

Brighton Upsets ER Matmen

Up to last Saturday night, the East Rochester High School wrestling team was copying a rating familiar all during the football season when coach Don Quinn's grid eleven was hailed as the state's premiere club.

Then, within a short-two hour period, the hopes of the matmen faded away as the Bombers were upset by a visiting Brighton team that was given a big lift when the first three wrestlers posted a 14-0 lead.

"We were in trouble after 98 pounder John Walczyk lost a 10-6 decision to Marty Presburg," Quinn said.

And, when 105 pounder Frank Rotunda was pinned by Brighton's Kevin Willis at the 2:55 mark, Quinn sensed disaster.

It was really that at the end of the third scrape, when Rick Lane, of Brighton, demolished ER's Scott McIntosh, 13-0, for a 5-point superior decision.

Prior to the arguments, East Rochester was rated as the No. 5 high school wrestling power in New York State. Canandaigua was in the No. 4 spot. The Bombers had a clash with the Cans listed for last night (Wednesday), here.

Quinn finally got a win from a member of his crew in the 119 event, as Romeo Battazzi, a junior who always gives the coach a good performance, put ER on the scoreboard with an easy 10-0 decision, good for four points.

And when Mike Kuhn showed he can stand up and beat the best in the county in the 126 division, he proved it by knocking off strong Brighton matman Steve Levine for the second time in a week, this time by a 6-4 decision.

A week before, Kuhn pulled a surprise of the County Tournament at Athena by grabbing a tight 5-4 decision. The Kuhn-Levine skirmish was the feature match of the 12-scraps card.

Kuhn was training 2-0 after the first two minute period, and 5-3 by virtue of two late takedowns in the second chapter. A foul early in the third edged Kuhn in front, 6-4, and he relinquished one more point to Levine in the last period.

That win put ER back, 14-7, with still a hope ER could pull the match out.

But 132 pounder Curtiss Doreen lost four points to Gary Curwin of the visitors, who flailed the Bomber grunter for a 15-7 nod.

Prior to the match, wrestlers from both clubs searched the mats for a contact lens - lost by

Kuhn. It was found by teammate Dave Alongi.

Quinn's club moved back by 18-7 with six matches to go, and still a glimmer of hope.

It was brightened by 138 pounder Joe Walczyk's 6-5 decision over Joe DiPaolo.

Walczyk was in a 4-4 tie with 58 seconds to go, and worked his rival for a reversal. The lead held by an eyelash as DiPaolo had a one-point escape with 28 seconds left. The victory cut the Brighton lead to 18-10.

It was the 145 scrap that practically snuffed the ER chances. Greg Bonacchi was on the mats against Baron freshman Rob Evarts, and had a 5-4 lead, when the Bomber was charged with a pair of one-point stalling points and succumbed to a reversal that had him ending up on the short end of a 9-5 tally. Brighton moved ahead by 21-10.

It would take a miracle for the Bombers to overcome that lead. But 155 pounder Dennis Essom was fired up like a rocket and pinned Olney Kent in one minute and two seconds for a big six point win.

ER trailed 21-16. Three decisions would still mean a victory for the Quinns, and Drew McGregor was on the mats for the Bombers in the 167 event, the favorite spot for ER's super-athlete John Zito.

Quinn elected to move Zito up to the 177 division to face Brighton's tough Mark Evarts.

McGregor was 2-2 at the end of one period against Rick Katz, and 9-3 at the end of two, when he was in a near fall predicament. McGregor tired out and lost 13-7. That boosted Brighton to a 24-16 lead.

With two matches to go, ER needed nine points -- a decision and a pin would do it.

Evarts and Zito were 0-0 at the end of one period. It was 3-1 in favor of "Big John" at the end of two.

Evarts was weakening in the third after getting close, 3-2, but Zito couldn't pin the heavier Evarts after moving

ahead, 5-2, with 31 seconds to go. It was a three point win for Zito.

With only the Rick Sidor match against Brighton's Rob Thomas to go, ER needed a six point pin.

Sidor was punishing Thomas with an 11-6 lead with 1:12 to go, but Thomas fought off a pin by lying on the mats and preventing a position that would give Sidor a chance for a pin.

Twice Thomas had to go to the sidelines to rest an injured shoulder that was twice examined by Dr. McCollister Evarts. Thomas was threatened with a default loss worth six points to ER. He had given up three points to Sidor for stalling.

Sidor was able to collect only three points for the victory.

The win was the first in nine years over East Rochester, in nine years of coaching wrestling at Brighton for Mark Hoyt.

He caught East Rochester with at least two starters ailing from injuries suffered in the county tourney. They were 112 pounder Mike Brien and 145 pounder Bruce Kier.

Both would have been favored heavily over their opponents. The loss dropped ER to a 4-1 record in the Monroe County East Division. Fairport leads the pack at 5-0.

The Bombers, along with Brighton and Irondequoit, are showing like records and have to meet Fairport.

All ER can salvage for the season is a tie for first place. The team clashes with Fairport here Saturday night, Jan. 27.

The team collided with power-rated Canandaigua here last night (Wednesday), and Mendon tests the Bombers here tonight (Thursday).

Quinn takes his club to the Buffalo area Sweet Home tournament this weekend.

And, next weekend, ER is a participant in the crack Canandaigua Tournament on the Finger Lakes Community College mats.

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