



Celebration

Mynderse Academy's Steve Siegfried leaps into the arms of Coach Dan Caraher after winning the 105-pound title of the Section 5 Class B Wrestling Championships at Geneva High School. Siegfried won his fourth Section 5 class title with a 8-4 decision over Ted Pittinaro of Webster-Schroeder. (Times photo)



Matt Dorney

Different story

Steve Siegfried, a four-time wrestling bridesmaid, may finally reach the altar this weekend.

The 105-pound senior at Mynderse Academy has won four Section 5 high school class titles, including one as an eighth grader. He has a career record of 125-13-1. He has beaten several wrestlers who have competed at the state level.

But he has never been to the state meet.

The story line would suggest Siegfried can't win the big one. Saturday night might have changed the story line.

Siegfried (24-3-1 record this year) beat Ted Pittinaro of Webster-Schroeder 8-4 to win the Section 5 Class B 105-pound title at Geneva High School. Pittinaro was Section 5's 98-pound state representative last year.

"I've beaten kids who have gone on to states before, but never in a big final like this," said Siegfried, who will compete in the Section 5 state qualifier Friday and Saturday at Fairport. "This will give me a lot of confidence."

Confidence would seem to be the only thing he needs, for the talent is there. Siegfried won the Section 5 Class A 91-pound title as an eighth grader before moving up to take the 98-pound crown the next two years.

Section 5 reclassified its entire wrestling program last year, and Mynderse fell into Class B. In last year's Class B tournament, Siegfried was third at 105 pounds.

In each of his first four seasons, Siegfried reached the state qualifier, twice being eliminated by the eventual state representative. The top three finishers in each weight division of the Class A-B-C-D meets go on to the state qualifier, so Siegfried knew even before Saturday night's

final that he had qualified.

But if ever he needed a confidence-builder, . . .

"He really wanted it. He's had so much pressure on him because of his 125 wins. He's been expected to do it," said Mynderse Coach Dan Caraher of Siegfried.

Saturday night, in an emotion-filled battle, Siegfried did it, beating Pittinaro for the second time in three confrontations.

After a scoreless first period, Siegfried took a 3-0 lead in the second period and was never headed. When the match-ending buzzer finally sounded, Siegfried tearfully sprinted across the mat and leaped into the waiting arms of Caraher.

"This is my fifth year with Steve," said an emotional Caraher minutes later. "He's just a great kid; he's like a son to me."

And the "son" had just won his fourth sectional class title in five years.

"Beating the kid who was the 98-pound Section 5 state representative last year makes this extra special," said Siegfried.

As for the state qualifier, "I'm a senior, and when you're a senior everything means a little more. I've got a shot, and if I lose there's no more high school wrestling career," said Siegfried.

"It's all the way or nothing."

In the single-elimination format state qualifier, Siegfried will be favored, along with Pittinaro and Joe Hibbard of Canandaigua, the Class A champion. Siegfried and Hibbard tied 8-8 during the Finger Lakes East dual-meet season.

Rich LaPaglia of Spencerport, who has since moved to 112 pounds, was the 105-pound state representative last year.