

★ No one's laughing at Button's act

Newark wrestler 20-2 as freshman

By TOM FITZGERALD
D&C Sportswriter

Bob Button would like to be a nightclub comic some day. He could start his routine like this:

"Did you hear the one about the freshman who wanted to be a state wrestling champion in the 215-pound class?"

There's no punch line, because it's no joke. Button, Newark's rising star on the Section 5 wrestling scene, is a muscular 5-foot-8, 215-pounder who is 20-2 as a freshman.

His varsity career actually started last year thanks to a new program that allows mature 8th-graders to compete with the big boys.

He finished that season 10-2 in duals and 14-6 overall. This year his only losses were to Class B champ Ed Mitchell of Lyons and to AA 250-pound champ John Allie of Webster Schroeder. Button won the Class AA title last weekend on a pin, his 13th of the season.

Against the likes of seniors Mitchell and Dan Enright of Fairport, Button is a longshot in the state qualifier this weekend at Fairport. The top three finishers in each of the five sectional classes, plus a few at-large entries, will begin wrestling tomorrow at 5:30 p.m. On Saturday, the quarterfinals will start at 11 a.m., semifinals at 2 p.m. and finals at 7.

"I'd really like to win the states," said Button.

According to Newark Coach Jack Fisher, "Bob's not afraid of kids who look tougher than he does. A kid could look like Atlas, and it wouldn't bother him. He'd be right in there, going for a pin."

Button has another goal besides a state title.

"It may sound funny but I think I'd like to get into show business. I've been to some nightclubs in the Pocono Mountains and seen how comedians work. I'd like to try it some day."

First, however, he probably has three years of varsity football ahead of him (he's a tackle). He's a promising shotputter on the track team, too.

Who will represent Section 5 in the state meet March 10-11 in Syracuse?

91 pounds—Another freshman, Trevor Graham of Spencerport, is the favorite. He pulled out the Class AAA title against Larry Kane of Penfield in the closing seconds, 6-5.

98—After three high schools in two years, Rory Legacy apparently has found a home at Spencerport. He is one of only three returning champions in the field and looks like a strong bet to return to Syracuse. A fine first-round pairing will be Bob Egan of Brockport and Steve Burton of Hilton. Outside possibilities are Tim Lehmann of Irondequoit, Jeff Bumbarger of Churchville-Chili and Rick Emerson of Campbell.

105—If Tim Archer is ready mentally, the Churchville redhead could win it. McQuaid's Rob Starkweather, though, has a gaudy 25-0 record. He took a tough 1-0 decision from Irondequoit freshman Tony Cotroneo, who has to be considered another threat.

112—In probably the toughest weight class in the tournament, Chuck Tortorello of Fairport and Chris Kellman of Hilton figure to have the best chances. Don't count out Kevin Richard of Geneseo, who lost the 105-pound final to Don St. James last year on a default. Tortorello has a tough first opponent in Tom Burney of Batavia. Then there is heralded freshman Matt King of Canandaigua.

119—Don St. James, defending champion from Rush-Henrietta Sperry. You can pencil it in.

126—It's not that Ron Winnie likes to hurt people, but he IS planning to become a dentist. The Spencerport senior came close last year but suffered an overtime loss to Dave Halladay of Fairport. Last week Winnie beat his closest competitor, Gary Curwin of Brighton, 4-1.

132—A wide-open division. Mike LaRocca of Gates-Chili showed impressive endurance in his AAA upset of Spencerport's Ray Vincelli. But Vincelli can't be counted out. Nor can Matt King's older brother, Mark.

138—Not a well-stocked class. Bill Breon of Churchville and Dave Silipini of Gates look like the cream, with Greg Eiffert of Bishop Kearney and Dave Lynn of Canandaigua also in the running.

145—Tony Bruno of Brockport is the favorite in a relatively weak class.

155—A tough class. Len Barber of East and Rich Boland of Fairport probably will repeat their AAA final, which Barber won, 4-3. Barber told his father last week to go see brother, Al, wrestle for Monroe Community College in the Region 3 meet. "He can come see me next week," the con-



D&C photo by Kevin Higley

Bob Button, 215-pound freshman, has shot at state competition.

fident Len said. Outside threats are Gary Bullis of Mynderse and Dave Vella, who wrestled for Elba after three years at East Rochester.

167—John Zito of ER, the third returning champion, and Bob Kyff of Fairport have battled more times than the \$6 Million Man and Bigfoot. Kyff won last year and the year before. But Zito has won twice this year, both by one point. Dark horses are wildcard entry Grant Leschander of Greece Arcadia and Peter Lloyd of Victor, Kyff's first opponent.

177—Although he had a slight touch of his old asthma problem, Mark Evarts of Brighton won the AAA finals by a 6-2 count over Bob Dunlap of Gates. Evarts is the pick again, but Bob Coyne of Churchville, Bob Jones of Marion and Chris Kidder of Livonia could steal his thunder.

215—Look for a final of Dan Enright of Fairport against Ed Mitchell of Lyons.

250—Favored Joe Baldo of ER, who seems to thrive on pressure, probably will take on John Allie of Schroeder in the finals.

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