a first-round bye before pinning Ryan Scanio of Gowanda in 46 seconds. In the semifinals, Breazeale wrestled a very physical match over Shannon Milliman of Westfield, and pulled it out 12-9.

"That kid was a monster," noted Morton of Milliman.

In the finals, Breazeale controlled the match and picked up a slim 6-4 victory over Jess McFall of Portville.

Morton noted that although Breazeale was the top seed, he is wrestling a class where he gives up 25-30 pounds to his opponents in every match.

"He's wrestling heavyweight and he only weighs 185 pounds," Morton said, adding that the key to Breazeale's success was wrestling smart. "He's not getting himself into trouble and he's not making mistakes," he said. "He knows where he's at and he feels confident."

In the last match, Morton said he felt McFall was stalling with Breazeale doing most of the work to get the takedown. "Breazeale's efforts paid off, however, as he did indeed get the takedown and the crucial points."

For Salamanca, the two weight class crowns marks the first time in three years that the Warriors have managed to pull off such a feat. The last time the Warriors won two crowns was in 1991 when Mike Steinbar and Jim Kennedy both won their weight classes.

Salamanca ended the tournament with three other wrestlers, Jim Emborsky (98 pounds), Don Rowland (126 pounds) and Chris Frey (unlimited), all placing sixth. Also wrestling in the tournament for Salamanca were Alan Clute and Andy Arena at 105 pounds, Luis Martinez at 112 pounds, Jeremy Winship at 126 pounds, Jack Vail at 132 pounds, Cass Nolet and Kyle Harris at 155 pounds and Bob Painter at heavyweight.

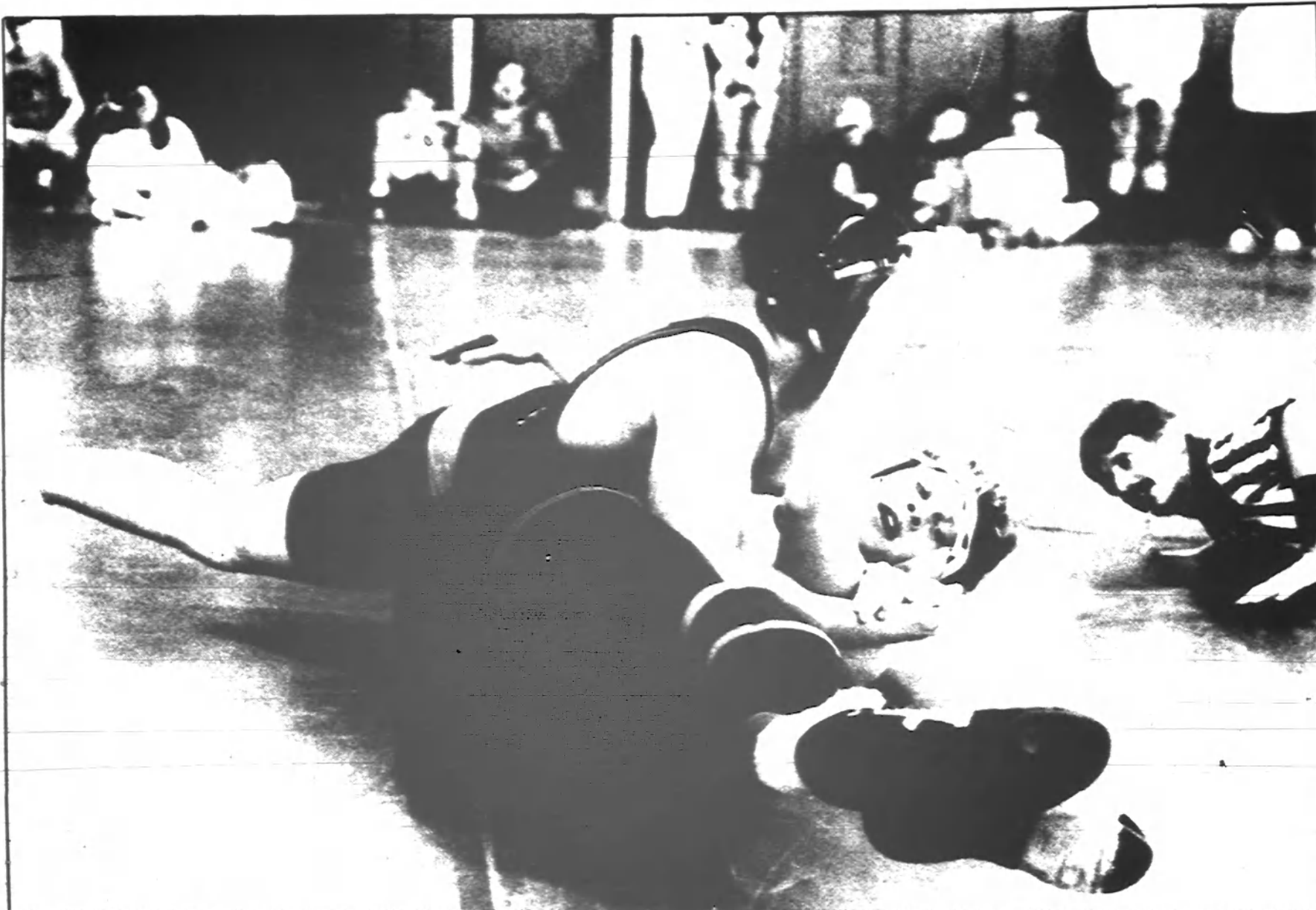
Only the top four finishers from each class advance to the sectional tournament coming up at Sweet Home High School. Seven wildcards were also awarded. The representatives are as follows (with the weight class champion first.)

