★Grapplers take 6th in championships

NCCC sends 3 to Nationals

By Bob Milne

Over the weekend of Feb. 20, NCCC hosted the Northeastern Zone Championships. Fifteen teams competed in the championships which lasted for two days.

After the two days of wrestling, Delhi CC emerged as the champion team with 134¾ points. Jamestown finished a distant second with 92 points, and Cobleskill finished third with 70 points. Fulton-Montgomery had 65¾, and Monroe 63½. NCCC wrestlers finished sixth with 57¾. Morrisville finished seventh, 49¾, Alfred eighth, with 49½ and Mohawk Valley finished with 41 points. Herkimer finished tenth with 37½ points. They were followed by Broome with 14½, Cayuga 12½, and Paul Smith's with 11¾ points.

Mike Morley is wrapped up by Matt LaTona

Tompkins Cortland finished fourteenth with 1½ points while Corning finished last with zero points.

In the 118-pound weight class, Matt LaTona of Monroe was the winner. He defeated Vic Montalvo of Delhi in the final match by an 11-5 score.

Mike Morley (118) finished third. Morley, seeded fourth for the tournament, drew a bye in the first round. In the second round, Morley beat Paul Sheridan of Cayuga by a 7-4 score. That victory put him into the quarter finals against Matt LaTona, the number one seed. LaTona defeated Morley by a 16-4 score. "I was tired and dehydrated," said Morley. "Mike has trouble making weight, unlike LaTona," said wrestling coach Eric Knuutila.

The third place finish qualified Morley for the nationals.

The next day, Morley wrestled in the consolations. He took on Dave Darling of Mohawk Valley and won by a 7-3 score. He then wrestled Paul Sheridan, his opponent from the previous day, and won 8-2 for his third place finish.

In the 126-pound weight, Ken Clarke of Delhi CC was the winner. Clarke was seeded number two, and he beat Bob Sluberski of NCCC. The score of the final match was 2-1.

Sluberski easily won his first three matches. He won his first match over Brian Reilly of Paul Smith's with a pin at 2:51. Sluberski won his next match over Keith Hammond of Cobleskill. The score was a lopsided 30-8. Sluberski then beat Randy Manchester of Fulton Montgomery by a 20-5 score.

In the final match versus Clarke, Sluberski was robbed, according to Knuutila.

"Clarke stalled for most of the match," said Knuutila. "The ref let him stall for the entire second period," added Knuutila. Sluberski agreed with his coach. "Yeh, he was stalling," said Sluberski. "The stalling didn't matter because I should have had a take down," added Sluberski.

The score was tied at 0-0 after two periods. Clarke got one point for a get-away and Sluberski got one point for a warning to Clarke for stalling. The match ended in a 1-1 tie, but Clarke earned one point for riding time, hence the 2-1 score.

The second place finish qualified Sluberski for the nationals.

In the 134-pound weight class, Mark Gillen of Fulton-Montgomery was the winner over Pete Dalaker of Cobleskill. The score was 14-5.

Mark Lewis was NCCC's wrestler in the 134 class. He lost his only match to Gary Fancher of Delhi by a 15-3 score.

In the 142-pound weight class, Larry Iacovelli, the number one seed, was the winner. He beat Kevin Alpha of Mohawk Valley by an 11-7 score.

Dave Casper (142), took on Iacovelli in the first round. Iacovelli won by an 11-2 score.

In his consolation match, Casper lost to Ken LaVerme of Jamestown by a close 8-6 score.

The winner of the 150-pound division was Phil Mattera of Delhi. Mattera, seeded number one, defeated Rick DeLong of Jamestown by an 8-7 score for the championship.

Jim Letcher was NCCC's wrestler in that weight class. He lost his first match to George Saltsman of Fulton-Montgomery by a pin at 2:02. He also lost his consolation match to Kevin Mott of Alfred, by a 7-5 score.

Steve Swan of Jamestown won the crown in the 158-pound weight class. He beat Scott Inman of Mohawk Valley by a 17-11 score in the championship match.

Don Voyzey was NCCC's entry in the 158-pound division. He won his first match against Willie Maloney of Cobleskill by a 3-1 score. Voysez then lost to Inman by a 22-7 score.

In the consolation matches, Voysez drew a bye, then wrestled Ted Couchman of Herkimer. Voyzey lost by a 12-4 score.

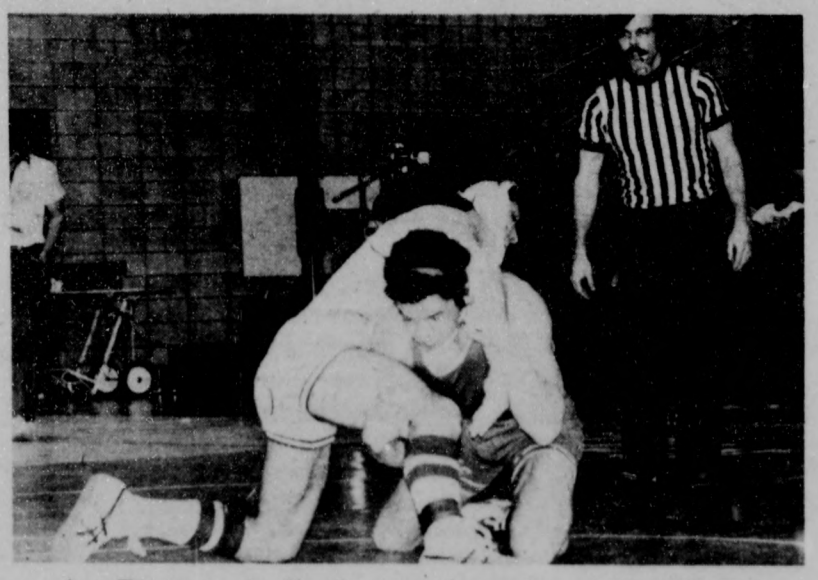
In the 167-pound class, Mike Walker of Jamestown defeated NCCC's Art Pittman. Walker was seeded number one, and Pittman number two going into the tournament.

