

# Quick Change on Mat

Coordination, communication and plenty of volunteers allowed this weekend's Suffolk wrestling championships to run smoothly.

Contractual obligations at the Indoor Sports Complex at SUNY-Stony Brook created unusual circumstances for scheduling and university special events manager Traci Thompson and Suffolk wrestling chairman Paul Brodmerkel.

A women's basketball game between Clark and Stony Brook scheduled for 2 p.m. yesterday was the biggest obstacle.

According to NCAA rules, teams must have an hour of pre-game warm-ups. That meant that all wrestlers and fans had to be cleared from the gym by 1 p.m. for the 2 p.m. game to set up admission and get the warmups off on time.

"We had a quick turnaround with no delays, and we were able to get everyone out with no problem," Thompson said. "Unless we had triple overtime we had confidence that we'd be okay."

A crew led by Babylon athletic director Bill DeSario had the mats back in

place by 5 p.m. for the wrestleback rounds.

"I can't say enough about the people who set up and broke down the mats," Brodmerkel said. "We had to make adjustments because Stony Brook had prior commitments and we worked it out."

"The cooperation of Section XI personnel and Paul's staffers made everything easy," Thompson said.

On Friday, with classes in session and parking difficult, shuttle buses carried fans back and forth to parking areas. The gym also had to be cleared by 6:30 p.m. for a men's basketball practice.

Longwood had served as the site for the championships for years. The increase in crowds and the need for a larger arena forced officials to look for a new site.

"Longwood and its staff had always done an outrageous job," Brodmerkel said. "But we needed six mats on the floor and to make it more comfortable for spectators in a larger facility."

"We've built a great relationship with Section XI and we look forward to hosting these events," Thompson said.

— Gregg Sarra