

Separating sectionals from Salamanca tourney tough



with **Don Sarnoffsky**

SECTIONAL COMPETITION LAST Saturday again pointed up the strength of the Salamanca Invitational Wrestling Tournament as the Salamanca Invitational winners, for the most part, picked up sectional crowns, as did a number of other finishers.

The intersectional qualifiers this weekend will again have a full slate of Salamanca Invitational wrestlers, and the meet could very easily shape up as a repeat of match-ups seen here in Salamanca.

In the sectionals, there was one repeat match, that occurring in Division II, where Williamsville North's Vince Stirling decisioned Frontier's Dave Tundo, 5-4. The same two wrestlers met in the finals of the Salamanca tourney at 115 pounds, with Stirling winning the championship by a 9-1 decision.

~~Salamanca champs that went on to win in the sectionals include Pioneer's~~ Doug Keenen at 101, Maple Grove's Seth Becker at 106, Stirling, Pioneer's Dale Rogers at 129, Pioneer's Doug Tingué at 135, Frontier's Gene Tundo at 141, Pioneer's Gary Devin at 148, Pioneer's Keith Stearns at 158, Dunkirk's Dennis Long at 170, and Medina's Ron Taylor at unlimited. The 91 pound Salamanca winner, Tim Feltz, Medina, moved up a class for the sectionals and lost to Keenen. The tourney's outstanding wrestler, Chris Meyers, Olean, lost to Rick Rothfuss, the fourth place finisher from Iroquois, in the sectional finals by a 2-1 decision, and the win gave Rothfuss outstanding wrestler honors in the sectional tourney.

The qualifiers this weekend will, of course, be the acid test, but for the most part, it looks like the Salamanca tournament will again be well represented at the New York state tourney.

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WHAT IS THIS SEASON'S toughest weight class? It could very well be 122 pounds, where the list of competitors is impressive.

Heading into the intersectional qualifiers, all four finishers in the Salamanca Invitational tourney will be present, as will a number of other wrestlers with impressive credentials.

The list includes Meyers and Rothfuss, plus Williamsville North's John Caulfield, the number two finisher at Salamanca, and Pioneer's Kyle Grunwald, who finished third at Salamanca. Both Caulfield and Grunwald won sectional titles.

Joining them will be three noted wrestlers from the Southern Tier, Jon Swan, Southwestern, Rick Goodell, Maple Grove, and Randy Mohr, Portville. All three have been impressive this year and are among the top wrestlers in the Southern Tier.

Filling out the lists are Tony D'Angelo, Wilson, who turned in an impressive performance in the Division VI competition in Salamanca, and Mike Martino, sectional winner from always tough Niagara-Wheatfield.

THERE MAY BE SOME argument about a weight class which may be stronger, but 122 still seems to be the best. Probably the weight class coming closest to being a tough class for just about everyone is 158, but that's only if you have to wrestle Pioneer's Stearns.

Last year's toughest class in the section was 115 pounds. Among the wrestlers competing in that class were Mike Arnold, Pioneer, John Fitzgerald, Salamanca, Greg White, Southwestern, Kurt Faulkner, Falconer, Mohr and Caulfield.