

Syracuse wrestlers bruise Brockport, 36-7

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Midway through the 126-pound bout last night, Gene Mills was leading Brockport State All-American sophomore Frank Famiano, 19-0. Brockport wrestling Coach Don Murray walked to the scorer's table to remind the announcer to tell the fans that the Syracuse University wrestler was a Division I national champion.

Murray wanted the fans to realize a great wrestler was beating a good one.

Mills beat Famiano, 36-0, in a match that set the tone for the rest of the night for Division III Brockport. The Golden Eagles are good, but not good enough to defeat Division I Syracuse. The Orangemen cruised to a surprisingly easy 36-7 triumph at Brockport State.

Murray admitted he didn't expect to win the match, but he didn't expect the final margin to be that great, either. Brockport edged Syracuse last year, but the Orangemen did not have five starters, including Mills, who was qualifying for the U.S. Olympic team.

"I would have liked to have had it a little closer," Murray said. "Except for the early matches, it was respectable. We weren't outclassed, we were outwrestled."

It was a battle of wrestling powerhouses that compete at different college levels.

In one corner was defending Division III champion Brockport, coming off two easy early-season victories over the University of Buffalo and St. John Fisher College. The Golden Eagles were rated No. 1 in the pre-season poll.

In the other corner was Syracuse, which had three straight victories and was looking forward to its match Saturday against Iowa, the No. 1 team in Division I. Syracuse was ranked 10th in pre-season polls, and probably will reach the top five in the next poll.

Last night the Division I team prevailed, and then some.

The Mills-Famiano match was indicative. Famiano earned All-American honors as a freshman last year and finished seventh at the Division III nationals (the top eight wrestlers earn A-A honors). Yet last night Famiano never was in his bout with Mills, a three-time Division I All-American.

"He has so much experience," Famiano said. "He's the best wrestler I've faced. He's the best college wrestler right now."

Famiano explained the lopsided result. "I let down early," he said. "Once the score got too high, I gambled and tried for the pin. It didn't work. But, I didn't get pinned."

Of the 10 matches, Brockport won only one and tied two. Joe Giani whipped Todd Bowers at 150 pounds, and Bob Lauro (142 pounds) and Woody Vandenburg (177) recorded the ties for the Golden Eagles.

Murray didn't appear upset after the loss. Was he going to push the panic button? "Who me?" he asked with a laugh. "I'm in good shape. They have to get their noses rubbed into the mat and have the courage to come back."

"I didn't have to schedule Syracuse, but we need tough matches to prepare for the Division tournament. That's what you need. But I don't need too many of them."



D&C photo by Brad Bliss

Syracuse 134-pounder Mark Iacovelli (rear) earns three points by putting Tim Abigail on his back.

