

Giani Upholding a Tradition

By Gregg Sarra
STAFF WRITER

For the record his name is Lou Rocco Giani. He is an 18-year-old senior at Huntington and third generation wrestler to grab the spotlight.

Giani is trying to write another chapter to a rich family tradition at the Dr. Robert Fallo Memorial Suffolk wrestling championships at the University at Stony Brook.

His grandfather, Lou Giani Sr., became Huntington's first county champ in 1953 at 141 pounds, and has been the Blue Devils' head coach for 30 years. He stood matside as his grandson decisioned rugged Rich Delgado of Centereach, 6-2, in a 152-pound semifinal match yesterday morning to advance to the final against Islip's Mike Patrovich.

Standing alongside the head coach during Giani's win was his father, Lou Giani Jr., an assistant coach at Huntington. Lou Giani Jr. also was a county champ, winning the 155-pound title in 1973 and becoming the school's first state champion.

"One more step," a tired but upbeat Giani said after his semifinal win. He placed sixth last year. "My family has never put any pressure on me. They just tell me to do the best I can and I follow the program they gave me."

There has been no generation gap in Huntington. For the third straight generation, a Giani reached the final. Ironically, his opponent also comes from a family with successful wrestling bloodlines. Mike Patrovich, a junior, also is the defending county champion at 119 pounds. His father, Joe Sr., was a coun-



Lou Rocco Giani, seated between his dad, Lou Jr., left, and his grandfather, Lou Sr., is trying to add to the family tradition of county championships in Suffolk wrestling.

Photo by Joseph D. Sullivan

ty champion at Farmingdale in 1973 at 145 pounds. His brother, Joe Jr., was a two-time county titlist from Connetquot in 1997 and '99.

"I'd say the sport is steeped in family tradition," said Section XI wrestling chairman Joe Giani, Lou Sr.'s son, who also won a county title in 1976 at 132 pounds. "It's a very family-oriented sport."

The Gianis and Patrovichs exemplify that family spirit. As does Hauppauge coach Chris Messina and his

son, Michael, a two-time state champion (1998-99). As does Ward Melville coach Kurt Ferraro, who will try and guide his 18-year-old son Cole through the 275-pound final.

And ultimately in the same manner that Shoreham-Wading River assistant coach Don Jantzen has watched his son, Jesse, win five county championships and three state titles. He got to see Jesse on Suffolk's grand stage one more time. Jesse tried to win an unprecedented sixth championship

last night against Brentwood's Casey Beach in the 145-pound final.

For Lou Rocco Giani, it's been a long road to the final. He underwent reconstructive shoulder surgery a little more than a year ago and has rebounded from the injury well.

"I feel so great about his ability to make it back," said his father. "I'm very proud. He's a great kid. I think he feels the pressure but he handles it very well."

Notes & Quotes: The finals will air on a tape delayed telecast at 8:30 p.m. Thursday and Friday on cable channels 68 and 79.

DR. ROBERT FALLO SUFFOLK WRESTLING CHAMPIONSHIPS
Semifinal Results — At State University at Stony Brook

96 - Rob Vaccaro (East Islip) p. Jaret Czarniecki (Northport), 3:28; Matt Sganga (Longwood) d. Joe Fiumano (Huntington), 10-9. 103 - John Cusumano (Lindenhurst) d. Rob Fredette (Westhampton), 8-2; Patrick Flynn (Huntington) d. Joe Moramarco (Northport), 5-1. 112 - Starlin Jimenez (Brentwood) p. Ryan McCreedy (Shoreham-Wading River), 2:55; Dan Song (Hauppauge) d. Greg McCoy (North Babylon), 3-2. 119 - Steve Sebastopoli (Lindenhurst) d. Lou Vecchio (Westhampton), 3-2; Steve Palacios (Huntington) d. Mike Vaccaro (East Islip), 3-2. 125 - Frankie Rivera (North Babylon) d. Josh Federico (Kings Park), 5-1; 130 - Kyle Bernholz (Mt. Sinai) d. Jerard Melito (Patchogue-Medford), 5-2; Anthony Carbone (Northport) d. Mike Williams (Floyd), 12-11. 135 - Mike Torriero (Rocky Point) def. Chris Barrett (East Islip), tech. fall 3:56; Justin Iannello (Hauppauge) d. Adam DeOliviera (Floyd), 6-5. 140 - Ryan Maurer (Floyd) d. Bill Mascaro (West Islip), 15-6; Uthman Jackson (Amityville) d. Gavin Ressa (Hauppauge), 12-6. 145 - Jesse Jantzen (Shoreham) def. Charles Kozara (Mattituck), tech. fall, 3:50; Casey Beach (Brentwood) d. Lee Rappaport (Hills West), 11-1. 152 - Mike Patrovich (Islip) d. Mike Seluzitsky (Commack), 3-1; Lou Giani (Huntington) d. Rich Delgado (Centereach), 6-2. 160 - Jack Piana (Huntington) p. Frank Zappala (Connetquot), 1:00; Ryan Robey (Newfield) d. Joe Cea (Rocky Point), 14-4. 171 - Jerome Joe (Hills East) d. Chris Cardella (Whitman), 4-2; Woody Cromarty (Amityville) p. Ricky Ressa (Hauppauge), 1:11. 189 - Antonio Pegues (Brentwood) p. Peter Vlahakis (Shoreham), 5:12; Matt Rocco (Hills East) d. Ben Bonaventura (Hauppauge), 9-7. 215 - Dan Sable (Longwood) d. Larry Lewis (Hauppauge), 13-1; Larry Banks (Brentwood) d. Kevin Gribbon (Harborfields), 5-3. 275 - Duncan Iannucci (Sachem) d. Werner (Stony Brook), 3-1; Cole Ferraro (Ward Melville) p. Chris Gugliotta (Sayville), 3:56. **Team Scores** - Huntington 122, Brentwood 103 1/2, Hauppauge 97, Shoreham-Wading River 78, East Islip 72 1/2, Floyd 69 1/2, Amityville 63, Northport 60, Lindenhurst 57 1/2, North Babylon 54 1/2, Rocky Point 50 1/2, Longwood 46 1/2, Hills East 46 1/2.