

Can Huskies move into top spot?

OLEAN — Will this be the year of the Huskies?

That's the big question in Western New York's Southern Tier as Olean heads toward the Salamanca Invitational Wrestling Tournament and a showdown with Pioneer.

One of the original teams in the Salamanca tournament, Olean has steadily moved toward the top of the standings, finishing fourth in the eight team field in the first tourney, sixth a year later, a distant eighth in 1973, then second in both 1974 and 1975.

This year, the Huskies are loaded. In two previous tournament appearances, they waltzed away to easy championships, and in dual competition, they haven't been pressed yet, twice scoring shutouts over their opponents.

Olean opened strong in tourney competition, winning the Southern Tier Conference title going away, sending nine wrestlers into the Division I finals and finishing with four overall championships.

The Huskies followed that performance with an even stronger performance in the Sweet Home Invitational, the biggest tournament in the state, winning four championships, and as the Salamanca tourney approaches, the Huskies are in top form.

"We're really looking forward to the tournament," said Olean coach Mike Foster. "The competition is good and it has a good Section VI flavor, with most of the top teams from the section in the field. It's just a really good tournament."

The Huskies this season have experience, depth and talent. Out of the 32 wrestlers on the Olean varsity squad, 25 have seen action in at least one varsity match, and Foster, in commenting on the program, could do little more than smile. "We haven't had a set line-up for two meets in a row," he said, "and that's really given us a chance to give a lot of wrestlers varsity experience."

Heading into the tournament, the Huskies are ranked tenth on the New York State Sports Writers Association wrestling poll, a poll ranking the top teams in the state. How the Huskies fare in the Salamanca tournament may have a great deal of bearing on how they are ranked for the rest of the season.



OLEAN HUSKIES — Can the Huskies break Pioneer's stranglehold on the Salamanca tournament title? That question is one many are anxiously awaiting the answer to. Members of the Olean squad this year include, front row (l-r): Clar Anderson, Ricky Gould, Chris Branch, Eric

Simpson, Dave Crean. Second row: Steve Tripodi, Tom Bushnell, Chris Leichtweis, Bruce Meyers, Kevin Forrest. Back row: Tom Morton, Ray Pikulski, Dave Simon, Eric Bartholomew, Gary Bliss.

Pacing the Huskies will be a pair of unbeaten wrestlers and one once beaten wrestler.

Once beaten is Bruce Meyers, who lost in the finals of the conference tourney, but came back to win the Sweet Home title. Meyers was the outstanding wrestler in last year's Salamanca tournament, becoming the second junior to win that honors as he won the 121 pound championship. This year, the senior will be at 140 pounds.

Unbeaten are senior Steve Tripodi, a 121 pounder, and Chris Leichtweis, a sophomore 134 pounder. Both won titles in both the conference tournament and in the Sweet Home tournament and both finished second in last year's Salamanca Invitational.

Other key wrestlers for the Huskies include Dave Crean, who finished second in the conference tourney, but came back to win the Sweet Home tourney. The senior 114 pounder placed fourth in last year's Salamanca tournament after forfeiting in both the semifinals and consolations due to an injury. At 91 pounds will be eighth grader Clar Anderson, a second place finisher in the conference tourney, while at 107 will be sophomore Eric Simpson, a conference tournament champ. Neither wrestled at the Sweet Home tournament.

Senior Ray Pikulski, a 169 pounder, won at the conference tourney and finished third at Sweet Home, while Dave Simon, a

junior 179 pounder, won the Division I crown in the conference tourney while finishing third at Sweet Home. Also winning a Division I title in the conference tourney was Gary Bliss, a junior who will be wrestling at 147 pounds at Salamanca.

Filling out the rest of the line-up will be eighth grader Ricky Gould at 100 pounds, senior Tom Bushnell or sophomore Kevin Forrest at 128, senior Eric Bartholomew at 157 pounds, and junior Tom Morton at heavyweight.

OLEAN HIGH SCHOOL

Olean, New York
Nickname: Huskies
School colors: Red and gold
Conference: Southern Tier, Division I
Athletic director: Matt Conte
Coach: Mike Foster
Assistant coach: Jim Myers
Captains: Dave Crean, Bruce Meyers, Ray Pikulski

Weight	Name	Year in School	Record
93	Clar Anderson	Eighth grade	3-1
100	Ricky Gould	Eighth grade	2-0
107	Eric Simpson	Sophomore	8-1
114	Dave Crean	Senior	15-1
121	Steve Tripodi	Senior	15-0
128	Tom Bushnell	Senior	5-2
	Kevin Forrest	Sophomore	1-0
134	Chris Leichtweis	Sophomore	15-0
140	Bruce Meyers	Senior	13-1
147	Gary Bliss	Junior	10-4
157	Eric Bartholomew	Senior	8-6
169	Ray Pikulski	Senior	16-1
179	Dave Simon	Junior	14-2
Hwt.	Tom Morton	Junior	6-4
Unl.			

Our Best Wishes to All Our Area Teams!

KITCHEN AID

WHIRLPOOL

And Service the Finest Appliances

BESSECKER & COSS

EAST STATE RD. OLEAN

Phone 372-0055

ROAD OF LYNAPOR SERVICE
OPEN HOURS: 11:00 AM - 7:00 PM

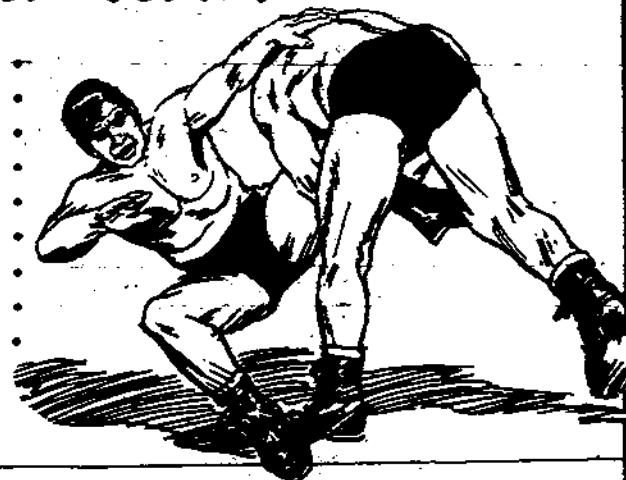
MAYTAG

FRIGIDAIRE

GIBSON

Best Wishes to Area Teams

Athletic
Equipment
for School and Team
Hunting
and Fishing Equipment
Sports Clothing
Skis and Equipment



Adams

SPORTING GOODS, Inc.

TELEPHONE 372-7912

307 WEST STATE STREET

OLEAN, NEW YORK 14760