

Mills leads Syracuse to EIWA title; Lehigh second

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PRINCETON, N.J. — In a tournament some champions are reduced to mere mortals, Gene Mills was his typical superhuman self.

He didn't just merely win his fourth Eastern Intercollegiate Wrestling Association championship yesterday, he pinned his way to it. And he didn't just lead Syracuse to the team championship, it was his style that is copied in some degree by every Syracuse wrestler that made them champions.

He won every major award includ-

ing outstanding wrestler. His four falls gave him the Sheridan Pinning Trophy. His fourth Eastern title — something only three others had been able to do before — gave him the Fletcher Award for scoring the most career points for his team in EIWA competition.

He won it all and just to make it a little bit more interesting, he came within one minute of not being in the tournament at all. It seems he ballooned to 20 pounds over his wrestling weight by Thursday morning of this week.

By Friday he was only within nine pounds and with an hour to go before

the end of weigh-ins Saturday, he still had two pounds to go. He made it with a minute — and two ounces — to spare.

He pinned his first three opponents and set up a finals match with Lehigh's Bob Weaver — perhaps the first time two U. S. Olympic teammates have ever gone head-to-head.

And considering Weaver has almost as much trouble getting UP to 118 as Mills does getting down, it looked like the bout was to be a mismatch. Mills admitted he weighed 133 pounds after his semifinal win Sunday.

Weaver didn't let it bother him as

he shot in for two takedowns in the first period and a 4-1 lead, but Mills escaped, got his own takedown and went to work with those half nelsons that look like his own invention.

It was Mills' bout 20-6 when he turned Weaver one last time and got the fall in 5:20. It was his 104th career pin leaving him just three shy of the record set by Clarion State's own living legend, Wade Schalles.

Maybe Weaver said it best: "I guess if there's any consolation it's in considering who I lost to."

Lehigh was a close second in the team race and halfway through the semifinals, the Engineer were on a

roll. Weaver, Tom Husted and Darryl Burley won their bouts at 118, 126 and 134, with Husted and Burley knocking off Syracuse wrestlers.

The tide started to turn at 150 when Orangeman Chris Catalfo won, then in a few quick minutes, everything started to go Syracuse's way.

Lehigh's defending champion Jim Reilly was a stunning 5-3 upset victim of Yale's Allen Washington, while on the adjoining mat, Syracuse's Tim Catalfo was in the process of beating Wilkes' Joe Birmingham 18-6.

When you consider that Reilly had

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pinned Catalfo in a dual meet and Birmingham had beaten him badly, it was a crucial turn of events.

And although Lehigh was doing well in its consolation bouts, Syracuse wasn't losing any. When Orangeman heavyweight Mike Rotunda scored a 22, 5-1 overtime decision over second-seeded Jim Phills, the team race was all but ended.

Lehigh would have had to win every bout in the consolation and championship finals and pray for a Syracuse collapse and with Mills present, everyone knew that wasn't going to happen.

Besides Mills, Syracuse also got championships from both Catalfos and Rotunda and ran away with the team title. The final point spread was 159¾ to 134½.

It was far from a total disaster for Lehigh. Nine of its 10 wrestlers placed. Burley and Kilrain coasted to their third championships and Husted got his first.

Six Engineers qualified for the NCAA Wrestling Tournament to be held here two weekends from now — the three champs and Weaver, plus 167 pounder Jeff Turner and Reilly.

Turner pulled off another of the big surprises of the tournament when he converted a five-point move in the second period into an 8-6 win over Navy's defending champion John

Reich in the consolation semifinals.

Reich wound up fifth and Reilly, suffering from a pulled muscle in his hip, ended up fourth, but both wrestlers, defending champions and placewinners in last year's NCAA Tournament, were given the EIWA's two wild card berths to the Nationals.

Lehigh's Tom Sloand, normally a 134-pounder, put on a gutsy performance and wound up fifth at 150 and Tom Hensler, who has seen action at 167 for the Engineers turned in a creditable sixth place finish at 190. Both lost heartbreakers in the consolation semifinals — Sloand when the injury clock ran out on him and Hensler when he lost a three-point lead when he was flipped to his back late in his bout with Princeton's

Henry Milligan.

"Syracuse just had too much depth and really they just wrestled too well for us to catch them," Lehigh coach Thad Turner said. "We had our disappointments, but we had a few things go our way, too, so I guess you can't say we really had a bad tournament.

Syracuse (and third-place finisher Navy) each placed their entire teams.

Husted had plenty of friends in the champions portrait. In addition to his Lehigh teammates, both Catalfo brothers were high school teammates of his at Montvale (N.J.) High. "I'll be pulling for them," Husted said after his 14-5 thumping of Army's Mark Palzer in the finals.

Husted had four takedowns, a re-

versal and near fall in that bout, which capped his first season as a Lehigh wrestler.

"It's tough work here with the academics and all, but it's all worth it, and this makes it more so," the Wisconsin transfer student said.

He was a little more excited about his Eastern title than old hands like Burley and Kilrain were.

"Coach told me I hadn't been working on my takedowns, so I thought I'd get in some practice," he said in explaining his 11-takedown 24-10 rout of William & Mary's Billy Pincus in the finals.