91 pounds — Joe Sweet (Franklinville), Nolan Rheinisch (Southwestern), Ryan Fralick (Falconer) and Brandon Smith (Westfield).
98 pounds — Brad Rowe (Ripley), Kyle Sweet (Franklinville), Shane Simpson (Olean) and John Molly (Frewsburg).
105 pounds — Jason Burch (Panama), Ryan Bentley (Ripley), Andrew Diaz (Fredonia) and John Debarbieri (Portville).
112 pounds — Chad Caros (Franklinville), John Inkle (Randolph), Alan St. Clair (Portville) and Luke Eckert (Panama).
119 pounds — Matt Lindamer (Olean), James Cunningham (Westfield), Dennis Sizin (Portville) and Trevor Norlander (Falconer).
126 pounds — Greg Bentley (Ripley), Jerry Fairbanks (Southwestern), Jason Pecuch (Frewsburg) and Scott Orloff (Cassadaga Valley).
132 pounds — Matt Amore (Allegany), Larry Bryant (Southwestern), Louis Szabo (Franklinville) and Jim Reese (Westfield).
138 pounds — David Bryant (Panama), Ryan Jordan (Portville), Darin Rammelt (Ripley).

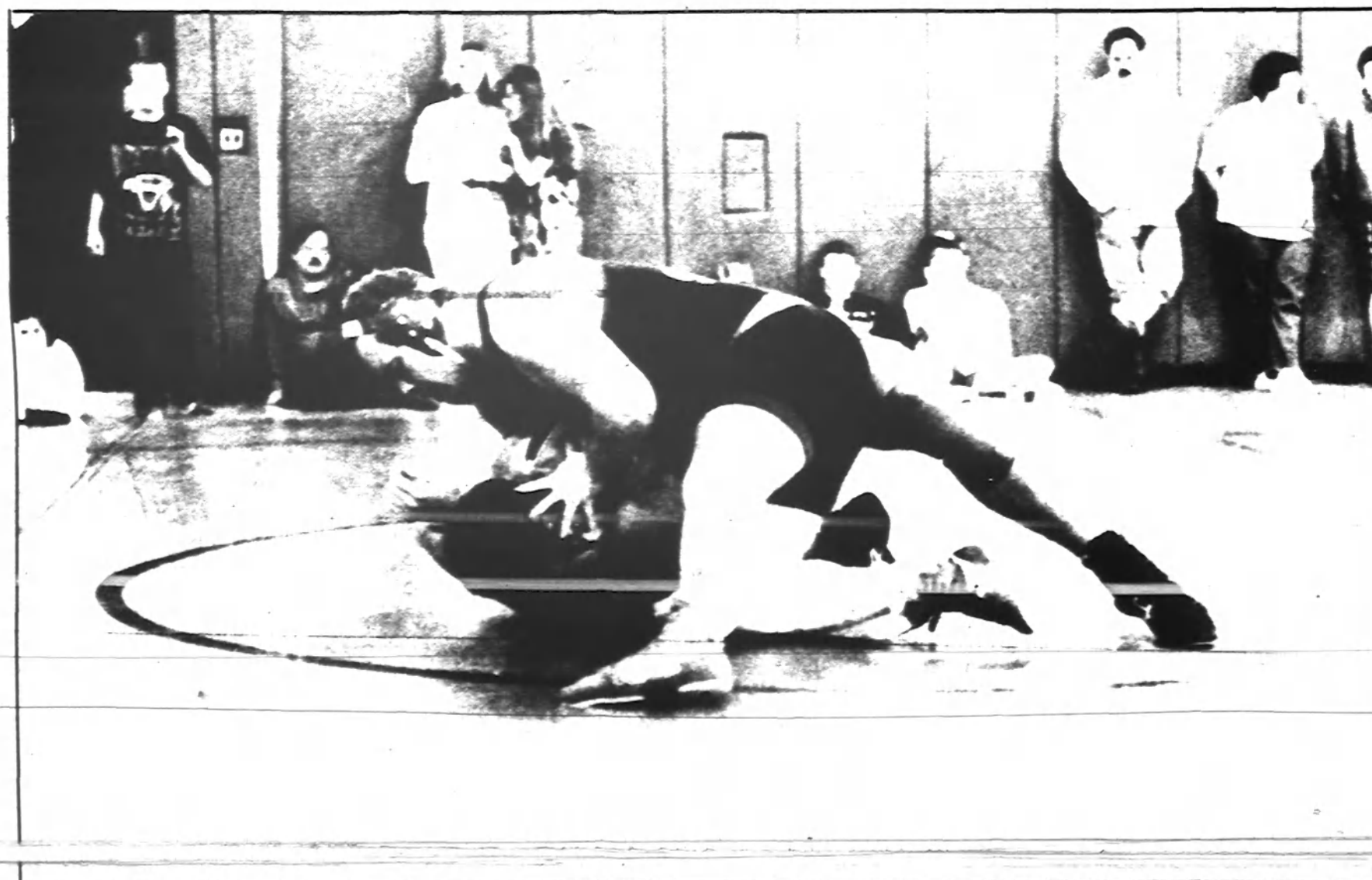
145 pounds — Jacob Schauss (Falconer), James Mower (Cassadaga Valley), Frank Anastasia (Allegany) and Randy Ewing (Cassadaga Valley).
