

1991 Empire State Games

Rich in Talent

The fourteenth annual Empire State Games were held in Albany from July 24th to 28th this year. In the past, there have been many great athletes who have medaled in The Games, including Mike Tyson, Chris Mullin, Mark Jackson, Diane Dixon, and Jeff Blatnick. Tyson kills brain cells for a living, while Mullin and Jackson throw balls into nets. Dixon is an Olympic gold medalist, and of course, Blatnick won the Olympic Games in 1984. He competed at the 220 pound weight class in the Greco Roman competition.

This year the talent at The Games was again super. A number of veterans and a large crop of cock-strong newcomers highlighted the four wrestling tournaments (freestyle and Greco in Scholastic and Open divisions).

In the scholastic division, two wrestlers were able to win double gold medals - Kerry McCoy at 220 and Chad Henkin at 143. McCoy edged a fast-improving Jason Gleasman by one point in Greco while he dominated Greco national champ Marco Sanchez 12-3 in the freestyle finals. Henkin decked Jeremy McVige in the Greco finals and beat fellow Long Islander Junius Gradney 5-2 in freestyle.

In the Open division, no one was able to win two gold medals, a testament to the calibre of competition that included several Olympic hopefuls. The closest person to a double-winner was Central's Jim Hall. He won the Greco title by beating Jake Sabo 4-0, but dropped a 2-1 decision to Jeff Ellis in the freestyle finals.

The team competitions were dominated by Long Island, which won three of the four competitions. In scholastic freestyle, LI outdistanced Central by 37 points for the title and in Greco amassed 105 points to Central's 97. Long Island beat Western by 11 points for the open freestyle title. However, in the open Greco event, Long Island finished tied for second place with Hudson Valley at 42 points each. The

winner - no surprise - was Adirondack, home of some of this country's finest Greco wrestlers. Adirondack killed the competition by winning with 82 points, nearly double the runners up.

Following is a weight-by-weight synopsis of what happened in this year's eventful competition.

Scholastic Freestyle

91 pounds

The eventual champ here, Ben New of Central, overcame a 6-5 defeat in the pool finals against Western's Bill Wolfe. The setup is that the top two from each pool make up the overall semifinals, so New was paired up against the bottom pool's champ, Austin Shaw of Hudson Valley. He beat Shaw, 5-3; meanwhile, Wolfe lost to Ed Maslin of Central by a 7-5 margin, setting up a New-Maslin finals (both placed second in their pools). New took it 7-0 and the gold medal. Wolfe decked Shaw in 1:01 for the bronze, with Shawn Lewis of LI decking Tony Nguyen of HV in 3:37 for fifth. Overall, a very competitive weight class, with a lot of close matches. Look for the top four here to do some damage in future sectional and state competitions.

98 pounds

Brian Fischenich of LI showed his dominance here by beating most people handily, including Jeff Reese in the finals. There, it was all Fischenich, 17-1, as he breezed to the gold medal. Fischenich placed third in this year's scholastic state tournament, and with this victory, should be favored to win another high medal. In another high-scoring match, Adirondack's Eric Terry overcame Frank Scandiffio of Hudson Valley, 14-8, for third place. For fifth, Ken Addy beat Don Lilly by injury default.

105.5 pounds

A relative newcomer to ESG medal-winning overcame a talented group here, as Long Island's Mike Fields beat fellow Islander Rason Phifer in a 15-11 shoot-out. Scholastic state medalist Mike Merry of Central dominated Vinnie Popolizio from Adirondack, 10-1 for the bronze. And for fifth, Adirondack's Greg Connell beat Noah Herrick, HV by injury default.

114.5 pounds

Another all-Long Island final here had people starting to think we should have held the tournament on the Island! A fast-improving Liston Brown overcame Pete Shimpkin in an

exciting 8-3 match. For third, another Long Islander, Robert Harris, beat Gary Cook of Central 6-2. Tim Giambalvo of Hudson Valley decked Jon LaForce of Central in just 41 seconds for fifth.

123 pounds

Looks like it's going to be a great year for Western's Jason Wartinger. He's placed in the states before and in other state-wide competitions. And in this year's ESG's tournament, he looked super. He won his pool by beating Anthony Cogswell, 10-3, pinning Dave Stoddard in just 21 seconds, decking Mark Aquilar in 2:50, beating Robert Paletta 7-4, and pinning Brian Stisser in 3:41. In the semifinals, he shut down Jason Collins 10-0 to set up his finals match against Long Island's Len Fries. Fries advanced to the finals by 15-0 win, pin in 1:10, and 11-1 decision. In the finals, it was Wartinger coming out on top of a 3:01 fall victory. Third place went to Rob Paletta of Long Island, who beat Jason Collins of Western 6-4. Sixth place went to Eric Westervelt, and there was no sixth place awarded, although it would have gone to Brian Stisser had he not forfeited.

