

# Hromada Gains Final, Eyes Syracuse

By Gregg Sarra  
STAFF WRITER

Steve Hromada wants another trip to the state wrestling championships in Syracuse. This time, however, he'd like to do it in a Half Hollow Hills East uniform.

Hromada, a senior and the top seed at 125 pounds, stormed into last night's final against Lindenhurst's Tony Sebastopoli in the Suffolk County Wrestling Tournament at Stony Brook University.

## SUFFOLK WRESTLING CHAMPIONSHIPS

Hromada, who finished third at 130 pounds in the county tournament a year ago, earned the berth in the final yesterday morning with a technical fall over Rob Fredette of Westhampton in 3:30. With a 34-0 record and having already beaten Sebastopoli, 16-4, in the Islip Cup this season, Hromada looks to be on his way to the state tournament.

"It's my last chance to win a state championship in the public school tournament," said Hromada, who placed fourth in the county in 2001. "But I'm not looking past the final. It's doesn't matter what happened during the season. I've seen so many upsets over the past two days. I'll keep my focus on one guy in one match and then deal with the upstate tournament."

Hromada's first appearance at the New York State Public Schools championships came as a Chaminade freshman in 2000. He captured the 96-pound CHSAA title and wore the brown and yellow sectional singlet upstate, where he lost both of his bouts.

"I need to get back upstate. It's been one of my many goals," Hromada said. "I lost to the state runner-up and the kid who finished fourth in the state. And I wanted a rematch with both of them."

He got one with LaSalle's Steve Sutton as a junior and avenged the state loss with a thorough win by technical fall in a freestyle bout. But he never wres-

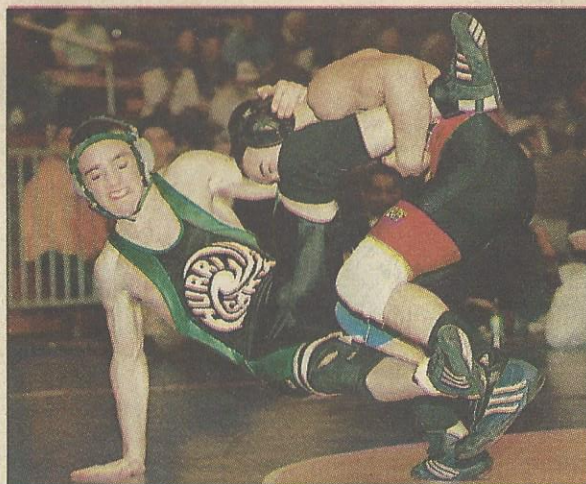


Photo by Joseph D. Sullivan

Steve Hromada, right, takes down Rob Fredette during his win in the Suffolk County 125-pound semifinals.

tled Massapequa's Walter Sosnowski again.

"He's lucky he graduated," Hromada said with a laugh. "I wanted him pretty bad. Maybe we'll meet in college."

Hromada said he could have stayed at Chaminade and won four CHSAA state titles and made four trips to Syracuse, but he transferred after a year because he felt he didn't fit in.

"It just wasn't me," said Hromada, an Honor Society student with a 95 grade-point average. "It was a good school academically but it didn't have the whole social and sports package for me. It would have been nice to go to Syracuse four times, but there's more than just wrestling, and that's what I was looking for. I know I could excel in academics wherever I go to school. It's matter of focus and prioritizing."

Hromada scored a 1,290 on his SAT and wants to study business finance in college. He's taken his wrestling to another level working with Angelo Zegarelli, a former state champion from Deer Park.

Now he'd like to have something in common with Zegarelli — a state crown.

**Notes & Quotes:** Riverhead coach Walt Stewart, who was inducted into the National Wrestling Hall of Fame two years ago, was in attendance again yesterday to watch the Blue Waves put two wrestlers into the finals by defeating two of the top seeds. Fourth-seeded John Capwell pinned top-seeded John Barone of Floyd in the semifinals in 3:04. He'll meet Rob Parker of Northport, the second seed, who edged Jeff Pastore of Smithtown, 5-4. Unseeded Matt Scott came away with a thrilling 3-1 overtime victory over top-seeded Gavin Johansen of Rocky Point at 130 pounds. Scott will wrestle unseeded Charlie Taylor of Amityville in the final . . . Five of last year's eight county runner-ups reached last night's final round, including Ken Torres (Brentwood, 103), Romaine Malcolm (Amityville, 135), Alton Lucas (West Babylon, 145), Phil Archer (Floyd, 171) and Brian McQuade (Longwood, 215).

DR. ROBERT FALLOT SUFFOLK COUNTY WRESTLING TOURNAMENT  
At Stony Brook University  
Semifinals

96 — Lahn (Lindenhurst) p. Jantzen (Shoreham-Wading River), 2:48; Eagan (Smithtown) d. Ingram (East Islip), 12-0. 103 — Torres (Brentwood) d. Schollmeyer (Deer Park), 14-2; Meringolo (Whitman) d. Iorio (Sachem), 9-4. 112 — Tutunjian (Longwood) d. Rudden (Connetquot), 5-2; Mag-nani (Islip) d. Mulzoff (Whitman), 10-3. 119 — Riley (Huntington) d. Rosado (Central Islip), by tf., 5:59; Knapp (Bay Shore) d. Raynor (Riverhead), 6-3. 125 — Hromada (Hills East) d. Fredette (West-hampton) by tf., 3:30; Sebastopoli (Lindenhurst) d. Darrow (Riverhead), 5-2. 130 — Scott (River-head) d. Johansen (Rocky Point), 3-1. OT; Taylor (Amityville) p. Sterling (Copiague), 5:57. 135 — Holmes (Longwood) p. Terwilliger (West Islip), 2:45; Malcolm (Amityville) p. Risberg (Port JEFFER-son), 5:22. 140 — Cummings (Bay Shore) d. Pardo (Brentwood), 5-1; Bradshaw (Huntington) d. Weibert (Northport), 10-3. 145 — Lucas (West Babylon) d. Copeland (Amityville), 6-1; Marro (Haup-pauge) d. Rivera (Brentwood), 8-4. 152 — Fraser (Amityville) d. Cardillo (Hauppauge), 5-2; Esposito (Islip) d. Paar (Huntington), 3-0. 160 — Capwell (Riverhead) p. Barone (Floyd) 3:04; Parker (North-port) d. Pastore (Smithtown), 5-4. 171 — Archer (Floyd) d. Sinclair (Deer Park), by tf., 5:59; Barnikel (Kings Park) d. Taylor (Glenn), 8-2. 189 — Sullivan (Huntington) d. Wolfe (North Babylon), 4-2; Aug-usta (Northport) d. Gossweiler (Sachem), 4-2. OT. 215 — Taylor (Copiague) p. Interiano (Miller Place), 4:36; McQuade (Longwood) d. Blanchard (West Babylon), 7-6. 275 — Casarona (Smith-town) d. Rafferty (Hills East), 6-2; Montemarano (Connetquot) d. Walker (East Hampton), 2:53.

**Team scores** — Amityville 95, Riverhead 88, Huntington 82, Smithtown 81, Longwood 77 1/2, Islip 73 1/2, Brentwood 64 1/2, Northport 64 1/2, Whitman 59, Bay Shore 57, Lindenhurst 52, Copiague 46, Hauppauge 45, Hills East 43, Sachem 43.