

Top Seeds Take a Fall

By Gregg Sarra. STAFF WRITER Newsday

Four top-seeded wrestlers heading into the final round of the Dr. Robert Fallot Memorial county wrestling championships at SUNY-Stony Brook were beaten Saturday night by opponents they had dominated throughout the season and in the past.

Earlier this year, Islip's defending county champion Mike Longobardi, a senior, handed Mt. Sinai senior Joe Morbillo (135) his only two losses, including a 7-2 defeat in the League V final.

But Morbillo denied Longobardi a second county title when he edged the Buccaneers grappler with a shocking 3-2 victory for the 135-pound class.

"It was his own 'Vision Quest,'" Mt. Sinai assistant Darren Goldstein said. "He [Longobardi] was the only kid Joe couldn't beat."

Said Morbillo: "I could have gone to a different weight class in the leagues to avoid him and a lot of people told me I should have. But we had a game plan and it worked out."

Morbillo (29-2) used a defensive strategy to keep Longobardi (29-1) off him and did enough offensively for the win. He constantly blocked Longobardi's inside moves and made it difficult to score.

Patchogue-Medford junior Artie Weidler (125) found scoring difficult in his final against Longwood junior Keith Poloskey, an opponent he'd beaten twice this year, including a 7-2 victory in the League I final.

Each time Weidler (28-1) made a move, Poloskey (29-2) hit a beautiful counter and came away with an 8-3 win to capture the 125-pound class.

Poloskey's win helped Longwood take the team title with 1131/2 points. The Lions unseated second-place and defending champion Mt. Sinai, which scored 104.

Sachem junior Derek Brady (152 pounds) met the same fate as Weidler. Brady (29-3) had beaten Connetquot sophomore Joe Patrovich twice this year, including an 8-3 decision in the League I final. But the third time was a charm for Patrovich, who took a 7-2 victory for the title. It gave Connetquot its 12th county champ in the past 13 years.

"Interesting tournament, that proves you never really know," Connetquot coach Bill Santoro said. "We told Joe, who's still maturing as a sophomore and gaining confidence, that he could win. He wrestled wide open without any pressure."

And after those three upsets, Bellport's Ryan Newman (31-4) went out and took it to previously unbeaten Islip senior Guy Wavra (28-2). Newman has lost three times over the past three years to Wavra, including an 11-3 beating in a semifinal of the Islip Tournament.

"We thought Wavra would be a little tentative before the final," Bellport coach Fred Meyer said. "We could see it in his emotion. The magnitude really didn't register with our kid [Newman] and it didn't bother him being in the spotlight. And when he hit the fireman's carry and clamped him up, I knew it was over. He never lets people off their back."

Said Newman, who recorded his 29th pin: "I just locked him up and that was it."

Rocky Point's Matt Wyllie (24-0), the school's all-time winningest wrestler (148 wins), became only the third wrestler in Suffolk to win four county titles. He did that after pulling out a 15-10 decision in a brawl with Longwood's George Sable at 145 pounds.

"This was the toughest win yet," Wyllie said. "He was really strong and ready to go."

Wyllie hit Sable with an early five-point move when he picked the Longwood wrestler's ankle and dumped him on his back for a 9-2 lead. Sable (31-1) pushed the action throughout the second and third periods but couldn't pull off the upset.

Shoreham-Wading River freshman Jesse Jantzen (33-0) locked up his third county title with a first-period pin in 1:37 over Bayport-Blue Point junior Bryon Rose. Jantzen is 94-3 in his career.

Wyandanch senior Thomas Marrero (15-0), the defending state champion, needed a late third-period takedown for a 6-5 win over junior Mike Clancy (18-4) of Kings Park. Marrero won the 250-pound state title in 1996.

"I almost blew it," Marrero said. "But I kept working for that last move and it finally happened."

And Marrero will look for a repeat of his past glory at the states Friday at the Onondaga War Memorial in Syracuse at 3 p.m.

But Marrero beware. Saturday night, past glories were simply the past.