132 pounds

Central's Terry Showalter came close to a double championship. He easily won the Greco tournament, but lost by fall to fellow Central wrestler, Ron Vosburg in 3:58. Ironically, he had beaten Vosburg two times in the qualifiers, and was ahead in points when Vosburg scored his stunning fall with just two seconds left in the match. Third place went to Eric McAllister of Adirondack with a 7-4 win over Travis Smith. State placewinner Rob Bashaw of Adirondack took fifth with a 9-4 win over Sean O'Hara. Tough wrestlers throughout, and expect to see more than a few of these guys in Syracuse next March.

143 pounds

Chad Henkin is a super-tough competitor out of Rocky Point in Section 11. In March, he placed fourth in the state tournament, behind three talented seniors, Mike Castro, Doug Groncki, and Justin Raines. In addition, he beat state freestyle champ Phil Donnelly 8-0 in that tournament. In the ESG's, he looked even better in winning freestyle and Greco crowns. In freestyle, he edged fellow Islander Junius Gradney 5-2 for the gold. Rick Grembocki of Adirondack took third based on his 12-6 victory over Joe Johnson of HV. Todd Mangan won by injury default over Jeremy McVige for fifth. Both are from Western.

154 pounds

A surprise winner here, as Hudson Valley's relatively unknown Alper Bekirov won five

close, hard-fought matches in his climb to the top. First off was a wild yet close 12-8 win over Art Arden. Then Bekirov won 2-0 over Rusty Grant of Western. For the pool championship, he beat Matt Manico of Adirondack 4-1. In the tournament semi's, he squeaked past Duane Thompson of Long Island, 4-3. And in the finals against Section 2 champ Shawn Nautel, it was again Bekirov coming out on top of a close 6-5 match for the gold. Thompson rebounded by beating Manico for third, 7-1. Brian Lawton of Central won 7-4 over Art Arden for fifth place.

165 pounds

The Lassen name has been a familiar one in state competitions for years, and this year, Brett Lassen overcame a rugged field for his title. He easily won the pool championship with easy victories over Jon Hoover, Andre Cave, and Marc Salvati. In the semifinals, he edged Mitch Clark of Adirondack, 3-2. For his title, Lassen entertained the crowd with a 14-8 win over Central's Shayne Bogardus. Cave of Central (who was runner-up in Section 4 to state champ Matt Marciniak) won by forfeit over Clark for third, and Salvati beat Courtney Hutchinson 12-2 for fifth. All four top placefinishers have state championship potential.

178 pounds

Central's George Chaumon can really score points in freestyle! In sixth matches on the way to the title, he scored 69 points, not including what was on the board when he won by injury default over Wade Hutchinson. His matches went like this: 16-1, injury default, 6-3, 14-6, 13-1, and 20-11. The last match was against Ed Jesmain of Adirondack. State placewinner, Gino Brown, who dropped close decisions to both finalists, won 5-3 over Nick Bryne for third. Both are from Hudson Valley. Dave Friburg of Adirondack won 8-4 over Andres Olvet of NYC for fifth.

192 pounds

Six big tough wrestlers and none afraid to throw moves right from the opening whistle. Every match wrestled, except for the finals, ended in a technical fall or a pin, making this one of the most entertaining classes of all. If

every tournament weight class went like this, we wouldn't have to wait sixth months to watch half an hour of wrestling at 1:00 AM on TV. Let's start with the top pool. Art D'Isabel of Adirondack took that title based on two pins, 24 and 35 seconds. In the bottom pool, Chad Love of Central won it by 15-0 tech fall and 3:19 pin. The pin was against LI's John Aebly, who took second based on his 15-0 tech fall over the pool's other entrant, Allen Pailley of Adirondack. In the semi's, Aebly and Love advanced by first period falls to set up a rematch of the pool championship. There, it was Aebly who surprised Love with a 6-5 victory and the gold medal. For the bronze, D'Isabel faced his first round opponent, Marcus Johnson of NYC. In their first meeting, D'Isabel won by fall in just 24 seconds. The second time around, he was late for dinner, so took just 23 seconds to secure the fall. And for

HWT

This weight class showed off the talents of four or five guys who just may be in the state finals come March of 1992. The winner was Josh Mastrangelo, who placed in this year's state tournament. He first pinned Barry Weed of Long Island, Jason Spector of Adirondack, and Chad Walker of Central in 2:43, 2:13, and :23. In the semi's he beat out Scott McAndrew of LI 3-0. McAndrew was the other pool's runner-up, with Matt Stein of Adirondack winning it. Stein decked Walker in 3:30 to earn his finals match with Mastrangelo. In the finals, Mastrangelo won 6-3. Walker, who had been decked twice, came back from the dead to pin McAndrew for the bronze medal. Wayne Burke of HV won by forfeit over Jason Spector for fifth.

