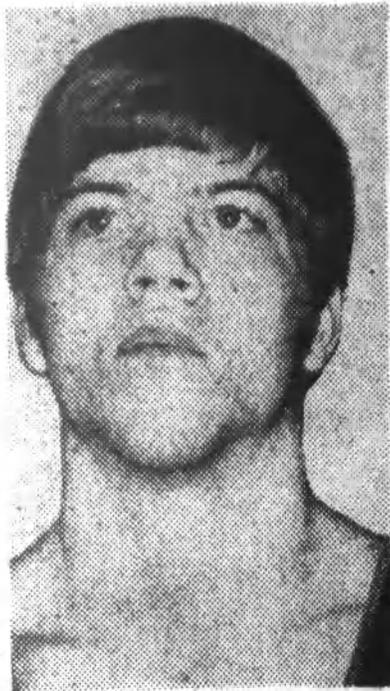


Two Grapplers Top Candidates for Titles

By NEIL KERR

When it's time for sectional and intersectional wrestling competition at winter's end, two of the finest grapplers in Section III — Nick Porillo of North Syracuse and Norb Sitnik of East Syracuse-Minoa — will be taking dead aim at championships on both levels of competition.

Both athletes have compiled enviable records in three years of varsity competition, and both are capable of win-



NORB SITNIK

ning state titles in their respective weight classes.

Wrestling at 145 pounds, Porillo looms as a top-notch candidate for statewide honors. In three years of varsity competition, the rugged Northman has chalked up a record of 48 wins and only three losses. He went 25-1 last winter, with the lone setback occurring in the Section III finals, where he dropped a hard-fought verdict to Ozell Bemby of Utica Proctor by a score of 5-3.

This year Nick is determined to reach the state meet at the Onondaga County War Memorial, and he is more than anxious to avoid any more losses. So far, Nick has earned a 3-0 record this year, beating two opponents by scores of 14-0 and 8-0. His other win was by a forfeit, so Porillo remains unscored upon after three meets.

Bemby of Utica Proctor also returns for another year, but he reportedly is wrestling in the 155-pound division this winter.

North Syracuse coach Ron Roch expects Nick to go far this season, but adds, "We really don't have anybody

here that can push him in practice. Two years ago, we had sectional champion Stan Sotherden, and he gave Nick all he could handle.

Last year, Bill LaRonde at 165 pounds had some good scraps with Nick at practice, but it's tough for Nick to get a hard workout this year. He's been working with our 177-pounder, Jeff Cornish, who can push him to some extent."

To get top-notch competition, Porillo looks for opponents at every opportunity. Last summer, Nick took part in various invitationals around the state, and he won every tourney he entered, including ones at Dryden, Union-Endicott, Brewerton, Cicero and the Adirondack Camp, near Speculator. North Syracuse will take part in a four-team scrimmage at 10 a.m. today with Cicero, Christian Brothers Academy and Marcellus at North Syracuse.

Next week, the Northmen host an eight-team Christmas invitational involving Nottingham, Ilion, Corcoran, Solvay, Rome, Jordan-Elbridge, and Skaneateles, and Porillo will be favored to remain un-

beaten through all his holiday matches.

At East Syracuse-Minoa, coach Jack Griffin points to star 126-pounder Norb Sitnik as a good possibility for Section III honors. Only one opponent — state champion Bob Medina of Baldwinsville — stood between Sitnik and a sectional championship last year. But that has been Sitnik's problem for two years — he has been up against some of the state's finest wrestlers in a very tough weight class.

As a sophomore, Sitnik compiled a 16-3 record, winning a county championship at 120 pounds as he beat Westhill's Doug Petroff in the finals. However, Norb lost the following week in Section III action to the same Petroff.

During his junior year, Sitnik went 21-4-2, losing twice to Medina. He also dropped a pair of one-point decisions to Petroff and Ed Treen of Mohawk in the sectionals.

This season, Norb has gone 3-0, extending his career ledger to 40-7-2, and he is unscored upon so far. Norb has pinned two opponents and decided another, 11-0. At pre-

sent, he is at 126 pounds, but coach Griffin may drop him to 119 for sectional activity.

"Norb is probably the finest wrestler we've ever had at ES-M," Griffin recently said. "He's not too big, and we feel that he can do very well in the big tourneys at 119 pounds. We'll see how he does in the Auburn Christmas tournament, and then decide which class to put Norb in for sectional matches."

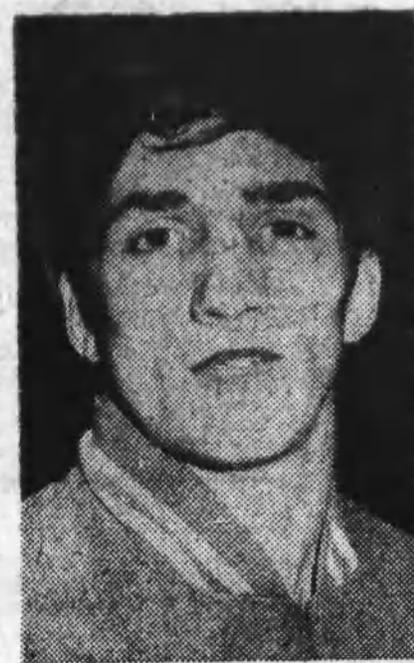
ES-M will go to Auburn Tuesday, where teams entered in the tourney are Geneva, Scotia-Glenville, Corning East, Seneca Falls' Mynderse Academy, East Rochester, Rush, Henrietta and Auburn.

In a recent win over a Fayetteville-Manlius High wrestler, Sitnik won by pin, and F-M coach Jim Hennighan was very impressed. "I've coached wrestling for a good many years, and I can think of only three kids I've seen who compare with Sitnik," he said. "Medina of Baldwinsville, Carlton Orr of Greene, and Rich Stock of Kingston were all similar to Sitnik.

"Medina went on to Penn State after winning the state title, Orr went to Cornell and

Stock later wrestled for Penn State also. All these kids had the set strength, moves and quickness necessary to be outstanding wrestlers," added Hennighan.

Section III is the defending state intersectional champion, and with wrestlers such as Porillo and Sitnik, plus others such as defending state runner up Karl Severdoski of Lowville at 138 and Bemby of Proctor at 155, Section III should again be a top contender for state honors.



NICK PORILLO

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