

Sutter's Legs Licked 'em

By DAVE ROSSIE

What may be the most beautiful legs in the 1964 freshman class at Cornell, or maybe Syracuse, or maybe Bloomsburg, Pa., State, may be seen these days leaping over slush puddles in Newark Valley.

Before pastoral Tioga County is inundated by a horde of ogles, let it be restated that all beauty is in the eye of the beholder. The beholders in this case are named Jim Miller, Ed Carlin and Russ Houk, and the legs they're interested in are attached to one Barry Sutter.

Sutter is a 142-pounder who is the one and only reason that Section Four did not come up a big fat zero in last weekend's state wrestling intersectionals at South Huntington, L. I. And one of the reasons he is a state champion today, in the opinion of his coach, Chuck Rossini, is that he's one of the most skilled leg wrestlers in the state.

"I feel he's as good as any of the boys who won down there," Rossini said. "He's one of the few who showed he could use his legs effectively. He's an all-around wrestler."

In his preliminary bout and later in the final that saw him edge Riverhead's Myron Harris, 5-4, Barry used his legs superbly to tie up the opposition, Rossini said.

And significantly, it was his semifinal bout with Valley Stream North's Ron Luisi that proved to be probably his most difficult of the year, simply because he could not use his legs to good advantage.

"The other boy (Luisi) knew what he was trying to do," Rossini explained, "so he'd keep standing up to prevent Barry from getting a good leg hold."

The bout was tied 2-2 at the end of regulation and it took an overtime period reversal to win it for Barry.

The decision over Harris brought an end to a high school career that spans 85 bouts including tournaments. Broken down into the usual won-lost-tied categories, it comes out 73-10-2 which is very impressive. But what is most impressive is the reading for the last two years,

when this young man began to hit his stride.

He had begun as a 120 pounder while still in ninth grade. As a sophomore he wrestled at 133 and he was still at 133 for the 1962-63 season. The weight may have been the same, but this was a much different wrestler than the year before, and he proved it with a 25-1 season. The lone loss was to Ithaca's Richie Leonardo, a 2-1 decision in the Section Four finals. And it might be noted here that Leonardo went on to become Section Four's lone 1963 intersectional champion.