Scholastic Greco Roman

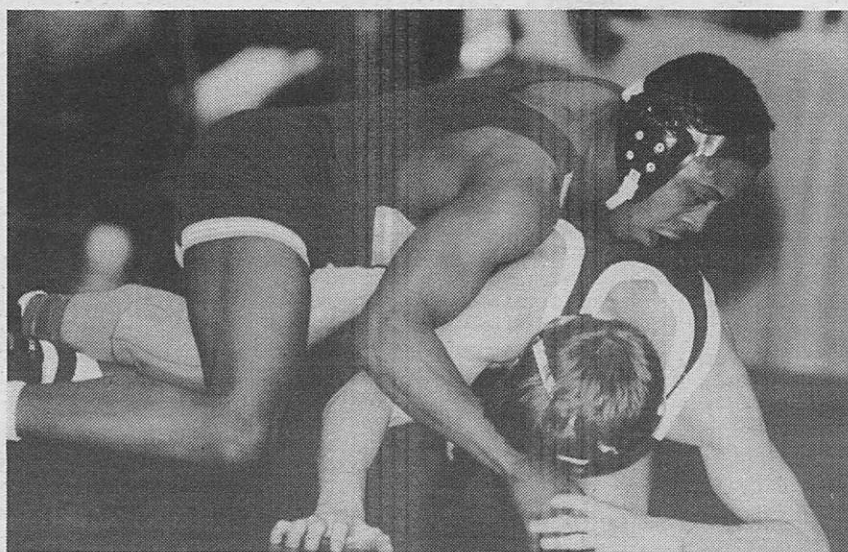
91 pounds

This class featured a lot of guys we haven't heard much about yet, but from the way they competed, they're sure to be making headlines in the coming years. Long Island's Brian Cusati muscled his way to four pins and a shutout for the gold medal. He decked David Danton of Central, Aaron Hoffman of Hudson Valley, Jeremy Curtis of Adirondack, and Austin Shaw of Hudson Valley in 1:25, :14, 1:16, and 1:05. In the finals, he dominated Matt

Duquette of Western 14-0. Duquette has won his pool, with Shaw in second place. Denton pinned Shaw for third place and LI's Matt Brennan pinning Curtis in 1:35 for fifth.

98 pounds

Super-tough Greco wrestler Jason Goldman proved dominant in a class that included four guys with state championship potential. Goldman is a world-calibre Cadet Greco wrestler who's been competing for years. Now a junior, he's been in over 400 matches, competing all over the country and overseas as well. Greco is his forte, and he proved it with four straight wins on the way to the title. His finals win was 5-2 against James DiMartino of Long Island, and he also beat LI's state bronze medalist, Brian Fisichenich. Fisichenich repeated his states performance, losing in the first round, but coming back to beat that same person for third place. In Syracuse, it was Dave Ritoli, here it was Central's Tim Tyler. Tyler posted a 37 second fall over Fisichenich, but dropped a 54 second



MIKE JAMISON, in 105 pound state final action against Alex Croog. Jamison made the successful transition to Open competition by winning the 114.5 Open Freestyle Empire State Games. Photo by Peter Venier.

fifth, Pailley won by fall in 3:45 over Agostino. Great job, men!

220 pounds

Ironically, the finalists here met in the very first match of the weight class with LI's Kerry McCoy beating up on NYC's Marco Sanchez, 9-2. After that, they both kicked ass throughout and then ran into each other again in the finals. There, McCoy performed even better in winning 12-3. In the other pool, a rugged Jason Gleasman of Central beat out Robert Garcia of HV and Ryan Hammersmith of Western for first place. In the semifinals, Sanchez surprised Gleasman and McCoy beat Garcia to set up their reunion. Gleasman came back to finish a winner by beating Garcia 3-2 for the bronze. Anthony Dellafane beat Ryan Hammersmith by injury default for fifth place. Both are from Western.

pin to him in the consolations. In fifth place, Don Lilly of Western scored his own 54 second pin, his over Ryder Herman of LI.

105.5 pounds

This was a tough weight class, as evidenced by the fact that the scholastic state champ, David Hardwick of Hudson Valley, lost twice on the way to third place. The winner of the weight class was Central's powerful Doug Riddell. He stormed through his first three bouts, pin in 1:50, 16-0, and pin in 1:00. Then he beat Hardwick 8-2 to win his pool. He won twice more, against John LaBombard of Adirondack and Micah Sams of Hudson Valley (1:18 pin in the finals) for his gold medal. Hardwick lost to Sams in the semi's, but came back to beat LaBombard 8-2 for the bronze. Shane Donaldson, Adirondack, decked Western's John Zicari in just :27 for fifth place.

