

Jantzen Pinning Hopes on History

By Gregg Sarra

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Syracuse — Jesse Jantzen will begin the final phase of his wonderful wrestling career this week. He will begin a weight training program, start his running and set up a freestyle schedule for workouts with his North Shore wrestling club.

He believes there is no time to rest when you're on the path to success. And no one would argue with him.

With the pressure of winning a third straight state title behind him, Jantzen would rewrite the New York wrestling history books with a fourth title in his senior year.

"I said it when he was a freshman and I'll say it again," Shoreham-Wading River coach Paul Jendrewski said, "if there's anyone that can win four state titles — Jesse Jantzen can. He has the makeup, the maturity and the technical skill to accomplish it. It's been a fantastic ride since he was a seventh-grader."

Now you could say the pressure is really on. Jantzen, a junior at Shoreham-Wading River, made this all possible when he won his third consecutive state title by beating Johnson City's Matt Yonkoski by technical fall in 2:54 of the 145-pound weight class late Saturday night at the state championships at the Onondaga War Memorial in Syracuse. The performance earned Jantzen the tournament's most outstanding wrestler award.

The only Suffolk wrestler to win three state titles before Jantzen was Longwood's John Lange (1992-94). Jantzen became the 11th wrestler in the state ever to win three state crowns.

"I have thought about winning four state titles," Jantzen said. "I know it's never been done before — and now I have the chance. But all it takes is one mistake and that possibility is gone. I take no opponent for granted and I know I'll have to continue to improve to make it happen."

Added Jendrewski: "Two things can happen next year. Either everyone will run from Jesse and go to other weight classes or someone will come from out of the woodwork to challenge him and try to be the last one to beat him."

"That is unlikely.

Jantzen wasted little time building a 12-0 first-period lead on Yonkoski before tipping him to his back early in the second period for the win. The victory sets the stage for Jantzen to challenge

Results on Page A36

the state record for wins, which is 223. His winning streak reached 117 and his career record improved to 175-3. The accolades don't stop there. He is the third wrestler in history to place at the state tournament five times and the first to win state titles as a freshman, sophomore and junior.

Jantzen shared the spotlight with three other Long Island champions, including two-time state champion Mike Messina (130, 36-2) of Hauppauge, who downed Mineola's Beau Bruno, 17-8.

"I felt great before the final," Messina said. "We had the right game plan. And I was very loose out there."

Messina's father, Chris, who coached the Suffolk sectional team to the state title with 221 points, was instrumental in getting his son ready for the previously unbeaten Bruno (35-1). Bruno, Lawrence's Stu Holzer (112) and Massapequa's Vinny D'Agostino keyed Nassau's rise to second place in the team standings, giving Long Island a 1-2 finish for the first time since 1964.

"We knew Beau would be great on his feet and we told Mike to stay away from the tieups," said Chris Messina, who coaches his son at Hauppauge, the county team champion.

Floyd's super sophomore, Ryan Maurer (33-1), followed Messina's win with an exciting 10-7 victory over Justin Giffe of Webster for the 135-pound title. Maurer, who has extraordinary strength for a sophomore, turned Giffe to his back for the win.

"There was no way I was losing," Maurer said. "I worked too hard through the offseason and I was determined to get it done. He was probably the strongest kid I'd wrestled all year. Now I can go for three titles."

Winning one title was enough for Massapequa's Tom Katsigiorgis. He made good on a promise that he would capture a title after he fell short of a placement in last year's tournament. Katsigiorgis outlasted Jim Matheis of Williamsville-South, 3-2, for the 189-pound crown.

"I was pumped up because I had something to prove," Katsigiorgis said. "I'm no chump. And last year I left that mat crying like a baby after I lost. I never wanted to leave that mat crying again. Tonight, I am the champion."

1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10-11-12-13-14-15-16-17-18-19-20-21-22-23-24-25-26-27-28-29-30-31-32-33-34-35-36-37-38-39-40-41-42-43-44-45-46-47-48-49-50-51-52-53-54-55-56-57-58-59-60-61-62-63-64-65-66-67-68-69-70-71-72-73-74-75-76-77-78-79-80-81-82-83-84-85-86-87-88-89-90-91-92-93-94-95-96-97-98-99-100

1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10-11-12-13-14-15-16-17-18-19-20-21-22-23-24-25-26-27-28-29-30-31-32-33-34-35-36-37-38-39-40-41-42-43-44-45-46-47-48-49-50-51-52-53-54-55-56-57-58-59-60-61-62-63-64-65-66-67-68-69-70-71-72-73-74-75-76-77-78-79-80-81-82-83-84-85-86-87-88-89-90-91-92-93-94-95-96-97-98-99-100