155 pounds — Erich Crisafulli (Allegany), Seth Leising (Gowanda), Bill Odell (Panama) and Carlo Miceli (Southwestern).

167 pounds — Robert Dando (Franklinville), Nate Chapman (Franklinville), Alan Harding (Falconer) and Brad Verbosky (Maple Grove).
177 pounds — Chauncey Brace (Salamanca), Dave Hodges (Southwestern), Miah Stanton (Frewsburg) and Rich Chase (Portville).
Heavyweight — Bob Breazeale (Salamanca), Jess McFall (Portville), Eric South (Southwestern) and Shannon Milliman (Westfield).
Unlimited — Erin Putnam (Falconer), Dan Webb (Ripley), Jeff Reiser (Olean) and Seth Garfield (Southwestern).

Wildcards: David Rammelt (Ripley — 91 pounds), Jason Hoffmeyer (Portville — 98 pounds), Anthony Marinari (Olean — 105 pounds), Eric Lindstrom (Southwestern — 112 pounds), Jeremy Zeigler (Ripley — 119 pounds), Jeff Henning (Olean — 126 pounds) and Dale Lamb (Falconer — 145 pounds).



Salamanca's Chauncey Brace (top) forces his 177-pound weight opponent to the mat. Brace won the tournament with a pin in 4:48 over Dave Hodges of Southwestern.