114.5 pounds

Central's Mike Bevins looked awesome in smashing seven opponents easily on the way to his gold medal here. He decked his first five opponents - Steve Velez, NYC in 2:12; Bruno Calzeta, NYC in 3:07; Rob Bianchine of HV in :48; George Swingle in 3:51; and Brian Berkery of LI in 3:58. That gave him the pool title, and in his semifinal match, he scored a 13-6 win over Central's John Alexander. And in the finals, he faced freestyle champ Liston Brown of LI and scored a 3:16 fall for the title. In third place was Alexander, who decked Berkery in 3:30. George Swingle scored an entertaining 14-10 win over Alex Chapman of Central for fifth.

123 pounds

This weight class featured three state placefinishers and six other rugged wrestlers who all have good shots at making the state tournament in the future. The placewinners were Terry Showalter of Central, Billy Dixon of Western, and John Tyler of Central. Dixon and Tyler were in one pool, with Dixon scoring a fall over Tyler and two other pins to capture the pool title. On the other side, Showalter was equally dominant, scoring a pin and decisions of 13-0, 15-0, and 12-3. Dixon and Showalter both won their semifinal matches, and in the finals, Showalter looked unbeatable in gaining a 10-4 victory. Tony DeMaio of Hudson Valley beat Central's Mike Fanton 8-6 for third, and Mark Voci of Western blanked Justin Matteson, Adirondack, 8-0 for fifth.

132 pounds

LI's Lou DiMaria looked strong in winning over a field that included a couple of state placefinishers and a number of adept Greco wrestlers. He and Jake Gardner, Adirondack advanced to the finals fairly easily. In the finals, DiMaria broke a regulation tie with a spectacular throw that earned him a 6-1 overtime win and the gold medal. Ed Aulino, LI edged Chris Meehan, also of LI, 8-7, for the bronze. Rob Bashaw, Adirondack, pinned HV's David Amuso for fifth place.

143 pounds

Freestyle champ Chad Henkin of LI prevailed in the Greco competition as well. Winning a series of fairly close matches to gain the finals, he pinned Western's Jeremy McVige in 3:35 for the title. Fred Ippolito of LI beat William Trigg, 6-3, to earn the bronze medal. For fifth place, Joe Parsons of HV decked Andy Klein of Central in 3:15.

154 pounds

Ian Baird of NYC earned a first round 10-6 victory over Scott Krulisky of Western. Both proved dominant over everyone else, as they met again in the finals. Krulisky learned something from the first match, and was able to secure a 7-1 victory this time. Jim Lange, LI decked Shawn Akley, Central, in 2:15 for the bronze medal. Andy Ciaravino of Central pinned Gary Morgan, also of Central, in 1:30 for fifth place.

165 pounds

Central's Shane Bogardus looked slick in winning the gold medal here. He first beat a powerful Mike Costanzo of HV, 7-4. Then a win over Chris Giambone, and a 15-0 tech fall over Western's Matt Kramer. In the semifinals, Bogardus beat Andre Cave of Central, 14-11. Kramer, having placed second in the pool, pinned the other pool's champ, Sean Pickett, HV, to gain the finals and another crack at Bogardus. This time, it was much closer, 11-6, but with the same result. For third, Cave repeated his win over Pickett, this time 11-6, for third place. Fifth place went to LI's Eric Petrullo, who edged Costanzo 3-2.

178 pounds

Strange twist of fate here. Both finalists took second in their pools. However, in the semifinals, each beat the opposite pool's champions decisively to gain the finals. In the bottom pool, Western's Dana Ernst lost his very first match to Gino Brown of HV, 4-0, who won the pool. After his loss, Ernst scored two falls to make it to the semi's against the opposite pool's champ, Eric Price of Central, to gain the finals. There he faced Ed Jesmain of Adirondack, who placed second to Price. Jesmain beat Brown in the semifinals to set up an all-runner up final. Ernst won a mechanical 6-0 victory for the gold. In the consolations, the pool champs, Price and Brown put on a spectacular battle with Brown winning 10-5. Josh Coleman of Western took fifth place over Vinny Gebbia of LI by fall in 1:06.

192 pounds

The top two here turned out to be Western's Ryan Hammersmith and LI's John Aebly, who won the freestyle title. Ironically, they met in the first round and Aebly took a tough, 6-4 decision. Both continued to win and earned a finals rematch. It looked like Aebly would become a double-winner, as he was favored to win. However, Hammersmith pulled a surprise and scored a stunning 2:55 fall to win the gold. Third place went to Matt Kitts of Central, who pinned HV's Ziad Jabri in 50 seconds. This duplicated his earlier fall victory over Zabri for the pool title. Fifth place was

Mike Cipar, Central, by 2:20 fall over Cory Walters of LI.