"It's what I do best and it's what I'll have to go to if I get into trouble at the Nationals."

Kilrain was also looking two weeks

ahead. "I can't really say there's much difference between this one and the other two (Eastern titles)," Kilrain explained. "It's what happens two weeks from now that's important."

An old knee injury flared up on Kilrain in his final bout with Navy's Mark Phillips so he decided to stay on the mat, work toward four near falls in the final period and score a 15-3 walkaway.

Among other Lehigh Valley area products competing, Princeton's Jim Fraivillig, a former Freedom standout, lost a tough decision to Kilrain in the semifinals and wound up fifth at 177 and Navy's Doug Heimbach, who did his high school wrestling at Liberty, wound up sixth at 126.

WRESTLING

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Team Scoring

Syracuse (S) 159³/₄; Lehigh (L) 134¹/₂; Navy (N) 99³/₄; Army (A) 50¹/₄; Temple (T) 49; Princeton (Pr) 46³/₄; William & Mary (WM) 44¹/₂; Yale (Y) 39¹/₄; Cornell (Cr) 37³/₄; Wilkes (W) 33¹/₂; Columbia (Cm) 32¹/₄; Franklin & Marshall (FM) 22; Harvard (H) 19¹/₂; Colgate (Cg) 14¹/₄; Penn (Pn) 13¹/₂; East Stroudsburg (ES) 3.

Semifinals

118-- Gene Mills (S) pinned Jim Abbott (Cg) in 2:13; Bob Weaver (L) dec. Ray Broughman (WM) 5-2.

126-- Tom Husted (L) dec. Dale Mills (S) 11-10; Mark Palzer (A) pinned Sam Edwards (Cr) 7-7, 1st 9 overtime.

134-- Darryl Burley (L) dec. Mark Iacovelli (S) 12-6; Billy Pincus (WM) dec. Dave Halladay (N) 12-4.

142-- Gene Nighman (Cr) pinned Andy McNerney (H) in 4:13; Bill Swezey (WM) dec. Gary Siegel (S) 8-7.

150-- Chris Catalfo (S) pinned Ned Pelger (Pr) in 7:11; Frank Shaffer (N) dec. Dave Galdi (Cm) 8-4.

158-- Allen Washington (Y) dec. Jim Reilly (L) 5-3; Tim Catalfo (S) dec. Joe Birmingham (W) 18-6.

167-- Colin Grissom (Y) dec. Mark Schlitt (Pn) 3-2; Dave Hagg (A) dec. Jeff Turner (L) 6-5.

177-- Colin Kilrain (L) dec. Jim Fraivillig (Pr) 14-6; Mark Phillips (N) dec. Doug Graham (A) 5-1.

190-- Tony Mantella (T) dec. Henry Milligan (Pr) 8-3; Craig Blackman (FM) dec. George Fears (N) 5-2.

Hwt-- Jay Craddock (Cm) dec. Rick Smith (W) 6-3; Mike Rotunda (S) dec. Jim Phills (H) 2-2, 5-1 overtime.

Championship Finals

118-- Mills pinned Weaver in 5:20.

126-- Husted dec. Palzer 14-5.

134-- Burley dec. Pincus 24-10.

142-- Nighman dec. Swezey 8-2.

150-- C. Catalfo dec. Shaffer 15-9.

158-- T. Catalfo dec. Washington 10-4.

167-- Grissom dec. Hagg 8-8, 1-0.

177-- Kilrain dec. Phillips 15-3.

190-- Blackman dec. Mantella 5-4.

Hwt-- Rotunda dec. Craddock 11-9.

Consolation Finals

(for third place)

118-- Ray Broughman (WM) dec. Jim Abbott (Cg) 5-2.

126-- Sam Edwards (Cr) dec. Dale Mills

(S) 11-5.

134-- Mark Iacovelli (S) dec. John Orr (Pr) 12-5.

142-- Gary Siegel (S) dec. Tom Bold (L) 11-3.

150-- Dave Galdi (Cm) dec. Ned Pelger (Pr) 3-2.

158-- Mike Rodgers (N) dec. Jim Reilly (L) 6-3.

167-- Jeff Turner (L) dec. Joe Coolican (S) 8-0.

177-- Kurt Honis (S) dec. Pete Creamer (W) 4-2.

190-- Henry Milligan (Pr) dec. George Fears (N) 3-2.

Hwt-- Larry Cox (T) dec. Pat Ryan (N) 2-1.

(For fifth place)

118-- Guy Zanti (N) dec. Bob Turner (A) 6-4.

126-- Rusty Fiste (Pr) dec. Doug Heimbach (N) 11-4.

134-- Steve Cifonelli (T) dec. Dave Halladay (N) 11-4.

142-- Andy McNerney (H) dec. Barry Kenney (N) 3-0.

150-- Tom Sloand (L) dec. Hal Fullmer (Pn) 8-2.

158-- Joe Birmingham (W) won by default over Mike DeGenova (T).

167-- John Reich (N) dec. Mark Schlitt (Pn) 12-1.

177-- Jim Fraivillig (Pr) dec. Doug Graham (A) 4-1.

190-- John Dougherty (S) dec. Tom Hensler (L) 7-6.

Hwt-- Jim Phills (H) won by default over Rick Smith (W).