

Grapplers settle for third place finish

By RON MOSHIER

Varsity wrestling coach Vince Gonino said that, in general, he was pleased with his wrestlers' third place performance in last weekend's SUNYAC championships. But all he could dream of was how it could've been.

"Before the tournament we could have assumed we would finish between first and third," said Gonino. "And there was a good chance of having five champions."

The Dragons might have been first or second if his second prediction had come true. Three Dragons did win individual titles, including Bob Eddy (118), John Ciotoli (126) and Rick Armstrong (158). Pete Rossi (134) and Bob Menz (190), however, didn't fulfill pre-tourney expectations, neither of them reaching the finals, and Brockport won the team crown for the fifth consecutive year with 79.5 points. Binghamton was second with 74.25 and Cortland third with 63.25 despite the fact that Cortland wrestlers won six of eight matches against Binghamton.

"We could've gotten at least six more points from Menz and ten points from Pete," said Gonino, pointing out that those 16 points could've meant the difference between a first and a third place. Last year the Dragons placed second, and both Menz and Rossi were champions.

Menz tied Oswego's Van Watkins 3-3 in regulation and 1-1 in overtime, before losing on a referee's decision in the 190-pound semi-final on Sunday. "Menzie disturbed me, because he had beaten the kid before 13-3," said Gonino. "It's disturbing because he's probably the best conditioned kid on the team. He should've

been in the finals." Menz, who was seeded second, later earned a third place by decisioning Binghamton's Bill Francke 2-1 in the consolation finals.

Rossi was also beaten by an early season victim in the semi-finals. Pete, who aggravated a rib injury in the second period of his semi-final match against eventual champ Greg Locke of Binghamton, was still beaten only 11-10. The injury forced him to withdraw from the consolation round.

"He was questionable," said Gonino. "He had beaten Locke earlier 12-6, but he's not up to par yet. He's been out for two

weeks. As long as he didn't get hurt more, I'm happy."

After first round competition was completed, it looked like the hosts were going to run away with the championship, as nine of the ten Dragon matmen were victorious.

Sophomore, 118-pounder Bob Eddy was sensational throughout the tourney. Eddy remained undefeated, using a reversal with 50 seconds left in the finals to beat Binghamton freshman Joe Benanati 10-8. He had advanced to the finals by whipping his semi-opponent 17-3. Eddy placed second last year as a freshman.

Ciotoli, third in the tourney two years ago, had it even tougher in his final bout against Steve Darling of Binghamton. He scored a reversal at the buzzer while losing 7-6, and it wasn't until minutes later that officials ruled him an 8-7 winner.

Gonino said Armstrong, one of only two wrestlers to successfully retain their SUNY crowns, wrestled the best he had in two years. Rick overcame a sore arm and Binghamton's Ron Reedy to win 9-7.

"Chris Bourne looked good all the way through the tournament," said Gonino. The 150-pound junior earned a second place, losing 10-4 to Brockport's highly-touted Bob Brenton, whom Bourne had tied 3-3 earlier in the season. Bourne whipped top-seeded Matt Quimet of Binghamton 16-6 in the semis.

Gonino was also pleased with the improvement of Cliff

Moore and All McAlinn, who placed third and fourth, respectively. Moore lost to Oswego's Paul Corley, the eventual 167 champ, in the semis. He came back, though, to trim Steve Carr of Potsdam 2-1 to place third. McAlinn was stopped by Brockport's Rich Sipple, who went on to win the 177-pound title.

Senior, 142-pounder Brad Hamer surprised third seeded Jim Dilorio of Oswego in the first round, but lost by default in the semi-finals. Dilorio, who had easily beaten Hamer earlier this season, went on to take third.