220 pounds

Freestyle champ Kerry McCoy probably came closest to anyone in the state to a triple crown this year. He barely lost in the scholastic state finals, 3-2 to John Degl, then won both competitions in the Empire Games. In Greco, he pulled off some close matches, including his 5-4 victory over Jason Gleasman of Central in the finals. Third place went to Roger Gysel of Western, who beat Toby Elmore of LI 8-3. In fifth was Chris Wolf, Western, pinning Central's Mark Miller in 43 seconds.

HWT

Matt Stein and Chris Smith are both national calibre wrestlers very familiar with themselves. In the Cadet National freestyle championships, Smith placed second by just one point to Ohio's Joey Barlow. In third place was Matt Stein, who shut down David Fairchild of Maryland for his bronze medal. In the Greco Cadet nationals, Stein posted an overtime 7-4 victory over Smith to take seventh place. Both wrestlers came away with All American status in both styles. Back in New York for the Empire Games, Stein advanced fairly easily to the finals, but Smith dropped his first match to LI's Scott McAndrew, 8-3. But because McAndrew next lost, 9-4, to Adirondack's Jason Spector, and Smith decked Spector in :51, Smith won the pool title. Smith and Stein then won their semifinals match. In the finals, another exciting confrontation ensued, with Stein grabbing a 3-1 victory. Third place went to Barry Weed, who shocked McAndrew with a 40 second pin for his medal. Fifth place went to Jason Spector based on his 4-0 victory over Trevor Richards of HV.

Open Freestyle

105.5 pounds

Only two guys showed up here, Sean Oppeki of NYC and Tony Olang of HV. Olang, a veteran ESG medalist, took the title based on a 17-1 technical fall.

114.5 pounds

Newcomer to the open division, Mike Jamison, overcame a third round setback to win the gold medal, just as he did last year. He won his first match by 12-8, then 16-1. Lance Allen of LI, a survivor of many Empire State Games battles, then won a 5-4 decision. In the other pool, James Lopez emerged as the champ, having beat Andrew Borshik of Adirondack 9-7. In the semifinals, Allen and Jamison advanced, setting up a rematch. Jamison won this time by an equally close margin, 6-5. It was a good day for reversals, as Borshik wound up beating back Lopez for third place. Stephen Herishen of NYC took fifth based on a pin over Central's Nils Watson.

125.5 pounds

Great tournament for former state champ Tom Sinacore. He soared into the finals with two pins (1:22 over Paul Cocuzzi, Western; and :43 over Joe Doulin of Adirondack) and a 15-0 win over Frank Sandy of NYC. He then advanced to the finals by winning 7-0 over Vince Tabano of Adirondack, where he scored a 3:51 pin over Jason Inzirillo of LI. Overall, he went unscored upon in taking the gold medal. Inzirillo also looked impressive, winning by fall in 25 seconds, 17-2, a win by injury default, and 5-2. Tabano took third with a 1:40 pin over Doulin. In fifth was Adam Erno of Adirondack, who won by injury default over Frank Savoy of NYC. Darren Goldstein of LI, a many-times EGS gold medalist, injured himself in the second round and was forced to withdraw.

136.5 pounds

This weight class was packed with talent, including two state champs, neither of whom won the title. It also included two former gold medalists in ESG competition, and neither of them won the title either. Ralph Tubello of LI advanced over this impressive field to take first place, beating fellow Islander Steve Muhlback, 9-7. Juan Garcia, two-time state champ and ESG scholastic champ, took third, beating former state champ and many-times gold medalist Bill Starke, 7-4. Tony Massaro of Adirondack beat Mike Reese by injury to take fifth. Dave Barr, former gold medalist from Central, was not able to place.

149.5 pounds

Back in the early 1980's, Charlie Cheney was a member of the famous Division II powerhouse team California State-Bakersfield, the team coached by Joe Seay. It included such greats as Joe Gonzales, John Azavedo, and many other super-tough wrestlers. Cheney placed second in the NCAA Division II Championships as a senior. He's now head coach at UB and can't seem to stay away from the sport. He's still a national calibre freestyler, and he showed it at the Games. Up a weight from his normal 136.5 pounds, he dominated the field at 149.5. In his pool, the matches went like this - pin in 1:54 over Ben Lombardi of HV; pin in 1:19 over Chris O'Bryne of NYC; 16-0 over Todd Hammerle of Central; pin in 3:15 over Vinny Innes of LI. Corey Carter of HV gave Cheney the only close match in losing 4-1 in the semifinals. For the gold, Cheney beat Innes again, 13-2. Former state champ Marcel Cooper of NYC, earned his second one-point victory over Carter in taking third, with Hammerle beating Matt McLennan of Western, 4-0, for fifth place.