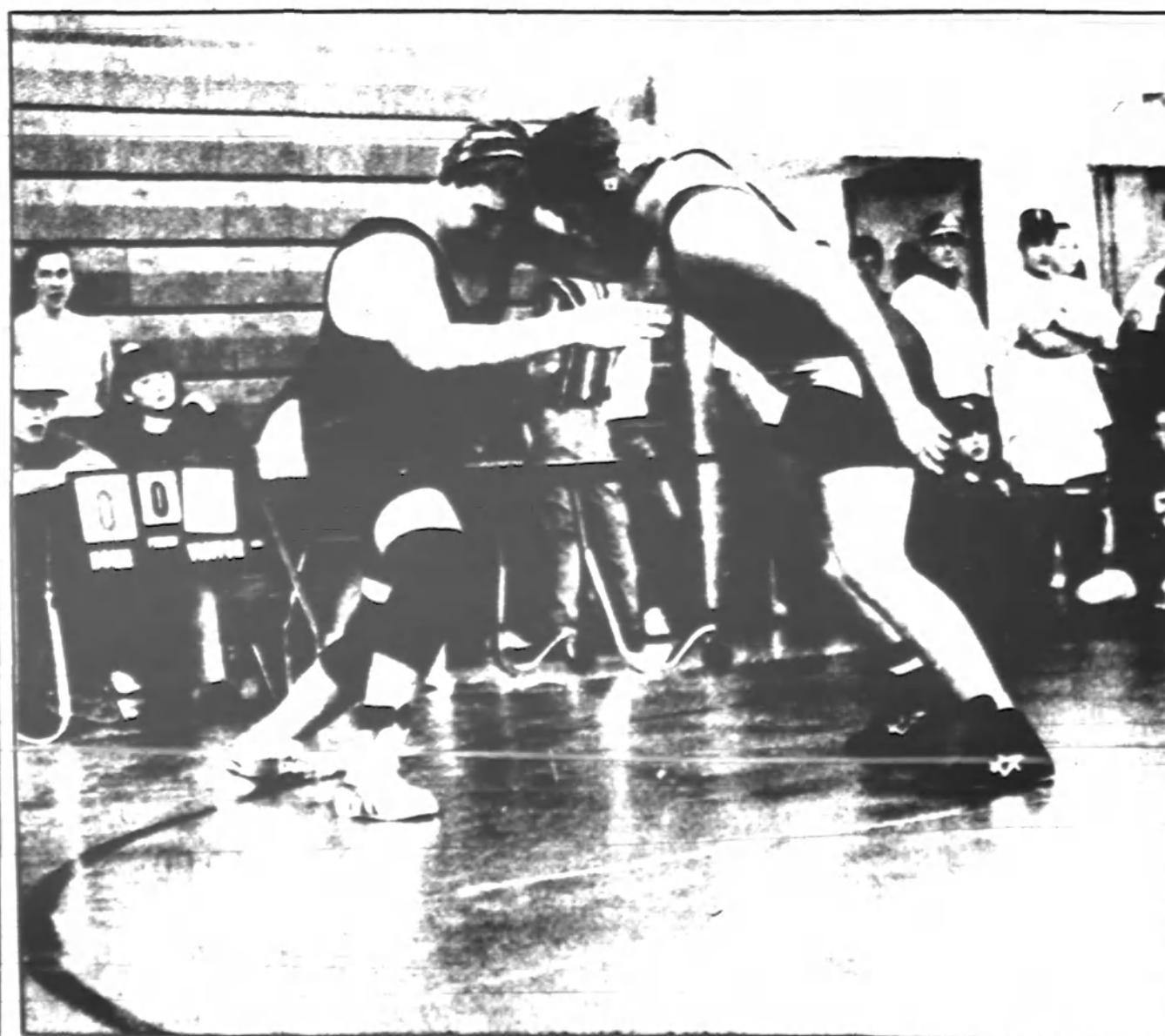


The Warriors' Bob Breazeale (top) controls semifinal opponent Shannon Milliman of Westfield for a 12-9 win. Breazeale went on to win the heavyweight class championship with a 6-4 decision over Jess McFall of Portville.

Press photos
by
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Jimmy Emborsky, wrestling at 132 pounds, puts his opponent on his back during their match Saturday.



Chris Frey (black) tied up with unlimited opponent Seth Garfield of Southwestern. Frey lost the match 2-0.