



DAVE LONDRES staff photographer

Brockport senior John Martin-Cannon wins first place in his match at 152 pounds at the Webster Schroeder tournament earlier this month. Cannon has won more than 150 of his 200 matches, including all 20 this season with two forfeits.

# MAT MASTER

## BROCKPORT'S JOHN-MARTIN CANNON, INSPIRED BY HIS COACHING FATHER, IS HEADED TO UNIVERSITY AT BUFFALO

JAMES JOHNSON | STAFF WRITER

John-Martin Cannon was in a store one recent Friday night to stock up on food for a wrestling tournament the next day, when he stopped his father in an aisle.

"He grabbed me and said 'Dad, you realize we are not going to do this much anymore?'" Brockport wrestling coach James Cannon said.

Given that midnight was approaching after an evening of wrestling action, it was probably not the best time to reflect. But the young man was right.

This is John-Martin Cannon's sixth and final varsity season of wrestling at Brockport. One coach has always been in his corner. James Cannon coached the third of his four children back when John-Martin, now a senior, took a liking to the sport as a pee-wee.



John-Martin Cannon

The support from his father will still be there, but technically, John-Martin Cannon will have a new head coach once he arrives to wrestle at the State University of New York at Buffalo.

"It's going to be different, I know that for sure," John-Martin said. "There's pluses and minuses to it, but I wouldn't trade my father for any coach. I thought it was a privilege.

"The coaches at UB have father-like traits, but I know I'm going to be a little



James Cannon

homesick at first."

James Cannon has watched his son, as a 7-year old, lock his attention on a mat during a dual between two strong teams. Father then watched son work to qualify for the state tournament, then place fifth as a sophomore and third last season.

Coaches and wrestlers around Section V have watched John-Martin win more than 150 of his 200 matches, including all 20 this

### John-Martin Cannon

**Age:** 17. **Sport:** Wrestling.

**School:** Brockport.

**Class:** Senior.

**Height/weight:** 5-foot-7/  
152 pounds.

**Academic average:** 89.

**Mat moves:** Middleweight finished third last season at 145 pounds and fifth as a sophomore at 135 during the last two large-schools state wrestling tournaments. . . .

Signed a letter of intent to wrestle at University at Buffalo.

. . . 20-0 record this season for the Blue Devils (11-0). . . 158-43 career record. . . Two-time SuperSectional, Section V class and Monroe County champion.

**Family:** James Cannon (father and Brockport wrestling coach), Joanne Gilbert-Cannon (mother), Jamaal (brother, 26), Janelle (sister, 22), and Jordan (brother, 16).

**Future plans:** Pursue a degree in elementary education.

**His first name:** A tribute to his great, great grandfather.

# Cannon

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season with two forfeits. Nine of this year's win total came during the 10-team Sergeant Richard Romesser Attica Blue Devil Dual Meet Challenge, won by Brockport (11-0) last weekend.

"We really wrestled well at the Attica Tournament," the two-time Section V and Monroe County league champion said. "We beat Fulton (a Syracuse-area power). We had a forfeit every match, six points (in the hole) every time.

"That showed that we are working hard. It's finally settling in that we are a good team."

The Blue Devils' trip to the Union-Endicott Duals on Jan. 5, which shape the state rankings, will be here soon. The same goes for Brockport's dual at Spencerport, Section V wrestling's version of the New England Patriots, on Feb. 6.

John-Martin's final varsity match could come quicker than a takedown, too.

"We appreciate what this sport has done for us, I have a lot of good memories," James Cannon said. "Not too many seven-year olds get fascinated for that long. I didn't have to wonder where he wandered off to.

"He made it pretty clear early, that he wanted to be a wrestler."

There were mixed feelings for the Cannons at last year's state tournament in Albany.

John-Martin was ahead during the third period of his first-round match against Lockport's Matt Cinelli. Cannon said that with about 30 seconds remaining, he rushed to hit a cradle move.

Cinelli rolled through Cannon's attempt. Cannon said he thought that the wrestlers were out of bounds, when Cinelli scored a reversal and back points. Cinelli, then a senior, won the match, 9-8.

"I was gunning for a state championship," John-Martin said. "Then I had to wrestle back five matches to take third. It was tough not knowing what could have been.

"I'm not saying I would've won, but it was tough to watch (the final). Wrestling is a sport where one mistake can cost you everything. You've just got to learn."

One mistake wrestlers make at states is to let their disappointment stagger them during

the consolation rounds. John-Martin won the wrestlebacks by scores of 7-3, 14-5, 7-2, 8-4 and 3-2 to finish third.

It turned out that at least one set of college coaches were impressed with his rebound.

State University of New York at Buffalo coaches steadily recruited John-Martin Cannon. They invited the Cannon family

to visit the UB campus in Amherst during the spring. About two weeks later, UB coaches came to the Cannon family's home with a scholarship/financial package offer.

"We're looking for a certain type of kid," UB coach Jim Beichner said. "He is in that mold, I looked right at him and saw that.

"We've had success with kids like him, a good citizen, hard-worker, very solid wrestler. We've had less success with picking up some of these blue-chip kids that have done it all. Sometimes when they get here, they're done. I'd take 100 kids like (Cannon)."

John-Martin told UB coaches

*"We've had success with kids like him, a good citizen, hard-worker, very solid wrestler."*

**JIM BEICHER**  
UB coach

that he would accept the school's offer in April. He signed a letter-of-intent to formalize the agreement during the early commitment period in November, not long after a seventh-place finish at 152 pounds during the Super 32 Challenge in Greensboro, N.C.

Binghamton, George Mason and Boston University also showed some interest in Cannon, who dreamed that he would wrestle at Michigan or another Big 10 Conference school.

"I didn't understand how good you really had to be," John-Martin said. "They want three-time state champions and kids like that. I looked at UB's schedule, and there's good competition.

"I didn't know the school campus was so big and there's a lot of diversity and stuff. I definitely liked that.

"Division I athletes are the best in the nation. It's always been a dream of mine to be in that mixture."

John-Martin's wrestling future began to flow to that level during his freshman year. A one-point loss to Canandaigua's Rob Mack gave Cannon confidence, especially after Mack qualified for states. The next year, Cannon edged Mack during a match.

"I really started changing my mind set," Cannon said. "That's

## Wrestlers to watch

The following Section V wrestlers qualified for the 2007 state tournaments and are back to make another run at a title this season in Rochester.

**Eighth-grade:** Quinton Murphy (Holley).

**Freshmen:** Bobby Dierna (Wayne); Dakota Stackhouse (Warsaw).

**Sophomores:** Vinny Digraivio (Wayne), Zak Griffith (Warsaw).

**Juniors:** Tim Banks (Holley), Alex Ekstrom (Palmyra-Macedon), Cody Hutcheson (Bath), Tyler Marlow (Palmyra-Macedon), Mike Nevinger (Letchworth), Ian Paddock (Warsaw), Joe Smaldone (Geneva), Josh Veltre (Greece Olympia).

**Seniors:** Matt Appleby (Bolivar-Richburg), Corey Borshoff (Pittsford), Bryan Bourne (Spencerport), John-Martin Cannon (Brockport), Chris Collura (Spencerport), Zack Ellis (Brighton), Alex Marianetti (Greece Athena), Josh Mayville (Marion), Justin Melia (Spencerport), Nate Schiedel (Caledonia-Mumford).

really half of the battle, being secure, knowing you can win.

"If I lose, I lose, but you have to make that kid beat you.

"That's something I got from my dad." □

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**Mat Master.**

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