163.5 pounds

In the past, Central's Marty Wyckoff has won several silver medals, overcoming many competitors but always falling just a little short of the title. He overcame that obstacle this year, winning the freestyle title over a field of rugged, powerful middleweights. He started the show with a 5-2 win over SU wrestler Chris Saba of Adirondack. Then came a 13-1 drilling of Bob Iovinella, also of Adirondack. To

win his pool, Wyckoff decked HV's Dwight Berry in 2:11. In the semi's he beat John Pavlin, yet another Adirondack entrant. In the finals, Wyckoff won over Western's Townley Hedrick, 5-2. Hedrick, despite dropping a close loss to Damiano Markou of NYC, won his pool and beat Berry to make the finals. Third place went to John Pavlin, a nationally ranked Greco enthusiast, who beat Berry by a point. John Sui of NYC took fifth based on a victory by injury default over Markoff.

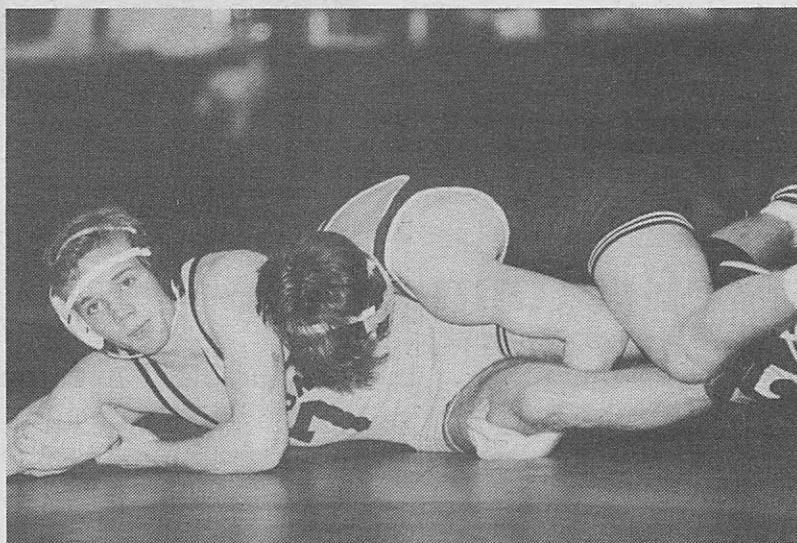
180 pounds

It's easier picturing Pete Capone knocking teeth out rather than cleaning them. But he is a dentist by profession, and probably the world's toughest dentist at that. In high school, he won two state championships, and as a senior at Hofstra, came about a quarter of an inch away from an NCAA Division I title. In this competition, he pinned his first two patients, then won decisions of 15-7 and 11-1 in winning his pool title. He won once again in the semifinals over Dale Robin of HV to set up his finals match against SU's Jamie St John. St John, also a two-time state champ, advanced to the finals based on five victories. In the finals, a close, highly-entertaining bout resulted in a 3-1 Capone win. With four state titles between them, it was one of the most anticipated finals match. Robin won by injury default over Western's Tim Habecker for third place, and Regan Johnson of Adirondack beat Central's Dave Ciocca 15-0 for fifth. Overall, a

he won 2-1 over Central's Matt Gallagher; 19-3 over Paul Newman of LI; and a 2:25 pin over Fred Meyer, also of LI. He then bet Central's Rich Calkins 8-5 in the semi's; meanwhile, Gallagher kept winning, and on the opposite side of the semifinals, he beat Ethan Bosch 4-3. In the rematch, Farrell slightly increased his margin of victory, winning the gold 3-0. Third place was Bosch's, who beat Calkins 7-3. Meyer took fifth with a 1:35 fall over Barry Friedberg of NYC.

220 pounds

If a finals match is a repeat of an earlier round match, it seems like it's almost an advantage to have lost the first time around. Many losers come back to win titles, and that's what happened here. Jeff Ellis, a two-time state champ out of Western, ran into a 200-pound roadblock in round two named Jim Hall, a nationally-ranked Greco wrestler. Hall won 2-0. They both kept winning, with Hall taking first in the pool to Ellis' second. In the semi's, Hall beat Sam Thomas of Long Island and Ellis beat Mark Kerr of Central. The second time around was kinder to Ellis, and he won 2-1. Hall, who took the Greco title, came closer to anyone to two golds. Thomas won by injury default over Kerr, who had beaten him by a point earlier, for the bronze. Mike DeCapua of HV won a 4-3 match over Tony Conetta of LI for fifth. Of all the weights, this is the one you wouldn't want to meet in a dark alley. Ellis, as



ROB BASHAW, 132 pounds, showed great versatility in taking fifth in both styles at the Empire State Games. He has placed in the Games and in other state-wide competitions, and will challenge for a state title this year. Photo by Peter Venier.

hugely talented weight class, with another state champ, Brian Gray, losing two close matches right from the start and many other talented wrestlers also unable to place.