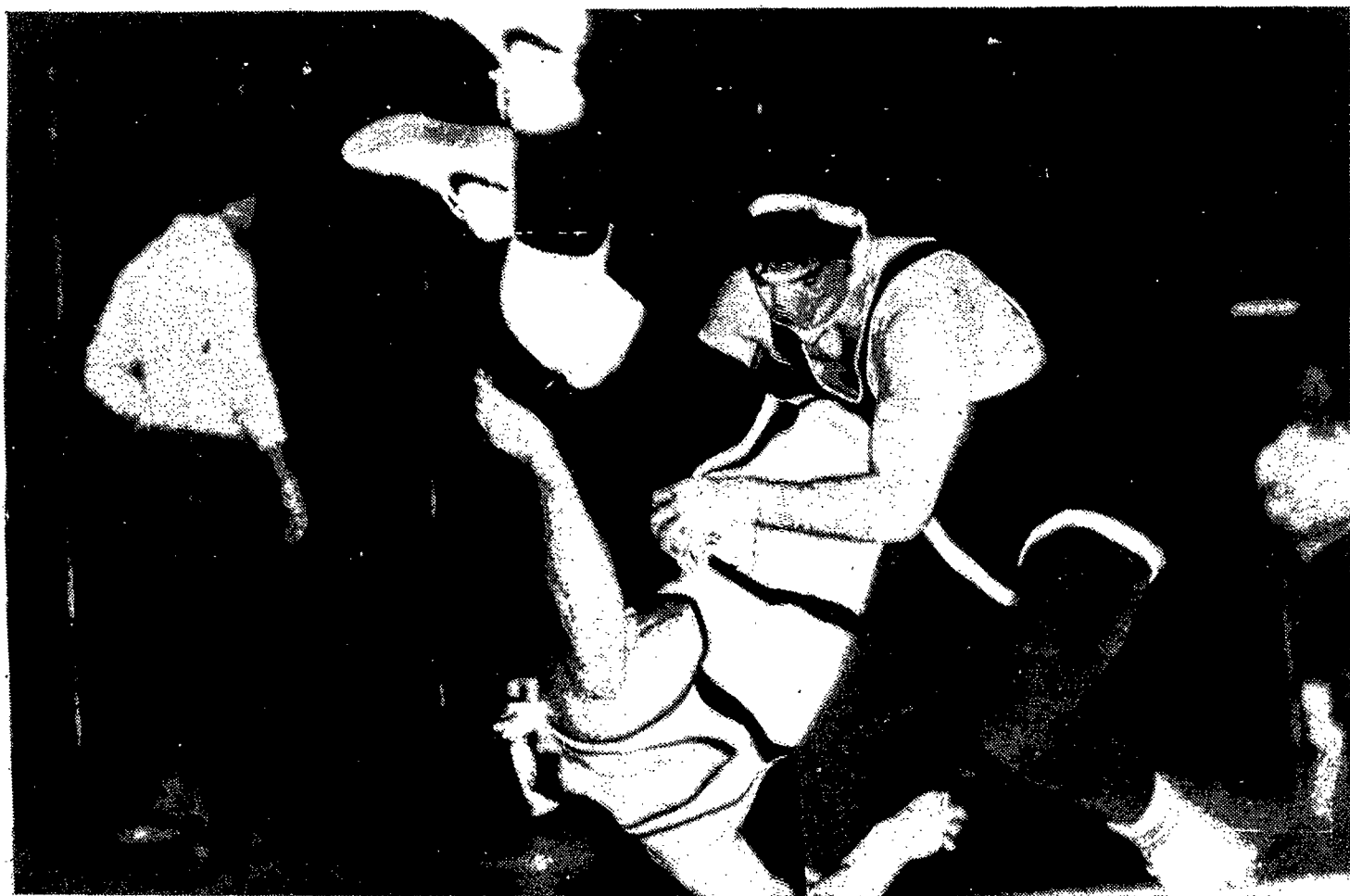
Dragon unlimited Ed Quirk nearly made it a Cortland sweep in the opening round, but the freshman was pinned while holding a 6-2, second period lead. "He's just a young freshman without any experience," said the Cortland coach. "He only wrestled one year in high school."

"It was probably one of the toughest SUNY championships we've had in a long time," said Gonino, noting that eight All-Americans competed in the tourney.

His team is competing in the New York State Intercollegiate Championships today and tomorrow at RIT. "I don't think we'll do as well this year because I'm not taking a full team. We'll be without some wrestlers," said Gonino. Last season Cortland finished third behind Buffalo and St. Lawrence. "Considering the injuries and the setbacks we've had, I'm pleased with the season," commented Gonino.

Sports

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Bob Menz, Dragon 190-pounder, takes down Binghamton's Bill Francke in the consolation finals Sunday

Trackmen nip Colgate

Joe Pierson's indoor track team continued its winning ways Saturday at the Lusk Field house, whipping Oswego, Brockport, and LeMoyne and edging Colgate by two and a half points for first place.

A second place finish in the meet's final event clinched the victory for the Red Dragons, who compete in the Rochester Invitational tomorrow. Cortland's team score was 56.5, and Colgate scored 54. Oswego (21.5), Brockport (20.5) and LeMoyne (9.5) trailed.