

STATE WRESTLING CHAMPIONSHIPS

N Sports

Daddino keeps eye on crown

■ Sewanhaka senior has made it through rounds to be Nassau's only hope to bring home a championship

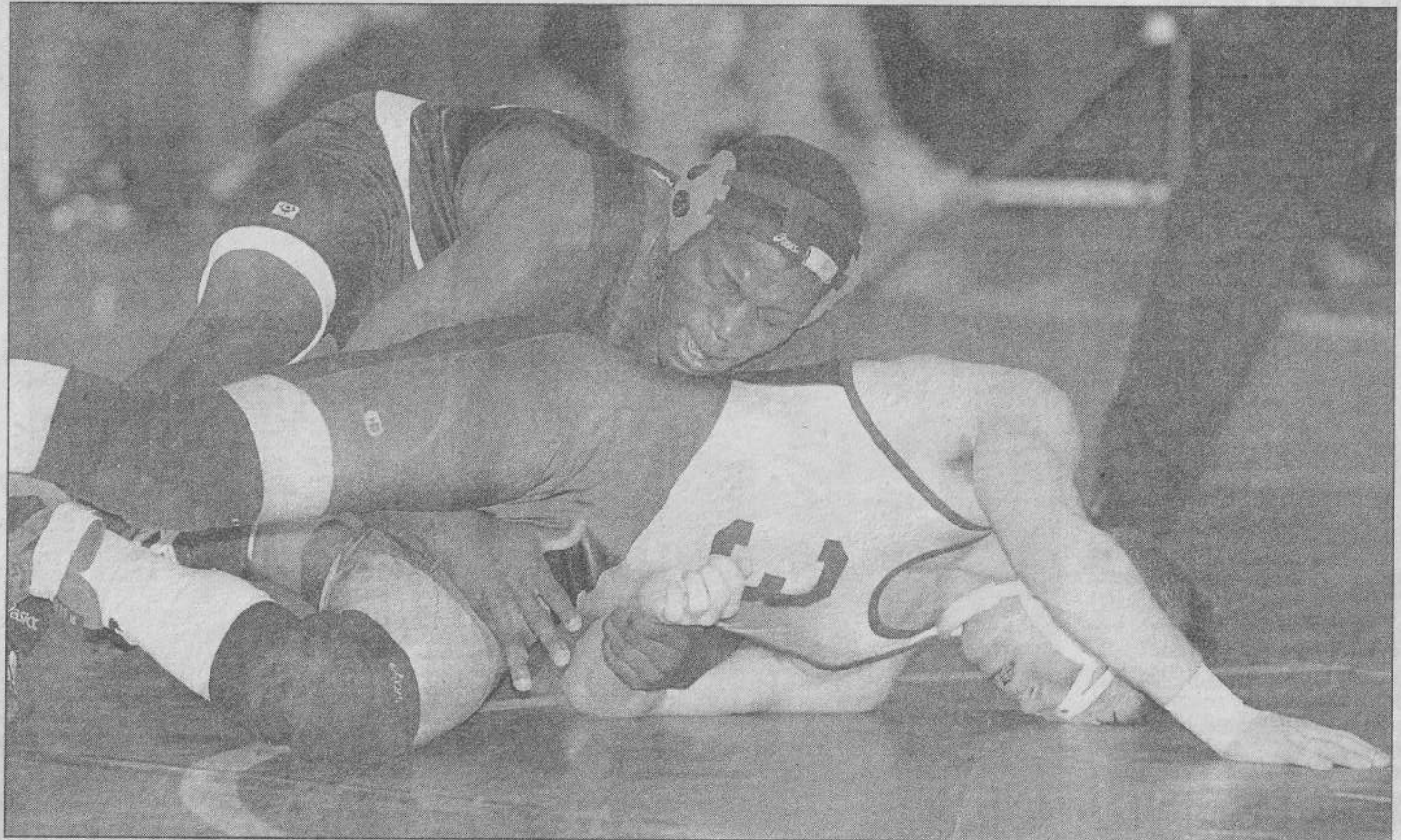
BY GREGG SARRA
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BUFFALO — The first trip to the state wrestling tournament is usually a test of nerves. The huge crowds, the pressure that comes with competing against the best the state has to offer and because the draw is a blind one, wrestlers don't know how tough an opponent can be.

Sewanhaka senior Matt Daddino found that out in the first round of this year's state championships at Alumni Arena at the University at Buffalo. Daddino survived a first-round scare and edged Max El-Hag of Section I's Fox Lane, 8-7.

He followed the first-round victory with two first-period pins in the quarterfinals and semis to move into last night's 215-pound final against Zack Zerniak of Franklin (X). Zerniak placed fifth at 215 in last year's championships.

After Daddino dispersed El-Hag to the wrestleback round, the senior El-Hag easily handled four opponents for a third-place finish. Daddino shook off the early jitters and pounded Nick Strange of Niagara Falls (VI) in the semifinal round for a pin in 1:12. "Winning the state title has been the goal all season," said Daddino, who improved to 35-0. "It was good to get the first win out of the way. I feel good."



AP PHOTO

HUNTINGTON'S 145-POUND wrestler Shaheim Bradshaw, top, tries to lock down the arm of Joe Dolson of Cicero-N. Syracuse.

Daddino was the only Nassau wrestler to reach the finals. East Meadow's Spencer Cook (130) lost a heartbreaker in overtime to East Islip's Trevor Baney, 11-9. Cook caught Baney in a tough third-period headlock for a 9-8 lead and held him on the mat for 1:31. Baney wiggled out of the headlock with two seconds left in the match to force overtime and won it with a takedown at 31 seconds

of the extra period.

East Meadow's Matt DeLuca (171) was beaten by Floyd's John Barone, 5-2, in a semifinal and Baldwin's Andrew Cardella (130) was shut out by Huntington's Shawn Riley, 5-0. Cardella had come into the match with a 40-1 record.

"It was a very tough match and Andrew found Riley very hard to score on," Baldwin coach Mike Robinson said. "He

was strong and had good balance."

Long Beach freshman P.J. Gillespie won three consecutive bouts in the wrestleback round to take third place. He beat Fulton's Derrick Bartlett (III), 5-2, for the third.

Once again, the Suffolk sectional team pounded the opposition in the state tournament, winning the team title before the final round.

Suffolk moved 10 wrestlers into the finals. Shoreham-Wading River's Corey Jantzen (96), Brentwood's Kenny Torres (103), Islip's Tom Magnani (119), Riley (130), Baney (135), Islip's Ryan Patrovich (140), Huntington's Shaheim Bradshaw (145), West Babylon's Alton Lucas (152), Barone (171) and Huntington's Jack Sullivan (189) were all looking to win a crown.