



Elmira Notre Dame wrestlers Brad Seymour (bottom) and Kevin Wilson grapple during a Feb. 19 practice at ND.

Bebette G. Augustin/Photo editor

Crusaders claim first-ever Section 4 crown

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

For a team that wasn't accustomed to being front-runners, the Elmira Notre Dame wrestlers acted like they'd been on top forever.

Notre Dame, which took a decisive lead thanks to the outstanding performance of its lower weight classes, cruised to the Section 4 Class D championship this past Saturday, Feb. 22, at Deposit High School.

This marks the first sectional wrestling title in ND history. The Crusaders scored 171 1/2 points to outdistance Groton, which finished with 145 1/2 points; and Deposit and Harpursville, with 128 each.

ND essentially had the meet wrapped up before the finals even began, since the Crusaders owned a

17-point lead at that point and had five wrestlers in the championship round.

Three Notre Dame grapplers won individual titles, in consecutive weight classes no less: Tim Steed at 105 pounds, Chris Kamas at 112 and Brad Seymour at 119.

Second-place finishers were Mike Clune at 167 and Damian Saks at 250.

Seventh-year Crusader Coach Steve Weber reported that the team's celebration was a relatively subdued one.

"It's more of a relief than anything else. (The wrestlers) were really beat because we had to leave (for Deposit) at 6 a.m.," he explained.

Ten ND wrestlers placed in the top four, thereby earning the right to compete in the overall sectionals this Friday and Saturday, Feb. 28-29, at Cornell University. This tournament combines Section 4 wrestlers from all four

classifications (A through D) and serves as a state qualifier, with the individual winner of each weight class going on to states.

Joining the ND finalists at the upcoming meet are Brett Owen (91) and Andre Serafin (126), who each took third this past weekend; and Alex Jordan (98), Kevin Wilson (138) and Dan Wilson (177), who all finished fourth.

Section 5 also held its championships this past weekend, and Bishop Kearney's Gracen Porreca won an individual title in the Class B 105-pound division.

Porreca scored a 9-1 decision over Victor's Ken Shaffer in the Feb. 22 finals at Palmyra-Macedon High School. The win was Porreca's first sectional title after he placed second the previous two years.

Porreca's record is now 27-1-1 for

the season and 102-15-1 for his career. He is BK's first wrestler ever to reach the 100-victory plateau.

Porreca will be back in action Feb. 28-29 when the Super Sectional state qualifier takes place at Webster Junior High School.

Two McQuaid Jesuit wrestlers also qualified for Super Sectionals by recording top-four finishes in Class A.

Mark Voci, competing in the 119-pound division, reached the championship round before losing 3-2 to Fairport's Mike Kohl on Feb. 22 at Rush-Henrietta High School.

Along with Voci's second-place showing, teammate John Zicari finished third at 98 pounds to reach the Super Sectionals.

In team scoring, McQuaid finished 12th in Class A. BK ended up 15th in Class B.

Knights cruise to sectional indoor title; Walters, Deegan triumph for Little Irish

ROCHESTER — This might be the only sports team you'll ever meet that enjoys being in the basement.

Not the one where last-place teams are known to dwell, but the basement at the University of Rochester Palestra. That's where the U of R's indoor track is located, and it's also where McQuaid Jesuit acted like anything but a last-place club this past Saturday, Feb. 22.

The Knights turned in a record-setting performance in winning the Section 5 Class A boys' championship for the third time in five years. McQuaid scored 125 team points, surpassing the previous meet record of 114 1/2 set by East last year.

This was supposed to be a two-way race between McQuaid and Fairport, but it turned into a blowout as the Knights finished ahead of the second-place Red Raiders by a full 50 points.

According to McQuaid Coach Bob Bradley, the meet's turning point came in three early events — the 3,200 meters, 1,000 meters and high jump.

"We had projected Fairport to have 25 points and us to have 33, but instead it was 48-12 and that was pretty discouraging for Fairport," Bradley commented. "And we never let up after that; we scored in every event."

The Knights' early burst saw Adam Reitz and Dan Lesser finish two-three in the 3,200, followed by a one-two showing from Tim Kelley and Eric Garsin in the 1,000 (Kelley's win was McQuaid's only individual first place of the meet). Then Steve Parrish went second in the high jump and Mike Keogh took second in the 600 meters.

Other high individual finishers included Garsin, second in the 1,600; and Kris Weldon, second in the 300.

With a 95-65 edge, the Knights already had first place clinched heading into the meet-ending relays. Then, just for good measure, they swept all three events.

The 3,200 relay consisted of Shawn Watts, Keogh, Garsin and Kelley; the 1,600 relay was comprised of Les Bernard, Joe Tiffany, Damon Wade and

Weldon; and the 800 relay featured Bernard, Keogh, Wade and Weldon.

This was Bradley's third indoor title. He's also won five outdoor track sectionals, as well as eight in cross-country, in his 30 years at McQuaid.

The Knights will reach for further success in the sectional Meet of Champions state qualifier this Saturday at the U of R, beginning at 10 a.m.

In the girls' indoor track sectionals, Aquinas Institute's Josie Walters had a big day in Class B. She won two events, capturing the triple jump and 40-meter hurdles. Walters also took third in the long jump to help the Little Irish finish sixth in team scoring.

Also having a good sectional were the Aquinas boys, who placed fourth in Class B. Top AQ performers were Rick Deegan, who won the pole vault; Joe Hayes, second in the shot put; and Gabe Bauza, second in the 40 hurdles.

Bishop Kearney's boys were led by Paul Blandino, who ended up third in the Class B 600 meters.

— Mike Latona

SPORT
SHORTS



MHA benefit set

BRIGHTON — The second Mental Health Association Hoop-A-Thon is scheduled for Sunday, March 1, from noon to 6 p.m. at McQuaid Jesuit High School, 1800 Clinton Ave. S.

Individuals may participate alone or as part of a team. Each participant will shoot baskets for a limited amount of time. Pledges will be based on the number of baskets made. Prizes will also be awarded.

Registration and pledge sheets may be obtained from the Mental Health Association, 1100 University Ave., or by calling 716/256-0590.