

# Mills claims his second NCAA wrestling crown

By JOE CHESSARI

Staff Writer

PRINCETON — If he wasn't a celebrity before last week, Gene Mills is certainly one now.

ABC-TV interviews, exposure from local television stations, interviews from quote-hungry reporters and flocks of youngsters seeking autographs, have all made him an elite figure in the world of amateur sports. Of course, this undivided praise and attention hasn't just come to Mills from out of nowhere.

The New Jersey-bred 118-pound senior out of Syracuse University and DePaul High School won his second NCAA wrestling championship in three years by defeating John Hartup of Central Michigan with a pinfall 6:35 into the bout, Saturday evening at the Jadwin Gym on the campus of Princeton University.

Another wrestler from New Jersey fared equally well.

Tom Martucci, a Trenton State senior from Palisades Park, outlasted Temple's Tony Martella, 4-3, to capture the national title at 190 pounds.

It was a classic defensive struggle, decided when Martucci, the number-eight seed, escaped Martella's grasps for one point in the final period. The escape made the score 4-3 and stood as the two grappled and shot for control the rest of the bout.

"It's the greatest feeling," an excited Martucci exclaimed after accepting the first place plaque and official scoring poster during the awards presentations. "Most people don't think of Division III wrestlers as being competitive with the ones from Division I. They don't take notice. But now I'm number one and I want the whole country to know it."

In the early going, Harputee, the tournament's 10th seed at 118 from Michigan, gave Mills all he could handle. In fact, it was Harputee who made the initial

two-point takedown with only 10 seconds of elapsed time gone from the clock. Harputee maintained an effective ride for the next 45 seconds, but quickly found himself losing, 3-2, as a result of an escape and a follow-up takedown by Mills.

From that moment on, the Syracuse standout dominated the bout, scoring freely and regularly.

Mills tallied 10 points in the second period, including a devastating three with 10 seconds left for a near fall.

With 1:25 left in the match and protected by a comfortable 16-5 advantage, Mills ended his impressive college wrestling career by hooking Harputee's leg's at the edge of the mat and bringing the shoulders down for the fatal count of one.

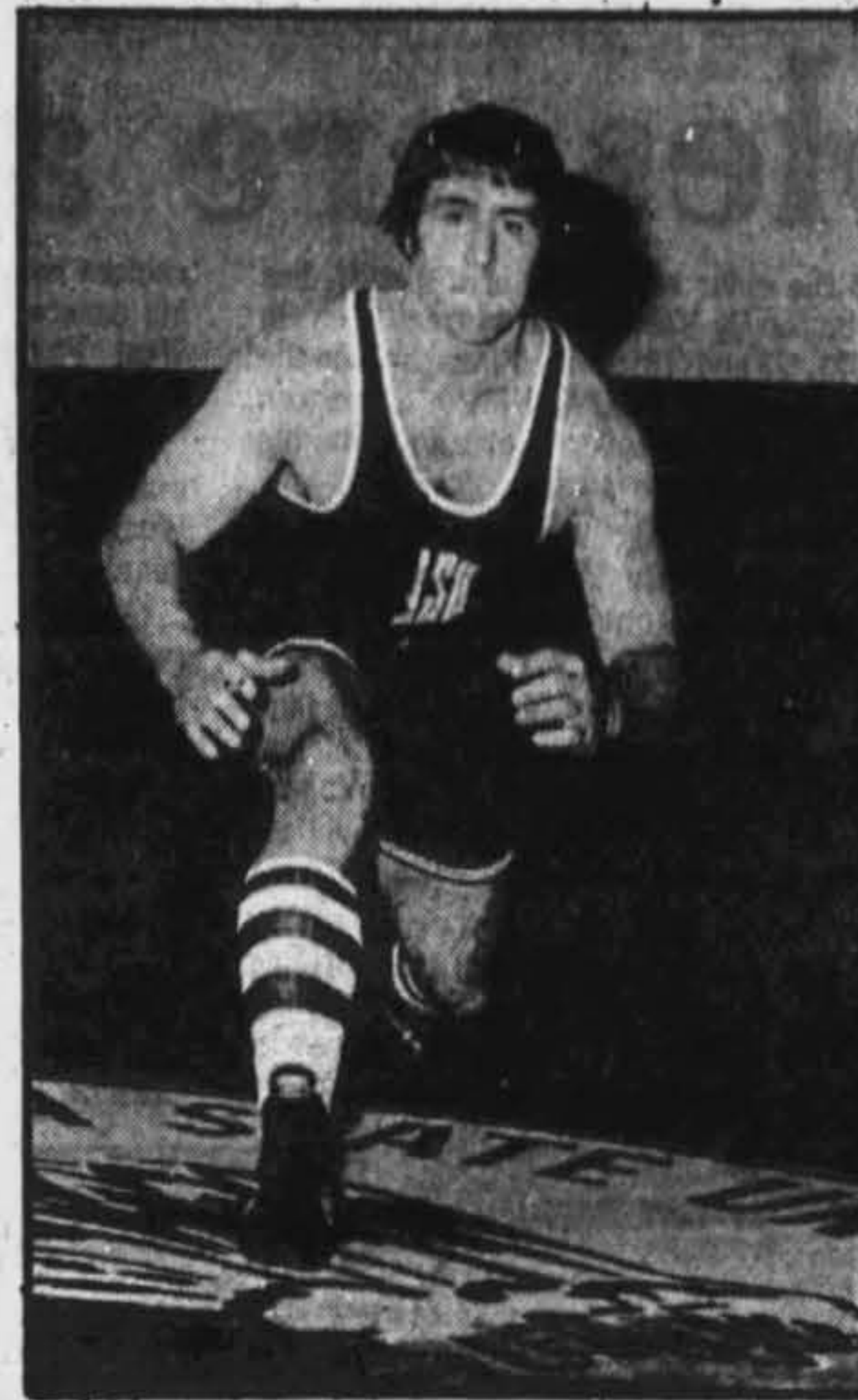
"I was going for the pin the whole time," said Mills, who recorded 82 falls while wrestling at DePaul in Wayne. "I've always been like that. I used my half-nelson on him and floated over his head when he didn't expect it and forced the shoulders down."

