



# Hilton wrestling champion curbs emotions, wins title

## Antonucci stops four opponents at Bernabi

By John Moriello

Democrat and Chronicle

A stunning sectional loss two years ago apparently has had minimal effect on Andy Antonucci's wrestling style. He's either going to pin 'em or pain 'em.

The Hilton senior, who acknowledges he's trying to temper the aggression that turned a 6-2 lead into a loss via pin in the 1986 sectional final, survived penalty points in two matches yesterday to win his third straight Rotary-Bernabi Wrestling Tournament title at Spencerport.

He was assessed a point in the first period of the 119-pound semifinal and second period of the final for lifting opponents off the mat and dumping them. Neither case was excessively dangerous, but there was no disputing either call.

"It's my style to get them in the air," he said. "I get excited and I'm not careful enough because I try to get them to their back too quick. I get too greedy."

But his unrelenting style has produced a 10-0 record this season, a 102-16-1 mark for the 5-foot-6 senior's career and one trip to the state meet.

Antonucci defeated Gary DeCarr of North Rose-Wolcott in the semifinals, 7-3, and Chris Bannister of Spencerport in the final, 4-3, to wrap up the championship and earn the most outstanding wrestler award in the 23rd annual holiday tournament. An estimated 600 fans watched the finals.

Gates-Chili produced three individual champs — Rob Giannavola (98 pounds), Jim Barbato (122) and Jeff Wittman (177), all 11-0 — but Spencerport edged the Spartans in the team race, 165½-162½. Other winners from Section 5 schools were Brockport's Scott Daly (126) and Steve Taylor (145), North Rose-Wolcott's John Brooks (138) and Pittsford

heavyweight Dereck O'Connor.

Antonucci's victory against DeCarr presumably put to rest some of the controversy surrounding their previous meeting. Antonucci defeated the North Rose-Wolcott junior in the 1987 Bernabi final, 7-6, with a third-period takedown after the clock had been reset to three seconds.

When last seen that night, DeCarr was exchanging angry glares with Antonucci on the awards podium. DeCarr went home feeling he had really won.

"I knew he was going to be ready and want me after what happened last year," Antonucci said. "The talk and all that didn't bother me, but the intensity from that night stayed in my head. Yeah, it was wild last year."

For his part, DeCarr vows the rivalry isn't over.

"He's got a lot of experience and he's a great wrestler," DeCarr said, "but nothing counts 'til Super Sectionals."

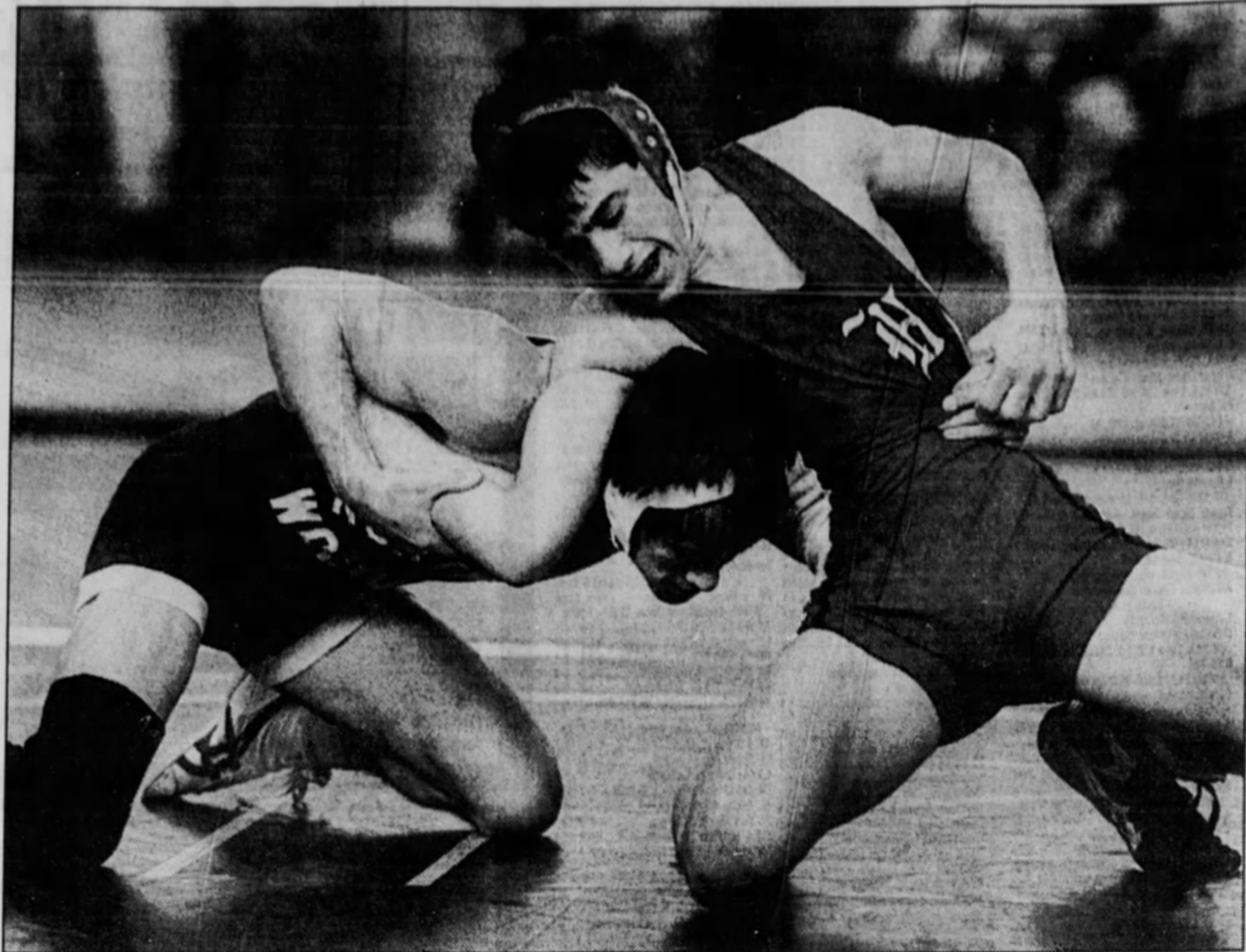
The statement doesn't surprise Antonucci, whose previous Bernabi titles came at 91 pounds in 1986 and 105 in '87. He's been a target since pinning 18 opponents and going 34-3 en route to fifth place at the 1988 state meet in the Onondaga War Memorial.

