

Suffolkmania Overwhelms State Wrestling

Wins 8 individual titles

By Gregg Sarra

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Syracuse — The Suffolk sectional team put on a clinic at the state wrestling championships at the Onondaga War Memorial.

They were so good the other sectional teams should have taken notes as Suffolk crowned eight individual champions and scored 242½ points to win its first team title since 1989, falling just four points shy of its own state record set in 1986.

Longwood crowned three champions to tie a state record, shared by Brentwood (1971) and Mepham (1964).

"It was nothing less than awesome," Longwood coach Mike Picozzi said. "And all three kids finished undefeated."

Longwood's Kerry McCoy forced a smile after he captured the 177-pound title with a 5-2 win over Ryan Hammersmith of Clarence.

"I settled for less than perfect again," said McCoy, who lost in the state final as a junior. "I wasn't satisfied with my performance."

McCoy's expectations and guidance as captain of the sectional was a major factor in the team's performance.

"The kid is a real leader," West Islip coach Tony Mellino said. "He kept the kids focused and ready."

Huntington's Brian Fischenich posted a technical fall in 5:44 over Freeport sophomore James Hieronymous for the 91-pound title. He became coach Lou Giani's 15th state champion, the most for any coach in the state.

Centereach's Keith Matias (105) turned in a stunning 7-4 win over Bethpage's James Douglas for the title. The win made Matias the first state champion in the Middle Country School District.

Sachem became the first school to have two state champions earn the most outstanding wrestler award

when Jason Kraft (155) won the honor and joined Dan Mayo, a 1983 recipient.

Louis DiMaria (126) of Herricks was coach Cliff Forziat's first state champ in his 15 years at the school. DiMaria was Nassau's lone state champ as the section finished seventh.

"He's put in five hard years," Forziat said of DiMaria. "He's self-motivated. His family and the coaches are very proud of him."

First-round losers at the state championships are forced into the difficult wrestleback round and are sometimes overlooked as the focus shifts to the wrestlers who advance and vie for titles.

But who could fail to notice the wrestling displayed by Sachem's Sean O'Hara (126) and Bethpage's Phil Coniglio (145). Both suffered first-round losses and battled their way back to third-place finishes with four consecutive wins.

"I was disappointed when I lost," O'Hara said. "But there's a pride factor, and instead of throwing my hands up and quitting, I went all out for third. I wanted to go out a winner."

That he did.

Final Results

91 — Brian Fischenich (Huntington) def. James Hieronymous (Freeport) by tech. fall, 5:44. 98 — John Carvalho (Sachem) dec. Gary Wolf (Beaver River, III), 5-3. 105 — Keith Matias (Centereach) dec. James Douglas (Bethpage), 7-4. 112 — Alex Croog (Brighton, V) dec. Ted Secoolish (Johnson City, IV), 6-3. 119 — Ron Vosburg (Elmira Free Academy) dec. Rob Bashaw (Peru, VII), 7-4. 126 — Louis DiMaria (Herricks) dec. John DeMoors (Baldwinsville, III), 10-7. 132 — John Morello (Lockport, VI) dec. Chad Henkin (Rocky Point), 4-2, in overtime. 138 — Duane Thompson (Longwood) dec. Shawn Nautel (Niskayuna, II), 3-0. 145 — John Lange (Longwood) dec. Matt Manico (Colonie, II), 6-0. 155 — Jason Kraft (Sachem) dec. Mitch Clark (Canton, X), 13-6. 167 — Mike Quaglio (John Jay East Fishkill, I) dec. Eric Gross (Medina, VI), 9-2. 177 — Kerry McCoy (Longwood) dec. Ryan Hammersmith (Clarence, VI), 5-2. Hvy — Jamie Huntington (Whitehall, II) dec. Casey Lamb (Victor, V), 7-3. 250 — Jason Cohen (West Islip) dec. Jason Spector (Queensbury, II), 3-2. Most Outstanding Wrestler — Jason Kraft, Sachem.

Team Scores — Suffolk 242½, Albany-Schenectady II 185½, Syracuse III 170, Buffalo VI 134, Westchester I 133, Binghamton IV 129½, Nassau 126, Rochester V 102, St. Lawrence County X 47½, Plattsburgh-Champlain VII 43, Catskills IX 29, CHSAA 25½, PSAL 16.