"It feels great winning it in your home state," continued Mills, who received the award as the tournament's Most Outstanding Wrestler. "It was something I was looking forward to ever since I found out that the nationals were gonna be here."

Two NCAA championships, a first place title from the Tbilisi Championships in Russia last year, a 1981 championship from the Eastern Intercollegiate Wrestling Association tournament and recognition as being one of the finest amateur wrestlers in the world. So what else is left for Gene Mills?

"The Olympics in '84," he said. "It was a disappointment not going to Russia last summer. Los Angeles (the site of the '84 Summer Games) is my goal."

NOTES — Enroute to his 190-pound title, Martucci



**Bruce Baumgartner  
loses in finals**

decisioned number-one seed John Forshee from Iowa State, 2-1...Mills pinned four out of the five men he met...For the sixth time in seven years, the University of Iowa walked away with the national team championship. Coached by Dan Gable, the Hawkeyes totaled 129.75 points followed by Oklahoma with 100.25, Iowa State with 84.75, Oklahoma State with 68.50 and Lehigh with 38...The top three schools each turned out two singles champions...

# Big Bruce takes loss in his giant stride

By JOE CHESSARI

Staff Writer

PRINCETON — Struck down by the means which had brought him the title as the number one heavyweight wrestler in the nation, Bruce Baumgartner now realizes what it feels like to be at the other end of a victory.

"I just didn't wrestle to my potential," said the 255-pound Manchester Regional High School graduate, after he was pinned by Iowa's Lou Banach, 5:45 into their heavyweight final which concluded the 51st Annual NCAA wrestling tournament at Princeton's Jadwin Gym.

"I went out there, I wrestled bad and he wrestled good," he said. "You have to learn from your mistakes. It's as simple as that."

The soft-spoken Baumgartner, who wrestles out of Indiana State University in Terre Haute, entered the three-day affair as the No. 1 heavyweight as decided by the NCAA.

The junior, an industrial arts major, also majors in the pin and used it 24 times while collecting a 38-0 record prior to last week's tournament. But being the number one seed and having a list of credentials an arm and a half long, didn't intimidate Banach as the 230-pound Hawkeye disposed of the favored Sycamore in almost effortless fashion.

Baumgartner took a quick 2-0 lead as a result of a takedown about a minute into the match. Banach escaped soon after but ended the period down, 2-1.

Banach, whose brother Ed captured the title at 177, picked up two points for a reversal, 45 seconds into the second period and maintained a ride for another 45. After escaping and tying the bout at three, Baumgartner was the victim of a five-point assault.

Banach picked up the Haledon resident, threw him down to the mat and clamped on a waistlock. Baumgartner, momentarily stunned by the slam, relaxed, but in doing so, forfeited another point to Banach for stalling.

When the second session came to a close, Baumgartner was behind 8-3 and Banach was sensing an upset.

Banach took the former Olympic team alternate over onto his back and worked his shoulders to the bright yellow canvas. The Big Ten champion from Port Jervis, N.Y., then hooked Baumgartner's near leg, sat back and cradled his opponent moments before the referee's hand shot into the air, signifying the pinfall.

The loss, his first of the 1980-81 season, doesn't leave Baumgartner discouraged.

"The Olympics will still be there. This tournament will still be here. And the World Cup and AAU's will still be here," he stated. "I'll be back, you can bet on that."

NOTES — Baumgartner concludes his junior year of wrestling with a record of 42-1 (25 pins)...Attendance for all three dates was 51,536.