198 pounds

Western's Darren Farrell put together a few close victories and a couple of easy wins in taking the gold medal here. To win his pool,

mentioned, is a two-time state kingpin, while Hall was an All American and is now a super Greco competitor. Thomas looked great in taking the bronze, and Kerr owns three wins over NCAA champ Matt Ruppel. DeCapua competes for Division I Hofstra, and Conetta has one of the nation's best high-crotch's. He used it to win an NCAA Division III title and later to beat one of the Scherr brothers, a

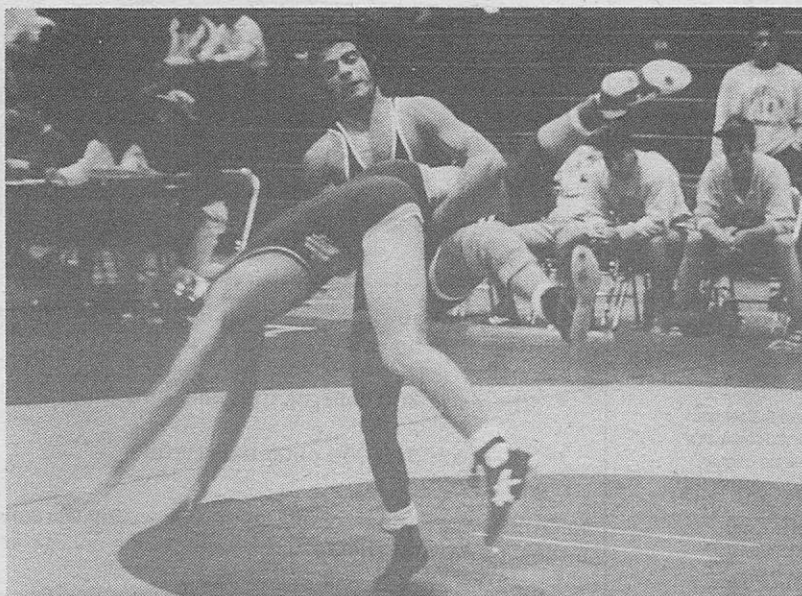
former Olympian. Overall, great wrestlers and great matches!

Heavyweight

Former Division III NCAA Champ Mike Fusilli of Western dominated this weight class. He first won by disqualification over Kirk Butryn of HV, then won 16-0 over Mike DeFosse in winning his pool. The other pool offered Joe Muscarella, Western, and Bill Friburger, Long Island. In the semi's, Fusilli took just 20 seconds to finish Friburger, and Butryn edged Muscarella 4-2. In the finals rematch, Fusilli took a 6-1 decision. For third, Friburger beat Muscarella, 7-4, reversing a 4-1 loss to him earlier. Jim Biel of Central won by injury default over Mike DeFosse, also of Central.

finished strong with an 11-2 win over Tony Morgan.

side, Nelson Colley of Western looked like gold in scoring three decisions and a pin for his pool title. In the semi's, he pinned Johnson, while Fronhofer won 1-0 over Ralph Mordente of LI. And against Colley, he also won 1-0 for the gold. Mordente beat Johnson 8-3 for the bronze and Chris O'Bryne won by fall over Marcel Cooper of NYC for fifth.



TOM SINACORE looked dominant in winning the Open Freestyle ESG title at 125.5 pounds. A former NY state champ, he now competes for Old Dominion University.

163 pounds

In 1984 Dale Oliver came close to making the US Olympic team. A strange blood disorder that sapped his endurance might have cost him the honor. In 1988, he was first alternate for the Olympics, which means he was the number two man to go. Both times, he had beaten the guy who wound up going to the Olympics. Next year, a more experienced Oliver looks to have an excellent shot at making the team. And when you get a guy of that calibre competing in the Empire

Games, it's no contest. Oliver, competing for Adirondack, won his first two by fall in 3:15 and 1:00. Then he had a close one - 16-0. In the semifinals, he won by disqualification. And in the finals, he again scored a 16-0 technical fall. Runner-up was John Pavlin, also of Adirondack, who decked or disqualified everyone in making the finals. Dave Fish of NYC took third, with Kip Henkin, LI pinning Bob Winchip, Adirondack for fifth place.

180.5 pounds

Greg Jones of Adirondack put together an excellent tournament in winning five close matches and scoring one pin on his way to the title. Kevin Kennedy of NYC was his first opponent, and Jones won it 4-1, then 9-6 over Nick Smith of LI. He then decked Bill Miller in 3:08, and to win the pool championship, beat Joe LaRocco of LI 5-4. Jones scored an 8-3 win over powerful Kevin Gfroerer of Western. His finals opponent was Steve Fischbein of HV. Fischbein stomped to the finals, winning by fall in 1:16, fall in :43, 10-3, and a 26 pin in the semifinals over LaRocco. In the gold medal match, Jones was able to shut down Fischbein's scoring machine while scoring four of his own points to win it. LaRocco won a one-point decision over Gfroerer for third. Kennedy won by injury default over Kurt Lassen of LI for fifth.