"You go to states," Antonucci said, "and you know guys are going to be out for you."

The question arose, however, as to whether those guys were going to be heavyweights. Antonucci has jumped two weight classes in each of the last two seasons. It was darn near a change of five weight classes this year.

"He was a fat little pork chop before he started losing weight," Hilton Coach Al Krotz said.

Indeed. Antonucci showed up for practice this season as though he was intent



Kevin Higley Democrat and Chronicle

Hilton's Andy Antonucci (right) eluding move by Gary DeCarr of North Rose-Wolcott at Spencerport tourney.

on replacing Rick Sadwick, the Cadets' two-time 155-pound state champ.

"I was 137 the first day," Antonucci admitted. "I chowed like a maniac over the summer. I wrestled a fair amount, but it was nothing major, not as much as I did last year."

"Some people wrestle 12 months a year. That's not for me."

Instead, Antonucci spends a fair percentage of his time playing ice hockey, a sport better suited to his aggressive nature.

"He's so physical that he creates his own problems sometimes," Krotz said. "You pick (a wrestler) up and you're responsible for getting him down safely."

Antonucci is out to prove the safest

route against him is to stay away from the mat entirely.

**NOTES** — Section 4's Johnson City, the team champion the past two years, did not participate. Spencerport has won the event four times, but went without an individual winner for only the second time in a decade. Spencerport put four wrestlers into the finals.



# WRESTLING

Yesterday

Rotary-Bernabi Tournament

At Spencerport

**Team:** Spencerport 165½, Gates-Chili 162½; Brockport 129, North Rose-Wolcott 109, Athenas, Pa., 99½, Lancaster 99, Hilton 95, Pittsford 83, Lockport 73½, Cicero-North Syracuse 59, Bethlehem 51, Williams-ville North 48½, Niagara Falls 44, Cheektowaga 42, Whitehall 34½, Guilderland 32½, Elmira Southside 31½, Elmira Notre Dame 30, Horseheads 16.

## Individual finals

91 pounds — Jason Wartinger (Cheek) d. John Morello (Lock), 5-1; 98 — Rob Giannavola (G-C) ff. Don Spalding (Hil), 5:13; 105 — Mike Ford (Lock) d. Jim Heines (Pit), 4-1; 112 — Jim Barbato (G-C) d. Rich Stevens (NRW), 11-5; 119 — Andy Antonucci (Hil) d. Chris Bannister (Spen), 4-3; 126 — Scott Daly (Brock) d. Mark Teeter (Athens), 2-1; 132 — Rob Kearney (Will N.) d. Joe LoPresti (Spen), 3-1; 138 — John Brooks (NRW) d. Chris Terry (Whit), 13-5; 145 — Steve Taylor (Brock) d. Pat White (Hil), 8-7; 155 — Todd Miller (Lan) p. Mark Mattia (Hil), 2:40; 167 — Chip Foster (Guil) d. Larry Zerniak (NRW), 7-5; 177 — Jeff Wittman (G-C) d. Mike Licata (Spen), 20-8; 215 — Al Woolen (NF) p. John Thurston (Athens), 3:15; 250 — Dereck O'Connor (Pitt) p. Hasan Uyar (Spen), 3:05.