

Federation wrestling event

2nd event simply not necessary

SYRACUSE—Fourteen wrestlers won what was supposed to be the most coveted prize in New York state this season.

The first Federation wrestling tournament was held at Fowler High School on Sunday, with the story focusing more on who wasn't there than who was.

For the most part, the competition was average, the crowd was sparse and, as expected, everyone went home dissatisfied.

With the exception of the 13 New York State Public High School Athletic Association champions who either didn't make weight Saturday night or simply decided not to show up.

The one NYSPHSAA champion who decided to take part in the Federation tournament just hours after winning the tournament at the Onondaga County War Memorial in Syracuse was Unatego's 177-pounder, Nick Muzashvili.

Although little proof was necessary, considering the little success the Catholic High School Athletic Association and Public School Athletic League had in the state meet in previous years, Muzashvili showed the NYSPHSAA is levels above the CHSAA and PSAL.

He started the day with an 22-8 technical fall victory over Peter Murawski of Chaminate — a CHSAA school — in 5 minutes, 10 seconds. It was the only semifinal match of the tournament.

In the final, Muzashvili needed just 3:02 for his 16-1 technical fall victory over Victor Moran, who wrestlers for Franklin D. Roosevelt of the PSAL, in the title match.

"Yesterday was a lot more difficult," said Muzashvili, a senior who finished at 30-1. "All of the weight classes were much tougher yesterday.

"I'm just so happy to win a New York state championship."

One among the 100 or so onlookers at Fowler High wasn't as happy.

She was Sandra Scott, executive director of the New York State Public High Athletic Association.

"It's a disgrace," Scott said. "The coaches made a decision that hurt all 11 sections and the kids from the other two federations.

"Our association voted to have separate championships and they have boycotted it.

"Especially Section 4 (which won five NYSPHSAA titles Saturday). They did so



Nick Muzashvili

a major bust

Wrestlers boycott extra tournament day —

good at our tournament."

When told that some of Saturday's NYSPHSAA champs didn't wrestle Sunday because they couldn't make weight — C.J. MacNaught of Walton being one of those — Scott replied: "If they were motivated, they would have made weight. This young man did (pointing to Muzashvili)."

When Dylan Urban — Union-Endicott's 119-pound champion — was asked Saturday night if he would compete Sunday, he said, "No, I'm satisfied with winning this title. Besides, I know I can beat those guys anyway."

MacNaught, the 91-pound champ, 132-pound champion Jeff Reese of Elmira Southside, and Greene's 155-pound winner Jake Hoyt all said Saturday night that they would not compete.

Perhaps the biggest farce Sunday came when 138-pound Public School Athletic League champion Tony Park of Stuyvesant was given the Federation title by forfeit. The NYSPHSAA champ, Kyle James of Niskayuna, didn't show up and the Catholic champion didn't make weight.

"I don't feel like I won anything," Park said. "It's kind of a joke. (The PSAL) didn't take it seriously. We're waiting for them to go back to the old system."

Iowa unbeatens could equal mark

Iowa can become the second school in college wrestling history with three unbeaten individual champions in the same season.

Since the sport started in 1928, that feat has been achieved twice, at the same school: Oklahoma State in 1954 and 1965.

Iowa's unbeatens: sophomore Jeff McGinness (24-0, 126 pounds), junior Lincoln McIlravy (21-0, 150) and senior Joel Sharratt (22-0, 190).

McIlravy could become the first wrestler in history with four NCAA titles in four seasons. He could grab No. 3 this weekend and add No. 4 in 1996.

Oklahoma State's Pat Smith became the first, four-time college champ last season, but accomplished the feat in a span of five seasons.

"It would be nice to be the first, but I don't worry about that stuff," McIlravy says.

Sharratt defends his 1994 national championship. McGinness, last season's Big Ten Conference freshman of the year, was fifth at the '94 NCAAAs.

"It would be great to end with (an individual) championship," Sharratt said. "And if everyone does their job, the team title will take care of itself."

— Bruce Miller