198 pounds

Hudson Valley's Tod Giles is another Olympic hopeful who is always ranked nationally in Greco. Here, he faced a rugged class that

Greco Roman

114.5 pounds

Just three guys here, Andrew Borushik of Adirondack, Scott Larkin, and Tony Olang of Hudson Valley. Borushik first decked Larkin, then outlasted Olang, 13-11. Olang decked Larkin as well, to finish second. Larkin took the bronze, and Borushik took the gold medal.

125.5 pounds

We don't know much about the gold medalist here, Tsibelman Vacheslav of New York City. Except, of course, that he's a fantastic Greco wrestler. He started by pinning Chris Mulvay of HV in 3:35, then decked Ralph DeLuca of LI in 2:11. Another fall followed, this time against Jason Bross of Adirondack. To clinch his pool championship, he won by injury default over last year's double gold medalist, Darren Goldstein of Long Island. Also injured in the freestyle competition, Goldstein failed to win a medal. Rich Avignone of LI won the other pool title with two quick pins and a 12-5 victory. Vacheslav won by fall over Chris Mirabella of LI to make the finals, and Bross, who took second in the pool tournament, overcame Avignone 14-4 to earn another crack at Vacheslav. There, he made it much closer, losing just 4-3. Vachelsav won the gold, with Bross taking the silver. Avignone won a 7-3 decision over Mirabella for third. Goldstein, who managed third in the pool,

136.5 pounds

Western's Chris Stevens proved the best here based on four close decisions and two falls. First up was a 5-1 win over Darren Oland of LI, then a 2-1 victory over Adirondack's Tony Massaro. He next pinned Joe Amuso of Hudson Valley and beat Rob Appel of Adirondack 5-2. This put him in the semifinals, where he pinned Cengiz Evinger of NYC. Bill Starke, a gold medalist several times over, won his pool competition, but dropped a 2-1 squeaker to Appel in the semi's. He then won by injury default over Evinger for the bronze. For the title, Stevens and Appel tangled once again. Another close Stevens victory resulted, this time 2-1. In fifth place was Joe Amuso, who beat Israel Olang of HV, 11-3.

149.5 pounds

Van Fronhofer of Adirondack is still in college, yet already has Olympic aspirations. And while 1992 might be a bit early for him, don't count him out of the picture for 1996 or the year 2000. As for ESG competition, he won the title with great Greco techniques and super defensive skills. His matches seemed to be getting closer and closer as he advanced into the tournament. He first tech falled Ray LaChase of Western, 17-0. Then he won 11-7 over Chris O'Bryne of NYC, who's won several ESG medals in his time. The next round was a 3-1 win over Melvin Cooper of HV. To claim first in his pool, Fronhofer next beat Ken Johnson of LI, 13-7. Johnson took second, with O'Bryne in third. On the other

included state champs Chris Balducci of HV, Todd Webb of Central, and Ethan Bosch of Western. In round one, the powerful Giles disqualified Rich Benz of LI. Then he won 8-6 over Bosch, a national university Greco champ. In round three, he won by 16-0 tech fall over Western's Steve Cronmiller. That gave him the pool title; with Bosch in second, there was a chance of a finals rematch. In the other pool, Hudson Valley's Clifton Grant thrashed three opponents (two of whom are state champs) - 11-0 over Rich Knazik, pin in :45 over Webb, and 2:45 pin over Balducci. To win the pool, he edged a fast-improving Jason Bovenzi of Western, 5-2. In the semifinals, Giles and Bosch easily advanced, Bosch beating Grant 10-0, and Giles beating Bovenzi 12-0. The much awaited finals turned into a one-sided romp, with Giles winning by 15-0 technical fall. Bovenzi beat Grant 9-1 for third, with Cronmiller winning by injury over Balducci for fifth.

220 pounds

Veteran Jim Hall of Central relied on his vast experience to win the title here. He had a slow start in winning his first match just 1-0 over Adirondack's Jake Sabo. He then rolled 11-0 over state champ Mike Bucci. In the semifinals, he faced another state champ, Gerry Armengau of LI, whom he pinned in 2:17. Sabo won his next two matches to gain a finals rematch. The score this time was 4-0 Hall. Third place went to HV's Mike DeCapua with a 5-0 win over Armengau. Rod Cooke of LI took fifth.

HWT

As mentioned before, Open Greco belongs to Adirondack. That proved true here, as nationally ranked Chris Tironi easily powered his way to a gold medal. First was a disqualification win over state champ Bill Friburger of LI, then a :56 pin over Garfield Henry of NYC. He won by forfeit against Rob White. In the semi's, Tironi drilled John Canestaro of Central, 13-0, and then Bill Friburger in the finals, 12-0. Canestaro won by 1:16 fall in taking third over Alan Gordon of Adirondack. Fifth place went to Garfield Henry of NYC.

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