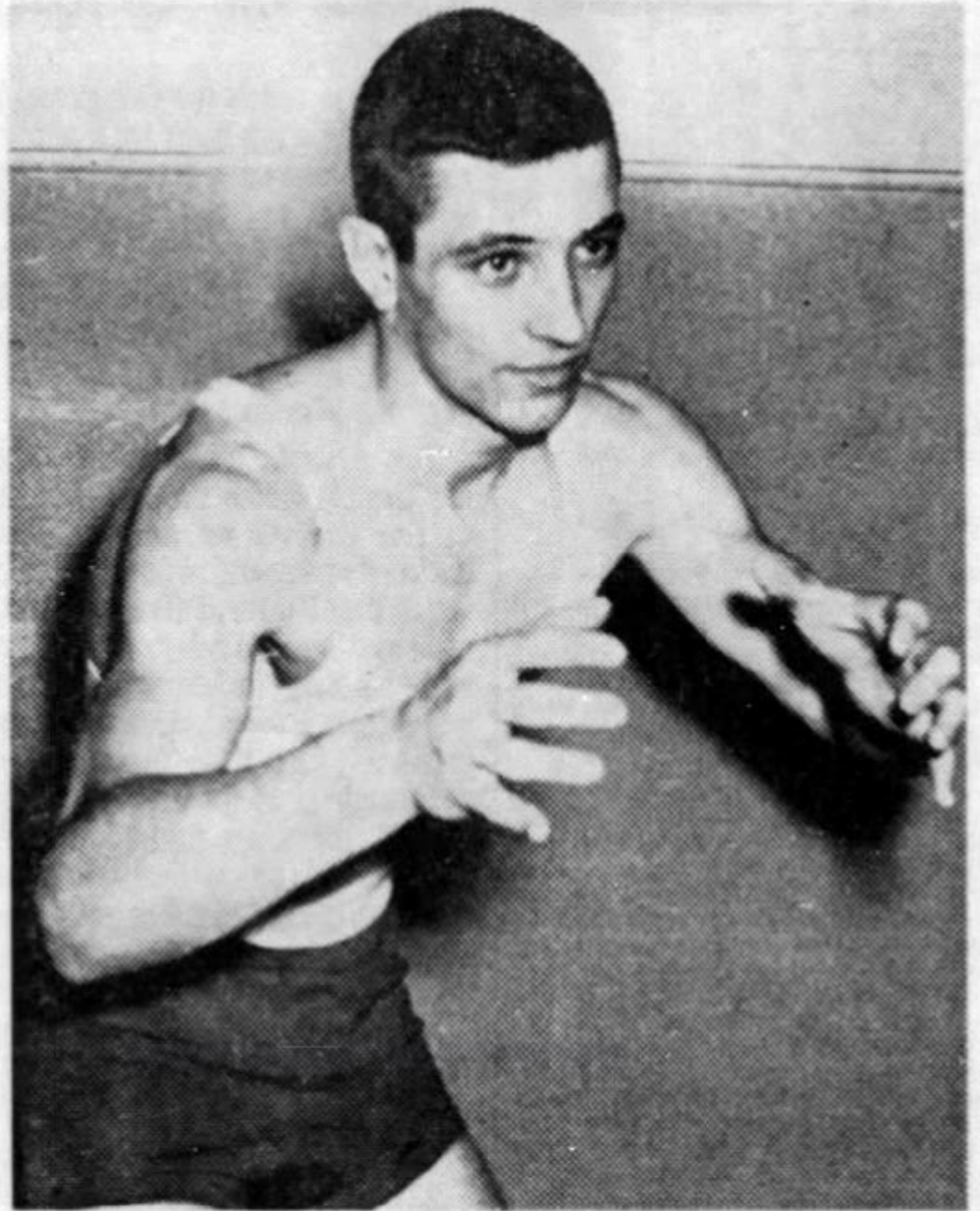
This year Barry went 22-0 to make it a two-year string of 47-1, and it is probably not coincidental that each of these fine seasons followed summer attendance at a wrestling camp operated by the aforementioned Mr. Houk when he is not coaching wrestling at Bloomsburg State.

At Houk's hideaway in the hills back of Williamsport, Pa., promising young grapplers are encouraged to bat one another around under the watchful eyes of some of the best wrestling tutors in the east. Here Barry learned from Yale's Red Campbell and Elliott (Gray) Simons, three-time national champion from Lock Haven, Pa.

There was the chance, too, to work out daily with other state and collegiate champions and from these people Barry learned a great truth: that a wrestler who can use his legs to good advantage as well as his arms and head, has a decided edge on the opponent who is simply strong-armed and strong-willed.

Barry caught Houk's practiced eye, too. And he seemed all but delivered as a Bloomsburg freshman come September. But then he breezed through the sectionals copped a state title and all of a sudden Cornell's Miller and Syracuse's Carlin woke up to the fact that there was a live one right under their noses. Both immediately began paying court.

That Barry could have es-



—PHOTO BY JAMES McQUEEN.

BARRY SUTTER... KING-SIZE 142

caped notoriety is difficult to understand until you talk to Rossini about the wrestling situation at Newark Valley.

"This year we had 10 boys out for wrestling," he said, "which means that even with everybody healthy we'd have to forfeit at least two matches."

And when everybody wasn't healthy, well, a lot of the other coaches were understanding and several of the Cardinals' matches went into the books as "exhibitions."

Rossini, who wrestled as a Shamokin, Pa. schoolboy and later at Penn State, believes wrestling hereabout will never achieve a generally high degree of proficiency so long as

it is forced to exist as something that also happens during basketball season.

On Long Island wrestling enjoys status. It is the bounce-ball players who are tolerated. And that is why Nassau County kids have terrorized the rest of the state in both intersectional meetings.

There is a dismal possibility, too, that Newark Valley's first wrestling champion may be its last. For Rossini confirms that there is talk of the school discontinuing the sport unless greater interest is shown.

It would seem that any sport that can produce a state champion out of a 10-man field shouldn't need to plead for its life.

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