Pittman won his first three matches easily. He pinned John Wake of Mohawk Valley at 1:03. Taking on John Gauthier of Corning, Pittman won by a pin at 1:04. Pittman beat Tom West of Alfred by a 16-3 score. That set up the match against Walker.

"It was the most exciting match of the finals," said Knuutila.

Pittman fell behind 2-0 after a take down but picked up one point for an escape. At the end of the first period Pittman trailed 2-1.

In the second period, Pittman got one point for an escape. The score was 2-2. Walker gained a point for an escape and Pittman was again trailing. Walker then got two points for a takedown and was leading 5-2. Pittman picked up the next three points, one for an escape, one for stalling, and one for another escape. Both were at the center of the mat with nine seconds remaining. The referee blew his whistle and both wrestlers fired towards each other. "He underhooked and I overhooked," said Pittman. "If I could have made him back up, I would have gotten a point for stalling," he explained. Walker pinned Pittman at 7:51. Pittman's second place finish qualified him for a spot at the nationals.



Art Pittman in finals match against Mike Walker

In the 177-pound class, Mark Cody of Delhi beat Dave Adsit of Morrisville. Cody, the number one seed, easily won by an 18-0 score. NCCC didn't have a wrestler in that weight class.

In the 190 class, Tony Cotrupi, number one seed, won the crown by forfeit over Ken Cook of Herkimer.

Mike Regnet was NCCC's entry in this weight class. In his first match, Regnet was pinned at :32. "Mike has a bad arm," said Knuutila. "When he went down, he got the arm under him and there was nothing he could do," Knuutila explained.

In the consolation round, Regnet drew a bye before taking on Mike Hicks of Fulton-Montgomery. Regnet destroyed Hicks by a 21-1 score.

Regnet lost to Jeff Pidgeon in overtime by a 2-0 score. Mike Young drew a bye before taking on Marty Merola of Cayuga. Young won by a 8-0 score. His next opponent was Bob McMorris of Herkimer. Young lost by a pin at 1:40 but finished sixth in the tournament.

NCCC will host the tourney again next year.

The three qualifiers for the nationals, Pittman, Sluberski, and Morley, will leave with Knuutila for Syracuse on Monday night. When they get to Minnesota, the wrestlers will work out Monday night and Wednesday morning. Wrestling will start on Thursday and conclude on Saturday.

"Friday will be the most important day," says Knuutila. "If you make it that far, you're guaranteed to be All-American," he explained.

"I expect Art (Pittman) and Bob (Sluberski) to do really well," said Knuutila. "Mike (Morley) is a freshman, and he'll be awed by the situation," explained Knuutila. "Once he gets straightened out, he'll be okay."

then annihilated Steve Dombrowski, Broome. The score was 24-0. That was good for a fifth place finish for Regnet.

In the unlimited weight class, Joe D'Acquisto of Monroe, the number one seed, defeated Bob Phillips of Fulton-Montgomery by a 9-7 score.

Ken Young wrestled for NCCC in that weight division. Young took on Phillips and lost by a pin at :41.

In the consolation round,

Athletes of the week

Mike Morley, Art Pittman, Bob Sluberski

Last weekend, NCCC hosted the Northeastern Zone Wrestling Championships. The Spirit sports staff has decided to honor not one, but three athletes for the week. Art Pittman, Bob Sluberski, and Mike Morley turned in good performances in those championships. Pittman and Sluberski finished second in their respective weight classes while Morley finished third in his weight class.

Pittman, a co-captain of this year's team, has an over all record of 21-6. He finished first in the Hawk tournament, third in the Corning tournament, and fourth in the Niagara tournament.

Sluberski, the other co-captain of the team, has an over all record of 22-3. He captured the crown in the Niagara and the Hawk tournaments while finishing second in the Corning tournament.

Morley, a freshman, has an over-all record of 27-11. He finished second in the Hawk tournament and third in the Corning tournament.

All three wrestlers will represent NCCC in the upcoming Nationals to be held in Worthington, Minn., later this week.

Mark Gillen is honored

In the recent Northeastern Zone Championships, Mark Gillen of Fulton-Montgomery was named Wrestler of the Year. Gillen wrestles in the 134 pound weight class. He was the 1980 New York State Freestyle Champion, the Greco Roman runner-up, Olympic Training Camp Qualifier, and Class B Champion in Section II.